

A Man Like None Other

Novel

Chapter 6531

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The armies of Venerable Xuanbing and Venerable Shengguang remained encamped.

Their tents were neat and clean, their disciples' armor gleamed, their weapons sharp, and their spiritual energy abundant.

From dawn until now, they hadn't fired a single arrow or drawn a single sword, silently watching the Heavenly Palace's army be gradually worn down and destroyed.

Now, seeing Venerable Tianji leading his defeated troops out of the Misty Forest in a disheveled state, Venerable Xuanbing and Venerable Shengguang simultaneously smiled.

Venerable Xuanbing, driving his Xuanbing chariot, went to meet them, his ice-blue robes fluttering in the wind, a feigned expression of concern on his face.

"Heavenly Palace Master, are you alright? Why did you come out so quickly? We were just about to lend a hand."

His voice carried undisguised mockery, like a cat toying with a wounded mouse.

Venerable Tianji slowly raised his head, his blood-red eyes fixed on Venerable Xuanbing.

His fists clenched so tightly they cracked, his nails digging into his palms—not anger, but humiliation.

“Xuanbing.”

His voice was hoarse, like sandpaper grinding iron. “How dare you say such a thing? I risked my life at the front, and twelve hundred disciples of the Heavenly Pole Palace died, and you didn’t fire a single arrow or offer a single sword strike, just stood by and watched! Now you tell me you’re prepared to lend a hand?”

Venerable Holy Light floated down from the floating platform, his white robes as white as snow, his smile as warm as spring.

His smile was as gentle as an old neighbor trying to mediate a fight. “Heavenly Pole Palace Master, you’re wrong about that. It was agreed that you would lead the charge. You couldn’t break through yourself, and now you blame us for not helping?

Besides, we were assessing the situation. Look, when you withdrew, the Ten Thousand Demon Ridge didn’t pursue you, did they? That means they were exhausted too. Wouldn’t it be twice as effective if we intervened now?”

Venerable Heavenly Pole almost spat out blood.

His chest heaved violently, his wounds burst open with anger, and golden blood flowed down his chest, staining the sand beneath his feet a dark gold.

“Assess the situation? Achieve twice the result with half the effort?” His voice was already incoherent. “Xuanbing, Shengguang, you wait. The shame I suffer today, I will avenge in the future...”

“The future?”

Venerable Xuanbing laughed, a cold laugh. "Palace Master of Tianji, you should go back and heal your injuries first. In your current state, it's hard to say whether you can live to see 'the future.

' The aftereffects of burning your essence blood are not so pleasant."

He paused, his voice becoming even more sarcastic. "Don't worry, we'll handle the matter of Wanyao Ridge for you."

Venerable Tianji didn't speak again.

He glanced at the two of them one last time, his gaze filled with a desire to pounce on them and tear them to pieces, but he ultimately didn't move. He couldn't move; he couldn't turn against Shenyuan Pavilion and Tiansheng Palace here.

Tianji Palace only had eight hundred remaining soldiers, and his own cultivation had fallen to the second rank of Golden Immortal, while the two families combined still had thirteen hundred elite troops.

No matter how unwilling he was, he could only endure it.

He turned around and led the remaining soldiers of Tianji Palace into the depths of the wasteland.

His back was hunched, his steps faltering, a trail of golden blood etched behind him, starkly contrasting against the gray sands of the wasteland.

Eight hundred remaining soldiers followed him, silent except for the clatter of footsteps and intermittent coughs.

Occasionally, someone would fall, never to rise again; their companions would simply quicken their pace in silence, not daring to look back.

Venerable Xuanbing watched the remnants of the Heavenly Palace disappear at the edge of the wasteland, his smile vanishing.

He turned and met Venerable Shengguang's gaze.

"Now," Venerable Xuanbing said, his voice as cold as ancient ice, "it's our turn."

Venerable Shengguang nodded, a smile still playing on his lips, but it was no longer gentle; it was the smile of a hunter eyeing its prey.

"The Heavenly Palace has expended most of the Ten Thousand Demon Ridge's fighting strength for us; they themselves are almost depleted. David is powerful, but even the strongest can be overwhelmed by sheer numbers. Furthermore, that woman from Qingqiu has also expended considerable energy; I sensed her aura was much weaker than before the battle."

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He paused, "But that kid David is a bit strange. Pavilion Master Xuanbing, what do you think?"

"What do I think?" Venerable Xuanbing smiled, "No matter how strange he is, he can't stop our two families from joining forces. Let's try diplomacy first, then force."

The two gave the order simultaneously.

1,300 elite cultivators from Shenyuan Pavilion and Tiansheng Palace began to form ranks.

Their ice-blue robes and white armor were distinct yet perfectly coordinated, forming a line hundreds of feet long on the wasteland.

The disciples of Shenyuan Pavilion were in front, their icy power forming a continuous sheet that froze the sand on the ground into solid ice, causing the temperature in the air to plummet.

The disciples of Tiansheng Palace were behind, their holy light power converging into several pillars of light, within which faint angelic phantoms danced.

Banners fluttered, swords and spears stood like a forest, ice crystals and holy light reflected each other, forming an encirclement even more tight and ruthless than that of Tianji Palace.

Venerable Xuanbing propelled his Xuanbing Chariot, arriving at the gates of Wan Yao Ridge in mere breaths.

Venerable Shengguang's floating altar followed closely behind, its ninety-nine luminous stones illuminating the plaza before the gates with divine light.

The white light shone on the scattered corpses and pools of blood, highlighting the twisted faces and broken limbs with a gruesome grotesque quality.

"David,"

Venerable Xuanbing's voice, though not loud, carried clearly throughout the entire Wan Yao Ridge gates, "You have some skill. That fool, Venerable Tianji, deserved to fall into your hands. But don't be too happy yet."

He paused, his gaze sweeping over the defensive lines before the gates. The Guiyuan Sect's sword formation was incomplete, the Qingyun Sword Sect's flying swords were more than half broken, and the Wanfa Sect's restrictions were riddled with cracks.

The cultivators of Wan Yao Ridge, though still standing, were exhausted, many bearing wounds, their spiritual energy depleted.

"Look at those people behind you. They've been fighting all day, more than half dead or wounded, their spiritual energy completely depleted. How much strength do they have left? How many more waves of attack can they withstand?"

Venerable Xuanbing's voice was unhurried, as if he were doing some calculations. "Behind me are thirteen hundred elite soldiers, not a single arrow fired, not a single sword drawn. They're more than enough to deal with your defeated troops."

David stood before the mountain gate, his blue robe stained with blood, some of his own and his enemies'. After

dozens of direct clashes with Venerable Tianji, his spiritual energy was considerably depleted, but he still stood straight, his figure as upright as a javelin.

"What do you want to say?" David's voice was calm.

"I, the Pavilion Master, will give you three choices,"

Venerable Xuanbing held up three fingers. "First, take your people and withdraw from Ten Thousand Demon Ridge, leaving behind all its territory and resources.

Second, hand over the treasure within your body. I know what it is—a token of the Daoist sect's inheritance, isn't it? Hand it over, and I might spare your lives.

Third, if you don't agree, then I'll have no choice but to storm in. At that time, Ten Thousand Demon Ridge will be utterly annihilated."

A brief silence fell over the plaza.

The cultivators of Ten Thousand Demon Ridge gripped their weapons tightly, their eyes filled with vigilance.

Guiyuanzi straightened his body, Qingyunzi gripped his sword hilt, and the Grand Elder of the Myriad Laws Sect silently activated the last few layers of runes that sealed the barrier.

David did not answer.

He raised the Dragon-Slaying Sword, and the purple chaotic fire on its blade reignited.

The flames were small, yet they formed a purple defensive line before the mountain gate.

The flames reflected in his purple eyes, dyeing them a deep purple.

He answered Venerable Xuanbing's question with his actions: if you want the Myriad Demon Ridge, you must first cross his sword.

Just as David was about to make his move, a white figure walked out from inside the mountain gate.

Jiang Xuelan.

She wore spirit armor, its silver plates shimmering softly in the holy light.

She wore no helmet, her black hair cascading down, simply tied back with a silver hairpin, her expression calm yet resolute.

Her white dress fluttered in the wind, her steps unhurried yet exceptionally steady, a silver-white longsword in her hand.

She walked directly to David, turned to face Venerable Xuanbing.

Then she made a gesture no one expected: she bowed slightly, clasped her hands in a fist salute, performing an ancient greeting.

It wasn't the greeting of Wan Yao Ling, nor of Guiyuan Sect, but of something far more ancient and timeless.

"Senior,"

her voice was soft, yet clearly heard by everyone, "This junior is Jiang Xuelan, the seventy-second generation successor of the Ice God lineage, greetings, Senior."

Venerable Xuanbing's fingers paused.

He was about to urge the Xuanbing chariot into a charge when he heard the words "Ice God lineage," and his movements abruptly stopped.

The ice-blue robe froze in the wind, its fluttering hem suspended in mid-air as if frozen.

He narrowed his eyes, scrutinizing Jiang Xuelan.

His gaze fell on the silver longsword in her hand, then on the spirit armor she wore. On the shoulder armor of the spirit armor was an extremely subtle rune, so faint it was almost invisible under the holy light, but Venerable Xuanbing recognized it—the clan crest of the Ice God lineage.

"The Ice God lineage?"

Venerable Xuanbing's voice trembled slightly. "You're from the Ice God lineage? How is that possible? The Ice God lineage was already..."

"Almost extinct,"

Jiang Xuelan interrupted, her voice calm, but a hint of sorrow hidden in her eyes. "We lived in anonymity, hiding in the spiritually barren lower realms, barely surviving for tens of thousands of years. Senior should know the Ice God lineage's status among the gods. We were ostracized, suppressed, and driven away by other branches, ultimately forced to lower our cultivation and flee to the lower realms."

Venerable Xuanbing remained silent for a long time.

A long, icy blue robe fluttered gently in the wind, and some of the frost covering the chariot slowly receded.

A complex expression flashed across his face, the look of someone having touched a long-sealed memory.

"You...are you truly from the Ice God lineage?"

His voice was much softer than before, no longer carrying that condescending coldness. "Show this master your bloodline mark."

Jiang Xuelan raised her left hand, rolling up her sleeve to her elbow.

On the inside of her wrist was an icy blue mark, small, only the size of a fingernail, shaped like a hexagonal snowflake.

In the center of the snowflake was an extremely thin vertical line, like a sword, or perhaps an icicle.

She infused the mark with spiritual power, and it suddenly lit up, emitting an extremely pure, icy aura.

The aura wasn't cold and sinister, but rather a solemn, ancient, icy power belonging to the orthodox branch of the divine race.

The Xuanbing Venerable's pupils contracted slightly.

He remained silent for a moment, then also raised his left hand, rolling up his sleeve to his elbow.

On the inside of his wrist was a similar icy blue snowflake mark.

Two icy auras converged before the mountain gate, the air temperature plummeted, and moisture condensed into countless tiny ice crystals, shimmering with iridescent light in the sunlight.

The bloodlines of the Ice God lineage resonated upon sensing their kind; the marks on their wrists lit up simultaneously, echoing each other in an ancient way.

That echo contained tens of thousands of years and countless generations of inheritance. The Xuanbing Venerable's brow relaxed slightly, a fleeting, inscrutable emotion flashing in his eyes.

"The Ice God lineage still has descendants,"

he said softly, as if speaking to himself. "I thought that apart from myself and a few old fogies, the Ice God lineage had been wiped out." The Holy Light Venerable frowned beside him. "Pavilion Master Xuanbing, this is not the time for reminiscing. You wouldn't back down just because of a few words from a young girl from the Ice God lineage, would you?"

His voice remained gentle, but a subtle chill had crept into his tone.

The Xuanbing Venerable ignored him.

He looked at Jiang Xuelan and asked, "Why are you here? Why are you mingling with these demons and humans? You are a descendant of the Ice God lineage, a legitimate branch of the divine race. How can you stoop so low as to associate with these ants from the lower realms?"

Jiang Xuelan shook her head.

Her voice remained calm, but it held a hint of strength. "Senior, you speak of a legitimate branch of the divine race? Then, this junior dares to ask, when have the other branches of the divine race ever given the Ice God lineage a second glance?"

The Xuanbing Venerable's expression stiffened.

"The Ice God lineage has been the weakest since ancient times. We've never had a voice in the council of the God Alliance. We're always the last in the allocation of God resources.

We're excluded from the inheritance of God techniques. When the Ice God lineage was wiped out tens of thousands of years ago, where were the other branches of the God race?

They watched us being killed, watched us being driven out of the God race, and not a single one offered a helping hand."

Jiang Xuelan's voice was neither humble nor arrogant. "Senior, you are now the Pavilion Master of the Divine Abyss Pavilion, wielding great power, but ask yourself, does the God race truly consider you one of their own?"

Venerable Xuanbing remained silent.

"The other lineages of the Divine Race occupy the best spiritual veins, the best resources, and the best inheritances."

Jiang Xuelan glanced at Venerable Saint Light, then looked back at Venerable Profound Ice. "What does the Ice God lineage have? The Divine Abyss Pavilion? You conquered the territory of the Divine Abyss Pavilion yourself, it wasn't given to you by the Divine Race. Whether it's the Heavenly Pole Palace or the Heavenly Saint Palace, which of them has ever given you a second glance? If it weren't for the attack on Ten Thousand Demon Ridge, none of them would have paid you any attention." Her

voice wasn't loud, but every word pierced Venerable Profound Ice's heart like an ice spike.

Venerable Profound Ice's expression grew increasingly grim, his fingers lightly stroking his cane, his ice-blue robe fluttering without wind.

Venerable Saint Light sensed something was wrong.

He stepped forward, his voice still gentle, but with a clear warning in his tone: "Sect Master, don't be swayed by a little girl's words. It's not even certain if she's from the Ice God lineage. Even if she is, she's betrayed the Gods by

siding with the Demon Clan, and deserves to die. You don't need to sacrifice yourself for a traitor..."

"Shut up." Venerable Xuanbing's voice was soft, yet it frosted the air within dozens of feet.

Venerable Shengguang's smile froze. He narrowed his eyes at Venerable Xuanbing, saying nothing more.

Silence lasted for dozens of breaths.

The wind in front of the mountain gate stopped. The pervasive stench of blood seemed to freeze at that moment.

The cultivators of Wan Yao Ridge gripped their weapons tightly, unsure of what would happen next.

Gui Yuanzi's palms were sweaty, Qing Yunzi's flying sword hovered behind him, spinning silently, and the array masters of Wan Fa Men had already pressed their fingers onto the final restrictive runes.

Venerable Xuanbing looked at Jiang Xuelan, countless emotions flashing in his eyes: nostalgia, anger, sorrow, resentment, and a barely perceptible wavering.

He had lived for tens of thousands of years. He was powerless when the Ice God lineage was destroyed, he endured the ostracism of the gods, and after conquering the Divine Abyss Pavilion, he desperately climbed the ranks, wanting to prove that the Ice God lineage was no less powerful than any other branch.

And this young girl, this descendant of the Ice God lineage who had crawled up from the lower realm, spoke words that struck him where it hurt most.

"Senior,"

Jiang Xuelan spoke again, her voice much gentler, "the Ice God lineage is almost extinct. If you attack the Myriad Demon Ridge today, regardless of victory or defeat, the Divine Abyss Pavilion will be severely weakened. Our Ice God lineage can no longer bear such damage."

She paused, her gaze fixed on Venerable Xuanbing, "Senior, please do not attack the Myriad Demon Ridge. This is my request to you as the seventy-second generation successor of the Ice God lineage."

Silence fell over the plaza once more.

Venerable Holy Light's expression gradually darkened.

He turned to look at Venerable Xuanbing, the gentleness in his eyes completely gone.

Venerable Xuanbing remained silent.

He was still hesitant. Taking over the Myriad Demon Ridge this time would bring abundant resources, strengthen the Divine Abyss Pavilion, and make the Ice God lineage even more prosperous.

But...

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"Xuanbing brat, are you hesitating about your mother?"

Suddenly, an aged voice drifted in from nowhere.

Hearing this voice, Venerable Xuanbing was startled, his eyes filled with surprise.

"Ancestor? Ancestor, that's your voice! Where are you?"

Venerable Xuanbing exclaimed excitedly.

Jiang Xuelan immediately recognized it as the voice of Bei Mingyuan, the ancestor of the Ice God lineage within David's sea of consciousness.

"Senior, our Ice God lineage's ancestor is now only a wisp of remnant soul, surviving in David's sea of consciousness, waiting for an opportunity to reshape his physical body,"

Jiang Xuelan said to Venerable Xuanbing.

"What?" Venerable Xuanbing stared intently at David, his face filled with disbelief. "How is this possible? How could the ancestor's remnant soul be in David's sea of consciousness?"

"We accidentally discovered a passage to the ancient battlefield in the Fourteenth Heaven, so we entered the ancient battlefield and encountered the ancestor's remnant soul." "

David's sea of consciousness is vast, and he also possesses the Great Luo Golden Scripture, which is why the ancestor's remnant soul can survive within it,"

Jiang Xuelan explained.

She didn't dare say that Bei Mingyuan had tried to possess David, but his remnant soul had been suppressed by the Great Luo Golden Scripture as soon as it entered David's sea of consciousness, and was now obediently staying there.

"I don't believe it..." Venerable Xuanbing shook her head, completely disbelieving.

This was simply too outrageous. How could the ancestor of the Ice God lineage, who had disappeared for countless millennia, suddenly appear in the sea of consciousness of a mere True Immortal?

"You bas***, you can't even recognize my voice? You still dare not believe me?"

This time, Bei Mingyuan's voice truly came from within David's body.

The voice wasn't loud, even somewhat weak, yet it carried a bone-deep age and majesty, like a wisp of cold air seeping from the deepest part of a ten-thousand-year-old ice layer.

The voice echoed above the plaza, and everyone who heard it involuntarily shivered.

It wasn't because the temperature had actually dropped, but because of the ancient and extreme aura contained within the voice, causing their souls to tremble instinctively.

Venerable Xuanbing froze on the chariot.

His fingers froze in mid-air, the fingertips still holding the position they had just hesitated in.

The ice-blue robes no longer fluttered, and the frost covering the chariot silently thickened.

He had lived for tens of thousands of years, crawling out of the sea of blood from the destruction of the Ice God lineage, building the foundation of the Divine Abyss Pavilion amidst the ostracism and cold stares of the gods. He thought he would never lose his composure again.

But at this moment, his eyes trembled slightly.

That voice.

That voice he thought he would never hear again.

"Ancestor... Ancestor?"

His voice was hoarse, so hoarse it was almost distorted, as if he hadn't used that title for tens of thousands of years. "Is it really you? You're still alive? You... you weren't in the ancient war..."

"Nonsense."

Bei Mingyuan's voice came from within David, carrying a hint of impatience, a hint of weakness, and a hint of the satisfaction of finally being able to speak again after being questioned by a junior for tens of thousands of years. "If I were dead, would I still be talking to you here? Do you think you're hearing a ghost?"

The Xuanbing Venerable's hand trembled.

The ice-blue robe fluttered without wind, and the frost on the hem rustled softly. He opened his mouth, wanting to say something, but before he could speak, Bei Mingyuan's curses came again.

"Xuanbing brat, you bas***!"

The old voice suddenly rose a few decibels, weak yet full of vigor, "How did I teach you back then? The Ice God lineage would rather break than bend, would rather die than submit! And you, you've come to attack my benefactor with those two bas***s from the Heavenly Extreme Palace and the Heavenly Saint Palace? Have you grown wings? Or have you been kicked in the head by a donkey?"

Xuanbing Venerable's lips trembled twice, "Ancestor... I... I don't know..."

"Don't know?"

Bei Mingyuan sneered, his sneer carrying the vicissitudes of tens of thousands of years, "Of course you don't know. If you knew that my remnant soul was in this brat's sea of consciousness, being nourished by his Great Luo Golden Scripture, would you still dare to come? I ask you, how many people are left in the Ice God lineage? How many are left?"

Xuanbing Venerable was silent for a moment, "I... I don't know."

Xuanbing Venerable truly didn't know; he didn't know if there were still any members of the Ice God lineage in the Seventeenth Heaven Upper Realm.

However, it's highly unlikely that they're gone. After all, the higher you go, the closer you are to the main altar of the gods. Back then, the Ice God lineage fled the main altar, all heading down to the lower realms, even lowering their cultivation levels. It's unlikely that anyone would risk staying in the upper realms.

He also took a great risk when he fled to the seventeenth heaven and founded the Divine Abyss Pavilion.

"Don't know?" Bei Mingyuan's voice suddenly deepened, as heavy as a boulder falling into an icy sea. "Of the seven lineages of the gods, only our Ice God lineage has fallen to such a state.

Good, very good. Xuanbing brat, you brought these Ice God lineage disciples to the Ten Thousand Demon Ridge to seek death? If this battle continues, are you planning to completely wipe out the Ice God lineage?"

Venerable Xuanbing stood in the cold wind, unable to utter a single word.

His icy blue robe wrapped around his thin figure, and tens of thousands of years of arrogance and forbearance turned into silence at this moment.

"What are you still standing there for?" Bei Mingyuan's voice suddenly rose again, "Kneel down before me!"

He stepped down from the Xuanbing chariot and walked step by step to David's side.

His steps were slow, each one leaving a frosty footprint on the stone slab. His

ice-blue robe trailed on the ground, the hem already a mess of blood and ice crystals.

He stopped, looking at David, at this young man whose cultivation was only at the seventh rank of True Immortal Realm yet who had just repelled the Heavenly Extreme Venerable.

Then he bent his knees and knelt down. His

knees struck the cracked stone slab with a dull thud.

He lowered his head, his forehead touching the ground, his white hair scattered among the blood, mud, and ice crystals. His

ice-blue robe spread out on the ground, like a submissive subject kneeling before a king.

A Pavilion Master of the Divine Abyss Pavilion who had lived for tens of thousands of years, an elder of the Ice God lineage, a powerful figure whose stomp could make countless forces tremble in the Seventeenth Heaven, knelt before David.

The Divine Abyss Pavilion disciples on the Xuanbing War Chariot looked at each other, unsure how to react.

They had never seen their Pavilion Master kneel before anyone, not even the Heavenly Extreme Venerable and the Holy Light Venerable, to whom the Pavilion Master had only slightly nodded.

At this moment, the Pavilion Master knelt before a young man at the seventh rank of the True Immortal Realm.

"Ancestor above," Venerable Xuanbing's voice trembled, "Junior Xuanbing pays respects to Ancestor."

David stood motionless.

He knew Venerable Xuanbing wasn't kneeling before him, but before the Northern Abyss within his sea of consciousness.

But he also sensed something; the Northern Abyss within his sea of consciousness was very quiet.

That quiet wasn't calmness, but a profound stillness—a stillness that, after being suppressed by countless years of hardship and suffering, had suddenly found solace in the junior's kowtow.

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Get up," David said calmly. "You're kneeling before your ancestor, not me. Get up and speak."

Venerable Xuanbing didn't rise immediately.

He knelt for three breaths, then slowly stood up.

His eyes were slightly red, not from crying, but from the instinctive physiological reaction of an old man who had lived for tens of thousands of years in extreme excitement.

He looked into David's eyes; those purple eyes held no pride, no condescension, only calmness.

That calmness made him suddenly understand why his ancestor had chosen to reside in this young man's sea of consciousness.

It wasn't a coincidence, not luck, but because this young man was inherently different.

"David."

Venerable Xuanbing's voice returned to normal, now with a touch of solemnity. "This Pavilion Master—no, I—I owe you a favor. You protected the remnant soul of my Ice God lineage's ancestor until now. The Ice God lineage will remember this favor."

"Xuanbing."

Venerable Shengguang's voice rang out in the cold wind. His voice was no longer gentle, but carried a chilling intent born of repeated mockery and a loss of patience. "Have you knelt enough?"

Venerable Xuanbing turned to face Venerable Shengguang.

Their gazes clashed in the air, the icy blue light contrasting sharply with the golden holy light.

On the plaza hundreds of feet wide, the two colors of pressure clashed, producing a low hum.

"Holy Light."

Venerable Xuanbing's voice was cold. "You saw it. The remnant soul of the Ice God lineage's ancestor is in David's sea of consciousness. He protected my ancestor's remnant soul; he is Venerable Xuanbing's benefactor. Consider the weight of the Divine Abyss Pavilion."

The smile had completely vanished from Venerable Shengguang's face.

His white robes billowed in the holy light, and his angular face, which had always worn a gentle, fake smile, was now as cold as stone.

Ninety-nine Light Stones simultaneously lit up on the altar behind him, the holy light cascading down and illuminating the plaza before the mountain gate.

"Palace Master Xuanbing," he said, his voice low, each word seemingly squeezed out between clenched teeth, "are you betraying the Divine Race?"

"Betraying the Divine Race?" Venerable Xuanbing laughed, a hoarse and sarcastic laugh. "Holy Light, tell me, when has the Divine Race ever considered the Ice God lineage one of their own?"

He stepped forward, his ice-blue robes remaining perfectly still in the holy light.

"Of the seven lineages of the Divine Race, how much exclusion, how many cold looks, how much injustice has the Ice God lineage suffered over tens of thousands of years? You dare to talk to me about betrayal today? Let me tell you, it wasn't me who betrayed the Divine Race, it was the Divine Race that betrayed the Ice God lineage first."

The Holy Light Venerable's eye twitched. "Xuanbing, are you insane? Are you sure you want to turn against the entire Divine Race camp for a mere True Immortal Realm brat, a remnant of the Ice God lineage who crawled out of the lower realm? Have you thought about the fate of your five hundred disciples?"

"I have."

Venerable Xuanbing's voice was as calm as a stagnant pool. "I've thought it through very clearly. Today, if you attack David, you are attacking me

, Xuanbing. If you attack the Myriad Demon Ridge, you are attacking the Divine Abyss Pavilion. You have eight hundred disciples of the Heavenly Saint Palace behind you, I have five hundred disciples of the Divine Abyss Pavilion behind me, and the Myriad Demon Ridge has more than a thousand capable warriors. The two sides are fighting against you. You weigh your chances of winning."

The atmosphere in the square suddenly froze.

The Holy Light Venerable's face twitched.

He was quickly calculating. The eight hundred disciples of the Heavenly Saint Palace and the five hundred disciples of the Divine Abyss Pavilion were originally his reliance.

If Xuan Bing defected, that would be eight hundred against one thousand five hundred, not even counting David, the prodigy who single-handedly repelled the Heavenly Extreme Venerable.

If David and Xuan Bing joined forces, plus the Golden Immortal of Qingqiu in charge, his chances of winning were indeed less than ten percent.

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Xuanbing.”

The Holy Light Venerable’s voice was icy cold. “I have remembered what happened today. The Divine Race has also remembered it. You have severed your ties with the Divine Race; you will have no place in the Seventeenth Heaven from now on.”

“Whether you have a place or not is not up to you alone.”

The Xuanbing Venerable’s voice was full of mockery and disdain. “Get out. Before I change my mind, take your people and get out of the Ten Thousand Demon Ridge territory immediately.”

The Holy Light Venerable’s fist clenched.

The knuckles under his white robe made a slight grinding sound.

He stared at the Xuanbing Venerable, then at David, and finally glanced at Qingqiu, who stood on the mountain gate wall in white robes, hands behind his back.

His gaze lingered on each person for a moment, as if etching their faces into the depths of his memory, not out of grudge, but to remember the scene that had humiliated him today.

Then he turned sharply, his white robe flicking, his voice as cold as poison: "All members of the Heavenly Saint Palace, retreat!"

The floating divine platform slowly turned around, and the light from the ninety-nine Bright Stones dimmed slightly.

Eight hundred disciples of the Heavenly Saint Palace turned around in perfect unison, their ranks perfectly aligned. Even in retreat, this army maintained a chilling discipline.

However, five fine cracks appeared on the edge of the altar beneath the feet of the Holy Light Venerable, his fingers clenched so tightly they seemed to have formed.

The disciples at the very back of the formation couldn't help but glance back at the gates of the Myriad Demon Ridge. Their gaze wasn't filled with anger, but rather with confusion and a hint of resentment.

No one understood why, when victory seemed assured, the Pavilion Master had suddenly led the Ice God lineage to defect, and the Palace Master had simply retreated.

The last disciple of the Heavenly Saint Palace disappeared into the edge of the wasteland, the last rays of holy light swallowed once more by the misty forest.

The suffocating oppressive atmosphere that had enveloped the gates of the Myriad Demon Ridge finally dissipated.

A gentle breeze swept across the plaza, diluting the pungent smell of blood.

The gates slowly opened, and Qingqiu descended from the city wall.

Her white robes were stained with dust and sweat. Controlling nine layers of restrictions to fight against an army of four thousand five hundred was exhausting after a whole day; even a third-grade Golden Immortal was somewhat weary.

Yet her steps remained light, a faint smile in her fox-like eyes.

"Pavilion Master Xuanbing," she said, bowing slightly as she approached Venerable Xuanbing. "Please."

Venerable Xuanbing glanced at her, then at David, before finally fixing his gaze on Jiang Xuelan. "Little girl, lead the way."

Jiang Xuelan smiled slightly and turned to enter the mountain gate.

Half an hour later, in a side hall of the Demon Emperor's Palace in Wan Yao Ridge, everyone sat around a stone table.

Qingqiu sat in the main seat, with David and Jiang Xuelan on his left, and Guiyuanzi, Qingyunzi, and the Grand Elder of the Wanfa Sect on his right.

Venerable Xuanbing sat alone in the guest seat.

Several of them still had bloodstains on their armor, and their faces showed signs of fatigue, but none complained of being tired.

Venerable Xuanbing picked up the spiritual tea on the table but did not drink it. The teacup steamed in his palm, the icy blue spiritual energy creating a strange contrast with the hot tea.

He looked at Jiang Xuelan, then at David.

"This Pavilion Master has something else to tell you."

His voice returned to its usual calm and coldness, "Don't think everything is fine just because you repelled the Heavenly Extreme Palace and forced the

Heavenly Saint Palace to retreat today." Qingqiu's brow twitched slightly.
"What do you mean?" "

Although Venerable Tianji was defeated, and the Tianji Palace was crippled, don't forget that the Tianji Palace possesses something no other power has." Venerable Xuanbing put down his teacup and said, word by word, "A communication channel to the Eighteenth Heaven."

A moment of silence fell over the side hall.

The wind whistled through the cracks in the windowpanes, causing the candlelight to flicker.

"The Eighteenth Heaven?" Guiyuanzi's expression changed. "The Tianji Palace can contact the Eighteenth Heaven?"

"Yes."

Venerable Xuanbing's voice was deep. "The Tianji Palace is a branch of the Fire God lineage in the Seventeenth Heaven. The Fire God lineage still has true powerhouses in the Eighteenth Heaven. Given Venerable Tianji's crushing defeat, he won't remain silent.

He will disregard everything to contact the Eighteenth Heaven and request the divine experts to descend. And once the powerhouses of the Eighteenth Heaven arrive..."

He didn't finish, but everyone understood.

The powerhouses of the Eighteenth Heaven were beings that cultivators of the Seventeenth Heaven could only look up to.

The Heavenly Palace headquarters possesses a sacred spiritual vein and thousands of disciples under its command. Combined with the divine forces of the Eighteenth Heaven, if they are allowed to recover, they will undoubtedly launch a more ferocious counterattack.

After a long silence, David spoke, his voice still calm, "Then don't let them recover."

"You mean..." Venerable Xuanbing looked at David, a sharp glint in his icy blue eyes.

"Take advantage of the Heavenly Palace's weakened state and destroy it in one fell swoop."

David said this with the nonchalant tone of someone discussing what to eat, "Before the reinforcements from the Eighteenth Heaven descend, uproot the Heavenly Palace's foundation in the Seventeenth Heaven. Without a foothold, even if reinforcements arrive, they won't be able to cause any significant trouble."

Qingyunzi gasped, "Mr. Chen, although the Heavenly Palace is crippled, it still has eight hundred remaining soldiers. Although Venerable Tianji's cultivation has declined, even a starved camel is bigger than a horse. If we attack the Heavenly Palace now, isn't that..."

"That's right, even a starved camel is bigger than a horse."

David interrupted him, his purple eyes sweeping over everyone present. "But now we're not a single horse anymore. The Ten Thousand Demon Ridge is still standing, and the Divine Abyss Pavilion has arrived. The three forces combined are enough to crush a crippled Heavenly Palace. If we wait for reinforcements from the Eighteenth Heaven to arrive before making a move, it will be too late."

Venerable Xuanbing was silent for a moment, then slowly nodded. "David is right. Now that I've taken this side, I won't hesitate any longer. The Divine Abyss Pavilion's spies have been watching the Heavenly Palace for thousands of years. I have a general idea of where the passage to the Eighteenth Heaven is hidden.

From contacting the envoy to sending him down to the mortal realm, and then integrating the remnants of the Heavenly Palace, it will take at least a month. Within a month, we must destroy the Heavenly Palace.”

“Then what are we waiting for?” David stood up. “The wounded should stay and recuperate. The rest of you, go into seclusion immediately. One hundred days inside the Demon Suppression Tower equals one day outside. With the current resources, everyone’s combat strength should be restored within three days.”

David summoned the Demon Suppression Tower; only inside could they recover in the shortest time.

When David entered the Demon Suppression Tower, it was already filled with resources brought back from the Divine Alliance’s treasury.

Piles of crystals emitted multicolored light, rows of pills in jade bottles exuded a rich medicinal fragrance, and walls of cultivation manual jade slips emanated an ancient aura of law.

David sat cross-legged inside the tower.

In his battle with the Heavenly Venerable, he had almost directly confronted a peak third-grade Golden Immortal who had burned his essence blood.

Although the power of chaos restrained the holy light, the difference in their cultivation levels was undeniable, and every clash of swords consumed his vital essence.

His spiritual power had been depleted by seventy percent, and traces of the Heavenly Venerable’s holy light remained in his meridians.

Upon internal inspection, fine cracks were found on the inner walls of several major meridians, hidden injuries left by the clash between holy light and chaotic power within the body.

If left to heal slowly in the outside world, it would take at least several months. He picked up a crystal and held it in his palm.

He activated the Concentration Technique, and the spiritual energy within the crystal was absorbed and transformed by the power of chaos, filling his parched meridians.

The cracks in his meridians slowly healed under the nourishment of the spiritual energy, and the marks of the holy light's scorching were gradually burned away by the chaotic fire.

Then came the second, the third, crystal after crystal, which was drained dry, turning into grayish-white powder that slipped from his fingertips.

Pills were refined one after another, their medicinal power converging into torrents within his meridians, filling every tiny wound left by the previous battle.

Above his head, the runes of the Demon-Suppressing Tower slowly swirled.

The laws of time enveloped him, isolating him from the outside world's clamor, the smoke of the battlefield, and the pervasive stench of blood.

Only the sound of chaotic power surging within his meridians could be heard, like a colossal dragon born from primordial chaos gradually awakening from its long slumber.

Qingqiu, Guiyuanzi, Qingyunzi, and Xuanbing Venerable began to integrate their three forces, reorganize their units, and discuss the route to attack the Heavenly Pole Palace.

The teleportation array's light shone day and night over the Ten Thousand Demon Ridge, and intelligence from scouts poured back like snowflakes.

Everyone knew this battle was far from over.

At the same moment, in the Heavenly Pole Palace

, deep within an ancient stone hall

, the Heavenly Pole Venerable sat on a cold stone throne. His golden robe was now obscured by blood and mud.

Half his hair had turned white, and his face bore more than ten deep wrinkles.

The aftereffects of burning his essence blood were rapidly eroding his body; his cultivation had plummeted from the peak of the third rank of Golden Immortal to the first rank, and was slowly declining every day.

Before him, a massive bronze door slowly opened.

Behind the door was a deep void passage, its edges engraved with ancient war runes.

These runes were even older than the Heavenly Pole Palace itself, radiating the fluctuations of Golden Immortal-level laws.

For tens of thousands of years, this door had only been opened three times, and each opening signified the impending annihilation of the Heavenly Palace.

"Palace Master," a wounded elder knelt before the stone throne, his voice trembling, "Are you sure... you want to contact the Upper Realm?"

"Is there any other choice but to contact the Upper Realm?"

The Heavenly Venerable's voice was hoarse and weak. "David, Qingqiu, Xuanbing, they must all die. The Ten Thousand Demon Ridge must be razed to the ground. The supreme treasure must be obtained. I will pay any price, no matter who I summon, no matter how the Seventeenth Heaven is shattered..."

He coughed violently several times, golden blood spilling from the corner of his mouth, dripping onto his chest armor, staining the ancient runes a dark gold.

He took a deep breath, channeling his last strength into the bronze door.

The void passage behind the door began to slowly rotate, spatial power surging and blooming within it. An ancient will emanated from the direction of the Eighteenth Heaven, a will cold and majestic, like a giant rock suspended in the heavens.

"What business does the lower realm have to disturb the upper realm?"

The Celestial Venerable knelt before the door, his forehead pressed against the cold bronze.

"The Palace Master of the Celestial Palace of the Seventeenth Heaven requests that the upper realm send down an envoy. The Divine Abyss Pavilion and the Heavenly Saint Palace have rebelled, the Daoist lineage has reappeared in the world, and the foundation of the Seventeenth Heaven's divine race is in imminent danger."