

# A Man Like None Other Novel

## Chapter 6261

David was somewhat embarrassed: "I'm telling the truth."

"I know," Jiang Xuelan said calmly, "That's why I said you're interesting."

She turned around and walked towards the depths of the sea.

"Come over when you're awake, your remnant soul is still waiting for you."

David suddenly opened his eyes.

What came into view was a golden light.

He lay on a stone bed, the stone bed was cold and hard, yet inexplicably made him feel at ease.

Above him was a huge golden canopy, countless golden leaves swaying gently in the breeze, making a rustling sound, like an ancient song.

The air was filled with a faint fragrance of grass and trees, the fragrance was refreshing and invigorating, and his almost exhausted spiritual energy was recovering at an incredible speed.

He sat up and found himself on that small island.

The trunk of the ancient tree was not far from him, as thick as a wall.

The bark was covered with ancient patterns, those patterns were not carved by man, but formed naturally, like the palm lines of the earth.

The tree roots rose from the soil, intertwining to form a natural staircase leading deep into the canopy.

Jiang Xuelan stood on the staircase, her back to him, gazing up at the canopy.

Her long hair shimmered faintly in the golden light, and the hem of her white dress spread out on the roots like a blooming white lotus.

"Awake?" She didn't turn around, her voice still calm.

David rolled out of bed, stretched his body, and was surprised to find that his depleted spiritual energy had recovered by seventy or eighty percent, and the hidden injuries he had sustained in the Guixu Gale had mostly healed.

"How long was I unconscious?" he asked.

"Three hours," Jiang Xuelan turned around and said calmly, "faster than I expected. The regenerative ability of the Golden Dragon bloodline is indeed well-deserved."

David walked to her side and followed her gaze upwards.

Deep within the ancient tree's canopy, a tree hollow could be vaguely seen.

The hollow was small, radiating a soft, pale golden light, a warm and peaceful light that drew one closer.

"What is that?" David asked.

"The foundation of the Divine Palace," Jiang Xuelan said, "and also the place where I can help you release your remnant soul."

She took the soul crystal from David's hand and held it in her palm.

"Follow me."

She walked up the steps from the tree roots, her steps light and steady.

David followed, their footsteps echoing among the branches of the ancient tree, intertwining with the rustling of the leaves to create a strange rhythm. The tree hollow was much larger than David had imagined.

The entrance didn't seem large, but once inside, the space was as spacious as a small palace.

The walls were covered with golden patterns, mirroring those on the tree bark, radiating a warm glow.

In the center of the hollow was a naturally formed stone platform.

The platform wasn't large, just big enough for one person to lie down.

Its surface was smooth as a mirror, covered with complex runes—not any known script, but a more ancient and primitive language.

"This is...ancient divine script?" David exclaimed in surprise.

He had seen this script in ancient texts; it was said to be the language used by the first beings in the world at the dawn of the gods, each character containing the power of the laws of heaven and earth.

"You recognize it?" Jiang Xuelan looked at him with some surprise.

"No, I've only seen it in ancient texts," David answered truthfully.

Jiang Xuelan nodded slightly, saying nothing more.

She walked to the stone platform and placed the Soul Crystal in the center. Then, she raised her right hand, palm down, hovering above the Soul Crystal.

A pale golden light emanated from her palm, warm and gentle, sharing the same origin and essence as the golden light of the ancient tree, yet more condensed and profound.

The light fell upon the Soul Crystal, and its blue outer shell began to slowly melt, like spring snow dissolving.

The two white lights within the Soul Crystal sensed the outside world and began to tremble violently, their movements accelerating as if desperately trying to break free.

Jiang Xuelan's brow furrowed slightly, and a fine layer of sweat beaded on her forehead.

Releasing the remnant souls within the Soul Crystal was far more mentally taxing than she had imagined. These two remnant souls were too weak; the slightest carelessness would cause them to dissipate completely.

She had to use the gentlest and most delicate methods to guide them out of the Soul Crystal bit by bit.

Time passed slowly.

The cave was so quiet that only the two of them breathing and the hissing sound of the melting Soul Crystal remained.

David stood to the side, holding his breath, not daring to even exhale.

He dared not disturb Jiang Xuelan, not even get too close, for fear that his presence might interfere with her spellcasting.

After about the time it takes for an incense stick to burn, the outer shell of the soul crystal finally melted completely.

Two beams of white light slowly rose from the molten liquid, like two butterflies emerging from their cocoons, gently fluttering above the stone platform.

Their light was very weak, almost invisible, yet the life force contained within it made David's eyes slightly warm.

That was Mu Sha.

That was his wife.

They were still alive.

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Jiang Xuelan took a deep breath, formed a hand seal, palms facing upwards, and slowly raised her hands.

Two beams of white light rose slowly with her movement, floating three feet above the stone platform.

Jiang Xuelan's hands danced lightly in the air, her ten fingers like playing a silent melody, each movement precise to the extreme. The

golden patterns on the cave walls began to light up, echoing the light from Jiang Xuelan's palms.

The ancient runes peeled off from the cave walls, transforming into golden symbols that spun and danced in the air, eventually merging into the two beams of white light.

With each symbol merged, the two beams of white light became more solid and brighter.

David could clearly feel that the remnant souls of Mu Sha and his wife were becoming more and more complete and powerful.

This process lasted for a full hour.

When the last golden symbol merged into the remnant souls, the two beams of white light finally stabilized completely. They slowly rotated above the stone platform, their light warm and peaceful, like two small suns.

Jiang Xuelan withdrew her hands, took a step back, her face paling slightly.

"The remnant souls have been released and stabilized."

Her voice was weary. "Next, we need to rebuild their physical bodies. This process will take longer, at least seven days. And..."

She paused, looking at David.

"Rebuilding the physical bodies requires a large amount of life force as raw material. My spiritual power can support some, but it's far from enough. The other part... needs you to provide."

David asked without hesitation, "How much?"

Jiang Xuelan looked at his unwavering eyes and remained silent for a moment.

"Aren't you going to ask what impact providing life force will have on you?"

"No need to ask." David shook his head. "As long as it can save them, I'm willing to pay any price."

Jiang Xuelan looked at him quietly, her expression complex.

"You..." she murmured, but didn't finish her sentence.

She turned around and faced the stone platform again.

"Then let's begin. Extend your hand."

David extended his right hand.

Jiang Xuelan grasped his wrist, her fingertips gently pressing on his pulse.

Her hand was cold, yet a strange power surged within her fingertips.

That power flowed into his body along the meridians of his wrist, circled in his dantian, and then returned along the same path.

"The Golden Dragon bloodline is indeed extraordinary." She released her grip and said calmly, "Your vitality is at least ten times stronger than that of cultivators at the same level. With you here, these two bodies should be fine."

She took out two golden seeds from her sleeve. The seeds were only the size of soybeans, yet they emitted an aura identical to that of the ancient tree.

"These are seeds of the Tree of Life, and they are the key to reshaping the physical body."

She placed the seeds on the stone platform, one on the left and one on the right, beneath two beams of white light. "The seeds of the Tree of Life will absorb life force and gradually grow into a human-shaped body. Once the body is fully formed, the remnant soul will automatically merge into it, completing rebirth."

She looked at David: "This process will last for seven days and seven nights without interruption. You need to continuously infuse your life force into the seeds until the physical body is fully formed."

David nodded: "I understand."

He sat cross-legged in front of the stone platform, placing his hands on the two seeds respectively. The Golden Dragon Bloodline within his body began to circulate, and golden life force surged into the seeds through his palms.

The seeds trembled slightly and began to slowly expand.

A tiny root emerged from the seed coat and burrowed into the cracks on the surface of the stone platform.

Immediately afterwards, more roots emerged, spreading outwards like a spider web.

A crack appeared at the top of the seed, and a tender green seedling emerged from the crack, swaying gently in the golden light.

The seedling grew at a visible speed, reaching half a foot in height in the time it takes to brew a cup of tea.

Branches began to sprout from the seedling's stem, and more leaves grew on the branches, each leaf tender and vibrant green, full of life.

David could clearly feel his life force draining away at a steady pace.

The feeling wasn't painful, just exhaustion, like running a very, very long road, his body growing heavier and his steps slower.

But he couldn't stop.

He gritted his teeth and persevered, his Golden Dragon bloodline surging wildly, transforming every ounce of life force into nutrients for the seedlings' growth.

Jiang Xuelan stood by, quietly watching him.

Her gaze moved from his face to his hands, then to the two thriving seedlings.

"Was it worth it?" she suddenly asked, her voice soft.

David didn't look up, only saying calmly, "It was worth it."

Jiang Xuelan fell silent.

She had lived for a very, very long time, seen too many people, too many life and death events, too many grudges and affections.

She had seen people betray their friends for profit, abandoned their companions to survive, and made solemn promises only to forget them completely the next day.

But she had rarely seen someone like David.

For a promise, he had traveled thousands of miles, braving the fierce winds of the Void, risking annihilation, to arrive in a completely unfamiliar place.

To save two people, he had used his own life force as fuel, without even blinking an eye.

"You..." Jiang Xuelan uttered those three words again, then shook her head, not continuing.

She turned and walked to a corner of the cave, sat cross-legged, and closed her eyes to regulate her breathing

. Her spiritual energy had been greatly depleted, and she needed time to recover.

The cave became quiet, with only the rustling of the seedlings growing and David's steady breathing remaining.

Golden light flowed through the cave, enveloping everything in a warm and peaceful atmosphere.

Outside the cave, the enormous Tree of Life swayed gently in the wind, its golden leaves rustling as if singing an ancient ballad.

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Time flowed silently within the tree hollow.

David had lost count of how long he had sat before the stone platform.

His consciousness flickered, sometimes clear, sometimes hazy, like a candle flame in the wind, its light uncertain.

Life force surged continuously from his palms, flowing into the two golden seeds.

He could feel his flesh growing thinner, his bones more fragile, even the golden dragon bloodline within him was slowly but irreversibly fading.

Yet he did not let go.

Before his eyes, the two seedlings grew taller and stronger day by day. By

the third day, they had grown to three feet tall, their stems branching out into more twigs, each leaf a golden, translucent yellow, radiating a warm glow.

Even more astonishing to David was the subtle change in the shape of the two seedlings.

Their tips began to swell, gradually outlining blurry human figures, like two embryos being sculpted.

By the fifth day, the human figures were clearly visible.

On the left seedling, the silhouette of a man was taking shape: broad shoulders, long limbs, and although the features were still blurry, Musa's outline was already discernible.

On the right seedling, the silhouette of a woman was growing simultaneously: a slender figure, slightly curly long hair, and a face that had been blurry in David's memory but was now becoming increasingly clear.

David looked at the two faces taking shape, his eyes slightly warm.

Soon.

Soon.

On the sixth day, Jiang Xuelan opened her eyes.

She stood up from the corner of the cave, walked to David's side, looked down at the growth of the two seedlings, and nodded slightly.

"Faster than I expected. Your vitality is more abundant than I imagined."

David didn't speak.

Not because he didn't want to, but because he no longer had the strength to speak.

His face was as pale as paper, his lips were cracked and peeling, his eye sockets were sunken, and he had lost a lot of weight.

His once full cheeks were now sunken, his cheekbones were high and prominent, and he looked like he had been seriously ill.

Jiang Xuelan looked at him and remained silent for a moment.

"Your life force has been depleted by nearly forty percent," she said calmly. "If this continues, you will damage your foundation."

David shook his head, his voice hoarse and almost inaudible: "It's alright, I can still hold on."

Jiang Xuelan said nothing more.

She took out a thumb-sized golden fruit from her sleeve. The fruit was crystal clear and emitted an aura identical to that of the Tree of Life.

She held the fruit to David's lips.

"Eat it."

David glanced at the fruit, didn't ask what it was, and swallowed it.

The fruit melted instantly in his mouth, and a warm liquid flowed down his throat into his stomach, then exploded inside him.

It was an extremely pure life force, like a long-awaited rain on a parched riverbed.

His body trembled slightly, and a trace of color finally returned to his pale face.

The golden dragon bloodline within him was replenished, its circulation speed increased, and the life force injected into the seed became even more abundant.

"These are fruits from the Tree of Life, which only bear fruit once every three hundred years."

Jiang Xuelan's tone was calm, as if she were talking about something insignificant. "One fruit can replenish twenty percent of your depleted life force. Eat two more, and you should be able to hold on until the end."

She took out two more fruits from her sleeve and placed them beside David.

"Eat one every other day. Don't eat them early, and don't delay."

David nodded, but a complex emotion welled up inside him.

They were complete strangers; she could have simply watched him exhaust his life force and then intervened to save him. That way, she would have another trump card to use against him.

But she chose to act at the most opportune moment, using her most precious possession to help him.

"Thank you," David whispered.

Jiang Xuelan didn't respond, turning and walking back to the corner of the cave, sitting cross-legged again.

The moment she closed her eyes, a very subtle smile appeared on her lips.

The seventh day.

The last day.

The two seedlings had completely grown into human form.

They were no longer "human-like" plants, but two lifelike bodies, skin, hair, facial features, limbs—everything was indistinguishable from a real person.

The only difference was that their bodies emitted a faint golden light, the trace of the power of the Tree of Life flowing within them.

Mu Sha's body had its eyes closed, its face calm, its breathing even, as if it were simply asleep.

His wife, David, remembered her name as Liu Qingyin, was also sleeping peacefully, even with a faint smile on her lips, as if she were having a sweet dream.

The two beams of white light above the stone platform sensed the bodies below and began to slowly descend.

They floated to the chest level of the two bodies, paused briefly, and then, like droplets of water merging into a lake, silently disappeared into the bodies.

In an instant, the golden light of the two bodies intensified!

The light was dazzling yet warm, filling the entire tree hollow, even making the ancient runes on the walls shine brightly.

David subconsciously squinted, but his hands remained firmly pressed on the seed, not moving an inch.

The light lasted for about the time it takes to brew a cup of tea, then slowly faded.

The tree hollow returned to calm.

Then...

Musa's eyelashes trembled slightly.

His eyelids twitched, as if he was trying to open his eyes.

After a few breaths, his eyes finally opened a crack.

They were blank eyes, pupils unfocused, as if he had just woken from a long nightmare.

"Senior Musa!"

David's voice was hoarse and urgent. "Senior Musa, can you hear me?"

Musa's pupils slowly focused, his gaze wandering in the tree hollow for a moment before finally settling on David's face.

His lips parted slightly, uttering an extremely weak sound.

"Mr...Mr. Chen?"

The voice was hoarse and weak, like a candle flickering in the wind, yet those two words were as clear as if etched into David's heart.

David's eyes instantly reddened.

"It's me, Senior. It's me."

Musa's lips twitched slightly, as if he were smiling.

But he had too little strength, and the smile vanished before it could even take shape.

His gaze shifted from David's face to the female body beside him.

Liu Qingyin was still asleep.

Her brows were slightly furrowed, as if she were experiencing an unpleasant dream. Her

breathing was more even than Musa's, but equally weak, almost imperceptible.

"Qingyin..." Mu Sha's voice trembled. He wanted to reach out and touch his wife's face, but his arm only lifted slightly before falling limply back onto the stone platform.

"Don't move, senior," David said hurriedly. "You have just reconstructed your physical bodies and are still too weak. You need time to recover."

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Musa didn't move, only turning her head to quietly look at Liu Qingyin's face.

Tears glistened in her eyes.

Jiang Xuelan walked over from the corner, glanced at the two of them, and nodded slightly.

"The reconstruction was successful. The fusion of the remnant soul and the physical body is better than I expected, with almost no rejection reaction."

She paused, then added, "However, they are indeed too weak. In their current state, they will need at least three months of rest to regain basic mobility."

David breathed a sigh of relief, as if all his strength had been drained away. He swayed and almost fell off the stone platform.

Jiang Xuelan reacted quickly, grabbing his shoulder.

"You're almost there too."

Her tone was reproachful. "Seven days and seven nights of continuous output of life force, even the Golden Dragon bloodline can't withstand that kind of consumption. If you don't want to lose yourself too, let go immediately."

David looked down at his hands, his palms still resting on the two withered seeds.

The seeds' life force had been completely drained, turning into two clumps of grayish-white powder.

He slowly released his grip, and the two clumps of powder immediately scattered, turning into fine dust and dissipating into the air.

"It's over..." he murmured, his voice as soft as a sigh.

Jiang Xuelan helped him stand up from the stone platform. His legs were weak, almost unsteady, and he only managed to stay upright thanks to her support.

"Your current condition isn't much better than theirs," Jiang Xuelan said calmly. "Go rest over there; I'll handle the rest."

David nodded, no longer trying to be strong.

He stumbled to a corner of the cave and sat down against the wall.

The cold, hard stone wall gave him a strange sense of peace.

He looked at Mu Sha and Liu Qingyin on the stone platform, at their peaceful sleeping faces, and a slight smile appeared on his lips.

Senior Mu Sha, Senior Liu Qingyin, you've finally come back to life.

He closed his eyes and fell into a deep sleep.

When David woke up again, it was already the next day.

Sunlight streamed through the cracks in the tree hollow, golden spots dancing on the walls like countless tiny fireflies.

The air was filled with the fragrance of the Tree of Life, a scent that soothed and invigorated him.

He stretched and found that his vitality had recovered to about 50-60%, still somewhat weak, but no longer hindering his movements.

On the stone platform, Mu Sha and Liu Qingyin were still asleep. However, their complexions were better than yesterday, no longer deathly pale, but with a faint hue.

Jiang Xuelan was not in the tree hollow.

David stood up, walked out of the tree hollow, and descended the steps from the tree roots.

On the lake, Jiang Xuelan stood by the water's edge, her back to him.

Her white robes fluttered slightly in the morning breeze, her long hair as black as ink, creating a breathtaking scene against the backdrop of ice, snow, and golden light.

She seemed to be looking at something beneath the lake, her expression focused and serene.

"Awake?" She didn't turn around, but she accurately sensed David's arrival.

"Yes." David walked to her side, following her gaze to the lake. Beneath the surface of the lake, in its inky blue waters, something was moving slowly.

It was a gigantic fish—no, not a fish, but a dragon?

No, it was enormous, tens of meters long, its body covered in inky blue scales, swimming silently through the water.

Two curved horns were faintly visible on its head, and its eyes were golden, emitting a faint glow in the darkness.

"What is that?" David exclaimed in surprise.

"The guardian of the Tree of Life,"

Jiang Xuelan said calmly. "It's called 'Gui Xu,' a creature that has lived in this lake since ancient times. It was here before the Divine Palace was even built."

The gigantic creature seemed to sense David's gaze, slowly swimming to the vicinity of the lake's surface, its golden eyes glancing at him through the water.

That glance gave David the feeling of being watched by an ancient, primordial beast.

There was no hostility, no kindness, only an indifference that transcended time. In its eyes, David was merely an insignificant passerby in the vast expanse of time.

Then, it turned and swam away, disappearing into the darkness at the bottom of the lake.

David withdrew his gaze and looked at Jiang Xuelan.

"Your two friends should wake up this afternoon,"

Jiang Xuelan said. "Their recovery is faster than I expected, probably because your golden dragon life force is so abundant, making their physical bodies stronger than those of ordinary reconstructed bodies."

David was delighted: "When will they regain their mobility?"

"As for mobility, they'll be able to move around slowly after waking up today." Jiang Xuelan paused, her tone becoming more serious, "But they can't stay in the Fourteenth Heaven for long."

David was taken aback: "Why?"

Jiang Xuelan turned to look at him, her gaze calm yet serious.

"The laws of the Fourteenth Heaven are more than one level stronger than those of the Thirteenth Heaven. Their current condition is not suitable for them to stay in the Fourteenth Heaven."

David frowned slightly. "I can create a small world for them."

Jiang Xuelan shook her head and said, "With your strength, even if you could create a small world in the Fourteenth Heaven, how long could that small world exist?"

The two of them cannot withstand the laws of the Fourteenth Heaven right now. It's like... a fish being thrown from a stream into the ocean. The ocean is much wider, but the water pressure is also much greater. If the fish doesn't have strong enough scales and bones, it will be crushed to death by the water pressure."

"You mean, they will be in danger if they stay in the Fourteenth Heaven?" David asked.

"It's not just that there will be danger, it's that there will definitely be danger."

Jiang Xuelan's tone left no room for doubt. "With their current physical strength and cultivation level, the laws of the Fourteenth Heaven will begin to erode their bodies within three days.

On the first day, they will feel chest tightness and shortness of breath, and their spiritual energy will circulate poorly;

on the second day, blood will begin to seep from their seven orifices, and cracks will appear in their meridians;

on the third day... their bodies will be crushed like a crushed egg, ground into dust by the power of the laws."

David clenched his fists.

He had exerted so much effort, traversing tens of thousands of miles of the Guixu Gale, sacrificing nearly half of his life force, to save Mu Sha and his wife from the brink of annihilation.

If they were to perish again simply because they remained in the Fourteenth Heaven, what would be the point of everything he had done?

"Then what should we do?" he asked in a deep voice. "Send them back to the Thirteenth Heaven?"

Jiang Xuelan nodded: "The laws of heaven and earth in the Thirteenth Heaven are much weaker than those in the Fourteenth Heaven. With their cultivation level, they will not only not be suppressed in the Thirteenth Heaven, but will also thrive because the quality of their physical body reconstruction is far superior to that of ordinary cultivators. As long as they return to the Thirteenth Heaven, they will recover quickly, and their cultivation level may even rise to another level."

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"Then send them back." David said without hesitation.

Jiang Xuelan glanced at him: "Do you know how to open the void passage between the two heavens?"

David remained silent.

He knew.

Opening a void passage from the fourteenth heaven to the thirteenth heaven required immense power.

Ordinary Upper Immortal cultivators couldn't do it at all; only True Immortals and above possessed this ability.

Although his current strength was enough to challenge a True Immortal of the third rank, opening a void passage required not combat power, but an understanding and control of the laws of space.

"I can try," David said through gritted teeth.

Jiang Xuelan didn't say anything, only nodded slightly.

In the afternoon, Mu Sha and Liu Qingyin indeed woke up.

When David entered the tree hollow, Mu Sha was struggling to sit up from the stone platform.

Liu Qingyin leaned against him, her face pale, but her eyes were open, and she was looking around with a blank gaze.

"Senior Musa!" David quickly walked over and supported Musa's shoulders. "Don't rush to get up, you're still too weak."

Musa raised his head and looked at David.

That face, once so full of vigor in the Xuanhuang Realm, was now filled with weakness and exhaustion, but his eyes were still as bright as ever.

"Mr. Chen..." His voice was hoarse, but it carried a sense of relief at surviving a calamity, "I... I thought I was going to die."

David smiled: "Senior, you're lucky, it's hard for you to die even if you wanted to."

Musa gave a bitter smile and turned to look at Liu Qingyin beside him.

Liu Qingyin was looking at David with a complicated gaze, her eyes slightly red.

"Mr. Chen... thank you." Her voice was very soft, almost inaudible. "Musa and I... we owe you a life, no, Musa owes you two lives."

David shook his head: "What are you saying, senior? Back in the Twelfth Heaven, you helped me. If it weren't for you, I would have died long ago. Besides, if you hadn't been tainted by the chaotic energy on my body, you wouldn't have been refined into soul crystals by the temple."

Liu Qingyin wanted to say something more, but Musa gently took her hand.

"Alright, Qingyin." Musa's voice was weak, but it carried a reassuring steadiness. "Mr. Chen isn't the kind of person who likes to hear thanks. We'll just keep it in our hearts."

Liu Qingyin nodded and didn't say anything more, only gently resting her head on Musa's shoulder.

David watched this scene, a warm feeling welling up in his heart.

They had finally come back to life.

Footsteps came from outside the tree hollow, and Jiang Xuelan walked in.

She glanced at Mu Sha and Liu Qingyin's condition and nodded slightly: "They're recovering well. At this rate, with another two or three days of rest, they should regain basic mobility."

She paused, then looked at David: "However, I suggest we send them away today."

David was taken aback: "Today? They haven't recovered yet..."

"The slower they recover, the longer they stay in the Fourteenth Heaven, and the greater the risk of being corrupted by the laws."

Jiang Xuelan's tone was calm and firm. "While their physical condition is still relatively stable, send them away as soon as possible. The longer we delay, the more variables there will be."

David was silent for a moment, then looked at Mu Sha.

Although Mu Sha didn't quite understand what was happening, he gleaned some clues from their conversation.

He looked at David, then at Jiang Xuelan, and slowly nodded.

"I'll listen to you. As long as I can live and stay with Qingyin, I'm fine anywhere," Mu Sha said. Chen

Ping took a deep breath and stood up.

"Alright, let's do it today." He walked to the open space outside the tree hollow, looked up at the golden canopy and pale aurora above, and took a deep breath.

Then, he raised his right hand.

Golden dragon energy surged from his palm, condensing into a phantom of a five-clawed golden dragon in front of him.

Although the phantom was much dimmer than in its prime, it still exuded a chilling dragon's might.

David closed his eyes, focusing all his attention on the void.

He could feel that the spatial barrier of the fourteenth heaven was much thicker than he had imagined.

That barrier was like an invisible wall, separating the fourteenth heaven from the thirteenth heaven below.

To open a void passage to the thirteenth heaven, he needed to first find the weak point of the spatial barrier, and then tear it apart with enough power.

He found it.

The weak point was in the void dozens of feet in front of him, like a faint crack, emitting a slight spatial fluctuation.

David exerted all his strength, and the golden dragon energy transformed into a sharp sword beam, slashing fiercely towards the weak point!

Boom!

The sword light slashed through the void, unleashing a deafening roar.

Space trembled violently, rippling like the surface of a lake after a boulder has been thrown in.

But the crack... only opened slightly, less than a foot wide, before quickly closing again.

David's expression changed. He once more channeled his dragon energy and unleashed another sword strike.

This time, he used all his strength; the golden sword light was even sharper and more ferocious than before.

The sword light struck the same spot, and space trembled again. The crack widened to two feet, but it still wasn't enough.

To pass through a void passage, a crack at least ten feet wide is needed.

Two feet was far from sufficient.

David gritted his teeth and channeled his dragon energy a third time.

But this time, his body shuddered violently; the aftereffects of excessive life force depletion erupted at this moment.

A sharp pain shot through his dantian, and the golden dragon energy surged wildly through his meridians, nearly spiraling out of control.

He groaned, kneeling on one knee, large drops of cold sweat dripping from his forehead.

"Mr. Chen!" Mu Sha called out from the tree hollow, trying to stand up, but Liu Qingyin held her down.

"Don't go." Liu Qingyin's voice was soft but firm. "Going there now will only cause him trouble."

Mu Sha gritted her teeth and ultimately didn't move.

David struggled to his feet, took a deep breath, and prepared to attack again.

A hand pressed down on his shoulder from behind.

The hand was cold, yet carried a strange power.

That power flowed into his body through his shoulder, calming the raging dragon energy within him, and the intense pain in his dantian gradually subsided under the soothing power.

"That's enough." Jiang Xuelan's voice came from behind, calm as still water. "You've done your best. Leave the rest to me."

David turned around and saw Jiang Xuelan standing behind him, looking at him calmly.

"But..."

"No buts."

Jiang Xuelan interrupted him. "You have consumed nearly half of your life force and have internal injuries. Forcibly opening a void passage now will only worsen your injuries.

Moreover, even if you exert all your strength, with your current understanding of the laws of space, you may not be able to open a passage wide enough."

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Jiang Xuelan walked up to David, facing the void.

“Step back.”

David hesitated for a moment, then took a few steps back.

Jiang Xuelan raised her right hand, the movement as casual as shooing away a passing mosquito.

She didn't even activate any spiritual power, just waved her hand lightly.

With that one

wave, the void seemed to be torn apart by an invisible giant hand, a massive crack three zhang wide bursting open before David!

The edges of the crack were smooth as a mirror, without a trace of spatial tremor, without a piercing shriek.

It appeared there quietly, like a sheet of white paper sliced by a paper cutter, clean, crisp, and composed.

On the other side of the crack, a vast, desolate land could be vaguely seen—the Thirteenth Heaven.

David stared blankly at the crack, his mind a complete blank.

He had exerted all his strength, making three attempts, but could only open a crack at most two feet wide, and it closed again in less than a breath.

Jiang Xuelan simply waved her hand, opening a three-zhang-wide passage with ease, stable, wide, and calm, as if tearing apart spatial barriers was as simple as breathing for her.

The difference... wasn't just a factor of two, but a world of difference.

“Let's go.” Jiang Xuelan turned to Mu Sha and Liu Qingyin in the tree hollow.  
“The passage can only last for thirty breaths.”

Mu Sha and Liu Qingyin helped each other out of the tree hollow and arrived at the crack.

Mu Sha glanced back at David, his eyes filled with complex emotions.

"Mr. Chen..." his voice choked slightly, "We can't thank you enough. When we get back, we'll cultivate diligently and repay you in the future."

David shook his head: "Senior, don't say that. Go back and heal your injuries properly, don't take any more risks."

Mu Sha nodded, supporting Liu Qingyin, and stepped into the crack.

The two figures rapidly disappeared into the crack, growing smaller and smaller until they vanished from the land of the Thirteenth Heaven.

The crack slowly closed, and the void returned to calm.

It was all over.

David stood there, silent for a long time.

Then, he turned to look at Jiang Xuelan.

"Just how strong are you...?"

Jiang Xuelan didn't answer, only glancing at him indifferently.

Her gaze was calm as still water, yet it gave David the feeling that he had been seen through.

"You don't need to know," she said calmly.

David was silent for a moment, then asked, "Who exactly are you?"

Jiang Xuelan raised an eyebrow slightly: "Don't you already know? I am the Palace Master of the Divine Palace."

"No, that's not what I'm asking." David stared into her eyes. "I'm asking about your identity. Palace Master is just your title; I'm asking about your origins, your bloodline, who exactly are you?"

Jiang Xuelan's gaze changed slightly.

The change was subtle, almost imperceptible, but David caught it.

It was... a hint of surprise, and a hint of wariness.

"Why are you asking these questions?" Her voice remained calm, but carried a subtle distance.

David didn't answer immediately. He suddenly remembered something.

Back in the Tenth Heaven, he had met someone.

It was a woman, a woman equally aloof, equally powerful, equally unfathomable.

The Palace Master of the Northern Underworld Palace.

The woman who called herself the "Holy Maiden of the Divine Race."

Her eyes were very similar to Jiang Xuelan's.

Not in appearance, but in that aura, that innate aloofness, that profound depth honed by countless years, that detached indifference overlooking all living beings.

David took out the Northern Underworld Token from his robes.

It was a palm-sized token, entirely ice-blue, with the words "Northern Underworld" engraved on the front and a blooming snow lotus on the back.

The token emitted a faint chill; even on this small island warmed by the Tree of Life, the biting cold could still be felt.

"Back in the Tenth Heaven, I met someone," David said slowly, his gaze fixed on Jiang Xuelan, "The Palace Master of the Northern Underworld Palace. She called herself the Holy Maiden of the Divine Race."

Jiang Xuelan's gaze fell on the Northern Underworld Token, her pupils slightly contracting.

The change was extremely subtle, yet David saw it clearly.

"She gave me this Northern Darkness Token, saying that if I ever need help, I can use it to find someone from the Ice God lineage,"

David said.

Jiang Xuelan remained silent.

David put the Northern Darkness Token back into his robes, stared into Jiang Xuelan's eyes, and asked the question, word by word.

"Jiang Xuelan, are you from the Ice God lineage of the Divine Race?"

The air seemed to freeze.

The breeze on the lake stopped, the leaves of the Tree of Life ceased swaying, and even the enormous creature called "Return to the Void" deep within the lake stopped swimming, as if the entire world was waiting for Jiang Xuelan's answer.

Jiang Xuelan looked at David, her eyes filled with shock, scrutiny, and a very subtle... apprehension.

“How do you know about the Ice God lineage?”

Her voice remained calm, yet beneath that calmness lay an uncontrollable undercurrent of emotion. “Very few people know about the branches of the Divine Race. Even the major sects of the Fourteenth Heaven have no idea that there are even more intricate branches within the Divine Race. Did the Palace Master of the Northern Underworld Palace tell you?”

She stared into David’s eyes, her gaze sharp as a knife. “Who exactly are you?”

David felt somewhat uncomfortable under her gaze, but he did not back down. “I am just an ordinary rogue cultivator.” “

As for the branches of the Divine Race, it was indeed the Palace Master of the Northern Underworld Palace who told me. She not only told me that the Divine Race has branches, but also that there are distinctions of rank and status among these branches. She said that the Ice God lineage is one of the oldest and most noble bloodlines in the Divine Race, and that it has produced a Divine Race emperor.”

Jiang Xuelan’s pupils contracted again.

This time, the contraction was much greater than before.

“The Northern Underworld Palace...” she murmured, repeating those three words, her voice so soft it was as if she were talking to herself. “That branch of the Divine Race in the Tenth Heaven... how could they know about the Ice God lineage?”

She remained silent for a long time.

Just when David thought she wouldn’t answer, she suddenly spoke.

“You’re right.”

Her voice was a few decibels lower than before, carrying an emotion David had never heard from her before. "I am a member of the Ice God lineage. To be precise, I am the last descendant of the Ice God lineage."

David's heart skipped a beat. "The last descendant?"

Jiang Xuelan turned around, her back to him, her gaze fixed on the enormous Tree of Life on the lake.

"The history of the God Race is far longer than you imagine."

Her voice was calm, but beneath that calm lay endless vicissitudes. "In the most ancient times, the God Race was the most powerful race in the world. The entire God Race was composed of an alliance of the most elite bloodline cultivators. These cultivators of different bloodlines jointly ruled the God Race, each fulfilling their duties and guarding their respective territories."

## Chapter 6267

"And then?" David asked.

"And then..."

Jiang Xuelan's voice paused slightly, "And then so many things happened. Because of the inherent arrogance of the God Clan, they cannot cultivate with other bloodline cultivators, causing their bloodline to become increasingly fragile after hundreds of thousands of years of inheritance."

Hearing Jiang Xuelan's words, David instantly thought of the royal families of the mortal world. Wasn't it because they couldn't marry outsiders that the chances of inbreeding increased, leading to genetic mutations over time?

It seems the God Clan is facing the same situation now. No wonder both the temples and shrines are secretly engaging in bloodline fusion.

She turned around and looked at David.

For the first time, a vulnerable look appeared in her deep eyes. Although it was only fleeting, David saw it clearly.

"Our Ice God lineage has slowly declined from being one of the noblest bloodlines. Then, because a female cultivator from our lineage was chosen as a saintess but eloped with someone, it ultimately implicated the entire Ice God lineage." As Jiang Xuelan said this, a trace of hatred flashed in her eyes, but it quickly disappeared.

"So this is the Palace Master of the Northern Underworld Palace?" David was taken aback.

"You're right. This Palace Master of the Northern Underworld Palace should be the female cultivator who eloped back then. Because of her, our Ice God lineage was completely destroyed, and now only I, her successor, remain." Jiang Xuelan nodded.

"Do you hate her?" David asked.

"Hate, and not hate. I hated her before, but now, she was just pursuing her own love, so what wrong did she do?"

"It's all because of the corrupt system and oppressive class system of the God Race that caused all this."

Jiang Xuelan's eyes were full of relief; it seemed she no longer hated him.

"Are you satisfied now?" Jiang Xuelan looked at David and smiled bitterly.

David fell silent.

He hadn't expected that this woman, powerful enough to tear through the void with a flick of her wrist, this Palace Master of the God Palace who had lived for countless millennia, was actually a descendant of a race.

Alone, guarding this ancient tree, guarding this cold lake, guarding the last glory of a race that had long since vanished.

"I'm sorry," David said softly. "I shouldn't have asked."

Jiang Xuelan shook her head, the bitter smile gradually fading, replaced by a sense of relief.

"There's nothing you shouldn't have asked,"

she said calmly. "These things will be known sooner or later. Rather than letting others find out through other channels, it's better for you to ask me directly."

She paused, her gaze lingering on David's face for a moment.

"You have the bloodline of the Golden Dragon Royal Family, you can produce the Northern Underworld Token, you know about the Ice God lineage, and most importantly, you're a Celestial Realm cultivator... David, you're far more complex than you imagine."

David smiled bitterly: "I was just lucky."

"Lucky?"

Jiang Xuelan chuckled softly, a light laugh tinged with amusement. "You traveled all the way to the Fourteenth Heaven, traversed the fierce winds of the Void to find this secluded place, and have both the bloodline of the Golden Dragon Royal Family and human blood flowing through your veins—and you call that luck?"

David opened his mouth, wanting to explain, but found himself speechless.

Jiang Xuelan didn't press further.

She turned and walked towards the Tree of Life.

"Let's go," her voice regained its calm. "Your friend has left safely; it's time for you to fulfill your promise."

David was taken aback: "What promise?" Jiang Xuelan stopped and glanced back at him.

That glance held a hint of cunning, a touch of mockery, and a smile she herself didn't even realize.

"You promised me you'd stay in the Divine Palace and do three things for me. What, you forgot?"

David: "..."

He had indeed forgotten.

Or rather, he thought Jiang Xuelan was just saying it casually and wouldn't really take it seriously.

"You're not joking?" David asked tentatively.

Jiang Xuelan's expression instantly turned cold, like a lake surface frozen by a cold wind.

"I never joke."

Her tone was icy and serious, making David immediately realize that this woman was serious.

Very serious.

"What are those three things?" David resigned himself to his fate.

Jiang Xuelan thought for a moment and held up three fingers.

"The first thing."

She withdrew one finger, her gaze sweeping over David.

"The golden dragon bloodline in your body is very special. It's not just a simple royal bloodline... I sense something else in your bloodline that I've never seen before. I need to study it."

David looked at her warily: "How do you study it?"

Jiang Xuelan said calmly: "Just drawing some blood, it won't hurt."

David: "...Are you sure it's just drawing blood?"

Jiang Xuelan didn't answer, but gave him a meaningful look.

David suddenly had a bad feeling, as if he had sold himself to a very dangerous person.

No, not just felt.

It was definitely true.

Jiang Xuelan led David through the tangled roots of the Tree of Life to the other side of the trunk.

There was a small stone chamber here, much smaller than the previous tree hole, but extremely elegantly decorated.

Several luminous pearls were inlaid on the walls of the stone chamber, emitting a soft, pale blue light.

A stone table was placed in the center, on which were neatly arranged various utensils that David couldn't name: transparent glass bottles, slender silver needles, several jade pieces engraved with runes, and a yellowed ancient book.

"Sit." Jiang Xuelan gestured to the stone bench in front of the stone table.

David sat down as instructed, looking at the utensils on the table, and inexplicably felt as if he were lying on a chopping board.

Jiang Xuelan took out a silver needle from her sleeve. The needle was as thin as a cow's hair, and a faint golden light flowed around its tip.

She sat down in front of David, held the silver needle up to her eyes, and said calmly, "Stretch out your hand."

## Chapter 6268

David hesitated for a moment, then extended his right hand.

Jiang Xuelan grasped his wrist, pressing her thumb against his pulse, and closed her eyes slightly to feel for a moment.

Then, she gently inserted a silver needle into David's fingertip.

The needle was extremely thin, and the moment it pierced him, he felt almost no pain.

But the instant the needle tip touched the blood vessel in his fingertip, David's body trembled violently.

A strange power surged from the needle tip into his body, flowing upstream along his blood vessels, like an invisible eye scanning his meridians, dantian, and even every inch of his flesh.

The feeling was strange, as if he had been seen through from the inside out, with no secrets left to hide.

"Don't move," Jiang Xuelan said softly, her gaze focused intently on the silver needle.

A drop of golden blood slowly seeped from the needle tip.

That blood was completely different from ordinary blood; it emitted a faint golden light, like molten gold, and condensed into a round bead on the needle tip.

Even more strangely, a tiny, dragon-shaped phantom could be faintly seen moving on the surface of the drop of blood, emitting a barely audible dragon's roar.

Jiang Xuelan withdrew the silver needle, and the drop of golden blood hovered above her palm, slowly rotating.

She examined it carefully for a moment, then nodded slightly: "Golden Dragon Royal Bloodline, extremely pure, even more concentrated than what you showed me last time."

David didn't speak, only quietly watching her.

Jiang Xuelan carefully placed the drop of blood into a transparent glass bottle, then took a second drop, a third drop... a total of seven drops from David's fingertips before putting away the silver needle.

"Is that enough?" David asked.

"Enough." Jiang Xuelan lined up the seven glass bottles on the stone table, her gaze sweeping over the blood, "Initial observation shows that only three drops are needed; the rest can be saved for later."

"Later?" David looked at her warily.

Jiang Xuelan ignored his gaze, picked up the first bottle of blood, and held it up to her eyes. A pale golden light emanated from her palm, enveloping the glass bottle.

The blood began to change within the light.

The surface of the golden liquid began to boil, tiny bubbles constantly rising and bursting.

A dragon-shaped phantom swam wildly within the bottle, emitting increasingly loud dragon roars.

At the same time, the color of the blood also changed; a second color began to emerge from the gold.

It was a deep, profound purple, like the first ray of dawn before the chaos was broken.

Jiang Xuelan's pupils suddenly contracted.

She placed the glass bottle back on the table, her hands rapidly forming several hand seals, her fingertips touching the bottle.

The blood within seemed to be awakened by some power; the purple light grew stronger and more intense, eventually completely engulfing the golden light.

The entire drop of blood transformed into a pure purple, slowly rotating within the bottle, emanating an aura that made even Jiang Xuelan's heart tremble.

"This is..." Her voice trembled slightly; it was the first time David had seen such a reaction in her. She abruptly looked up, staring at David with eyes burning like flames.

"How can there be chaotic power in your bloodline?"

David shook his head. "Don't ask me, I don't know either."

Jiang Xuelan didn't answer, but quickly picked up the second bottle of blood and activated it using the same method.

The result was the same: the gold faded, and purple appeared.

The third bottle, the fourth bottle... all the way to the seventh bottle, every drop of blood contained that purple chaotic power, only the concentration varied slightly.

Jiang Xuelan put down the last glass bottle, took a deep breath, and tried to calm herself.

But her clenched fists and slightly trembling fingertips betrayed her shock.

"Do you know what chaotic power means?" Her voice was low and serious.

David shook his head again.

He truly didn't understand chaotic power.

Jiang Xuelan stood up and paced back and forth in the stone chamber, seemingly trying to organize her thoughts.

After a moment, she stopped and turned to look at David.

"The power of chaos is the most primordial force at the beginning of time. It encompasses everything, covering all things. The power of humans, the power of beasts, the power of demons, and even the power of our gods all originate from chaos, yet none of them are equal to chaos."

She picked up a glass bottle and showed David the purple blood inside.

"But your blood contains not only the power of chaos, but also... look here."

She touched the bottle with her fingertip, and the purple light in the blood rippled slightly before beginning to differentiate.

Within the purple light, three distinct rays of light separated.

Golden dragon energy, the power of the golden dragon bloodline;

black demonic energy, the power of the demon race;

and a transparent, water-like light, that is... the most fundamental power of humanity.

The three powers intertwined and fused within the bottle, yet each maintained its independent characteristics.

They were not simply mixed, but truly fused, like the three primary colors merging into white light; the three powers merged into chaos.

But when Jiang Xuelan used a special technique to separate them, they could be completely restored to their three independent powers.

"This is impossible..."

Jiang Xuelan murmured, her voice filled with disbelief. "Human, dragon, and demon—three completely different powers—can coexist perfectly within you, and even fuse into chaotic power... This violates all common sense about cultivation."

She looked at David, her gaze filled with an emotion she herself couldn't quite explain.

"Just what kind of monster are you?"

## Chapter 6269

David smiled bitterly, "I told you, I'm just an ordinary rogue cultivator."

Back in the Great Stone Village of the Celestial Realm, David already possessed three powers within him, and these three powers had fused into the power of the three races.

However, David hadn't paid much attention to it, assuming that everyone could possess such power.

"An ordinary rogue cultivator?"

Jiang Xuelan sneered, "An ordinary rogue cultivator can simultaneously contain the power of the Dragon Clan and the Demon Clan within his body without exploding and dying? An ordinary rogue cultivator can possess the power of chaos? An ordinary rogue cultivator can possess combat power comparable to a True Immortal in the Upper Immortal Realm?"

Her series of rhetorical questions left David speechless.

Jiang Xuelan took a deep breath, sat down again, and looked at him with a complex expression.

"Your body can contain any bloodline and power without the slightest bloodline rejection. This means that you can fuse with all the bloodlines in the world—the divine, the demonic, the dragon, and even more ancient and powerful bloodlines—without any conflict."

Her voice became low, carrying a seriousness that David had never seen in her before.

"David, do you know what this means?"

David shook his head.

"It means you are the most perfect bloodline vessel in the world," Jiang Xuelan said, enunciating each word clearly. "Without exception."

Silence fell over the stone chamber.

David digested Jiang Xuelan's words, a complex emotion welling up within him.

He had always thought his Golden Dragon bloodline was his greatest trump card, but now it seemed the real trump card was the chaotic power he himself had never truly understood.

"So what?" he asked calmly.

Jiang Xuelan looked at him, silent for a long time.

Then, she did something completely unexpected.

She stood up, walked to David, and slowly knelt before him.

Her white robes spread out on the cold stone floor, like a white lotus blooming on snow.

She raised her head, her deep, starry eyes looking directly at David, her gaze filled with pleading, determination, and a hint of... vulnerability.

"David, I have a request."

David was startled by her action and instinctively tried to help her up: "What are you doing? Get up and speak."

"Let me finish," Jiang Xuelan pressed his hand down, her tone firm.

She took a deep breath, her voice becoming very low. "I am the last descendant of the Ice God lineage. The bloodline of the Ice God lineage has weakened to its limit in my generation.

If a way to strengthen the bloodline is not found, the Ice God lineage will be completely wiped out. I have guarded this lake and this tree for ten thousand years, not to watch the Ice God lineage die out in my hands."

Her eyes reddened slightly, the first time David had seen such a look in her eyes.

“What I need is someone whose bloodline can merge with mine. Someone who will not reject the Ice God bloodline, nor be rejected by it. For ten thousand years, I have searched all over the fourteen heavens, and no one has been able to do it.”

She looked at David, her gaze burning.

“Until you came.”

David finally understood her meaning, his expression changing: “You mean...”

“I want to cultivate with you.”

Jiang Xuelan’s voice was calm, but her ears were faintly tinged with pink, “to merge the bloodline of the Ice God lineage with yours. Only in this way can the Ice God bloodline be strengthened, and the Ice God lineage continue.”

David suddenly stood up, took two steps back, his face becoming extremely ugly.

“No.”

His voice was firm, leaving no room for negotiation.

David objected because he loathed Jiang Xuelan treating him like a stud.

Although he enjoyed dual cultivation with women—after all, it was a source of pleasure—what was the difference between dual cultivation without an emotional foundation and being a stud?

Back in the Celestial Realm, he was forced by Bai Qian to continuously cultivate with her, absorbing her bloodline; it was unavoidable, as he needed Bai Qian to save him.

However, later, the two developed feelings for each other, and David became happy with it.

But this Jiang Xuelan, although beautiful, with a good body and beautiful skin, David always felt that Jiang Xuelan was somewhat dangerous, and he couldn't just engage in dual cultivation with her casually.

Jiang Xuelan knelt on the ground, looking up at him, the light in her eyes dimming slightly.

"Why?" Jiang Xuelan asked.

David turned around, his back to her, his fists clenched tightly. "I have a wife, women, even dozens of women, but they all have feelings for me."

"And you? You cultivate with me only for your own bloodline, without any feelings for me. I'm not a stud, someone you can use anywhere."

The stone chamber fell into a deathly silence.

Jiang Xuelan remained silent for a long time.

Then, she slowly stood up, brushed the dust off her skirt, and resumed her aloof and distant demeanor.

But her voice was now slightly hoarse, almost imperceptibly so.

## Chapter 6270

Those three things you mentioned."

David stiffened.

"You promised me you'd do three things for me." Jiang Xuelan's voice was calm, almost cold. "A man's word is his bond. You said it."

David turned to look at her.

Jiang Xuelan's gaze met his directly.

"The first thing, I've already done—I drew your blood for research. The second thing..."

She paused, her voice trembling slightly, but she finished.

"To cultivate with me."

David fell silent.

He knew he'd been outmaneuvered.

Jiang Xuelan was right; he had indeed promised.

Regardless of the circumstances, he had spoken the words himself, made the promise himself.

If he went back on his word now, how would he be any different from those treacherous villains?

"Aren't you afraid I'll go back on my word later?" David's voice was hoarse.

Jiang Xuelan smiled faintly, a bitter smile mixed with an indescribable emotion.

"You won't. You're not that kind of person."

She turned and walked towards the door of the stone chamber. She stopped at the doorway, without turning back.

"Tonight, beneath the Tree of Life. I will wait for you."

Her figure vanished through the doorway, leaving David alone in the stone chamber, facing the seven glass bottles on the table, speechless for a long time.

Night fell.

The nights in the Land of Return to Nothingness were different from elsewhere; the aurora borealis overhead grew brighter, its pale color transforming into a deep blue-purple, like a river flowing through the sky.

The golden leaves of the Tree of Life swayed gently in the night breeze, rustling like an ancient song, or a low sigh.

David stood at the entrance of the tree hollow, watching the aurora and golden shadows reflected on the lake, his mind a jumble of thoughts.

He didn't want to go.

But he had to go.

A promise is a promise.

The word "promise" was the most valued thing in his life.

If he could break his own promises so easily, what difference was there between him and those he despised?

He took a deep breath and stepped out of the tree hollow.

On the other side of the Tree of Life's trunk was a small clearing.

In the center of the open space, Jiang Xuelan was already waiting.

She had changed her clothes.

No longer the plain white dress she wore during the day, but a pale blue gauze dress, shimmering with a cold, eerie light under the aurora and golden leaves.

Her long hair cascaded down her back like a waterfall, a few strands falling beside her ears, gently swaying in the night breeze.

She stood with her back to David on the largest root of the Tree of Life, looking up at the canopy above.

Golden leaves drifted around her, landing on her shoulders and in her hair, like a golden crown adorning her head.

Hearing footsteps, she slowly turned around.

Moonlight, aurora, and golden light shone simultaneously on her face, making her appearance somewhat unreal, like someone who had stepped out of a painting.

"You've come," she said softly, almost drowned out by the wind.

David stopped in front of her. The two looked at each other.

"I've thought it over," David's voice was a little hoarse. "I agree. But I have one condition."

Jiang Xuelan raised an eyebrow slightly. "What condition?"

"This is just a transaction," David said, enunciating each word clearly. "After the dual cultivation, our relationship will remain the same. I won't have any other thoughts about you because of this. And you shouldn't have any other thoughts about me either."

Jiang Xuelan looked at him, silent for a moment.

Then, she smiled.

The smile was faint, almost imperceptible.

But in that smile, there was an emotion David couldn't quite define—was it relief? Bitterness? Or something else?

"Okay," she said, uttering only one word.

David nodded, took a deep breath, and began to remove his outer garment.

Jiang Xuelan turned around, her back to him, and slowly removed her thin veil.

Her movements were slow and composed, without a trace of awkwardness or haste.

It was as if she wasn't doing something of great importance concerning the continuation of their bloodline, but rather something utterly ordinary.

Moonlight spilled onto her snow-white shoulders, tracing a graceful yet serene arc.

The leaves of the Tree of Life began to fall rapidly, golden leaves swirling and dancing in the air like a golden rain.

The leaves settled around them, carpeting them in gold.

Jiang Xuelan turned around.

Her face remained serene, but a faint blush tinged her ears and neck.

That blush, shimmering in the moonlight and gold, made her appear no longer like an ice sculpture, but a woman of flesh and blood, capable of shyness and timidity.

"Come here," she said softly, yet with an undeniable authority.

David walked over and stood before her.

The distance between them was only a few feet.

He could smell her scent; it was no longer the delicate fragrance of winter plum blossoms from the daytime, but a richer, more intoxicating, cool fragrance, like the first snow of deep winter, crisp and sweet.

Jiang Xuelan raised her hand and gently pressed it against his chest.

Her hand was cold, yet a strange warmth surged within her fingertips.

The heat seeped into his body through his chest, coursing through his limbs and bones, causing the golden dragon blood within him to boil uncontrollably.

"Close your eyes," she murmured, her voice like a dream. "Relax, don't resist."

David closed his eyes as instructed.

The next moment, he felt Jiang Xuelan's body press against him.

Her body was cool, as cool as a piece of jade bathed in moonlight.

Yet, within that coolness, something incredibly warm flowed, like a hot spring surging beneath the ice.

Two completely different forces began to circulate between their bodies.

One was David's golden dragon energy, scorching, domineering, and filled with the power of destruction and rebirth;

the other was Jiang Xuelan's icy blue divine light, clear, gentle, and containing the ancient laws of freezing time and space.

The two forces circulated repeatedly within their bodies, intertwining and merging.

Initially, they repelled each other; the scorching heat of the dragon energy and the coldness of the divine light clashed fiercely within them like fire and water.

David felt as if his body was being torn in two, one half molten lava, the other icy frost.

Jiang Xuelan's brows furrowed tightly, a fine layer of sweat beading on her forehead.

But she gripped David's hand tightly, their fingers interlocked, palms facing each other.

"Don't resist," her voice whispered in his ear, carrying a reassuring strength, "Let them merge."