

# Apocalypse

By Dark\_Alchemist

Submitted: March 28, 2007

Updated: March 29, 2007

See [coverpage](#) for full description.

*Note: chapitres aren't all from the beginning, nor are they in order. So if it doesn't 'flow', that's why. In fact, I would be surprised if it did.*

Provided by Fanart Central.

[http://www.fanart-central.net/stories/user/Dark\\_Alchemist/44525/Apocalypse](http://www.fanart-central.net/stories/user/Dark_Alchemist/44525/Apocalypse)

**Chapter 3 - Captain**

2

### 3 - Captain

The beginning, told from the point of view of the Captain of the Guard. It's been sitting at the back of my head for a while, and I only just typed it up. Heh ... I don't really like this guy. He's such a moron. But I love Kitsune, so that makes it all okay. Just as a note ... this happens *before* the teaser and the two science paper chapters, and it's a scene that's not even in the real thing. o\_o; I'm not ... *trying* to confuse anyone ...

Well, the order came down today. Right from the top. That *princeling* is to have a bodyguard. Why me? Why must an important person such as myself be bothered over these trivial matters? The boy is convinced that he doesn't need a guard, and my colleague, who was responsible for training him, agrees that this is a waste. There is to be a tournament? A *contest*? Sometimes I think the Superior delights in wasting our time.

Very well. I shall preside over this ridiculous tournament, if only because it was an order. But really, it should be clear that I do not have the time, being as important as I am.

So. Here they are. Twelve applicants. They all look the same to me. Why can't they just draw straws? It would really be far more convenient, especially for the officers whose time is being wasted through this idiocy.

Then I noticed the thirteenth. Frankly, I don't see how I might have missed him. His tunic is styled in the most ridiculous fashion, quite unlike anything I've ever seen, and the little fool has long hair. If he wore a dress and had a more submissive look about him, he might be mistaken for a flat-chested woman. And he dyed it the queerest shade, a smoky purple. I wasn't aware that one could even buy a hair dye in that colour. Did I say little? I suppose that would be incorrect. He's as tall as any of them, if not taller, though that might be due to his rather odd sandals. On the other hand, I don't think I've ever seen a person skinnier than that who wasn't dead.

'Hey, you. Kid. What are you doing here?'

He didn't smile, but his voice was light. 'I'm here for the trial. What else?' His accent was like none I'd ever heard before.

'Trial? You must be mistaken. The courtrooms are in b-wing.'

'A *test or experiment to determine the quality, safety, performance, or usefulness of something*. In this case, a bodyguard. From the looks of these thugs, I don't believe I am mistaken.' The strangely accented voice was soft. The twelve contestants didn't move. They clearly don't perceive the thinly veiled insult.

'Oh. I'm sorry, there are only twelve names on here.'

'If you let me, I guarantee you won't be disappointed.' His eyes were veiled, unreadable. Assuming an important official like myself had time to learn how to read emotion. It isn't exactly a required skill.

Well, I decided to pity him. He was clearly an admirer of mine.

'Alright. I'll put you on the fourth, with numbers ten through twelve.' I couldn't help but wonder how he'd gotten in. The number thirteen pinned to the front of his tunic was spidery, clearly handwritten, whereas the others were neatly stamped. I'd have to take it up with the current rotation of guards. We couldn't have riffraff off the streets getting in like this.

Two won the first match, bashing the others' skulls together. Six won the second, though he was clearly more intelligent. He waited while the other two slugged it out, then easily picked off the already worn-down victor. The eighth contestant was the next winner; plunging into the three-way fray with his

fists swinging.

For the last, I would have said number eleven. The three shaven-domed musclemen turned on the lanky stranger, the way a bully will pick out an easy target on the playground. They didn't care about their own rivalries now; they were like three hunting dogs that had cornered a rabbit.

He twisted out of the way faster than my eyes could follow, twining around one like a dancer, sending him flying into another. The last was so surprised he stumbled, and a second later he too was on the ground. The strange newcomer was no rabbit. A wolf, maybe, or a mountain lion.

Valiantly hiding my astonishment, I ordered the commencement of the next round. Two probably would have won, but six had proceeded virtually unscathed, whereas he has suffered multiple minor injuries. Six would progress.

Eight was wiser to thirteen's strategy, and would not me as easily beaten. Again, thirteen moved too fast; try as I might, my eyes could not follow. Thirteen kicked him in the stomach with one of the sandals, and it was over as he dropped to the ground, winded. It was clear thirteen was stronger than he looked.

It was time for the last fight. This one they would fight with swords, as that area was important for any possible bodyguard. I realised that he hadn't had a sword when he'd come in, nor did he have one now. I announced this, and when I looked back, there it was. A long, thin blade, of a metal that was clearly not steel. It seemed there was no end to the surprises.

Six faced off against him. His sword was not as long, but it was quite a bit sturdier. Thirteen attacked, but something was wrong. The footing, the way he swung the sword ... It wasn't right. The moves did not follow those detailed by the *Swordsman's Companion*. Inconcievable, but clearly not as impossible as I would have thought. Six didn't stand a chance.

It was over. He had won. And I didn't even know his name. 'What ... what was ...'

The faintest trace of a smile touched his face, the first emotion I'd seen there. 'Well?'

Honestly? I had no idea. 'You .. are you sure you want the job?'

'Of course. Why do you think I'm here?'

'Yes ... I'll take you to meet him ... your charge ...'

'I would expect no more from an ignorant fool.'

I wouldn't dare retaliate. How had he won? It defied all logic ... I would have given anything to find out.