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Kai continued, “The Demonic Dragon lineage won’t let you go just because you’re hiding. They are sworn enemies of the orthodox dragon race, their feud spanning generations. Once they find your trail, they will definitely strike and exterminate you all.”

“The Temple won’t forget you just because you’re not causing trouble. They’ve always wanted to control the entire Fourteen Heavens and eliminate all potential threats.

And your Heavenly Dragon Clan is one of the biggest threats in their eyes. Once they find your trail, they will definitely send troops to besiege you. At that time, even if you hide in Heavenly Dragon Valley, you won’t escape death.”

He stood up, hands behind his back, gazing at the mountains outside the hall: “The longer you hide, the more arrogant and unscrupulous they become. Rather than hiding here, eking out a miserable existence, living in constant fear, you should stand up and live with dignity.”

“Use the power of your Heavenly Dragon Clan to defend your dignity and protect your people. Let the Fourteen Heavens remember the majesty of the Dragon Clan once more. Let those who dare to bully the Dragon Clan pay a terrible price!”

Long Zhan trembled, his eyes flashing with complex emotions—excitement, worry, hesitation, and a deep-seated longing. He

was excited because Kai’s words resonated with him.

For so many years, he had longed to lead the Heavenly Dragon lineage out of Heavenly Dragon Valley and live openly and proudly in the world.

He was worried because the Dragon Clan's strength was now greatly diminished; if they rashly intervened, they might be hunted down by the Demon Dragons and the Temple, bringing annihilation to the Heavenly Dragon lineage.

He hesitated because he didn't know if Kai could truly lead them out of the crisis and rise again.

And that longing was a longing for freedom, a longing for dignity, a longing for the Dragon Clan's renewed glory.

"Your Majesty, do you mean... that we, the Heavenly Dragon lineage, should leave Heavenly Dragon Valley, no longer hide, and appear in public?"

Long Zhan asked, his voice trembling, his eyes filled with anticipation and uncertainty.

Kai turned around, looked at him, and said, word by word, "That's right. Take your people to Cloud Immortal City. From now on, you don't need to hide anymore, you don't need to fear any demonic dragons, you don't need to fear any temples."

"I, Kai, will protect you. With me here, no one will dare to lay a finger on you."

Long Zhan was stunned.

He looked at Kai, at this ridiculously young Dragon Emperor, and an indescribable emotion welled up in his heart.

The Heavenly Dragon lineage had always hidden in the shadows, cautiously walking on thin ice.

No one dared to stand up to protect them, no one dared to tell them that they no longer needed to hide.

But now, this young Dragon Emperor told them with a firm tone. They

no longer needed to hide

. He would protect them.

He would safeguard them.

At this moment, all their worries and hesitations vanished in Kai's resolute gaze.

He knew that this was the Heavenly Dragon lineage's only chance, the only chance to escape their hidden life and rise again.

If they missed this opportunity, the Heavenly Dragon lineage would probably be forever confined to Heavenly Dragon Valley, barely surviving, and ultimately facing extinction.

Long Zhan took a deep breath, suppressing the turmoil in his heart. He bent his knees and bowed again, his tone respectful yet firm, his voice trembling slightly:

"Your Majesty, your subordinate... is willing to follow Your Majesty, even unto death! From this day forward, the Tianlong lineage will follow Your Majesty's lead without hesitation! If Your Majesty commands us to go east, we will never go west! If Your Majesty commands us to kill someone, we will show no mercy!"

Several dragon elders behind him also stepped forward and bowed: "We are willing to follow Your Majesty, even unto death!"

Kai reached out and helped Long Zhan up, saying calmly: "No need for such formalities. Get up. Now go and gather the clansmen. We will depart for Yunxian City in an hour." "Your subordinate obeys!"

Long Zhan respectfully replied, turning and striding away, his face filled with excitement and determination.

He needed to gather his people as soon as possible and tell them this good news; they could finally leave Tianlong Valley and live openly and proudly between heaven and earth.

Kai stood in the Dragon Palace, watching Long Zhan's departing figure, a slight smile playing on his lips.

The Dragon Clan was the most powerful race in ancient times.

Now, with the help of the Tianlong lineage, his strength would greatly increase.

He would have a greater chance of fighting against the Temple, seeking revenge, and protecting those he cared about.

He knew this was just the beginning.

More challenges awaited him.

The Temple wouldn't let it go easily, the Demon Dragon lineage would come knocking, and Kai didn't know the attitudes of the Divine Hall and the Divine Palace towards him.

But he wouldn't be afraid, nor would he back down.

He would lead the Dragon Clan, leading his subordinates, step by step, clearing away all obstacles.

Ultimately, he would stand at the peak of the Fourteenth Heaven and become a true powerhouse.

An hour later.

A deafening dragon roar echoed through the skies above Tianlong Valley, reverberating across the entire Cangmang Mountain Range.

Dozens of colossal dragons soared into the air, their massive bodies gleaming in the sunlight, their golden scales reflecting a dazzling light like dozens of golden stars, illuminating the entire sky.

The dragons emanated a powerful dragon's might, their overwhelming presence causing the surrounding mountains to tremble slightly.

Kai stood atop the foremost dragon, hands clasped behind his back, his robes fluttering, his long hair moving in the wind.

His handsome face and calm expression exuded a faint dragon emperor's majesty, as if he controlled all things in heaven and earth.

Behind him, powerful dragons such as Long Zhan and Long Hao stood atop their respective dragons, following closely behind.

Further back were countless dragon clan members.

Most of them had transformed into human form, clad in golden robes, flying through the air, weapons in hand, their expressions resolute, their eyes filled with excitement and pride.

This procession was vast and imposing, its aura soaring to the heavens. Golden light illuminated the entire sky, and the roar of dragons shook the heavens and earth.

They sped towards Cloud Immortal City.

No more hiding.

No more cowering.

They would walk out of Heavenly Dragon Valley with their heads held high, to remind the Fourteen Heavens of the dragon race's majesty once more, and to let everyone know:

The dragon race has returned! ...

Cloud Immortal City.

The city's inhabitants were busy with their own affairs. Some were setting up stalls on the streets, some were managing their businesses in shops, and some were walking on the streets; the entire city was bustling with activity.

But just then, the sky suddenly darkened.

The sunlight was blocked, and a powerful pressure, like a towering mountain, weighed heavily on the entire city.

The people in the city instantly felt short of breath, and an inexplicable fear welled up in their hearts.

They all looked up at the sky.

Instantly, everyone's eyes widened, their faces filled with terror and shock, their mouths agape, unable to utter a single word for a long time.

In the sky, dozens of giant dragons circled and danced, their massive bodies reflecting a dazzling light through the gaps in the clouds, so bright that it was blinding.

The dragons continuously emitted deafening roars, their might so vast and overwhelming that the entire city trembled slightly, and the houses on the ground shook gently.

"Dragons...Dragons?! Dragons!"

someone screamed, their legs buckling as they collapsed to their knees, trembling uncontrollably, their eyes filled with terror.

Dragons were the most powerful race in ancient times.

Legend had it that dragons possessed immense power, capable of overturning rivers and seas, summoning wind and rain; ordinary cultivators were utterly powerless against them. The sheer

terror they felt at the sight of so many dragons appearing above Cloud Immortal City was unimaginable.

Many more trembled with fear, fleeing into their homes, locking their doors, afraid to venture out for fear of being harmed by the dragons.

They didn't know why these dragons had appeared above Cloud Immortal City, whether they were there to protect it or destroy it.

Those who had been eager to seize control of Cloud Immortal City were utterly dumbfounded.

They stood rooted to the spot, speechless, their faces filled with terror and disbelief.

They never imagined that so many dragons would appear above Cloud Immortal City.

What was going on?

Just as everyone was filled with terror and at a loss...

a golden figure descended from the sky, landing steadily on the city wall of Yunxian City like a shooting star.

The figure, clad in a flowing white robe, possessed a handsome face and a calm expression.

It was Kai.

Kai stood with his hands behind his back, his gaze sweeping across the entire city.

His voice, though not loud, carried an innate authority that clearly reached everyone's ears, as if whispering in their ear, or proclaiming something:

“From this day forward, Yunxian City is under the control of the Heavenly Dragon Clan.”

“If anyone disagrees, they may step forward.”

As his words fell, the city fell into a deathly silence.

Not a single person dared to utter a sound.

Not a single person dared to move. Everyone trembled with fear, heads bowed, afraid to look up at Kai atop the city wall, afraid to look at the giant dragon in the sky.

They knew Kai’s words were no joke. Anyone who dared to disobey would be slaughtered by the dragon and Kai, dying without a burial place.

Those who had originally wanted to seize control of Yunxian City were now silent as cicadas in winter, wishing they could bury themselves.

Their hearts were filled with fear and regret, regretting their arrogance, their desire to seize control of Yunxian City, and their offense against Kai.

Now, the dragons had arrived, Kai had arrived.

Their strength was not even enough to fill the dragons’ teeth.

If Kai wanted to kill them, it would be as easy as turning his hand.

Chen Wanqing stood on the city wall, watching this scene, her heart filled with unparalleled shock.

She knew Kai was strong.

But she never expected that Kai could mobilize the entire dragon race, to have dozens of dragons serve him.

Looking at the dragon circling in the sky, looking at the trembling people in the city and those powerful figures, she was filled with pride and admiration.

She knew that from this moment on, Yunxian City could finally return to peace.

The old guard of the Chen family could finally stop being oppressed.

And she could finally protect the Chen family's foundation.

Ming Li leaned closer to Chen Wanqing, chuckling smugly, "Miss Chen, how about it? Isn't Mr. Chen amazing?

I told you, Mr. Chen is omnipotent. As long as Mr. Chen takes action, there's nothing he can't do.

Now that the Heavenly Dragon Clan is here, those clowns won't dare to be arrogant anymore, and they won't dare to bully your Chen family anymore."

Chen Wanqing snapped out of her reverie, nodded vigorously, her eyes filled with gratitude and admiration, and said softly, "Amazing, so amazing. Thank you, Ming Li, and thank you Kai too. If it weren't for you, I really don't know what..." "Do it."

Kai turned to Chen Wanqing, his tone calm: "Yunxian City is in your hands. With the Dragon Clan here, no one dares to touch you, no one dares to bully the old subordinates of the Chen family, and no one dares to stir up trouble in the city.

You must manage Yunxian City well, protect this city, and wait

for my return." Chen Wanqing looked at Kai, her eyes slightly red, and nodded firmly, her tone resolute: "Kai, don't worry, I will definitely protect Yunxian City, manage the affairs of the city well, and wait for your return. You must take care of yourself and come back safely."

Kai nodded, saying nothing more. He turned to look at Long Zhan.

Long Zhan quickly stepped forward and bowed respectfully, “Your Majesty, what are your orders?”

“Long Zhan, while I’m away, Yunxian City is in your hands,”

Kai said solemnly. “If anyone dares to invade, show no mercy, kill them outright, and eliminate any future trouble. You must protect Yunxian City and Miss Chen.”

“Your subordinate obeys!”

Long Zhan bowed firmly, his voice resolute, “Your Majesty, rest assured, your subordinate will swear to protect Yunxian City to the death, and will never betray Your Majesty’s trust and expectations.

As long as I am here, as long as the Dragon Clan is here, no one will dare to invade Yunxian City, no one will dare to harm Miss Chen and the people of the city!”

Kai grunted in acknowledgment.

He turned around, his gaze fixed on the distance, towards the direction of the Holy Domain of Light. On the city walls of Yunxian City, Kai stood with his hands behind his back, his gaze sweeping over the trembling civilians and the silent members of various factions, finally settling on the dozens of giant dragons circling in the sky.

The dragons radiated immense power and dazzling golden light.

With the Heavenly Dragon Clan in charge, the city was safe.

Kai’s gaze fell on Chen Wanqing.

Chen Wanqing stood to the side, her eyes slightly red, her lips gently pursed, as if she wanted to say something but didn’t know how to begin.

Kai looked at her, his tone softening: “The teleportation array should be fine now.”

Chen Wanqing was slightly taken aback, then realized.

Indeed.

Previously, those factions, relying on their powerful backers, had sealed off the teleportation array, preventing Kai from using it.

But now, with dozens of giant dragons circling above Yunxian City, their dragon might causing the entire city to tremble, those factions were probably too frightened to even leave their homes, let alone dare to obstruct him.

“I’ll go contact the guardian of the teleportation array right away,” Chen Wanqing said hurriedly.

Kai waved his hand: “No need. I’ll go myself.”

He paused, then looked at Ming Li and Liu Qianqian: “You two, come with me.”

Ming Li immediately nodded, his face showing excitement: “Alright! Mr. Chen, shall we go to the Holy Domain of Light? I’ve heard that it’s a place where righteous cultivators gather, full of powerful figures. It’ll be a good opportunity to see for ourselves!”

Liu Qianqian also nodded slightly, her eyes filled with anticipation.

Chen Wanqing bit her lip, finally unable to hold back her words: “Kai, I… I also want to go with you.”

Kai looked at her.

Chen Wanqing lowered her head, her voice somewhat low: “If I stay here… I can’t be of much help. Cloud Immortal City is already quite safe

with the Dragon Clan guarding it. I want to go with you to the Holy Domain of Light, perhaps... perhaps I can help you."

Kai looked at her quietly, without speaking.

After a moment, he shook his head.

"No."

Chen Wanqing raised her head, a hint of disappointment in her eyes.

Kai's tone was calm, yet undeniable: "Yunxian City needs someone to oversee it. Although those forces are temporarily intimidated by the Dragon Clan, it's hard to guarantee they won't secretly cause trouble.

You are the eldest daughter of the Chen family, most familiar with Yunxian City, and most qualified to control it. Your presence here is more useful than going with me to the Holy Domain of Light."

He paused, his tone softening slightly: "Besides, I don't know the situation in the Holy Domain of Light yet. It's teeming with powerful figures and complex factions; it would be more convenient for me to go alone. Taking you along would require extra care."

Chen Wanqing opened her mouth, wanting to say something, but ultimately nodded silently.

She knew Kai was right.

Her cultivation was only at the eighth rank of the Upper Immortal Realm, considered a high-level expert in Yunxian City, but in a place like the Holy Domain of Light, it would likely be insufficient.

Going with her would only be a burden to Kai.

"Then...then you must be careful," Chen Wanqing whispered, her eyes reddening again.

Kai nodded, saying nothing more.

He turned around, about to leave with Ming Li and Liu Qianqian, when Long Zhan suddenly stepped forward.

“Your Majesty, I have something to say, but I don’t know if I should.”

Kai looked at him: “Speak.”

Long Zhan’s expression was solemn, and he said in a deep voice: “Your Majesty’s trip to the Holy Land of Light is to find the Divine Hall and revive the soul in the Soul Crystal. This matter is of utmost importance, and I shouldn’t say much. However… there is one thing Your Majesty must know.”

He paused, his gaze falling on Ming Li, his tone becoming even more solemn: “The Holy Land of Light is a gathering place for righteous cultivators of the Fourteenth Heaven.

There are many powerful forces and sects there, but they all have one thing in common: they are extremely hostile to demons, ghosts, and other non-human races.”

The excitement on Ming Li’s face instantly froze. Long Zhan continued, “Ming Li is of Ghost Clan origin; the ghostly aura on his body cannot be concealed. Once he enters the Holy Domain of Light, those righteous cultivators will inevitably notice. At that time, forget about finding the Divine Hall; he’ll likely be besieged and hunted down as soon as he enters.”

Ming Li’s expression changed.

He opened his mouth, wanting to say something, but found himself speechless.

Long Zhan was right.

He was a Ghost Clan member.

No matter how he hid it, the ghostly aura on his body could not be completely eliminated.

In other places of the Fourteenth Heaven, he might be able to get away with it, but in a place like the Holy Domain of Light, those self-proclaimed righteous cultivators harbored a deep-seated hatred for the Ghost Clan.

Liu Qianqian was also stunned. She looked at Ming Li, a hint of worry flashing in her eyes.

Kai listened quietly, his expression not changing much.

He looked at Ming Li.

Ming Li lowered his head, his fists clenched, his body trembling slightly.

A moment later, he raised his head and forced a smile: “Mr. Chen, Clan Chief Long is right. I… I can’t go to the Holy Domain of Light. Going there will only cause you trouble.”

His voice was calm, but beneath that calm lay a deep sense of loss and helplessness.

He had originally wanted to follow Kai wherever he went, whatever dangers he faced, he was willing to follow.

But now, because of his origins, he had become a burden.

Kai looked at him and suddenly spoke: “Who said you would cause me trouble?”

Ming Li was taken aback.

Kai’s tone was calm: “You are my person, not a burden.”

Ming Li’s eyes welled up, and he almost shed tears.

Kai didn't say anything more. He looked at Long Zhan: "You mean, neither Ming Li nor Liu Qianqian can go?"

Long Zhan nodded: "Ming Li is a Ghost Clan member, so he definitely can't. Although Miss Liu Qianqian is a Human, her cultivation is still shallow. The Holy Domain of Light is full of powerful figures, and there are quite a few True Immortal Realm experts. It would be equally dangerous for her to go."

Liu Qianqian lowered her head and didn't speak.

She knew Long Zhan was right.

Her cultivation level was indeed too low.

Kai was silent for a moment, then nodded.

"I understand."

He looked at Ming Li and Liu Qianqian, his tone calm but carrying an undeniable authority: "Both of you, stay."

Ming Li panicked: "Mr. Chen, I..."

Kai raised his hand, interrupting him: "No need to say more. You stay and help me watch over Yunxian City and Chen Wanqing. We need people here too."

Ming Li opened his mouth, but could only nod silently in the end.

Liu Qianqian also nodded gently, a hint of reluctance in her eyes, but she didn't say anything more.

Kai turned to Chen Wanqing and asked, "Where is the teleportation array?"

Chen Wanqing quickly replied, "The teleportation array for Yunxian City is located in the teleportation hall in the north of the city. That

teleportation array is a relic from ancient times and can connect to various areas of the Fourteenth Heaven. However, activating it requires a large amount of immortal liquid, and each use requires the guardian's permission."

She paused, then added, "But now, with your power, the guardian would never dare to stop you."

Kai nodded and said nothing more.

He glanced one last time at Ming Li and Liu Qianqian, then at Long Zhan and the giant dragons circling in the sky. "I'm leaving,"

he said calmly.

With that, he transformed into a golden streak of light and sped off towards the north of the city.

Chen Wanqing stood on the city wall, watching the streak of light disappear into the distance, tears finally streaming down her face.

Ming Li and Liu Qianqian stood beside her, also gazing in that direction, silent for a long time.

Long Zhan bowed deeply, his tone respectful and firm: "Respectfully bidding farewell to Your Majesty!"

Behind him, dozens of giant dragons simultaneously roared to the sky, their cries echoing through the heavens and earth, as if bidding farewell to the Dragon Emperor.

...

North of the city, the Teleportation Hall.

This was an ancient stone hall, entirely constructed of bluish-gray boulders. The hall's doors were engraved with dense runes, emanating a faint fluctuation of spiritual energy.

Around the stone hall stood several guardians, all at the Upper Immortal realm.

When Kai's figure landed before the Teleportation Hall, the guardians' expressions changed drastically, and they hurriedly bowed in respect.

"Greetings, Your Excellency!"

Although they didn't recognize Kai, they had clearly witnessed the earth-shattering dragon roar and the dozens of giant dragons circling above Yunxian City.

How could they possibly offend someone who could command the subservience of the dragon race?

Kai ignored them and walked straight into the teleportation hall.

Inside, a massive teleportation array stood silently.

The array was circular, about ten zhang in diameter, and the ground was engraved with dense ancient runes, emitting a faint golden light.

In the center of the array was a recess for holding immortal liquid.

An elderly man with white hair emerged from the hall. Upon seeing Kai, he bowed deeply and said, "This old man greets you, sir. Are you going to use the teleportation array?"

Kai nodded. "To the Holy Domain of Light."

The old man paused slightly, then nodded again. "The Holy Domain of Light is extremely far from here, requiring a large amount of immortal liquid. According to the rules, each person needs one hundred and twenty bottles of immortal liquid..." Before

he could finish speaking, Kai had already taken out a storage bag from his storage ring and casually tossed it to him.

The old man caught the storage bag, probed it with his divine sense, and his expression changed slightly.

Inside were four hundred bottles of immortal liquid neatly arranged.

“Sir, this… is too much,” the old man hurriedly said.

Kai waved his hand. “Consider the extra a reward.”

The old man was overjoyed, thanked him repeatedly, and quickly turned to activate the teleportation array.

A moment later, the runes on the teleportation array lit up one by one, the golden light growing brighter and brighter, illuminating the entire stone hall.

Kai stepped into the center of the array.

The old man stood outside the array, bowing respectfully: “My lord, the teleportation array has been activated and will send you to the edge of the Holy Land of Light. I don’t know the specifics there, so please be careful.”

Kai nodded.

He turned around, taking one last look at the outside of the teleportation hall.

Outside, there was no one.

Only in the distant sky could the faint silhouette of a giant dragon coiling.

He withdrew his gaze.

The array’s light grew stronger, enveloping him entirely.

“Buzz—”

A deep hum resounded.

The golden light surged to its peak instantly, then abruptly dissipated.

Kai's figure vanished from the teleportation array.

Inside the teleportation hall, silence returned.

The old man gazed at the empty array, letting out a long breath, and murmured, "This lord… what is his background? To be able to make the dragon race bow down, to make those forces tremble in fear…"

He couldn't understand.

But he knew that from this day forward, Yunxian City had been completely transformed.

On the city wall of Yunxian City.

Chen Wanqing still stood there, gazing towards the north of the city. Ming Li stood silently beside her.

Liu Qianqian gently grasped Chen Wanqing's hand and whispered, "Miss Chen, don't worry. Mr. Chen… he will definitely return safely."

Chen Wanqing nodded without speaking.

In the distance, the dragon's roar still echoed between heaven and earth.

Golden light illuminated the entire Yunxian City,

and also lit the road leading to the distance.

Chen Wanqing withdrew her gaze, took a deep breath, turned around, and looked at Long Zhan.

"Clan Chief Long, from today onwards, Yunxian City is entrusted to you."
Long Zhan

bowed and said, “Miss Chen, rest assured, I will do my utmost to protect this city and everything His Majesty has entrusted to me.”

Chen Wanqing nodded.

She raised her head and looked at the sky.

The sky was a clear, deep blue, with white clouds drifting lazily by.

It was as if nothing had happened.

But she knew that everything was different.

From today onwards, Yunxian City belonged to the Chen family.

And the man who had given her a new life and given her hope had already embarked on the road to the Holy Land of Light.

“Kai, you must come back safely,”

she silently prayed.

Meanwhile, the Grand Elder of the Temple, carrying the jade slip used to contact the Demon Dragon, went to discuss cooperation with its leader!

Fourteenth Heaven, the edge of the Demon Realm.

This was a land shrouded in darkness and deathly silence.

The sky was perpetually gray, devoid of sun, moon, and stars, save for the occasional streak of dark red lightning that tore through the thick clouds, illuminating the barren land below.

The ground was cracked, barren of vegetation, and the air thick with the pungent smell of sulfur and decay.

The Demon Dragon lineage lay hidden here.

Passing through layers of mist and countless dark red barriers, one could see a majestic black palace standing atop a cliff at the edge of the Demon Realm.

The palace was entirely constructed of black magic crystal, shimmering with an eerie light under the glow of the dark red lightning.

Above the palace gates was carved a lifelike black dragon, its eyes burning with eerie green flames, as if watching over every visitor.

This is the core of the Demon Dragon lineage, the Demon Dragon Palace.

At this moment, the atmosphere within the Demon Dragon Palace is eerie and heavy.

On either side of the hall stand a dozen elders of the Demon Dragon lineage.

They are all middle-aged, clad in black robes, emanating a dense, dark red demonic aura, completely different from the golden dragon aura of the orthodox dragon race.

These demon dragons, the lowest in cultivation, are at least eighth-grade Upper Immortals, with many reaching first-grade True Immortals.

It must be said that after these demon dragons joined the Demon Race, utilizing the fusion of Demon Race techniques and dragon bloodlines, their strength surpasses that of the Heavenly Dragon Race.

In the central seat of the hall sits a burly middle-aged man.

He wears a dark red dragon-patterned robe, his face cold and stern, his brows exuding a sinister and majestic air.

His eyes are dark gold, and when they open and close, it seems as if two ghostly flames are burning within them.

His aura is as deep as an abyss, clearly that of a terrifying second-grade True Immortal.

This man was Long Yuan, the leader of the Demon Dragon lineage.

This Long Yuan was not the same as the other Long Yuan.

The guardian elder of the ancient Dragon Pool was also named Long Yuan, but he was an elder of the Heavenly Dragon lineage.

This man before him was the leader of the Demon Dragon lineage—same name, different fate.

Long Yuan sat high in the main seat, his fingers lightly tapping the armrest, his gaze fixed on the figure in the center of the hall.

It was an elderly man with white hair, wearing a silver robe, the temple's emblem embroidered on his chest.

He was none other than the Grand Elder of the Temple.

Previous Page The Grand Elder smiled, his posture humble yet dignified.

He bowed slightly, his tone respectful and courteous:

"Chief Longyuan, I have long admired your name. Meeting you today, I am indeed impressed by your extraordinary bearing and the awe-inspiring presence you command."

Longyuan's lips curled into a slight, enigmatic smile as he said calmly, "It is somewhat unexpected that the Grand Elder of the Temple has come in person. May I ask what brings you here?"

The Grand Elder smiled slightly and took out a jade slip from his sleeve—the very same dark red communication jade slip.

“Chief Longyuan, before your noble family left the Dragon Clan and allied with the Demon Clan, you had a brief period of cooperation with my Temple.

This jade slip is the means of communication left behind. Today, I have come with this jade slip to discuss a cooperation with your noble family.”

“Cooperation?”

A hint of amusement flashed in Longyuan’s eyes as he gestured for the Grand Elder to continue.

The Grand Elder nodded, his expression turning solemn. “Chief Longyuan must have heard that a young cultivator with the bloodline of the Golden Dragon has recently appeared in the Fourteenth Heaven, named Kai.

This boy is only a third-grade Upper Immortal, yet he has destroyed three sacred mountains of my temple, killed three True Immortal elders, and two Ghost Clan Saint Venerables who are about to be resurrected.”

He paused, his gaze fixed on Longyuan. “This boy is rumored to be a descendant of the Dragon Clan’s emperor, with close ties to the orthodox Dragon Clan. However, the nobles and the orthodox Dragon Clan are mortal enemies.

The enemy of my enemy is my friend. I have come here to join forces with the nobles to kill this boy.”

Upon hearing this, Longyuan’s smile remained unchanged, but a barely perceptible chill flashed deep within his eyes.

“Join forces to kill Kai?”

He repeated softly, a hint of amusement in his voice. “Elder, you make it sound so easy. But why should I believe you?”

The Elder's expression remained unchanged, his tone sincere: "Chief Longyuan, my temple and the nobles have no enmity. Kai is the nobles' mortal enemy, and also a great enemy of my temple. We have a common enemy, so naturally we have a basis for cooperation." "

A common enemy?"

Longyuan suddenly laughed, a hint of sarcasm in his smile.

"Elder, your temple is powerful, with countless experts. Is a mere third-grade Upper Immortal cultivator worth all this fuss? It seems you've come to us as pawns because you can't handle him yourself."

The Elder's expression shifted slightly, then returned to normal, and he smiled, "Leader Longyuan is joking. If my temple couldn't handle him, why would we cooperate with you?

It's just that Kai possesses the bloodline of the Golden Dragon, and may have the Dragon Clan backing him. If my temple were to act rashly, we risk falling into a Dragon Clan ambush.

You, on the other hand, have been enemies with the Dragon Clan for generations and know their situation best. If you are willing to help, your chances of victory are naturally greater."

Longyuan remained silent, simply observing the Elder.

His gaze seemed to see right through him.

The Elder felt somewhat uncomfortable under his gaze, yet maintained his smile, revealing no weakness.

After a moment, Long Yuan slowly spoke: "Elder, you've said so much, all you want is for my Demon Dragon lineage to take action and eliminate Kai for your temple. But have you considered why I should help you?"

The Elder quickly replied, “Leader Long Yuan, you’re mistaken. It’s not about helping my temple, but about helping yourselves.

Kai is of Dragon Emperor blood, the hope of the orthodox dragon race. Once he grows up, he will inevitably lead the orthodox dragon race to seek revenge on yourselves. At that time, yourselves will probably…”

“Probably what?”

Long Yuan interrupted him, his tone suddenly turning cold.

“Elder, are you threatening me?”

The Elder’s expression changed, and he quickly waved his hands: “No, no. I’m just stating the facts, I have no intention of threatening you.” Long Yuan stared coldly at him, his aura subtly shifting, an invisible pressure enveloping the entire hall.

Cold sweat beaded on the Grand Elder’s forehead, yet he stubbornly refused to retreat.

After a moment, Long Yuan suddenly smiled.

That smile, unlike his previous mockery, carried a hint of satisfaction and amusement.

“Grand Elder, you are quite a character,”

he said calmly. “To dare speak such words to me, you have considerable courage.”

The Grand Elder quickly bowed: “Chief Long Yuan, you flatter me. I am merely sincere in my desire to cooperate with your noble family.”

Long Yuan nodded, his tone softening slightly: “I will consider the cooperation. However, this matter is of great importance, and I need time to deliberate. Grand Elder, please return first. I will give you an answer once I have considered it carefully.”

The Grand Elder was slightly taken aback, a flicker of disappointment in his eyes, but he knew he couldn't force the issue.

He bowed respectfully and said, "In that case, I shall take my leave. If Chief Longyuan makes a decision, he may send someone to contact my temple at any time. The doors of my temple are always open to nobles."

Longyuan nodded and gestured for him to leave.

The Grand Elder turned and left, quickly disappearing outside the Demon Dragon Palace.

Inside the palace, silence returned.

A burly elder of the Demon Dragon Clan stepped forward, frowning. "Chief, why don't you just agree? Since Kai is of Dragon Emperor blood, he's bound to be a major threat to our Demon Dragon lineage. Wouldn't it be great if we could use the power of the Temple to eliminate him?"

Another elder nodded in agreement. "Yes, Chief. Kai destroyed three sacred mountains of the Temple and killed three True Immortal Realm elders; his strength is not to be underestimated.

If we allow him to continue growing, he will surely become a great threat in the future. It would be better to take advantage of his current weakness and join forces with the Temple to eliminate him."

Long Yuan glanced at them and said calmly, "Do you think the Temple truly wants to cooperate with us?"

The elders exchanged glances but remained silent.

Long Yuan sneered, "Those old foxes in the Temple never act without self-interest.

Their cooperation with us is simply a ploy to use us as a tool to kill someone else, to have us deal with Kai while they reap the benefits. Whether they'll turn their backs on us afterward is another matter."

He paused, then continued, “Moreover, that Kai… is he truly of Dragon Emperor blood? Even if he is, does he really have the Dragon Clan backing him? We know nothing about these things. Acting rashly will only fall into the Temple’s trap.”

Several elders nodded thoughtfully.

Long Yuan waved his hand, “This matter isn’t urgent. Send someone to investigate Kai’s background first. We’ll make plans after we’ve found out.”

“Yes!”

An elder accepted the order and left.

Then, a demon dragon elder in charge of intelligence hurriedly entered the hall, knelt on one knee, and said urgently, “Reporting to the leader, something terrible has happened!”

Long Yuan frowned: “What’s the matter?”

The elder raised his head and said in a deep voice, “I just received news that the Heavenly Dragon lineage… has come out of the mountains!”

“What?!”

Long Yuan suddenly stood up, a look of shock flashing in his eyes.

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The elder continued, “Long Zhan, the patriarch of the Heavenly Dragon lineage, led dozens of giant dragons out of Heavenly Dragon Valley and into Cloud Immortal City.

Now, dragons circle above Cloud Immortal City, their might overwhelming. The entire city is now under the control of the Heavenly Dragon Clan!”

“Long Zhan? He’s still alive?”

Long Yuan frowned, a complex emotion flashing in his eyes.

Long Zhan, the patriarch of the Heavenly Dragon lineage, was his mortal enemy who had fought him for control of the dragon clan.

He had thought Long Zhan was long dead, but unexpectedly, he was still alive, and at this time, he had led the Heavenly Dragon Clan out of the mountains.

“Chief, this is a golden opportunity!”

an elder exclaimed excitedly. “Now that Long Zhan has emerged from seclusion, we can seize this chance to attack and wipe them out in one fell swoop! Those remnants of the Heavenly Dragon lineage have been hiding for so many years, and they’ve finally come out. This is a godsend!”

“Yes! Chief, let’s send out our troops! Let’s slaughter them without leaving a single one alive!”

“Those Heavenly Dragon scum have been hiding for so many years; it’s time to settle our scores!”

In an instant, the hall was filled with fervor, and several elders volunteered for battle, their eyes filled with killing intent.

They had sided with the Demon Clan, and if it weren’t for Long Zhan and the other legitimate Heavenly Dragons, they would be the true dragons.

But now, they were called Demon Dragons, a disgrace.

Therefore, they all wanted to kill all the dragons as soon as possible, so that in the entire Fourteenth Heaven, only they, the dragons, would remain.

At that moment, they would be the true dragons!

Long Yuan, however, remained silent.

He slowly sat back in his main seat, his fingers lightly tapping the armrest, a thoughtful look flashing in his eyes.

A moment later, he raised his head and looked at the elder in charge of intelligence: “You just said that the Heavenly Dragon Clan has entered Yunxian City? Whose territory was that city before?”

The elder hurriedly replied, “Reporting to the chief, Yunxian City was originally the territory of the Temple. However, the Temple’s control was relatively weak, so it was jointly managed by the Wu family and the Chen family.

Not long ago, the Chen family was destroyed by the Wu family with the help of the Temple. Later, Kai appeared, destroyed the Wu family, destroyed the Temple’s branch hall, and took control of Yunxian City. Now, he has Long Zhan lead the Heavenly Dragon Clan to enter Yunxian City, but he himself has disappeared without a trace.”

A glint flashed in Long Yuan’s eyes: “Kai… it’s him again.”

He stood up, put his hands behind his back, and looked into the distance outside the hall.

“Chief, let’s send troops!” an elder once again requested.

Long Yuan shook his head.

“No rush.” The elders were taken aback, exchanging bewildered glances.

Long Yuan slowly spoke, “Have you considered why Long Zhan would emerge from seclusion at this time?”

He turned to the elders, “It’s because of Kai. That young man with the bloodline of the Dragon Emperor. Since Long Zhan is willing to lead the Heavenly Dragon Clan out of seclusion and into Yunxian City, it means

he has already acknowledged Kai's identity. In other words, Kai truly possesses the bloodline of the Dragon Emperor."

The elders' expressions changed.

Long Yuan continued, "Why did the Temple come to us for cooperation? It's because they can't handle Kai. A mere third-grade Upper Immortal cultivator can leave the Temple helpless. Do you think that's normal?"

He paused, his tone becoming more serious. "No, it's not normal. This shows that Kai does indeed have the Dragon Clan backing him. Moreover, the fact that Long Zhan brought the Heavenly Dragon Clan out of the mountains indicates that Kai's status within the Dragon Clan is higher than we imagined."

An elder frowned and said, "Chief, what you mean is…"

Long Yuan said in a deep voice, "What I mean is, now is not the time to fight the Heavenly Dragon Clan. Since Long Zhan dared to come out of the mountains, it means he's prepared.

If we act rashly, we'll only fall into their trap. What's more, the Temple is also watching us closely, waiting for us and the Dragon Clan to both suffer heavy losses."

He turned around and looked at the gray sky outside the hall, his tone becoming increasingly solemn.

"That Kai… destroyed three sacred mountains of the Divine Temple and killed three True Immortal Realm elders. His strength and courage are extraordinary. The fact that he could make Long Zhan submit and the Heavenly Dragon Clan leave the mountain shows he truly possesses exceptional abilities."

"Now, what we need is patience."

The elders remained silent, though unwilling, they understood their leader's reasoning.

One elder asked in a low voice, “Leader, what should we do next?”

Long Yuan was silent for a moment, then slowly spoke, “I need to go to the depths of the Demon Realm to see that great figure of the Demon Clan.”

The elders’ expressions changed.

“Chief, are you going to find the Demon Clan?”

Long Yuan nodded. “This matter is far too complex for us to decide alone. The Dragon Emperor’s bloodline has reappeared, the Heavenly Dragon Clan has emerged, the Divine Temple is eyeing us covetously… all of this requires careful consideration. I need the Demon Lord’s opinion, and I also need the Demon Clan’s support.”

He paused, his tone firm. “Before I return, no one is to act rashly. Continue to monitor Cloud Immortal City, monitor Kai’s every move. But don’t alert him.”

“Yes!”

the elders responded in unison.

Long Yuan turned around, gazing into the distance, a complex expression flashing in his eyes.

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The Holy Land of Light!

The golden light gradually dissipated, and Chen Ping’s figure appeared from the teleportation array.

He stood on unfamiliar land, surrounded by rolling green mountains. In the distance, clouds and mist swirled, and palaces and pavilions with

flying eaves and brackets were vaguely visible atop the peaks, exuding a magnificent aura.

The sky was a clear, deep blue, the sun shone brightly, and the air was filled with a rich spiritual energy, several times denser than that of Cloud Immortal City.

“This is the Holy Land of Light?”

Chen Ping narrowed his eyes slightly, sensing the fluctuations of spiritual energy around him.

The spiritual energy here was indeed abundant and incredibly pure, truly living up to the name “Holy Land.”

He could feel an inexplicable pressure in this world, as if some kind of rule was binding everything.

He raised his head, his gaze sweeping across the surroundings, and quickly spotted a small town at the foot of the distant mountains.

The town was small, but the buildings were well-organized, and the streets were bustling with people, appearing quite lively.

Chen Ping didn’t rush to move, but instead concealed his aura. In unfamiliar places, keeping a low profile was always a good idea.

A moment later, he moved, transforming into a faint stream of light, and sped towards the small town.

The town was called “Qingxi Town,” nestled against the mountains and beside the water, with beautiful scenery.

Shops lined both sides of the town’s streets, selling everything from pills and magical artifacts to spiritual herbs and materials.

There were many pedestrians on the street, their cultivation levels ranging from the fifth to the ninth rank of the Upper Immortal Realm.

Chen Ping walked slowly down the street, his gaze subtly sweeping over his surroundings.

He noticed that the cultivators here looked at people with a peculiar gaze, as if they were scrutinizing something, but without malice; it was more of a curiosity and examination.

He hadn't walked far when he heard a commotion ahead.

Chen Ping looked up and saw a group of people gathered not far away, seemingly watching something.

He stepped forward and, through the gaps in the crowd, saw a huge stone tablet standing there, with three large characters engraved on it—"Blood Testing Tablet."

Several men and women dressed in white robes, each with a golden lotus embroidered on their chest, stood before the stone tablet.

Leading them was a middle-aged man with a refined appearance and a smile, speaking loudly.

"...Fellow Daoists, our Holy Purity Sect has always revered bloodlines. Anyone possessing a superior bloodline can join the sect, enjoy its resources, find a Daoist partner for dual cultivation, and jointly comprehend the Great Dao!

Today, our sect is recruiting disciples. Those with the affinity are welcome to come and be tested. Those with superior bloodlines will even be personally received by the Vice Sect Leader!"

Chen Ping raised an eyebrow slightly.

The Holy Purity Sect?Bloodline is paramount?

He recalled what Long Zhan had said earlier: the Holy Domain of Light was a gathering place for righteous cultivators, with numerous sects.

This Holy Purity Sect seemed to be one of them.

However, the idea of ”bloodline being paramount” surprised him somewhat.

In the Celestial Realm, bloodline was indeed important, but to use it as a standard for joining a sect and openly recruit disciples—this sect’s style was quite high-profile.

“Fellow Daoist, would you like to give it a try?”

The middle-aged man seemed to notice Chen Ping, his gaze falling on him as he asked with a smile, “I see you have an extraordinary bearing, fellow Daoist; your bloodline must be strong. If the test reveals a superior bloodline, joining my Holy Purity Sect will surely lead to a bright future!”

Chen Ping looked at him calmly, without speaking.

He had come to find the Divine Hall and gather information, not wanting to cause any trouble.

But since the Holy Purity Sect had a certain influence in the Holy Domain of Light, perhaps he could find out the location of the Divine Hall from them.

Moreover, he also wanted to see what these so-called “righteous cultivators” were really like.

“How do I take the test?” Chen Ping asked calmly.

The middle-aged man’s eyes lit up, and he quickly said, “It’s simple. Just place your hand on the Blood Testing Stele and circulate your spiritual energy. The stele will automatically sense the purity of your bloodline and display its grade. There are five grades: lower, middle, upper, top-grade, and holy.”

Chen Ping nodded and stepped towards the Blood Testing Stele.

The crowd automatically parted to make way, their eyes all fixed on Chen Ping.

Some were curious, some were expectant, and some were disdainful.

Chen Ping walked to the stele and placed his hand on its surface.

The stele was entirely blue, cool to the touch, and covered with densely packed runes.

The moment his palm touched it, the runes lit up instantly, and a strange power surged into his body through his palm, seemingly probing something.

Chen Ping frowned slightly, instinctively wanting to resist the power.

But then he thought, this is just a bloodline test, so he allowed the power to probe.

A moment later, the runes on the stele suddenly burst forth with dazzling light!

The light was first cyan, then turned purple, then gold, and finally... it even faintly showed seven colors! “This...this is!”

The middle-aged man’s eyes widened, his smile instantly freezing, replaced by unbelievable shock.

The onlookers erupted in excitement.

“Seven-colored light! This is a Saint-grade bloodline!”

“Impossible! A Saint-grade bloodline is a once-in-a-century occurrence, how could it appear in a young cultivator at the third rank of the Upper Immortal Realm?”

“Heavens, I’ve cultivated for so many years, and this is the first time I’ve ever seen a Saint-grade bloodline!”

Chen Ping withdrew his hand, his gaze falling on the stone tablet, a hint of surprise flashing in his eyes.

His bloodline was the Golden Dragon bloodline, the blood of a Dragon King, so it wasn't surprising that it displayed seven-colored light on this blood-testing tablet.

He just hadn't expected that the Holy Purity Sect's blood-testing tablet could actually detect the characteristics of a Dragon bloodline.

The middle-aged man paused for a moment, then quickly came to his senses and stepped forward, bowing deeply to Chen Ping. His tone was extremely respectful: "Fellow Daoist... no, young master! I was blind to your greatness, unaware that you possess a Saint-grade bloodline. I have been very negligent; I hope you will forgive me!"

Chen Ping looked at him without speaking.

The middle-aged man hurriedly said, "Young master, your Saint-grade bloodline is one in ten thousand. If you join my Holy Purity Sect, your future will be limitless! I will immediately report to the Vice Sect Leader and request that he personally receive you!"

Chen Ping's heart stirred. A

personal audience with the Vice Sect Leader?

This was indeed an opportunity.

If he could glean information about the Divine Hall from the Vice Sect Leader of the Holy Purity Sect, he would save himself the trouble of searching aimlessly.

"Very well," he said calmly.

The middle-aged man was overjoyed and immediately instructed the person beside him, "Quickly report to the Vice Leader that a genius with

Saint-grade bloodline has descended upon our sect, and request that the Vice Leader come immediately!”

A disciple obeyed the order and quickly left.

The middle-aged man then said to Chen Ping, “Young Master, please come with me. Let’s rest in the sect for a while; the Vice Leader will arrive shortly.”

Chen Ping nodded and followed the middle-aged man out of town.

The onlookers watched Chen Ping’s departing figure, discussing among themselves.

Some were envious, some were jealous, and some speculated about Chen Ping’s origins. Outside Qingxi Town, a majestic mountain rises abruptly from the ground, its slopes shrouded in mist, where palaces and pavilions are faintly visible.

This is the mountain gate of the Holy Purity Sect.

Chen Ping followed the middle-aged man upwards, passing through layers of restrictions, until they arrived before a magnificent hall.

Above the hall’s entrance hung a plaque bearing three large characters—”Holy Purity Hall.”

Inside, a middle-aged man sat regally in the main seat.

He wore a white robe embroidered with golden lotuses at the hem, his face refined, a gentle smile playing on his lips, and a faint aura of power emanating from him—clearly a peak ninth-grade Upper Immortal.

Upon seeing Chen Ping enter, he stood up and quickly greeted him with a smile, his tone warm and polite: “This must be the young friend who possesses the bloodline of a Saint?

Indeed, you are a man of exceptional talent and bearing! I am the Vice Leader of the Holy Purity Sect, my Daoist name is Qingxu. May I ask your name

, young friend?" Chen Ping looked at him and said calmly, "Chen Ping."

"Chen Ping...a fine name!"

Vice Leader Qingxu nodded repeatedly, gesturing for him to sit. "Young friend Chen, please have a seat. Someone, bring tea!"

Chen Ping took his seat as a guest, his gaze sweeping across the hall.

The hall was elegantly furnished, with several landscape paintings hanging on the walls and an incense burner on the table, wisps of smoke rising and emitting a faint fragrance.

Vice Sect Leader Qingxu took his seat in the main position, his gaze falling on Chen Ping with a broad smile: "Young friend Chen, may I ask where your master is? Where do you come from? I observe that your aura is steady and your spiritual power is pure, so you must have an extraordinary background?"

Chen Ping replied calmly: "Just a rogue cultivator, without any sect or faction."

"A rogue cultivator?"

A hint of surprise flashed in Vice Master Qingxu's eyes, then his smile widened. "It's rare for a rogue cultivator to possess such a bloodline! Young friend Chen, since you've come to my Holy Qing Sect, it's fate.

My Holy Qing Sect has always revered bloodlines. A Saint-grade bloodline like yours is one in ten thousand. If you join my sect, you will surely be highly valued. I wonder if you would be willing to join my Holy Qing Sect?"

Chen Ping looked at him, not answering directly, but asking, “I’m new here and not familiar with the Holy Light Domain. May I ask, Vice Master, what kind of sect is the Holy Qing Sect?”

Vice Master Qingxu laughed heartily and said, “Young friend Chen, that’s a good question. My Holy Qing Sect is one of the orthodox sects of the Holy Light Domain, established for a thousand years. We revere bloodlines and use dual cultivation to attain the Dao.

Disciples in the sect are all matched by bloodlines, forming Daoist partners to cultivate together, achieving twice the result with half the effort. With a Saint-grade bloodline like yours, you will surely find a Daoist partner with an equally outstanding bloodline in the future, cultivating together and reaching the Great Dao!” Chen Ping raised an eyebrow slightly.

Matching bloodlines to form a Daoist couple?

Wasn’t that just forced pairing?

A hint of doubt flashed through his mind, but he remained outwardly calm, simply nodding.

Seeing his calm expression, Vice Sect Leader Qingxu assumed he was interested and continued, “Young friend Chen, since you possess a Saint-grade bloodline, I naturally won’t mistreat you.

To be honest, my sect happens to have a female disciple whose bloodline is also of the highest grade, just one step away from reaching the Saint-grade. She and you are a match made in heaven. I will arrange for her to marry you, what do you say?”

Chen Ping looked at him calmly, without speaking.

Seeing his silence, Vice Sect Leader Qingxu assumed he was hesitating and smiled, “Young friend Chen, don’t worry, I’ll take care of this. Someone, go and invite Miss Yun Yao.”

A disciple obeyed and left.

A moment later, a slender figure walked in from outside the hall.

It was a young woman, dressed in a plain white dress, her long, black hair cascading down to her waist.

Her face was exquisitely beautiful, her eyebrows like distant mountains, her eyes like autumn waters, yet a faint chill and a barely perceptible sorrow lingered in them.

She entered the hall, bowed slightly, and said in a clear, cold voice, “Yun Yao greets the Vice Sect Leader.”

Vice Sect Leader Qingxu smiled and waved his hand, “Yun Yao, no need for formalities. Come, let me introduce you. This is young friend Chen Ping, possessing a Saint-grade bloodline and exceptional talent.

I have decided to betroth you to him; from now on, you will be Daoist partners, cultivating together and comprehending the Great Dao.”

Upon hearing this, Yun Yao’s expression changed slightly. She raised her head, her gaze falling on Chen Ping.

In that gaze were scrutiny, doubt, and a hint of…resistance.

She bit her lip and whispered, “Vice Sect Leader, Yun Yao…is unwilling.”

Vice Sect Leader Qingxu’s smile froze instantly.

The atmosphere in the hall suddenly solidified.

After a moment, the smile on Vice Sect Leader Qingxu’s face slowly vanished, replaced by a chilling expression.

He looked at Yun Yao, his tone still gentle, yet carrying an undeniable authority: “Yun Yao, what do you mean by that?”

Yun Yao lowered her head, her voice still cold, yet trembling slightly: “Vice Sect Leader, Yun Yao only wants to focus on cultivation, she doesn’t want… doesn’t want to cultivate with anyone.”

Vice Sect Leader Qingxu was silent for a moment, then suddenly smiled. That smile was completely different from its previous gentleness, carrying a faint hint of mockery.

“Yun Yao, you’ve been in the sect for three years, enjoying countless resources, your cultivation rising from the sixth rank of the Upper Immortal Realm all the way to the eighth. Do you know how much effort the sect has poured into you in these three years?

Now, I’ve found you a Daoist partner with a Saint-grade bloodline. This is your fortune, your blessing. Yet you say you’re unwilling?”

Yun Yao raised her head, looking at Vice Sect Leader Qingxu, a stubborn glint in her eyes: “Vice Sect Leader, Yun Yao is willing to repay the sect’s resources, even if it means serving as a slave. But… but this matter of a Daoist partner, Yun Yao truly cannot accept.”

Vice Sect Leader Qingxu’s smile deepened, but the smile didn’t reach his eyes.

“Repay? What will you repay with?”

His tone remained gentle, yet carried an invisible pressure. “Yun Yao, I’m doing this for your own good. A Saint-grade bloodline is one in ten thousand. If you miss this opportunity, it will be too late to regret it later.”

Yun Yao bit her lip, remaining silent, but tears welled in her eyes.

Chen Ping watched this scene calmly, his brows furrowing slightly.

This Holy Purity Sect… indeed has problems.

All this talk of valuing bloodlines and dual cultivation for enlightenment—it's all just forced pairings, coercing female cultivators into dual cultivation.

Those who refuse, like Yun Yao, are coerced and tempted, even…

He remained silent, simply observing.

Seeing Yun Yao's continued silence, the Vice Sect Leader Qingxu's smile faded, replaced by a chilling coldness.

"Yun Yao, I'll ask you one more time, are you willing?" Yun Yao

raised her head, tears finally falling, but she stubbornly shook her head.

"No."

The Vice Sect Leader Qingxu was silent for a moment, then suddenly sighed.

"Fine, I didn't want it to be this way. Since you insist on refusing, then don't blame me."

He raised his hand, taking out a pink pill from his sleeve, emitting a faint, exotic fragrance.

Upon seeing the pill, Yun Yao's face instantly turned deathly pale, and she instinctively took a step back. "This…this is…"

"The Aphrodisiac Pill."

Vice Sect Leader Qingxu said calmly, "If you take this pill and do not cultivate with someone within three hours, your meridians will reverse, your blood and qi will boil, and you will eventually explode and die. Yun Yao, I'm giving you one last chance. Are you willing?"

Yun Yao trembled all over, tears blurring her vision.

She looked at Chen Ping, her eyes filled with despair and pleading.

Chen Ping looked at her calmly, without saying a word.

Yun Yao's heart sank little by little.

She knew that Chen Ping and Vice Sect Leader Qingxu were in cahoots.

How could he possibly help her?

Vice Sect Leader Qingxu stood up, walked to Yun Yao, and held the pill to her lips.

"Yun Yao, listen to me. Take it, and you will be a Daoist partner with a Saint-grade bloodline, with a limitless future. If you don't obey...then don't blame me for being ruthless."

Yun Yao tightly shut her mouth, shaking her head desperately, tears streaming down her face.

Vice Sect Leader Qingxu completely ignored her resistance, raising his hand to pinch her chin and forcibly shoving the pill into her mouth.

Yun Yao let out a whimper; the pill entered her stomach, transforming into a warm current that instantly surged throughout her body.

Vice Sect Leader Qingxu released his hand, took a step back, and watched Yun Yao slump to the ground, nodding in satisfaction.

"Young friend Chen, Yun Yao is now in your care. If she doesn't cultivate together within three hours after taking the Aphrodisiac Pill, she will surely die.

Don't worry, although she has a top-grade bloodline, it's still somewhat inferior to your Saint-grade bloodline; you won't be at a disadvantage."

He turned to Chen Ping, smiling broadly, "Young friend Chen, I'll have someone arrange a quiet room for you to take Yun Yao to rest."

Chen Ping looked at him calmly, then suddenly smiled.

The smile was faint, yet carried a profound meaning.

“Vice Sect Leader, are you sure… you want me to take her to rest?”

Vice Sect Leader Qingxu was taken aback, then smiled, “Young friend Chen, what are you saying? Since I’ve betrothed her to you, it’s naturally up to you to decide what to do with her.”

Chen Ping nodded.

He stood up, walked to Yun Yao, and looked down at her.

Yun Yao lay limp on the ground, her face streaked with tears, her eyes filled with despair.

She looked at Chen Ping, her lips trembling, wanting to say something, but found herself unable to speak.

Chen Ping reached out and helped her up.

Yun Yao’s body trembled, but she was powerless to resist.

Chen Ping looked at her and suddenly whispered, “Don’t be afraid.”

Yun Yao was startled.

Chen Ping didn’t say anything more, supporting her as they walked out of the hall.

Vice Sect Leader Qingxu watched their retreating figures, a satisfied smile on his face. After leaving the Holy Purity Hall, Chen Ping helped Yun Yao down the mountain.

Yun Yao’s body grew increasingly hot, her face flushed an unnatural red, and her breathing became rapid.

Clinging to her last shred of reason, she murmured, “You…you let me go…I don’t want to…”

Chen Ping didn’t speak, only supporting her and quickening his pace.

A moment later, they reached the foot of the mountain.

Chen Ping stopped, glancing back in the direction of the Holy Purity Hall, a cold glint in his eyes.

“Let’s go,”

he said calmly, supporting Yun Yao as they transformed into a streak of light and sped towards the distant dense forest.

Deep within the forest.

Chen Ping placed Yun Yao under a large tree, watching her curl up in a ball, trembling, her face flushing even more, her breathing becoming increasingly rapid.

He crouched down, looking at her, and asked softly, “What’s your name?”

Yun Yao raised her head, her eyes already somewhat glazed, yet she still stubbornly bit her lip, “Yun…Yun Yao…”

Chen Ping nodded, took out a pill from his storage ring, and held it to her lips.

“Take it.”

Yun Yao looked at the pill in his hand, a hint of doubt flashing in her eyes.

Chen Ping’s tone was calm: “Antidote pill. Although it can’t cure the poison of the Aphrodisiac Pill, it can suppress it for half an hour.”

Yun Yao stared at him blankly, tears welling up again.

Without hesitation, she opened her mouth and swallowed the pill.

After a moment, the flush on her face subsided somewhat, and her breathing became a little more even.

She raised her head, looking at Chen Ping, her eyes filled with complex emotions.

“You… why did you save me?”

Chen Ping said indifferently, “I couldn’t stand it.”

Yun Yao was stunned.

Couldn’t stand it?

Just because of that?

She bit her lip and whispered, “But you… you’re also a member of the Holy Purity Sect…”

“I’m not.”

Chen Ping interrupted her, “I was just passing by and wanted to inquire about something.”

Yun Yao was stunned.

After a moment, she suddenly smiled.

That smile carried a hint of relief, and a hint of bitterness.

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“I see…”

She took a deep breath, struggled to her feet, and bowed deeply to Chen Ping.

“Thank you for saving my life, young master. Yun Yao has no way to repay you. If I have the opportunity in the future, I will repay your great kindness with all my heart.”

Chen Ping waved his hand: “No need. Let’s leave here first.” As soon

as he finished speaking, a whooshing sound came from afar.

Chen Ping frowned and looked up.

He saw several white streaks of light rushing towards him from the horizon, as fast as lightning, and in the blink of an eye, they landed above the dense forest.

The streaks of light dissipated, revealing five figures.

The one in the lead was a middle-aged man wearing a white robe with a golden lotus embroidered on his chest. He was the same middle-aged man who had tested Chen Ping’s bloodline earlier.

Behind him were four cultivators dressed in tight-fitting clothes, each with a sharp aura and cultivation levels between the seventh and eighth ranks of the Upper Immortal Realm.

The middle-aged man looked at Chen Ping and Yun Yao with a cold smile on his face.

“Young Master Chen, what are you doing? The Vice Sect Leader told you to take Yun Yao to rest, why did you bring her to this desolate wilderness?”

Chen Ping looked at him calmly and smiled faintly, “I have a habit of having sex in the wild. Don’t you think it’s more exciting to cultivate together in the mountains?”

The middle-aged man was stunned; he hadn't expected Chen Ping to answer like that!

Yun Yao also blushed; the words "having sex in the wild" felt extremely offensive to her.

"Alright, then we'll watch you two cultivate together. Hurry up and get started,"

the middle-aged man said.

"But I don't like being watched while cultivating together. Tell me, if your father and mother cultivated together, would they like to be watched?"

Chen Ping sneered.

"You..."

The middle-aged man frowned, suppressing his anger, and said, "Young Master Chen, the Vice Sect Leader has treated you well, betrothing Yun Yao to you and arranging a quiet room for you. Yet you ran away with her. What does this mean?"

He paused, his gaze falling on Yun Yao, a hint of ruthlessness flashing in his eyes.

"Yun Yao, how dare you! The Vice Sect Leader bestowed upon you the Hehuan Pill, which is an honor. Yet you colluded with outsiders to escape, you're simply courting death!"

Yun Yao's face turned deathly pale, and she instinctively took a step back, hiding behind Chen Ping.

Chen Ping shielded Yun Yao behind him, remaining silent.

Seeing Chen Ping's silence, the middle-aged man assumed he was afraid, and his face sneered repeatedly.

“Young Master Chen, you’re merely a third-grade Upper Immortal, nothing more than an ant before me. If you know what’s good for you, obediently surrender, come back with me, kowtow and admit your mistakes before the Vice Sect Leader, and perhaps I’ll spare your life. If you don’t know what’s good for you…”

He raised his hand, spiritual energy gathering in his palm, radiating a sharp pressure.

“Then don’t blame me for being impolite!”

Chen Ping looked at him and suddenly smiled.

That smile was very faint, so faint as to be almost imperceptible. ”You just said… I’m an ant?”

The middle-aged man was taken aback, then sneered, “What? Isn’t that right? You, a mere third-grade Upper Immortal, what are you if not an ant in my eyes?”

Chen Ping nodded.

“Fine.”

He uttered this single word softly, then took a step forward.

This step seemed slow, but when he landed, he was already in front of the middle-aged man.

The middle-aged man’s expression changed drastically, and he subconsciously raised his hand to block. But his hand froze in mid-air after only halfway up.

Chen Ping’s hand was already pressed against the top of his head.

“You… you…”

The middle-aged man's eyes widened, filled with disbelief. He hadn't even seen how Chen Ping moved before Chen Ping was already in front of him, subduing him.

"Third-grade Upper Immortal?"

Chen Ping repeated softly, a faint sneer curling at the corners of his mouth.

"You're right, I am a third-grade Upper Immortal. But you, an eighth-grade Upper Immortal, are less than an ant in my eyes."

With that, he lightly pressed his palm down.

"Pfft—"

A muffled sound.

The middle-aged man's head instantly exploded, blood splattering everywhere.

The corpse fell from mid-air, crashing to the ground with a "bang," raising a cloud of dust.

The remaining four cultivators were completely dumbfounded.

They looked at Chen Ping as if he were a monster, their eyes filled with fear and despair.

An eighth-grade Upper Immortal, dead just like that?

Killed in one move by a third-grade Upper Immortal?

What kind of strength was this?

"Run!"

Someone shouted, and the four cultivators turned and fled, transforming into four streaks of light, desperately escaping into the distance.

Chen Ping looked at them, his eyes unmoved.

He raised his hand and casually waved it.

Four golden sword energies shot out from his fingertips, as fast as lightning, instantly catching up with the four cultivators. ”Plop—Plop—Plop—Plop—”

Four muffled thuds sounded almost simultaneously.

The bodies of the four cultivators froze in mid-air before plummeting to the ground.

All dead.

Chen Ping withdrew his hand, standing with his hands behind his back, his robes fluttering, spotless.

He turned to look at Yun Yao.

Yun Yao was completely stunned.

She looked at Chen Ping as if he were a god, her eyes filled with shock and awe.

A third-grade Upper Immortal, instantly killing an eighth-grade Upper Immortal with a single move, casually slaying four seventh-grade Upper Immortals…

What kind of strength was this?

This was simply… simply inhuman!

Chen Ping walked up to her, looked at her, and said calmly, “Can you still walk?”

Yun Yao came to her senses, nodded vigorously, then shook her head, her voice trembling, “I… my legs are weak…”

Chen Ping glanced at her, said nothing more, and reached out to help her up.

“Let’s go,”

he said calmly.

Yun Yao leaned against him, feeling the faint warmth emanating from him, and tears welled up again.

This time, they were tears of gratitude.

She knew she had met a benefactor.

Behind her, deep in the dense forest, five corpses lay scattered on the ground, their blood staining the fallen leaves.

Chen Ping, carrying Yun Yao, disappeared into the depths of the forest.

The wind howled, and fallen leaves swirled.

Deep in the forest, Chen Ping led Yun Yao through towering ancient trees.

After taking the antidote pill, the effects of the Hehuan Pill in Yun Yao’s body were mostly suppressed. Although she was still weak all over, she could at least walk with difficulty.

She leaned against Chen Ping’s side, occasionally looking up at the cold-faced young man, her eyes filled with complex emotions.

The scene from just now was still replaying in her mind.

The middle-aged man at the eighth rank of the Upper Immortal Realm hadn't even lasted a single move before Chen Ping smashed his head with a single palm strike.

The four cultivators at the seventh rank of the Upper Immortal Realm were also killed with a casual wave of his hand.

Such strength, such methods...

she had never seen such a terrifying cultivator.

"Young Master Chen..." Yun Yao whispered, her voice trembling slightly.

Chen Ping didn't turn around, and said calmly, "Speak."

"Where...where are we going?" Chen Ping continued walking, his tone still calm: "Leave here first, find a safe place, and we'll talk again after the effects of the drug have completely worn off."

Yun Yao bit her lip and whispered, "Thank you for saving my life, young master. Yun Yao... Yun Yao has no way to repay you."

Chen Ping didn't speak.

Yun Yao was silent for a moment, then asked, "Young master, you're not from the Holy Light Domain, are you?"

Chen Ping paused slightly, then continued walking, saying calmly, "How do you know?"

Yun Yao said softly, "People from the Holy Light Domain wouldn't be as... as powerful as you. Moreover, your methods don't seem like those of a cultivator from the Holy Light Domain."

Chen Ping didn't answer.

Yun Yao didn't press further.

The two continued walking, unknowingly venturing dozens of miles into the dense forest.

Suddenly, Chen Ping stopped.

Yun Yao was startled and was about to ask when she saw Chen Ping's brows furrow slightly, his gaze fixed on the depths of the forest.

"Young master, what's wrong?"

Chen Ping didn't answer, only staring silently ahead.

A faint, almost imperceptible smell of blood wafted through the air.

The stench of blood was thick and pungent, mixed with an indescribable putrid smell that made one want to vomit.

Yun Yao smelled it too, her expression changing slightly: "This is..."

Chen Ping raised his hand, signaling her to be quiet.

He closed his eyes, extending his divine sense into the depths of the dense forest.

After a moment, he opened his eyes, a hint of surprise flashing in them.

"There's something ahead," he said calmly.

A sense of unease welled up in Yun Yao's heart, and she subconsciously moved closer to Chen Ping: "Young Master, should we... should we take a detour?"

Chen Ping shook his head: "It's too late. They've already discovered us."

"They?"

Before Yun Yao could react, a low, hissing roar came from the depths of the forest.

The sound was neither human nor beastly, but a strange, chilling cry, as if it came from the deepest hell.

Immediately afterward, a black shadow darted out from the depths of the forest, moving with lightning speed, rushing towards the two of them.

Chen Ping raised his hand and struck out with a palm.

“Bang!”

The dark figure was sent flying by a palm strike, crashing heavily into a large tree. The trunk snapped instantly, and the figure fell to the ground with a piercing scream.

Only then did Yun Yao get a clear look at the figure, and she gasped in shock.

It was a humanoid creature, but its appearance could no longer be described as “human.” He was completely naked, his skin a strange grayish-black, covered with countless cracks, from which a faint, dark red light flickered.

His head was deformed, his features twisted, his mouth stretched to his ears, revealing a row of jagged fangs.

His hands had long, sharp nails that gleamed with a cold light.

Most bizarrely, his eyes were empty and lifeless, without whites or pupils, only a deathly darkness.

“What…what kind of monster is this?!” Yun Yao exclaimed in shock.

Chen Ping’s gaze fell on the monster, a hint of solemnity flashing in his eyes.

He could sense two completely different auras emanating from this monster.

One was a sacred aura, pure and majestic, the aura of the gods.

The other was an evil aura, cold and violent, the aura of the demons.

These two auras, which should be irreconcilable, were strangely fused together on this monster, forming a twisted, nauseating existence.

“Gods and demons…” Chen Ping murmured, his brows furrowed.

Upon hearing his words, Yun Yao’s expression changed drastically: “What?! Gods and Demons? How is that possible? How could Gods and Demons merge?”

Chen Ping didn’t answer.

He was also pondering this question.

The Gods, who considered themselves the noblest race in the world, had always looked down on the Demons, regarding them as lowly and filthy beings.

The two races were sworn enemies, locked in a blood feud for generations.

Yet this monster possessed the bloodlines of both races, completely defying common sense.

The monster, sent flying by Chen Ping’s palm strike, didn’t die.

It struggled to its feet, its twisted body convulsing, emitting low roars, its empty eyes fixed on Chen Ping, filled with a frenzied killing intent.

But it didn’t pounce again.

Not out of fear, but because…

from the depths of the dense forest came even more roars.

One, two, three... countless roars.

Dense and overwhelming, rising and falling.

Yun Yao's face turned deathly pale, her body trembling uncontrollably.

Chen Ping's expression remained unchanged, simply watching the depths of the dense forest.

Moments later, countless dark figures burst forth from the dense forest, rushing towards the two.

Some crawled on the ground, some leaped through the trees, and some pounced directly at them.

Each one, like the previous monster, was twisted, ferocious, and insane, emanating the aura of both gods and demons. They had no reason, no fear, only a thirst for flesh and blood.

They were monsters.

Monsters formed from the fusion of the bloodlines of gods and demons.

Chen Ping raised his hand, and the Dragon-Slaying Sword instantly appeared in his palm.

Golden dragon patterns shimmered with an eerie light in the dim forest.

"Stand behind me," he said calmly.

Yun Yao quickly hid behind him, her hands tightly gripping his robes, her body trembling like a leaf.

Chen Ping held the sword and took a step forward. The

golden sword light instantly illuminated the entire forest.

The monsters that pounced at him melted away the moment the sword light touched them, like ice and snow meeting the blazing sun.

With a sweeping sword, more than a dozen monsters exploded, turning into a cloud of blood mist.

Chen Ping did not stop. He moved forward with his sword, each step accompanied by a slash of sword light.

Each slash of sword light killed several monsters.

He moved through the monsters' encirclement as if strolling in a garden.

Those monsters were utterly helpless before him.

Whether they pounced or ambushed, whether they crawled or leaped, as long as they came within a foot of him, they were instantly annihilated by the sword energy of the Dragon-Slaying Sword.

Yun Yao followed behind him, watching this scene. The fear in her heart gradually dissipated, replaced by endless shock and awe.

She had seen strong people, but she had never seen such a strong person.

A third-grade Upper Immortal, yet possessing terrifying strength that could crush everything.

Each of those monsters had the strength of a fifth-grade Upper Immortal, but before Chen Ping, they were like ants, easily destroyed.

"Young Master… who exactly is Young Master?" she murmured, her eyes filled with admiration.

A moment later, the dense forest returned to calm.

Limbs and torsos were scattered everywhere, and dark red blood flowed into streams, staining the fallen leaves and soil.

The air was filled with a pungent stench of blood and decay, making one want to vomit.

Chen Ping stood with his sword, his robes still clean and spotless.

He sheathed his Dragon-Slaying Sword, his gaze sweeping over the corpses scattered on the ground, a thoughtful look flashing in his eyes. Where did these monsters come from?

Why are they in the Holy Land of Light?

How did the bloodlines of the gods and demons merge?

Yun Yao stepped out from behind Chen Ping, her face pale as she looked at the carcasses scattered on the ground, barely suppressing the urge to vomit.

“Young Master… what… what are these things?”

Chen Ping didn’t answer, only saying calmly, “Keep going.”

Yun Yao bit her lip, not asking any further questions, and followed Chen Ping’s footsteps.

The two continued onward.

The deeper they went into the dense forest, the more corpses lay on the ground, and the stronger the stench of blood became.

Some of the corpses were intact, some were mutilated, and some were even just piles of flesh.

Judging from the marks, they must have fought fiercely, devouring each other before finally dying here.

Chen Ping stopped, his gaze falling on a corpse.

It was a relatively intact corpse, still barely recognizable as human.

There was a huge bloody hole in its chest, its heart had been ripped out. Half an arm was still in its mouth, clearly indicating that it was eating before it died.

Seeing this, Yun Yao could no longer hold back. She turned and bent over, vomiting violently.

Chen Ping didn't look at her, only silently watching the corpse.

He closed his eyes, his divine sense spreading out, enveloping the entire dense forest.

After a moment, he opened his eyes, a cold glint in them.

"There's a restriction," he said calmly.

Yun Yao vomited for a while before straightening up and weakly asking, "What restriction?"

Chen Ping said, "This entire dense forest is shrouded by a huge restriction. Those monsters are trapped here, unable to leave."

Yun Yao was stunned.

She looked up at the top of the forest.

Through the gaps in the branches and leaves, she could see a faint layer of blood-red light in the sky, the light appearing and disappearing, like an invisible barrier isolating this dense forest from the outside world.

"This…who set up this restriction?" Yun Yao murmured.

Chen Ping didn't answer.

But he already had a guess in his heart.

To be able to set up such a restriction, trapping so many monsters that were a fusion of gods and demons, was definitely not something an ordinary person could do.

Behind this, there must be a conspiracy orchestrated by some powerful force.

And this conspiracy is very likely related to those “righteous” sects in the Holy Land of Light.

“Let’s keep going,” Chen Ping said again.

Although Yun Yao was terrified, seeing Chen Ping’s calm and composed demeanor lessened her fear considerably. She nodded and followed Chen Ping, continuing onward.

They walked for about half an hour, encountering several more waves of monsters along the way.

Without exception, Chen Ping effortlessly slew each of them.

Yun Yao’s initial fear transformed into numbness, and finally…admiration.

Looking at Chen Ping, her eyes held not just gratitude, but also an almost fanatical adoration.

This man was too strong.

So strong that it was impossible to look directly at him.

Just then, Chen Ping suddenly stopped.

Yun Yao was startled and about to ask a question when she felt a terrifying pressure emanating from the depths of the dense forest.

That pressure was dozens of times stronger than any of the monsters they had encountered before.

Yun Yao's face instantly turned deathly pale, her legs went weak, and she almost knelt on the ground.

"Young…Young Master…"

Chen Ping raised his hand, signaling her to be quiet.

He looked up, his gaze fixed on the depths of the forest.

A huge black shadow slowly emerged from the depths of the forest.

It was a colossal creature, over three zhang tall, covered in jet-black scales that shimmered with a dark red light.

Its head resembled a gigantic demon, with bloodshot eyes, bared fangs, and dripping foul-smelling saliva.

It exuded the terrifying aura of both gods and demons, the two energies intertwining to create a suffocating pressure.

A peak ninth-grade Upper Immortal.

Just one step away from entering the True Immortal realm.

Yun Yao nearly fainted upon seeing this monster.

A peak ninth-grade Upper Immortal was practically invincible in this place.

She looked at Chen Ping, her eyes filled with despair.

She knew Chen Ping was strong, but even so, he was only a third-grade Upper Immortal.

How could he possibly defeat a peak ninth-grade Upper Immortal?

"Young Master… let's run!" she cried urgently.

Chen Ping didn't move.

He simply watched the monster quietly, a faint smile playing on his lips.

"Peak of the ninth rank of the Upper Immortal Realm?"

he repeated softly, a hint of amusement in his voice. "Interesting." The monster seemed to sense Chen Ping's contempt, letting out a deafening roar as it lunged at him.

Its speed was astonishing; its massive body seemed weightless in that instant, like a black lightning bolt, reaching Chen Ping in a flash.

Its giant claw slammed down with earth-shattering power.

Yun Yao closed her eyes, unable to bear watching.

"Boom—"

A deafening roar erupted.

Smoke and dust billowed, the earth trembled.

Yun Yao felt the ground beneath her feet shaking, as if it would collapse at any moment.

A moment later, the smoke cleared.

Yun Yao opened her eyes, stunned.

Chen Ping remained standing, motionless.

His right hand, raised above his head, steadily caught the monster's giant claw.

That strike, powerful enough to shatter mountains, was caught by him with a single hand, effortlessly.

The monster was stunned, a look of bewilderment flashing in its crimson eyes.

It couldn't understand why its full-force attack had been so easily caught by a tiny human.

Chen Ping raised his head, looked at the monster, and said calmly, "That's it?" As

soon as he finished speaking, he exerted force with his right hand and flung it away.

The enormous monster was actually flung away by him with a single hand, crashing heavily into a large tree.

The towering ancient tree, which required several people to encircle, snapped instantly, and the monster fell to the ground, letting out a shrill scream.

Chen Ping didn't give it a chance to catch its breath.

He took a step forward, his figure instantly appearing in front of the monster, raising his hand and striking down with a palm.

"Bang!"

The palm struck the monster's chest.

The monster's chest instantly caved in, and pitch-black blood gushed out.

It let out an extremely shrill scream, its massive body convulsing violently, then it collapsed to the ground, lifeless.

A monster at the peak of the ninth rank of the Upper Immortal Realm, killed with a single palm strike.

Yun Yao was completely dumbfounded.

She looked at Chen Ping as if looking at an invincible god, her eyes filled with awe and worship. A third-rank

Upper Immortal Realm cultivator, killing a peak ninth-rank Upper Immortal Realm cultivator with a single palm strike.

What kind of strength was this?

What kind of method was this?

She suddenly remembered what Chen Ping had said before: “Third-grade Upper Immortal? You’re right, I am a third-grade Upper Immortal. But someone like you, an eighth-grade Upper Immortal, is not even as good as an ant in my eyes.” At the time, she thought it was arrogance.

Now she knew it wasn’t arrogance.

It was the truth.

Chen Ping withdrew his hand, turned to look at Yun Yao, and said calmly, “Let’s go.”

Yun Yao snapped out of her daze, nodded quickly, and followed behind him, her eyes filled with admiration.

“Young Master, what… what is your cultivation level?” she couldn’t help but ask.

Chen Ping didn’t turn around, his tone indifferent: “Third Rank of Upper Immortal Realm.”

Yun Yao didn’t believe it.

But she dared not ask again.

The two continued on their way.

After walking for a while, the view suddenly opened up.

The dense forest had come to an end.

Ahead was a wide plain, with distant mountains faintly visible, shrouded in mist.

Yun Yao glanced back at the dense forest behind her; the blood-red light still enveloped the entire forest, like a giant eye watching them.

She shivered and quickly turned her head away, not daring to look again.

Standing on the edge of the plain, Chen Ping gazed into the distance and suddenly asked, “Which direction is the Divine Hall?”

Yun Yao was taken aback, then quickly pointed to a distant mountain peak, saying, “That mountain is called Holy Light Peak. The Divine Hall is at the summit of Holy Light Peak.”

Chen Ping looked in the direction she pointed and saw the mountain peak soaring into the clouds, its summit shrouded in mist, with palaces and pavilions vaguely visible.

“Let’s go,” he said calmly.

Yun Yao nodded and followed behind him.

The two transformed into streaks of light and sped towards Holy Light Peak.

On the way, Yun Yao couldn’t help but ask, “Young Master, what are you going to the Divine Hall for?”

Chen Ping was silent for a moment, then said calmly, “To find someone to help me.”

Yun Yao was startled, then nodded, not asking any further questions.

She could sense that Chen Ping harbored many secrets. But she also knew that those secrets were not for her to ask.

Chen Ping suddenly spoke again: “How much do you know about the Divine Hall?”

Yun Yao thought for a moment and said, “The Divine Hall is one of the oldest forces in the Holy Domain of Light, said to be tens of thousands of years old. They take it upon themselves to protect the light and have always been revered by righteous cultivators.

It is said that the Divine Hall possesses secret methods capable of awakening souls, and many cultivators flock there seeking their help.”

Chen Ping nodded without speaking.

Yun Yao hesitated for a moment, then said, “However… the Divine Hall always acts mysteriously and rarely contacts the outside world. If you, Young Master, were to seek their help, I’m afraid it wouldn’t be so easy.”

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Chen Ping said calmly, “I know.”

Yun Yao bit her lip and whispered, “Young Master, if I may be so bold as to ask… who are you trying to save?”

Chen Ping was silent for a moment, then said softly, “Two friends.”

Yun Yao looked at him, a complex emotion welling up inside her.

This incredibly powerful man would actually travel thousands of miles to the Holy Land of Light to seek help from the Divine Hall for his friends.

She suddenly felt that the coldness and aloofness Chen Ping possessed wasn’t his true nature. It was merely a protective shell.

The real him was loyal and righteous.

“Young Master, although Yun Yao’s strength is low, if there’s anything I can do to help, please don’t hesitate to ask,” Yun Yao said earnestly.

Chen Ping glanced at her and nodded.

“Thank you.”

Yun Yao felt a surge of emotion.

To receive Chen Ping’s words of thanks made her feel that this trip had been worthwhile.

…

The two traveled swiftly and soon arrived at the foot of Holy Light Peak.

This mountain peak was majestic and towering, piercing the clouds.

The mountain was covered in lush vegetation, rich in spiritual energy, and filled with a faint fragrance.

Chen Ping stopped and looked up at the summit.

There, a massive palace could be vaguely seen, appearing and disappearing in the clouds.

“The Divine Hall…” he murmured.

Yun Yao stood beside him and said softly, “Young Master, there are restrictions on Holy Light Peak. You can’t fly up directly; you can only climb on foot. This is the rule of the Divine Hall, to show respect.”

Chen Ping nodded and began to walk up the mountain.

Yun Yao quickly followed.

The two climbed the stone steps step by step.

Along the way, Chen Ping remained silent, only moving forward in silence.

In his mind, the figures of the monsters in the dense forest kept appearing.

Monsters formed from the fusion of divine and demonic bloodlines.

Trapped in the dense forest, unable to leave, they could only kill and devour each other's flesh and blood.

What secrets were hidden behind this?

And what role did the Divine Hall, this ancient force revered by countless righteous cultivators, play in all of this?

He raised his head, gazing at the palace atop the mountain, a complex expression flashing in his eyes.

The Holy Land of Light, a gathering place for righteous cultivators.

Yet, along his journey, he had witnessed far more than just light.

The forced marriages of the Holy Purity Sect, the hellish landscape of the dense forest…

Was the so-called righteous path truly so upright and honorable?

For the first time, Chen Ping harbored doubts about the Divine Hall.

He suddenly stopped.

Yun Yao was startled and quickly asked, "Young Master, what's wrong?"

Chen Ping looked towards the mountaintop, remained silent for a moment, and said calmly, "Nothing. Let's go."

He continued walking towards the summit.

Yun Yao watched his retreating figure, a strange feeling welling up within her.

She felt that Chen Ping had hesitated for a moment.

But she didn't ask.

She knew Chen Ping had his reasons.

The two continued upwards, soon reaching the mountainside.

Just then, a white streak of light descended from the sky, landing before them.

He was a young man, dressed in a white robe, with a handsome face and an otherworldly air. He emanated a faint light, as if he were bathed in holy light. He glanced at Chen Ping and Yun Yao, nodded slightly, and said in a gentle yet distant tone, "Fellow Daoists, this is a sacred place of the Divine Hall. May I ask what brings you here?"

Chen Ping looked at him and said calmly, "We request an audience with the Lord of the Divine Hall."

The young man smiled slightly and said, "The Lord is currently in seclusion and does not receive guests. If you have anything to say, please inform me, and I will pass it on."

Chen Ping frowned slightly.

Seclusion?

He looked at the young man and suddenly asked, "Does the Divine Hall have any demons?"

The young man's smile froze instantly.

After a moment, his expression returned to normal, and he said calmly, “Fellow Daoist, you jest. The Divine Hall is a sacred place of the righteous path; how could there be any demons?” Chen

Ping looked at him without speaking.

The young man felt somewhat uncomfortable under his gaze, coughed lightly, and said, “If you have nothing else to say, please return. During the Lord’s seclusion, the Divine Hall does not receive guests.”

Chen Ping was silent for a moment, then nodded.

“Alright.”

He turned and walked down the mountain.

Yun Yao was startled and quickly followed.

“Young Master, are we just leaving like this?” she asked in a low voice.

Chen Ping didn’t answer, but simply walked quickly down the mountain.

Although Yun Yao was full of doubts, she didn’t ask any more questions and just silently followed behind him.

On the way down the mountain, Chen Ping suddenly stopped.

Yun Yao was taken aback and was about to ask when she saw Chen Ping turn around, his gaze fixed on the mountaintop, a cold glint in his eyes.

“Young Master?”

Chen Ping said calmly, “That young man… there’s something wrong with him.”

Yun Yao was taken aback: “What’s wrong with him?”

Chen Ping said, “His expression changed when he heard the word ‘Demon Clan’.”

Yun Yao recalled the scene just now and nodded: “Indeed, he seemed… a little nervous.”

Chen Ping was silent for a moment, then said, “The Divine Hall is probably not as simple as it seems on the surface.”

Yun Yao’s heart skipped a beat, and she whispered, “Young Master, you mean…”

Chen Ping didn’t answer.

He turned around and continued down the mountain.

Yun Yao followed behind him, a sense of unease rising in her heart.

She suddenly remembered the monsters in the dense forest, those twisted beings possessing the aura of both gods and demons.

If those monsters were truly related to the Divine Temple…

she shuddered, afraid to think any further.

The two descended the mountain, quickly returning to the foot of Holy Light Peak.

Chen Ping stopped and glanced back at the majestic peak.

The palace atop the mountain, shrouded in mist, appeared and disappeared, sacred and inviolable.

But now, in Chen Ping’s eyes, the palace’s light seemed veiled in shadow.

“Let’s go,” he said calmly.

Yun Yao nodded.

The two transformed into streaks of light, speeding away into the distance.

Behind them, Holy Light Peak still stood, shrouded in mist, as if nothing had happened.

But Chen Ping knew that beneath this seemingly sacred mountain lay untold secrets.

Those secrets might be even more terrifying than he imagined.

But he would not back down.

To bring Mu Sha and his wife back to life, whatever lay ahead, he would forge ahead without hesitation. At the foot of Holy Light Peak in the Holy Realm of Light,

Chen Ping, with Yun Yao in tow, stood in a secluded mountain hollow, gazing up at the mountain shrouded in divine light.

The mountain wind howled, stirring up wisps of spiritual mist, yet it couldn't dispel the heavy atmosphere in their hearts.

"Young Master, shall we... still go up?"

Yun Yao asked softly, her voice tinged with barely concealed worry.

She gently took Chen Ping's arm, and the instant her fingertips touched his sleeve, she sensed something amiss.

Although Chen Ping's expression remained unchanged, and his eyes were even sharper than before, she could feel a faint chill emanating from him.

It was a chill that seemed to emanate from the deepest hell, clashing with the omnipresent divine aura of the Holy Realm of Light, even showing signs of mutual repulsion.

In the distance, Holy Light Peak soared into the clouds, its palace atop the peak appearing and disappearing in the mist, like a celestial palace.

Golden light shone through the clouds, sacred and solemn, illuminating every inch of the land.

But at this moment, the light seemed exceptionally dazzling to Chen Ping, as if countless golden needles were piercing his retina, making him feel inexplicably irritated.

Chen Ping remained silent for a moment, his gaze fixed on the faintly visible palace complex on the mountaintop, as if trying to see the truth within through the layers of restrictions.

“Go up.”

His voice was calm and even, yet it carried an undeniable firmness, like metal striking the ground.

Yun Yao was startled, her brows furrowing, and she said urgently, “But that young man said the God Lord is in seclusion, and no one is allowed to disturb him, not even approach him.

If we force our way up, we might bring about our death. The Divine Hall’s protective array is renowned throughout the Fourteenth Heaven; it’s no joke.”

“Seclusion?”

Chen Ping’s lips curled up slightly, a faint smile playing on his lips.

The smile held no warmth, only a mocking glint. “He says he’s in seclusion, and we believe him? He says we can’t use the main gate, and we’re really just left to sigh in despair?”

He turned to Yun Yao, a hint of amusement and resolve flashing in his eyes: “I said we’ll go up, but not through the main gate.”

Yun Yao froze, her beautiful eyes filled with confusion.

Not through the main gate?

How would they get up then?

The Holy Light Peak was surrounded by the “Nine Heavens and Ten Earths God-Slaying Array,” said to be impenetrable even to True Immortals.

The infamous “Blood-Handed Butcher” of the Demon Clan had once attempted to sneak in from the side, only to be shredded into mincemeat by the array, leaving not even a soul behind.

Chen Ping didn’t explain; he simply raised his right hand slowly.

Golden light flickered faintly in his palm.

This light wasn’t the pure golden hue of Holy Light Peak, but rather a deep, dark gold, as if flowing with ancient dragon blood, mysterious and ancient.

He closed his eyes, his divine sense spreading out like invisible tentacles, instantly enveloping Holy Light Peak.

At this moment, his world changed. The once impenetrable barrier revealed a different face in his eyes.

To ordinary people, Holy Light Peak w Anyone attempting to force their way through would be reduced to ashes in the terrifying storm of spiritual energy.

However, in Chen Ping’s perception, the so-called “Nine Heavens and Ten Earths God-Slaying Array” was nothing more than a net woven from countless lines of spiritual energy.

These lines appeared seamless, but in reality, they contained countless nodes and connections.

Each node, each flow of spiritual energy, produced minute fluctuations.

To ordinary cultivators, these fluctuations were negligible and impossible to detect.

“Too crude,” Chen Ping muttered to himself, his tone tinged with disdain.

His spiritual sense followed the lines of spiritual energy, like a fish swimming in water, quickly discovering several extremely subtle flaws.

These flaws weren’t design defects in the array itself, but rather extremely subtle imperfections left by the person who set up the array when connecting two points of spiritual energy with different attributes.

It was like a perfect painting with a drop of undried ink in the corner; though inconspicuous, it disrupted the overall harmony.

To ordinary cultivators, this imperfection was completely negligible, even undetectable.

But in Chen Ping’s eyes, it was like an ink dot on a blank sheet of paper, crystal clear.

“So that’s how it is.”

He opened his eyes, a glint of light flashing within them, as if he had seen through the century-long scheme. “The foundation of this formation actually borrows the power of a fallen light-elemental demon beast.

Unfortunately, that beast’s power wasn’t pure; it was mixed with a trace of yin energy, causing the entire formation to freeze for a moment every three hours, during the transition between yin and yang.”

This momentary freeze was the location of the Gate of Life.

He calculated the time precisely and looked up at the sky.

It was currently the third quarter of the Si hour, half an incense stick's time before the transition between yin and yang.

Time was of the essence, and there was no room for delay.

"Follow me."

He moved, transforming into a faint golden stream of light, and swept towards the side of Holy Light Peak.

That direction led to a sheer cliff, where the wind howled, making it difficult for ordinary people to even stand, let alone climb.

Yun Yao quickly followed, her heart filled with turbulent emotions.

Watching Chen Ping's effortless movements, she felt her understanding being repeatedly overturned.

The two followed the mountain's contours, ascending upwards.

Chen Ping chose an extremely cunning route, deliberately traversing the weakest points of the invisible defenses.

Sometimes, he would squeeze sideways between two massive rocks, a seemingly tiny gap that perfectly avoided two intersecting killing formations;

other times, he would pause briefly beside a withered tree, waiting for a gentle breeze to blow and the leaves to obscure the array's detection before swiftly passing through.

The protective formations set up by the shrines were as useless to him, like paths

in his own backyard. He was like a master strolling through his own garden, intimately familiar with every path and every trap, effortlessly defusing countless dangers. as as solid as a fortress, with numerous

restrictions, like an iron barrel. Yun Yao followed behind him, her heart filled with growing shock, even a sense

of unreality. She discovered that Chen Ping's understanding of restrictions was simply unbelievable.

Those seemingly flawless restrictions always had a slight flaw in front of him.

And he could always seize that flaw and easily pass through it, as if those lightning beams, powerful enough to kill even a Celestial Realm expert, were nothing more than a gentle breeze.

Even when he occasionally touched the edge of the formation, he would merely flick his finger, and the originally violent lightning beam would obediently bypass them like a tamed snake, instead striking the open ground in the distance, stirring up a cloud of dust.

"Young Master, how…how do you know the restrictions of the Divine Hall so well?"

She finally couldn't help but ask, her voice trembling with tension and shock. "This Nine Heavens and Ten Earths God-Slaying Array is a masterpiece of the Divine Hall, painstakingly crafted by three True Immortal Realm elders.

Even disciples within the Divine Hall, without a specially made pass token, could never pass through so easily. Even the elders themselves would have to be extremely cautious."

Chen Ping didn't turn around, his steps still light, as if he were walking on a flat road, not a sheer cliff.

"Not familiar. These restrictions are just too crude," Chen Ping said dismissively.

Yun Yao's lips twitched, almost choking on her own saliva.

Too crude?

This is the mountain-protecting array that the entire Holy Domain of Light is so proud of!

Throughout the Fourteenth Heaven, countless forces have tried to imitate it but failed.

Countless powerful figures have tried to infiltrate it but have all returned empty-handed, some even perishing within, their bodies never to be found.

Yet, in Chen Ping's words, it's "too crude"?

She suddenly realized that she knew far too little about Chen Ping.

How many secrets did this seemingly young man harbor?

Who exactly was he?

Why did he treat even the highest secrets of the Divine Hall like child's play?

Could he have been a reclusive master of formations?

"Young Master,"

Yun Yao took a deep breath, trying to calm herself, but her doubts only deepened, "Since you could break the seal so easily, why did you go up and ask? Wouldn't it have been better to just come up directly? Why go through all that trouble and arouse his suspicion?"

Chen Ping paused slightly, turning his head to glance at her.

A deep meaning flashed in his profound eyes, as if concealing endless calculations.

“That was a test. I wanted to see if the temple was as good as the rumors suggested.”

He paused, then continued, “If I could just walk in confidently from the front, it would mean there’s a serious problem inside, or they’re deliberately luring us in, waiting for us to walk right into their trap.

But it seems they’re very vigilant, with a tight frontal defense, but this lateral breach exposes their arrogance. They think no one can break this defense, hence this single blind spot.”

Yun Yao felt a chill run down her spine upon hearing this.

So, it was a test. ” Young Master’s cunning is truly unfathomable.

” “Arrogance?”

Yun Yao repeated, still somewhat bewildered.

“Yes, arrogance,”

Chen Ping sneered, his voice exceptionally clear in the mountain wind. “They think their formations are unparalleled, yet they don’t understand the cycle of nature, the reversal of extremes.

The more they pursue perfection, the easier it is to leave flaws in the details. These flaws can only be discovered by those who truly understand the essence of formations. In their eyes, everyone else is foolish, only they are supreme—this is their path to death.”

As they spoke, the two had reached the edge of the mountaintop.

Chen Ping stopped, hiding behind a huge bluish-gray rock, his gaze peering through the cracks in the rock towards the palace complex atop the mountain.

The sight before her made Yun Yao gasp.

The architecture of the temple was even more magnificent and grand than what she had seen from below, exuding extravagance and power.

At the center was a massive temple, entirely constructed of an unknown white jade.

The jade shimmered with a soft, milky-white glow under the sunlight, seemingly possessing a sacred quality that made one hesitant to look directly at it.

The temple ceiling was inlaid with countless luminous pearls, not ordinary gemstones, but specially refined “spirit-gathering pearls.”

Arranged in a specific star-pattern, they refracted the sunlight with dazzling brilliance, making the entire temple appear like a celestial palace, radiating

auspicious energy. Surrounding the temple were dozens of side halls of varying sizes, each exquisitely carved and painted, exuding an imposing aura.

The eaves and brackets were carved with various mythical beasts: phoenixes poised for flight, majestic unicorns, and ferocious dragons.

These statues were so lifelike, as if they might come to life at any moment, guarding this sacred temple.

And in the plaza before the temple, hundreds of cultivators were gathered.

These people were dressed in various styles. Some wore fine robes, clearly from prominent families, exuding an air of distinction;

others were ragged, their faces sallow, resembling down-on-their-luck rogue cultivators, their eyes filled with weariness.

But they all shared one thing in common: their eyes were filled with longing and tension, as if facing imminent judgment.

They formed a long queue, proceeding one by one to a massive stone tablet in the center of the plaza.

The tablet stood three zhang tall, entirely black, covered in intricate runes, faintly radiating a chilling aura.

Each time someone approached the tablet, two disciples of the Divine Hall, dressed in white robes, stood by, their expressions indifferent, like high-ranking gods scrutinizing the ants below.

The test was simple: place your hand on the tablet.

The runes on the tablet would flash, displaying different colors.

Some were blue, representing lower bloodlines; some purple, middle bloodlines; some gold, upper bloodlines.

The color of the light determined their fate. A

low, rumbling sound began, initially faint, like the buzzing of a mosquito, almost imperceptible unless one listened carefully.

But in an instant, the sound amplified exponentially, becoming a deafening roar, as if the drums of an ancient war had been struck.

The runes on the stone tablet instantly lit up, bursting forth with dazzling light.

The light was initially azure, gentle and mild, like a spring breeze caressing willows.

The surrounding cultivators were about to mock this as a low-grade bloodline when they saw the azure light quickly turn purple before it dissipated.

The purple light was as thick as ink, carrying an aura of majesty that caused those around to involuntarily take a few steps back, secretly astonished.

“Purple! It’s a purple bloodline!”

someone exclaimed. “This is a mid-grade bloodline! This child actually possesses a mid-grade bloodline; his future is limitless!”

The expression of the Divine Hall disciple also changed, his disdain turning to surprise.

A mid-grade bloodline, while not top-tier in the Divine Hall, was enough to make one an inner disciple, enjoying decent resources, and worth cultivating.

However, the changes didn’t stop there.

The purple light lasted only a moment before suddenly exploding into a dazzling gold!

The golden light was intense and domineering, like the blazing sun, blinding everyone.

The temperature in the plaza instantly rose, and the spiritual energy in the air became restless, as if ignited by this power.

“Gold! It’s a golden bloodline!”

“Heavens! It’s actually a superior bloodline! This is a genius that only appears once in ten thousand years!” ”

The Divine Hall is about to have a great event! Quick, go inform the elders!”

The crowd erupted in excitement.

Those previously envious and disdainful gazes instantly transformed into envy, awe, and even flattery.

The cultivation world is so realistic; strength and bloodline determine everything.

The Divine Hall disciple who had received Chen Ping was flushed with excitement, about to step forward to flatter him, but saw that Chen Ping remained expressionless, his hand on the stone tablet showing no sign of loosening.

His expression was terrifyingly calm, as if all of this was within his expectations.

Then, a sudden change occurred!

“Roar…”

A deafening dragon’s roar resounded from the stone tablet!

The dragon’s roar was as powerful as a thunderclap, echoing throughout the entire mountaintop. The voice contained an ancient, desolate, and extremely domineering aura, as if it came from the primordial era, carrying the majesty of a supreme ruler.

The crowd in the square felt a sharp pain in their eardrums, their blood surging, their faces changing drastically, and they all retreated.

Those with weaker cultivation covered their ears, crouching on the ground in agony, cold sweat pouring down their faces.

“What…what’s going on? How could the bloodline test elicit a dragon’s roar?” ”

Could it be…could it be the legendary…”

No one dared to utter that name, for it was too unbelievable, too shocking, existing only in fragments of ancient texts.

Then, a colossal golden dragon shadow soared into the sky from the stone tablet!

The dragon shadow was tens of feet tall, with sharp claws, jagged horns, and scales that shimmered with a metallic luster in the sunlight, each scale seemingly containing the power to destroy the world.

It exuded a terrifying dragon's might, a kingly aura that transcended all things, making all living beings want to prostrate themselves in worship.

It circled once in mid-air, then roared to the sky, its cry shaking heaven and earth, echoing throughout Holy Light Peak and even reaching the town at its foot.

The entire mountaintop fell into a deathly silence.

Everyone stared wide-eyed, unable to believe what they were seeing.

Some gaped, their jaws nearly dropping;

others trembled, barely able to stand;

still others were so overwhelmed by the dragon's might that they fainted, foaming at the mouth.

That golden dragon shadow, that terrifying dragon might… what… what kind of bloodline is this?

In the legends of the cultivation world, bloodlines are divided into six major realms: Mortal, Spirit, Earth, Heaven, Saint, and God.

Above these six realms lies a legendary bloodline existing only in ancient texts—the royal bloodline.

The five-clawed golden dragon is the king of the dragon race, symbolizing supreme power and strength.

Those who possess the five-clawed golden dragon bloodline are born with the pride of heaven, their cultivation speed increasing by leaps and bounds, invincible among their peers, and even able to challenge those of higher levels, looking down upon all living beings.

“A five-clawed golden dragon…it’s the bloodline of a five-clawed golden dragon!”

Someone shouted first, their voice trembling with fervor.

This shout was like igniting a powder keg, and the entire square erupted in chaos.

Exclamations, whispers, and shouts of worship filled the air; everyone was stunned by this unprecedented sight.

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It emanated a terrifying dragon's might, a kingly aura that surpassed all things, compelling all living beings to bow down in worship.

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The entire mountaintop fell into a deathly silence.

Everyone stared wide-eyed, unable to believe what they were seeing.

Some gaped, their jaws nearly dropping;

others trembled, barely able to stand;

still others were directly stunned into unconsciousness by the dragon's might, foaming at the mouth.

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Those possessing the bloodline of the Five-Clawed Golden Dragon are born with the privilege of heaven, their cultivation speed increasing by leaps and bounds, unmatched among their peers, and even capable of challenging those of higher levels, looking down upon all living beings.

“Five-Clawed Golden Dragon…it’s the bloodline of the Five-Clawed Golden Dragon!”

Someone shouted first, their voice trembling with fervor.

This shout was like igniting a powder keg, and the entire square erupted in chaos.

Exclamations, whispers, and shouts of worship filled the air; everyone was stunned by this unprecedented sight. “It really is a five-clawed golden dragon! I actually witnessed the legendary five-clawed golden dragon bloodline with my own eyes!”

“Who is this child? Which reclusive family does he belong to?”

“Quickly, quickly report to the elders! Such a genius must be immediately brought into the core of the Divine Hall and given the highest level of treatment!”

The previously arrogant disciple of the Divine Hall suddenly collapsed to his knees,

his forehead pressed against the ground, his whole body trembling, not daring to lift his head.

Under the pressure of the five-clawed golden dragon, he felt like an insignificant ant, about to be crushed at any moment.

His previous arrogance had vanished, leaving only deep fear and awe.

The cultivators in line also knelt down, their faces filled with awe and fear.

This was the instinctive submission to the strong, a natural fear of the aura of an emperor, which was utterly irresistible.

A moment later, a white figure sped out of the Divine Hall.

Its speed was as fast as lightning, tearing through the sky and instantly landing on the plaza, stirring up a wave of air.

The man was a middle-aged man, dressed in a long white robe embroidered with golden cloud patterns at the hem. His face was dignified, and his eyes were like lightning.

He exuded the terrifying pressure of a first-grade True Immortal, a pressure that weighed heavily on everyone's hearts like a mountain, instantly silencing the previously restless crowd, who dared not even breathe.

His gaze fell on Kai, his eyes flashing with shock and excitement, even a hint of barely concealed greed.

It was the look of someone seeing a priceless treasure, as if Kai was not a person, but a walking piece of Tang Sanzang's flesh.

"Five-Clawed Golden Dragon Bloodline! This is the Five-Clawed Golden Dragon Bloodline!"

His voice trembled.

He had cultivated for ten thousand years and had never seen such a pure Five-Clawed Golden Dragon Bloodline.

This bloodline power was simply the most perfect treasure in the world. If one could obtain even a fraction of it, what would prevent one from achieving the Great Dao?

The middle-aged man took a deep breath, forcibly suppressing the excitement in his heart, and quickly stepped forward.

He showed no airs of a powerful figure, bowing deeply to Kai with utmost respect, as if addressing a supreme emperor: "I am an elder of the Divine Hall, my Daoist name is Qingxuan. Greetings, fellow Daoist! May I ask your name, fellow Daoist?"

Kai calmly looked at him, sensing the seemingly respectful yet subtly probing gaze.

That gaze, like tangible tentacles, attempted to pierce through his body, probing the depths of his bloodline.

He didn't speak, only uttering two words: " Kai."

Elder Qingxuan nodded repeatedly, his face beaming with smiles, his wrinkles crinkling together, appearing kind and approachable, but in reality, utterly hypocritical.

"Fellow Daoist Chen, you possess the bloodline of the Five-Clawed Golden Dragon, a peerless genius, one in ten thousand! Our Divine Hall has always revered bloodlines, and someone with your bloodline is undoubtedly a distinguished guest! Please come in quickly, this old man will immediately inform the Hall Master and personally welcome you!"

His enthusiasm made those around him feel somewhat uncomfortable.

Just moments ago he was so high and mighty, and now he's so obsequious—the contrast is too great.

But no one dared to say anything. Before the Five-Clawed Golden Dragon bloodline, everything else is insignificant; strength is the only truth.

Kai looked at him, a cold smile playing on his lips.

It's the same old trick.

The Holy Pure Sect is like this, and so is the Divine Hall.

These so-called righteous holy lands, constantly spouting benevolence and morality, are actually the most pragmatic profit-driven people.

They don't value you as a person, but rather the bloodline within you.

Once you lose your usefulness, or once they've obtained what they want, they turn on you faster than flipping a book.

Kai knew that getting the Divine Hall to help him release the souls of Mu Sha and his wife from the soul crystal wouldn't be easy.

But he remained outwardly calm, merely nodding slightly, as if accepting this "honor."

"Thank you for your trouble, Elder Qingxuan," Kai said calmly, his tone neither humble nor arrogant.

Elder Qingxuan was overjoyed and quickly stepped aside to lead the way, saying, "Fellow Daoist Chen, please, please!"

As he led Kai towards the temple, he glanced back at the crowd in the square and instructed, "Today's test ends here. Disperse! The rest can come again tomorrow!"

The cultivators in line exchanged glances but dared not say anything and dispersed.

However, before leaving, they couldn't help but look back at Kai a few more times, their eyes filled with complex emotions—envy, jealousy, and pity.

Kai followed Elder Qingxuan, passing through numerous halls.

Along the way, everything was decorated with extreme luxury. The corridor railings were carved from single pieces of warm jade, and the walls were adorned with various precious calligraphy and paintings. The air was filled with a faint fragrance of sandalwood and spiritual energy, making one feel refreshed and relaxed.

The occasional disciples of the temple, seeing Elder Qingxuan with Kai, were all astonished, then immediately put on ingratiating smiles and bowed respectfully. Soon, the two arrived at a secret chamber deep within the temple.

This chamber was located in a secluded courtyard, surrounded by exotic flowers and rare herbs, exuding a vibrant life force. While seemingly peaceful and serene, it possessed an eerie silence.

The chamber's door was covered in defensive runes, clearly indicating the presence of something extremely important inside, or perhaps a secret transaction.

Elder Qingxuan stopped and turned to Kai, saying, "Fellow Daoist Chen, please wait a moment. I will go and fetch the Hall Master. Hearing that you possess the bloodline of the Five-Clawed Golden Dragon, the Hall Master will surely come out to meet you personally."

Kai nodded, "Thank you for your trouble."

Elder Qingxuan turned and left, his steps hurried, clearly anxious, as if afraid Kai would run away.

Kai stood at the entrance of the chamber, his gaze sweeping

over the surroundings. He quietly released his divine sense, penetrating the chamber.

The chamber was small and simply furnished, containing only a stone table and two stone chairs.

However, hidden beneath the stone table was a small spirit-gathering array, continuously gathering spiritual energy from heaven and earth.

In addition, several jade bottles containing healing pills were placed in a corner of the secret chamber.

"It seems they intend to negotiate with me here,"

Kai thought to himself, a cold smile playing on his lips.

A moment later, the door to the secret chamber was pushed open.

An elderly man with white hair walked in.

He wore a simple white robe, devoid of any superfluous adornments, appearing very unassuming.

His face was clear and his eyes deep, as if holding the stars and the sea.

His aura was restrained, giving him an unfathomable feeling, like an ancient well, its depths impossible to fathom.

His cultivation was at the peak of the second rank of True Immortal Realm, just one step away from entering the third rank.

This man was none other than the Hall Master of the Divine Hall—Qing Xuzi.

Of course, this Qing Xu was not the same as the Qing Xu of the Holy Pure Sect. The vice-leader of the Holy Pure Sect was also named Qing Xu, but that was his Daoist title, while this Hall Master of the Divine Hall was named Qing Xuzi.

In the Holy Land of Light, Qingxuzi's name represented authority and power, second only to the God Lord.

Qingxuzi walked up to Kai, his gaze falling on him, a glint of admiration in his eyes.

That gaze held appreciation, admiration, but above all, an undisguised fervor, like a hungry wolf eyeing a fat sheep.

"The Five-Clawed Golden Dragon bloodline..." he murmured, a hint of emotion in his voice, "I never imagined that in my lifetime I would witness such a legendary bloodline."

Qingxuzi smiled slightly, his tone gentle and friendly, completely unlike a powerful warlord who controlled a vast force.

"Young friend Chen, please sit."

Kai took a seat in the guest seat, his posture composed and unpretentious, as if this were his territory.

Qingxuzi sat down opposite him, his gaze still fixed on him, his eyes full of admiration, as if looking at a rare treasure, afraid it might grow wings and fly away.

“Young friend Chen, what brings you to the Divine Hall?”

Qingxuzi asked bluntly. “Logically speaking, with your bloodline, you should have been sought after by various powerful forces long ago. Why have you come alone to my remote Divine Hall?”

Kai looked at him and, without beating around the bush, said directly, “I would like to ask the Divine Hall for a favor.”

Qingxuzi smiled slightly and waved his hand, saying, “Young friend Chen, please speak freely. As long as it is within the power of my Divine Hall, we will not refuse. Let alone one favor, even if it were ten or a hundred, for the sake of your Five-Clawed Golden Dragon bloodline, my Divine Hall will certainly do its utmost.”

These words sounded good, but Kai knew in his heart that all of this was based on the premise of the “Five-Clawed Golden Dragon bloodline.”

If he were just an ordinary cultivator, he probably wouldn’t even have the qualifications to see Qingxuzi and would have been beaten out long ago.

Kai took out a Soul Crystal from his pocket.

The Soul Crystal was smooth and lustrous, emitting a faint blue light, and felt cool to the touch.

Upon closer inspection, two ethereal figures could be faintly seen huddled within, eyes closed, breaths weak, as if they might dissipate at any moment.

These two figures were none other than Mu Sha and his wife.

They had been sealed within this soul crystal by the temple to save Kai.

Qing Xuzi's gaze sharpened, a strange light flashing in his eyes.

He reached out and took the soul crystal, examining it closely.

"This is... a soul crystal of twin souls?"

Qing Xuzi was somewhat surprised. "Moreover, these two souls are severely damaged, almost completely dissipated."

Kai's tone was calm, yet tinged with solemnity: "There are two people here, my friends. Their physical bodies have been destroyed, and their souls are sealed within this soul crystal. I've heard that the temple possesses a secret method to awaken souls and reshape physical bodies. I wish to request the temple's intervention to save their lives."

Qing Xuzi remained silent for a moment, his fingers gently stroking the surface of the soul crystal, seemingly calculating something.

After a moment, he raised his head, looking at Kai, a complex expression flashing in his eyes.

"Young friend Chen, how long have these two souls been sealed within this soul crystal?"

Kai nodded, "Several months."

Qingxuzi sighed and said, "The souls have been sealed for too long and have fallen into a deep slumber. Awakening them will not be easy.

Especially since their souls are severely damaged, without the help of rare and precious treasures, it will be difficult for them to fully recover."

Kai looked at him without speaking, simply waiting quietly for him to continue.

He knew that the other party would definitely not help unconditionally; this was the main event. Qingxuzi paused, then continued, “However, my Divine Hall does indeed possess a secret technique that can awaken a dormant soul. This technique is called the ‘Reincarnation Soul Crossing Technique,’ a closely guarded secret of my Divine Hall. But…”

He hesitated, his eyes flickering, seemingly observing Kai’s reaction.

Kai asked, “But what? What price is required? Hall Master Qingxu, please name your price.”

Qingxuzi looked at him and slowly said, “This secret technique requires a vast amount of bloodline power. Especially for awakening a soul that has been dormant for so long, the required bloodline power is immense.”

He paused, emphasizing his words, “Young friend Chen, you possess the Five-Clawed Golden Dragon bloodline, a peerless bloodline, one in ten thousand. If you are willing to offer a portion of your bloodline as a catalyst to awaken the soul, there is a seventy percent chance of success.”

Kai raised an eyebrow slightly. Offer his bloodline? He looked at Qingxuzi and said calmly, “How much do you need?”

Qingxuzi held up two fingers and gestured, “Not much, just one bowl. With your cultivation level, young friend Chen, donating one bowl of blood will allow you to recover in a few months. And your two friends will be reborn. This deal is a win-win for you, young friend Chen.”

One bowl of blood?

Kai sneered inwardly.

The Five-Clawed Golden Dragon bloodline was incredibly precious, containing immense life essence and the power of laws.

One bowl of blood was enough to transform an ordinary person, or even allow a cultivator to break through a bottleneck and prolong their life.

Qingxuzi spoke lightly, but its value was immeasurable.

But he had no reason to refuse.

To save Mu Sha and his wife, he would gladly give his life, let alone donate blood.

Kai was silent for a moment, then nodded, “Alright.”

A fleeting, almost imperceptible joy flashed in Qingxuzi’s eyes, but Kai keenly caught it.

Qingxuzi hurriedly said, “Young friend Chen is indeed loyal and righteous! I admire you! In that case, I will go and prepare the ceremony. Young friend Chen, please wait a moment, we will begin in a short while.”

He stood up, turned and left.

Kai sat in the secret chamber, watching his retreating figure, a thoughtful look flashing in his eyes.

Just now, when Qingxuzi heard “a bowl of blood,” the excitement in his eyes was too obvious.

That expression was not like someone who had gained an ally, but more like a hunter seeing prey that had fallen into a trap, his eyes full of greed and expectation.

“Is it really just a bowl of blood?”

Kai pondered to himself, “The Divine Hall claims to be a holy land of the righteous path, why is it so obsessed with my bloodline? There must be more to this than meets the eye.”

But he had no choice at this moment.

The lives of Mu Sha and his wife hung by a thread, he could only gamble.

If the souls of Mu Sha and his wife really disappeared, there was no way to restore them no matter what method was used.

He gambled that the Divine Hall would really keep its promise, and that Qingxuzi was indeed a highly respected senior of the righteous path.

Even knowing it was a pit of fire, he had to jump in for his brothers.

A moment later, the door to the secret chamber opened again.

Elder Qingxuan entered, followed by two disciples of the Divine Hall, carrying various magical artifacts.

There was a gleaming bronze bell, a jade plate radiating cold air, and an ancient sheepskin scroll covered with incomprehensible symbols.

Elder Qingxuan smiled and said, “Fellow Daoist Chen, the ceremony is ready. Please follow me.”

Kai stood up and followed him out of the secret chamber.

Passing through several halls, the three arrived at a side hall.

This side hall was located on the west side of the Divine Hall, in a relatively secluded location. The surroundings were silent; not even the chirping of birds could be heard, giving it a desolate feel.

The side hall’s door was tightly closed, covered with strange runes that faintly emitted a red glow, giving an ominous feeling, as if some evil thing was imprisoned inside.

Elder Qingxuan pushed open the door, and an ancient aura rushed out, mixed with a faint smell of blood.

Inside the side hall, a massive magic array was set up. The array occupied the entire floor of the hall, its densely packed patterns interwoven like a spiderweb.

These patterns emitted a faint golden light, but deep within the light, a wisp of black mist seemed to lurk, sending chills down one's spine.

In the center of the array lay a jade bowl. The bowl was as large as a washbasin, pure white, and carved with intricate dragon patterns, as if awaiting the nourishment of blood.

"Fellow Daoist Chen, please enter the array,"

Elder Qingxuan said, pointing to the center of the array, his tone utterly authoritative.

Kai stepped into the array. His steps were steady, without the slightest hesitation, as if he had already prepared to die.

Elder Qingxuan and the two disciples left the side hall and closed the door.

The click of the lock striking the door echoed sharply in the silent hall, like a countdown to death.

Alarm bells rang in Kai's mind. Just then, the magic array slowly activated.

The golden light grew increasingly intense, enveloping Kai entirely.

A strange power began to draw blood essence from his body.

At first, the power was gentle, as if guiding him.

But soon, it became domineering, like countless greedy hands frantically tearing at his meridians and draining his blood.

Kai frowned slightly. He sensed that the power was far more domineering than he had imagined.

The speed of the extraction was also much faster than "a bowl."

At this rate, his blood would be drained in less than half an incense stick's time!

He tried to resist, but found that his body was completely immobile!

An invisible binding had appeared within the magic array, firmly fixing his limbs in place.

No matter how much he struggled, he couldn't break free even an inch. Kai's expression changed.

"Something's wrong!"

He abruptly opened his eyes and looked towards the edge of the magic array.

There, Elder Qingxuan had somehow re-entered and was standing outside the array, watching him with a smile.

That smile was completely different from the previous respect; it carried a hint of sinister malice and smugness, like a fox watching its prey fall into its net, its eyes full of mockery.

"Fellow Daoist Chen, how do you feel?"

he chuckled, his voice filled with sarcasm.

Kai stared coldly at him, saying nothing, his eyes revealing a murderous intent that seemed to want to tear him to pieces.

Elder Qingxuan laughed heartily, "Fellow Daoist Chen, don't worry. This formation only extracts your bloodline; it won't kill you. However, a bowl of blood is fake; your entire bloodline is the real deal."

He took a few steps closer, looking down at Kai trapped in the formation, his eyes filled with greed. "The Five-Clawed Golden Dragon bloodline, the legendary blood of the Dragon Emperor—this is a treasure that appears only once in ten thousand years.

As long as I obtain your bloodline, my Divine Hall Master will break through to the third rank of True Immortal Realm in one fell swoop, and might even attempt to reach the fourth rank! At that time, the Divine Hall will become the number one power in the Holy Domain of Light, and may even rule the entire Fourteenth Heaven!"

He paused, his smile growing increasingly sinister, "That so-called Reincarnation Soul-Crossing Technique is nothing but a lie. Your two friends are already dead; their souls won't last long either."

A cold killing intent flashed in Kai's eyes, and anger burned fiercely in his heart.

"You... you lied to me?"

Elder Qingxuan laughed loudly, "So what if we lied to you? Did you think the Divine Hall was really some righteous holy land? Did you think we would really help you save people?

Ridiculous! In this world, only the strong survive, only interests are eternal. Your bloodline is your greatest original sin! Blame it on your naivety, actually believing us hypocrites."

Kai's face turned completely cold.

He had been deceived.

He had been played.

From beginning to end, the Divine Hall had no intention of helping him save people. All

they wanted was his bloodline!

The so-called righteous path, the so-called benevolence, were all just masks!

He wasn't angry that he had been deceived, but that those so-called righteous people, who spoke of being upright and honorable, were doing such despicable things behind the scenes.

They used the banner of saving the world, but their actions were those of world destruction. There were no good people in the Heavenly Realm!

"Very good."

Kai suddenly smiled, a smile that was icy and chilling, making people shudder, like a Shura from the deepest hell.

"I'll remember you all. Shentang, Qingxuzi, Qingxuan... If I, Kai, don't avenge this, I swear I'm not human!"

Elder Qingxuan's heart skipped a beat at his laughter, then he sneered, "Still being stubborn even when death is imminent! Drain him! Speed up the formation!"

The formation's light surged, and the extraction speed increased even further.

Kai felt the power of his bloodline rapidly draining away, his strength gradually dissipating.

His vision began to blur, and his consciousness grew heavy. He closed his eyes, an endless surge of anger and resentment welling up inside him.

Was this how it was going to end?

Was he going to perish here too if he couldn't save Mu Sha?

Just as Kai was about to fall into unconsciousness, the door to the side hall was suddenly pushed open.

A slender figure rushed in—it was Yun Yao.

Yun Yao looked at Kai trapped in the formation, her expression changing drastically, her eyes filled with anxiety and grief.

“Young Master!”

Without a word, she raised her hand and slashed at the formation’s edge.

The longsword in her hand burst forth with dazzling light, attempting to disrupt the formation.

Elder Qingxuan’s expression changed, and he roared, “Where did this lowly wench come from, daring to ruin my grand plan!”

He raised his hand and struck Yun Yao with a palm.

The palm wind howled, carrying the terrifying pressure of a first-grade True Immortal, like a mountain pressing down on Yun Yao.

Yun Yao was only an eighth-grade Upper Immortal; how could she withstand a palm strike from a second-grade True Immortal?

“Bang!”

With a muffled sound, Yun Yao was sent flying by the palm strike, crashing heavily against the wall, spitting out blood.

Her face instantly turned deathly pale, and her body slumped to the ground.

But she did not fall, nor did she give up.

She struggled to her feet, wiped the blood from the corner of her mouth, and rushed towards the formation again.

“Young Master, I’ve come to save you!” Her eyes were resolute; even knowing it was suicide, she did not hesitate. “You’re courting death!”

Elder Qingxuan sneered, his eyes flashing with murderous intent, and attacked again.

This time, he was serious, a golden sphere of light condensing in his palm—his signature move, the “Holy Light Annihilation Seal.”

But just then, the roof of the side hall suddenly exploded!

“Boom!”

Tiles flew everywhere, dust billowed.

A dark figure descended from the sky, like a meteor falling to earth, landing precisely in front of Yun Yao, blocking Elder Qingxuan’s attack.

It was a woman dressed in black, with a cold and beautiful face, skin as white as snow, and eyes as deep as the night sky.

She exuded a faint ghostly aura, but it wasn’t sinister; instead, it carried a noble and mysterious rhythm, as if from another world.

Yun Yao was stunned, staring blankly at the figure’s back.

The woman ignored everyone, simply raising her right hand, her palm as black as ink, wrapped with wisps of pure ghostly energy.

She slammed her palm onto the magic array.

“Break!”

A soft shout accompanied by a tremendous impact.

The seemingly indestructible magic array shattered instantly under this palm strike, as if made of paper.

The array patterns broke, the light dissipated, and the force binding Kai vanished.

Kai was freed from the array, his body swaying, almost falling.

His face was ashen, most of his bloodline power had been drained, and his strength was severely diminished.

He barely managed to stand, looking at the woman in black, a hint of doubt flashing in his eyes.

The woman in black turned around, her gaze falling on Kai, a strange light flashing in her eyes.

She didn't speak, but carefully examined Kai, as if confirming something.

After a moment, she said calmly, "Come with me."

Kai frowned slightly, about to ask a question, when he saw the woman raise her hand and a black light enveloped him and Yun Yao.

The light was like a black hole, instantly swallowing the three of them.

The next second, the three of them disappeared from the spot.

Elder Qingxuan's face was ashen, and he shouted sharply, "Chase! Chase him! Find him alive or dead! We can't let him escape!"

The disciples of the Divine Hall surged out, pursuing him down the mountain with overwhelming force.

A hundred miles away, in a desolate mountain range.

This place was sparsely populated, overgrown with weeds, and only the occasional roar of a beast broke the silence.

Three figures descended from the sky, landing in a secluded valley.

The woman in black released her grip, and Kai and Yun Yao landed on the ground.

Yun Yao slumped to the ground, panting heavily, her body covered in blood, her face extremely weak.

That palm strike had severely injured her internally; if not for her strong will, she would have already fainted.

Although Kai's face was pale, he still stood ramrod straight. He took a deep breath, circulating his remaining spiritual energy to steady his mind.

His gaze fell on the woman in black, filled with scrutiny and wariness.

"Who are you?"

he asked coldly, his hand already secretly gripping the hilt of his sword.

Although the other party had saved him, after experiencing the betrayal of the Divine Hall, he dared not easily trust anyone again.

The woman in black looked at him, not answering immediately, but quietly observing him.

After a moment, she suddenly spoke, her voice as cold as ice: "Why do you have the aura of the Ghost Clan on you?"

Kai frowned.

The aura of the Ghost Clan?

A thought flashed through his mind, and he remembered Ming Li.

Ming Li was a member of the Ghost Clan, and having followed him for so long, it was normal for him to have some of that aura on him.

"I have a friend who is a member of the Ghost Clan,"

he said calmly, "Who exactly are you?"

A hint of realization flashed in the woman in black's eyes, and then she nodded slightly: "I see."

She paused, and slowly said: "My name is Yun Xi, the princess of the Ghost Clan."

Upon hearing this, both Kai and Yun Yao's expressions changed.

The princess of the Ghost Clan?

The woman continued: "I come from the Fifteenth Heaven."

Kai's pupils shrank.

The Fifteenth Heaven?

That was a legendary place, one level higher than the Fourteenth Heaven, said to be the place where true powerhouses gathered.

Those who could descend from the Upper Realm were definitely not ordinary people.

"Why did you save me?" Kai asked in a deep voice, his wariness growing stronger.

Yun Xi looked at him and said calmly, "I sensed a trace of the Gate of Reincarnation in the Fifteenth Heaven, so I followed it down. When I got here, the aura disappeared, but I sensed the aura of the Ghost Clan on you. I assumed you were related to my Ghost Clan, so I helped you."

She paused, her gaze falling on Kai's face. "Now it seems that the aura was left by your Ghost Clan friend. Since you have a past with the Ghost Clan, I naturally wouldn't stand by and watch you die."

Kai was silent for a moment, then slowly released his grip on his sword.

Although her words were somewhat unbelievable, at least for now, she seemed to have no ill intentions.

And that Gate of Reincarnation was also something Ming Li had used before. Although it had been taken away, Ming Li should still carry a trace of the Gate of Reincarnation's aura.

"Thank you," he said in a deep voice.

Yun Xi shook her head. "No need. I'm just returning a favor."

She turned around, her gaze fixed on the distance, as if she could pierce through layers of clouds and see the legendary Fifteenth Heaven.

"The sudden appearance of the Gate of Reincarnation's aura must be suspicious. I need to investigate. Take care of yourselves."

With that, she turned to leave.

Kai suddenly spoke, "Wait."

Yun Xi stopped and turned to look at him.

Kai looked at her and said in a deep voice, "The people from the Divine Hall are still chasing me. You saved me and Yun Yao; I'll remember this kindness. If I have the opportunity in the future, I will repay you."

Yun Xi's lips curled up slightly, revealing a faint smile: "No need. I was just doing it on a whim. However..."

She paused, her gaze falling on Kai, a deep meaning flashing in her eyes.

"The bloodline in your body is very unusual. Live well, don't die here."

As soon as she finished speaking, her figure flashed, transforming into a black streak of light and disappearing into the vast sky.

Kai watched the streak of light disappear into the distance, remaining silent for a long time.

Yun Yao struggled to her feet and walked to his side, whispering, “Young Master, is what she said true? The Ghost Clan princess of the Fifteenth Heaven?”

Kai shook his head. “I don’t know. But she did save us. And the aura of the Gate of Reincarnation she mentioned does indeed exist.”

Kai hadn’t told Yun Xi about the Gate of Reincarnation because he wasn’t yet certain of her identity.

Revealing it now might bring disaster to Ming Li.

He turned to Yun Yao’s pale face, his brow furrowing slightly.

“Heal first. We’ll talk about the rest later.” Kai sat down cross-legged and began to heal his injuries.

Most of his bloodline power had been drained, and his strength had significantly decreased, but fortunately, his foundation remained, and he would recover after a period of rest.

He took out several pills from his storage ring, swallowed them, and then circulated his cultivation technique to guide the medicinal power.

Yun Yao struggled to her feet and went to Kai’s side to protect him.

Her eyes were still filled with worry, but seeing that Kai was safe and sound, she breathed a sigh of relief.

A moment later, a whooshing sound came from afar.

Dozens of white streaks of light rushed in and landed above the valley.

The leader was Elder Qingxuan.

He looked at the three people in the valley and sneered, “Run, why aren’t you running anymore? Did you think you could escape the pursuit of my Divine Hall by hiding in this desolate wilderness?”

Behind him followed dozens of Divine Hall disciples, each wielding a weapon, exuding murderous intent.

Kai opened his eyes, stood up, and looked at him coldly.

Elder Qingxuan felt a chill run down his spine under Kai's gaze, then sneered, " Kai, most of your bloodline has been drained, your cultivation has plummeted, and you still want to resist? If you know what's good for you, surrender obediently and come back with me, and perhaps I can leave you with a whole corpse. Otherwise, don't blame me for being ruthless!"

Kai looked at him and suddenly smiled.

That smile was cold, chilling to the bone, like a demon from the deepest hell.

"Elder Qingxuan,"

he slowly spoke, his voice hoarse yet full of power, "Do you know, the thing I hate most is being deceived."

Elder Qingxuan snorted coldly, "So what? The victor is king, the loser is villain. You only have yourself to blame for being too naive, actually believing that our Divine Hall would help you save people. Hmph, the righteous path? Where is there a true righteous path in this world? Only interests!"

Kai did not answer.

He simply raised his hand, and the Dragon-Slaying Sword instantly appeared in his palm.

The jet-black blade, with golden dragon patterns, shimmered with an eerie light in the sunlight.

The sword trembled slightly, emitting a low dragon's roar, as if responding to its master's anger.

Elder Qingxuan's expression changed slightly, then he sneered: "A third-grade Upper Immortal dares to draw his sword before me? He's courting death! Attack! Kill him, and I'll reward you with a thousand bottles of spirit liquid!"

A generous reward will surely attract brave men.

Dozens of Divine Hall disciples attacked simultaneously, unleashing a barrage of spells upon Kai.

There were towering flames, piercing ice, thunderous roars, and blades piercing the air.

The entire valley was instantly engulfed in various colors of light.

Yun Yao cried out in alarm, wanting to rush forward to help, but Kai stopped her with a raised hand.

"Stand behind me," he said calmly.

Yun Yao was stunned, looking at Kai.

She saw Kai holding his sword, taking a step forward.

This step seemed to shatter the void, carrying an unstoppable momentum.

"Get lost!"

A roar, accompanied by golden sword light, instantly illuminated the entire valley.

A sweeping sword strike!

This sword strike, seemingly simple, contained boundless sword intent.

That was the swordsmanship Kai had comprehended amidst life and death, an outpouring of his rage.

“Pfft pfft pfft—”

More than a dozen disciples of the Divine Hall exploded simultaneously, turning into a cloud of blood mist.

Their protective qi was as fragile as paper before this sword strike, utterly vulnerable.

Elder Qingxuan’s expression changed drastically.

This… what kind of strength was this?

A third-grade Upper Immortal Realm cultivator, killing more than a dozen seventh or eighth-grade Upper Immortal Realm cultivators with a single sword strike?

How could this be possible!

Even with the aid of divine weapons, it was impossible to do it so easily!

And Kai’s strength had decreased so much?

Kai didn’t give him time to react.

He flashed, instantly appearing before Elder Qingxuan. His speed was astonishing, as if

he were teleporting. The Dragon-Slaying Sword slashed down at him.

Elder Qingxuan hurriedly raised his hand to block, golden light surging from his palm, condensing into a golden shield.

“Holy Light Shield!”

“Boom—”

A deafening roar.

The golden shield shattered instantly, turning into countless points of light.

Elder Qingxuan was sent flying backward, crashing heavily against the mountainside, coughing up blood, his eyes filled with disbelief.

“You…you…”

A large section of his chest caved in, his bones shattered, and his internal organs severely damaged.

Kai stood with his sword, looking down at him, his eyes devoid of any warmth.

“True Immortal Realm, First Grade?” he repeated softly, a hint of disdain in his tone.

“Nothing special.”

Kai’s eyes narrowed slightly, his gaze filled with killing intent.

Even with his weakened state, he wasn’t afraid of Elder Qingxuan. If he were at his peak, this sword strike would have already taken Elder Qingxuan’s life. Elder Qingxuan felt a chill run down his spine under Kai’s gaze, an unprecedented fear welling up from the depths of his heart.

He had cultivated for a thousand years, reaching the first rank of True Immortal Realm, and considered himself a strongman in the fourteenth heaven.

Yet this young man before him, despite having had most of his bloodline drained and his strength significantly reduced, had killed over a dozen of his disciples with a single sword strike and severely wounded him with another!

What kind of monster was this?!

“You…who exactly are you?!”

Elder Qingxuan asked in a trembling voice.

Kai didn’t answer, but slowly raised the Dragon-Slaying Sword, its tip pointing directly at his throat.

The jet-black blade shimmered eerily in the sunlight, the golden dragon patterns seeming to come alive, faintly emanating a dragon’s roar.

Elder Qingxuan felt a chill run from the soles of his feet to the top of his head, no longer caring about face, mission, or the dignity of the Divine Hall.

“Retreat! Retreat quickly!”

he shouted sharply, struggling to his feet and staggering away into the distance.

The remaining disciples of the Divine Hall were already terrified. Hearing the order, they felt as if they had been granted a pardon and turned to flee, desperately trying to escape.

Their previous arrogance had vanished completely.

In an instant, only Kai and Yun Yao remained in the valley.

Kai stood with his sword in hand, watching the fleeing figures, his eyes showing no emotion.

Yun Yao, recovering from her shock, rushed to Kai’s side and said urgently, “Young Master, why don’t you chase them? You must nip it in the bud! If we let them go back and report, the people from the Divine Hall will soon come knocking again!”

Kai didn’t speak, just stood there quietly.

Yun Yao was about to persuade him again when she saw Kai's body suddenly sway, and the Dragon-Slaying Sword in his hand clattered to the ground.

"Young Master!"

Yun Yao exclaimed in alarm and quickly supported him.

Kai's face was ashen, and large beads of sweat rolled down his forehead.

He opened his mouth, wanting to say something, but suddenly spat out a mouthful of blood.

"Pfft—"

Blood stained his clothes, a horrifying sight.

Yun Yao was terrified and quickly helped him sit down: "Young Master! Young Master, what's wrong?!"

Kai leaned against Yun Yao, panting heavily. After a long while, he weakly spoke: "That sword strike just now... it was my last attack with all my might... If Qing Xuan hadn't run, I... I wouldn't have lasted three breaths..."

Yun Yao was stunned.

So, the imposing, murderous Kai from just now was actually bluffing with his last breath!

She recalled Kai's domineering gaze and his awe-inspiring aura, and an indescribable complex emotion welled up in her heart.

"Young Master, you..."

Kai gave a bitter smile and shook his head: "There's no other way... if we don't scare him, we'll all die here..."

Yun Yao's eyes welled up with tears, and she nodded forcefully.

She helped Kai up and whispered: "Young Master, let's go quickly. It's not safe here; they might react at any moment."

Kai nodded weakly.

Yun Yao picked up the Dragon-Slaying Sword, supported Kai, and staggered towards the depths of the valley.

Yun Yao helped Kai trudge through the mountains.

Kai's injuries were more severe than she had imagined. Most of his blood had been drained, and he had forced himself to unleash a sword strike beyond his limits; his meridians were severely damaged, and his spiritual energy was almost depleted.

Every few steps, he had to stop and catch his breath for a long time.

Yun Yao was anxious but dared not stop.

She knew that although Qing Xuan and his men had been frightened away, they would surely return once they regained their senses.

"Young Master, hold on a little longer,"

she whispered, comforting him. "I remember there's a cave ahead; let's hide there first."

Kai didn't speak, only nodded slightly.

The two walked for a full hour before finally finding a secluded cave.

The cave wasn't large, but it was enough for two people to fit in. The entrance was hidden by dense vines, making it difficult to spot without careful observation.

Yun Yao helped Kai into the cave and let him rest against the stone wall. Then she took out a pill and fed it to Kai.

“Young Master, you should rest first. I’ll go out and set up a simple concealment array, then come back to watch over you.”

Kai nodded weakly, closed his eyes, and began to circulate his cultivation technique to refine the medicinal power.

Yun Yao walked out of the cave, took out several array flags from her storage ring, and set up a simple concealment array around the cave entrance.

Although it couldn’t compare to the grand arrays of those major sects, it could at least fool ordinary pursuers.

After setting up the array, she guarded the cave entrance for a long time, making sure no pursuers followed, before returning to the cave.

Kai had already fallen into a deep sleep, his face still pale, but his breathing was much more steady.

Yun Yao sat beside him, looking at his tired face, and an indescribable emotion welled up in her heart.

This man, to save his friend, had traveled thousands of miles to the Holy Domain of Light, only to be deceived, harmed, and almost lose his life. Yet he had never complained, never retreated a single step.

She murmured softly, “Young Master, you must get better soon…”

For the next three days, the two hid in the cave.

Kai took medicine and regulated his breathing daily, refining his spiritual energy to repair his damaged meridians.

Yun Yao was responsible for keeping watch, occasionally going out to gather information and pick some spiritual herbs to treat Kai’s injuries.

After three days, Kai's injuries had improved considerably; although he was not fully recovered, he could at least move normally.

One day, Kai was regulating his breathing in the cave when he suddenly heard light footsteps outside.

He opened his eyes, his gaze sharpening.

Yun Yao also heard the noise and quickly got up, assuming a defensive posture.

A moment later, the vines at the cave entrance were parted, and several figures appeared at the entrance. The leader was a middle-aged man in a white robe, with a golden lotus embroidered on his chest.

His face was refined, with a gentle smile, but beneath that smile lay an undisguised sinister glint. He

was none other than Qingxu, the vice-leader of the Holy Purity Sect.

Behind him followed four or five disciples of the Holy Purity Sect, each possessing considerable cultivation, all above the seventh rank of the Upper Immortal Realm.

Qingxu looked at Kai and Yun Yao in the cave, his face beaming as if he were seeing an old friend.

"Young Master Chen, Miss Yun Yao, I've been searching for you everywhere."

His voice was gentle, yet carried a chilling coldness.

Yun Yao's expression changed drastically, instinctively stepping in front of Kai. "You…how did you find this place?!"

Qingxu smiled slightly, his gaze falling on Yun Yao, a greedy glint in his eyes.

“Miss Yun Yao, you are a member of my Holy Purity Sect, bearing our sect’s unique mark. No matter where you flee, I will find you.”

He paused, his gaze shifting to Kai, a strange glint in his eyes.

“However, I didn’t expect you to be with this Kai. I heard he caused quite a stir in the Divine Hall, even that old codger Qing Xuan suffered a loss. Tsk tsk, as expected of the Five-Clawed Golden Dragon bloodline, truly extraordinary.”

Kai calmly looked at him, saying nothing.

Seeing his composure, Qing Xu felt somewhat uneasy.

He had heard that although Kai’s cultivation was not high, his strength was astonishing, capable of even killing elders at the True Immortal realm.

However, judging from his current appearance, pale-faced and weak, he was clearly seriously injured.

Qing Xu felt reassured, his smile growing even brighter.

“Young Master Chen, Miss Yun Yao, come with me. I guarantee that as long as you cooperate obediently, I will not harm you.”

Yun Yao gritted her teeth and said sharply, “Don’t even think about it! I’d rather die than go back with you!”

Qing Xu sighed and shook his head, “Miss Yun Yao, why are you doing this? I’ve treated you well, given you resources and opportunities to cultivate, but you’re ungrateful and ran off with an outsider. This makes me very sad.”

He paused, his smile gradually fading, replaced by a coldness.

“Since you refuse to listen to reason, then don’t blame me for being impolite. Attack!” As soon as he finished

speaking, several disciples of the Holy Qing Sect behind him attacked in unison, rushing towards Kai and Yun Yao.

Yun Yao's expression changed drastically, and she hurriedly drew her sword to defend herself.

But her injuries had not yet healed, how could she be a match for these people?

After only a few moves, she was forced to retreat repeatedly, facing imminent danger.

Kai stood up, wanting to help, but suddenly felt dizzy and almost fell.

His injuries were too severe; he was powerless to fight.

Seeing Yun Yao about to give up, a resolute glint flashed in Kai's eyes. He gritted his teeth, forcing himself to muster his spiritual power, preparing for a desperate fight.

Just then—

"Boom!"

A loud explosion rang out, and the cave entrance suddenly shattered!

Debris flew everywhere, and dust billowed.

Several disciples of the Holy Purity Sect were thrown backward by the shockwave, crashing heavily to the ground, spitting blood.

Qing Xu's expression changed drastically; he quickly retreated a few steps, warily watching the cave entrance.

From the dust, a black figure slowly emerged.

It was a woman dressed in black, with a cold and beautiful face, snow-white skin, and eyes as deep as the night sky.

She exuded a faint ghostly aura, noble and mysterious, as if from another world.

It was Yun Xi.

Yun Xi slowly walked into the cave, her gaze coldly sweeping over Qing Xu and the Holy Purity Sect disciples.

Qingxu felt a chill run down his spine under her gaze and instinctively took a step back.

“You…who are you?!”

Yunxi didn’t answer, but simply raised her right hand, black ghostly energy slowly condensing in her palm.

Qingxu’s expression changed drastically. He could sense that the woman’s aura was unfathomable, far beyond his ability to contend with.

“Retreat! Retreat quickly!”

he shouted sharply, turning and fleeing.

The disciples of the Holy Pure Sect, disregarding their injuries, scrambled after him as they fled the cave.

Yunxi didn’t chase after them. She simply stood there, watching them flee into the distance, then turned to look at Kai.

Kai leaned against the stone wall, looking at her weakly, a bitter smile tugging at the corner of his mouth.

“I…I owe you again…”

Yunxi looked at him, a complex expression flashing in her eyes.

“Your injuries are severe.”

Kai nodded, not denying it.

Yunxi walked to his side, placing her hand on his shoulder, a surge of pure ghostly energy slowly flowing into his body.

Kai felt a warm current flow into his meridians, repairing the damaged areas.

His complexion gradually regained some color.

After a moment, Yun Xi withdrew her hand and said calmly, “I can only help stabilize your injuries. A full recovery will take time.”

Kai nodded, looking at her gratefully, “Thank you.”

Yun Xi shook her head, her gaze falling on Yun Yao.

Yun Yao was covered in wounds, her clothes tattered, yet she still stood firmly protectively in front of Kai, watching Yun Xi warily.

A hint of approval flashed in Yunxi’s eyes as she softly said, “He’s quite a loyal person.”

She paused, then looked at Kai: “What do you plan to do next?”

Kai was silent for a moment before slowly speaking, “I want to return to Yunxian City.”

“Yunxian City?” Yunxi frowned slightly. “What kind of place is that?”

Kai replied, “A city on the edge of the Fourteenth Heaven. My friends are there who can protect me and help me heal. I can’t rest and recover peacefully in the Holy Light Domain.”

Yunxi nodded. “Then how will you get back? The Divine Hall and the Holy Purity Sect are looking for you; they probably won’t let you leave easily.”

Kai looked at Yun Yao.

Yun Yao quickly said, “Young Master, I know a way. Although it’s somewhat dangerous, it can help me avoid the pursuit of the Divine Hall and the Holy Purity Sect and reach the city where the teleportation array is located.”

Kai nodded, then looked at Yunxi again.

Yunxi understood his meaning and said calmly, “I can escort you for a while.”

Kai looked at her earnestly and said, “Thank you. I will remember this favor.”

Yunxi shook her head, saying nothing more.

The three figures left the cave and disappeared into the vast forest. In the days that followed, the three embarked on a difficult escape.

Yun Yao led them along truly remote paths, deliberately traversing desolate mountains and wilderness.

Sometimes, they had to climb cliffs;

other times, they had to pass through dark, dense forests, dodging attacks from demonic beasts.

The pursuers from the Divine Hall and the Holy Purity Sect were ever-present, nearly discovering them several times.

Once, they had just left a valley when the Divine Hall’s men arrived.

Had Yun Yao not set up a warning array beforehand, the three would likely have been trapped inside.

Another time, they encountered a patrol of Holy Purity Sect disciples in the mountains.

Yun Xi wanted to intervene, but Kai stopped her. The three hid in the bushes, holding their breath, watching helplessly as the men passed by.

That short period of time felt longer than a year.

Yun Yao's injuries worsened, yet she gritted her teeth and persevered, never uttering a sound of exhaustion.

Kai saw this, his heart aching, but he was powerless to help. He could only try to rest as much as possible, recover his strength as quickly as possible, and escape this perilous situation as soon as possible.

Yunxi remained silent throughout, quietly protecting the two.

Whenever pursuers approached, she could sense them in advance and lead them to safety.

Her presence became their greatest support.

One day, the three finally arrived at a city.

The city wasn't large, but it was heavily guarded. The city walls were covered in array patterns, and soldiers stood guard at the gates, checking everyone entering and leaving.

Yunyao pointed to the city and said weakly, "Young Master, this is it. There are teleportation arrays in this city leading to various parts of the Fourteenth Heaven. If we can get in, we can teleport back to Yunxian City."

Kai looked at the city, his brows furrowed.

Entering the city was easy, but using the teleportation array would inevitably lead to discovery.

The Divine Hall and the Holy Purity Sect had certainly planted spies near the teleportation array.

Yunxi seemed to sense his concerns and said calmly, “I’ll draw them away.”

Kai was startled and looked at her.

Yun Xi remained expressionless, her tone calm: “You owe me twice, one more won’t make a difference. After you enter the city, go straight to the teleportation array, don’t delay. I’ll try my best to hold them off.”

Kai was silent for a moment, then slowly nodded.

“Take care.”

Yun Xi’s lips curled slightly upward.

“You too, after we leave, you can come to Yunxian City to find me, my ghost clan friend is there too.” Kai said.

“Okay…”

As soon as she finished speaking, her figure flashed, transforming into a black stream of light, flying in another direction.

A moment later, a series of exclamations and sounds of fighting came from afar.

Kai took a deep breath, helped Yun Yao, and walked towards the city gate.

The guards at the city gate only did a simple check before letting the two into the city.

Kai helped Yun Yao, quickly crossing the streets, and arrived at the teleportation hall in the city center.

Outside the teleportation hall, as expected, there were disciples of the Divine Hall secretly monitoring.

But at this moment, they were all attracted to the commotion outside the city and were looking in that direction.

Kai took the opportunity to bring Yun Yao into the teleportation hall.

Inside the hall, an elderly man with white hair was meditating.

Seeing the two enter, he opened his eyes, his gaze falling on Kai, a strange glint in his eyes.

“You two wish to be teleported?”

Kai nodded, taking five hundred bottles of immortal liquid from his storage ring and placing them before the old man.

“To Yunxian City.”

The old man glanced at the immortal liquid; it far exceeded the cost of teleportation.

He calmly put the liquid away and nodded.

“Follow me.”

He led the two to the teleportation array and began activating it.

The array slowly lit up, golden light enveloping the two.

Just then, a commotion arose outside the hall.

“Seal the teleportation hall! Don’t let them escape!”

Kai’s expression changed, gripping Yun Yao’s hand tightly.

The old man glanced at them and said calmly, “Don’t worry, the array is activated; they can’t stop us.”

As his words fell, the light surged.

The next second, the two figures vanished from the teleportation array.

The hall doors were smashed open, and a group of Divine Hall disciples rushed in.

But the teleportation array was already empty.

The leader's face was ashen, and he shouted sternly, "Investigate! Find out where they teleported to!"

But the traces of the teleportation array had vanished, making it impossible to trace.

...

Cloud Immortal City, Teleportation Hall.

A flash of light from the array, and two figures appeared in the hall.

It was Kai and Yun Yao.

The guardian in the hall was startled, but upon recognizing Kai, he quickly bowed.

Kai ignored him and helped Yun Yao out of the teleportation hall.

Outside the hall, the sun shone brightly, and the sky was azure.

In the distance, the silhouette of a giant dragon could be vaguely seen circling.

Kai took a deep breath, feeling the familiar air, and a sense of relief, like surviving a calamity, welled up in his heart.

Finally... we're back.

He turned around and looked at Yun Yao.

Yun Yao's face was pale, and she leaned weakly against him, but managed a smile.

Behind them, the doors of the teleportation hall slowly closed.

In the distance, a giant dragon circled, its roar echoing through the heavens and earth.

It seemed to be welcoming the return of the Dragon Emperor. Outside the teleportation hall in Yunxian City.

The sun shone brightly, and the sky was a clear, azure blue.

In the distance, dozens of giant dragons coiled and danced, their golden scales reflecting a dazzling light in the sunlight, their roars faintly echoing, majestic and solemn.

Kai, supporting Yun Yao, had just stepped out of the teleportation hall when several figures rushed towards them from afar.

Leading them was Long Zhan.

Behind him followed Ming Li, Liu Qianqian, and Chen Wanqing.

"Your Majesty!"

Long Zhan landed before Kai, his face full of joy. He was about to bow when his expression suddenly changed drastically.

His gaze fell on Kai's pale face, on his weak breath, and on the bloodstains remaining at the corner of his mouth.

"Your Majesty! You are injured?!"

Long Zhan's voice was filled with shock and anger.

He could feel that Kai's aura was much weaker than when he left, and the power of his bloodline was also much thinner.

Ming Li and Liu Qianqian also rushed over, and seeing Kai's appearance, they were both stunned.

"Mr. Chen, what... what happened to you?"

Ming Li asked anxiously, his eyes filled with worry.

Liu Qianqian didn't speak, but her beautiful eyes were also full of concern.

Chen Wanqing stood to the side, her eyes initially lighting up with joy at Kai's safe return, but her joy faltered slightly when she saw the unfamiliar woman Kai was supporting.

The woman was stunningly beautiful, with a cool and aloof air, and was now leaning weakly against Kai.

Although she was covered in wounds and her clothes were tattered, her captivating beauty was still undeniable.

A pang of sadness welled up in Chen Wanqing's heart .

But she quickly suppressed this emotion, stepped forward, and asked with concern, " Kai, are you injured? Is it serious?"

Kai shook his head and smiled weakly, "I'm fine, I won't die."

He paused, then looked at Long Zhan, "Let's go back first."

Long Zhan nodded hurriedly and personally helped Kai up. The group took to the air and flew towards the City Lord's Mansion.

...

Chen Mansion, main hall.

Kai sat in the main seat, with Yun Yao beside him.

Long Zhan, Ming Li, Liu Qianqian, and Chen Wanqing sat on either side.

Kai picked up his teacup, took a sip of spiritual tea, and slowly began to speak.

“I was deceived in the Holy Domain of Light.”

He recounted his experiences at the Divine Hall in detail.

From testing his bloodline, to being received by Qing Xuzi, to entering the magic array, to being ambushed by Qing Xuan, to Yun Yao risking her life to save him, to the appearance of the mysterious woman Yun Xi, and then to his escape.

After listening, everyone’s faces turned ashen, their eyes filled with anger.

“Bastards!”

Ming Li slammed his fist on the table and stood up abruptly. “What kind of bullshit righteous holy land is this! They’re just a bunch of beasts in human skin!”

As a member of the Ghost Clan, he already had no goodwill towards so-called righteous cultivators, and hearing about the Divine Hall’s actions only fueled his rage.

Liu Qianqian trembled with rage: “How…how could they do this?! They promised to save people, but they turned around and harmed them! Are…are they even human?!”

Long Zhan remained silent, but his dragon eyes flashed with cold killing intent.

Chen Wanqing’s eyes were already red.

Looking at Kai’s pale face, an indescribable heartache welled up in her heart.

” Kai…” she murmured, but didn’t know what to say.

Kai waved his hand, signaling everyone to calm down.

“I was able to come back alive this time thanks to Yun Yao and that girl named Yun Xi.”

He looked at Yun Yao, a trace of gratitude flashing in his eyes, “If it weren’t for Yun Yao risking her life to save me, if it weren’t for Yun Xi appearing in time, I’m afraid I would have died in the Holy Domain of Light.”

Everyone’s gaze fell on Yun Yao.

Yun Yao quickly stood up and bowed slightly to everyone: “Yun Yao greets everyone.”

Chen Wanqing looked at her, and the bitterness in her heart surged up again.

But she quickly suppressed her emotions, stood up, walked to Yun Yao, took her hand, and said sincerely, “Miss Yun Yao, thank you for saving Kai. I, Chen Wanqing, will remember this kindness.”

Yun Yao looked at her, felt the sincerity in her eyes, and her heart warmed slightly. She shook her head, “Sister, you flatter me. It was the young master who saved me first. I only did what I should do.”

Hearing the word “sister,” the bitterness in Chen Wanqing’s heart dissipated considerably, and a smile appeared on her face.

Kai looked at Long Zhan and asked, “Long Zhan, what happened in Yunxian City while I was away?”

Long Zhan quickly composed himself and replied solemnly, “Your Majesty, everything is fine in Yunxian City. The Temple hasn’t caused any trouble, and the Demon Dragon Clan hasn’t made any moves either.

Those forces that were originally restless have all become obedient after being intimidated by us."

He paused and continued, "However, my scouts reported that the Temple seems to be secretly gathering manpower recently, and I don't know what they're planning. There have also been unusual movements from the Demon Dragon Clan, as if they're waiting for something."

Kai frowned slightly and nodded.

"Continue to monitor them, and report back immediately if anything happens."

"Yes!"

Kai then looked at Ming Li and Liu Qianqian and asked, "What about you two? Have you discovered anything during this time?"

Ming Li shook his head: "Qianqian and I have been guarding the city, helping Long Zhan with some miscellaneous matters, and we haven't discovered anything special."

Liu Qianqian also nodded.

Kai hummed in acknowledgment, looked at Yun Yao, and introduced her to the crowd: "Miss Yun Yao is from the Holy Light Domain. She was forced by the Holy Purity Sect and almost forced into dual cultivation. I saved her, and she escaped with me. We owe her survival this time to her."

Everyone nodded in respect to Yun Yao.

Yun Yao was a little embarrassed, her cheeks slightly flushed.

Kai paused, then suddenly remembered something and looked at Ming Li.

"By the way, Ming Li, there's something I need to ask you."

Ming Li was taken aback: “Please speak, Mr. Chen.”

Kai said, “Do you know about the Ghost Clan of the Fifteenth Heaven?”

Ming Li was stunned.

“The Fifteenth Heaven?”

He frowned, shook his head, “This subordinate doesn’t know. Although this subordinate comes from the Ghost Clan, I don’t understand the situation of the Fifteenth Heaven.”

He paused, then asked, “Why does Mr. Chen suddenly ask about this?”

Kai said, “The woman who saved me is named Yun Xi. She said she’s a princess of the Ghost Clan from the Fifteenth Heaven, and came to the Fourteenth Heaven because she sensed the aura of the Gate of Reincarnation.”

Ming Li’s expression changed.

The Gate of Reincarnation?!

He was all too familiar with that thing.

He relied on the Gate of Reincarnation to become the Lord of Reincarnation in the Twelfth Heaven.

He took a deep breath, suppressing his shock, and said in a deep voice, “Mr. Chen, it seems the Ghost Clan of the Fifteenth Heaven is quite strong. They sensed even the trace of the Gate of Reincarnation’s aura on me.”

Kai nodded, “That’s right. Yun Xi seems to be at the True Immortal Realm, so their clan’s strength must be considerable.”

“That Miss Yun Xi saved me, so I’ve invited her to Yunxian City. If she comes in the future, you must not neglect her.”

Everyone nodded.

A hint of anticipation flashed in Ming Li's eyes.

As a fellow Ghost Clan member, he was filled with curiosity about this princess from the Fifteenth Heaven.

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After arranging everything, Kai prepared to go into seclusion to heal his injuries.

Long Zhan personally selected a secret chamber with the richest spiritual energy for him and set up multiple layers of restrictions around it to ensure absolute safety.

Kai stood at the entrance of the secret chamber and looked at everyone.

"During my seclusion, I entrust Yunxian City to you."

Long Zhan bowed and said, "Your Majesty, rest assured, I will protect Yunxian City with my life."

Ming Li also patted his chest and guaranteed, "Mr. Chen, rest assured, with me here, no one will dare to cause trouble!" Liu

Qianqian nodded gently, her eyes full of determination.

Chen Wanqing stepped forward, looking at Kai with concern in her eyes, " Kai, you must take good care of your injuries. We'll handle things outside."

Kai nodded, his gaze falling on Yun Yao.

Yun Yao quickly said, "Young Master, rest assured, Yun Yao will take good care of her injuries and won't cause any trouble for everyone."

Kai hummed in agreement and turned to enter the secret chamber.

The door of the secret chamber slowly closed, shutting out everyone's gaze.

Kai took out his Demon-Suppressing Tower and entered it to begin his recovery.

If he were in this secret chamber, without the change in time flow, it would likely take him several years to fully recover.

However, with the Demon-Suppressing Tower, time flowed rapidly; one day outside was equivalent to a hundred days inside. Therefore, Kai only needed a dozen days to recover!

This injury was more severe than any he had ever sustained before.

Most of his bloodline had been drained, his meridians were severely damaged, and his spiritual power was almost completely depleted.

If it weren't for his deep foundation and unwavering will, he probably wouldn't have survived.

But Kai was not discouraged.

Having experienced countless life-or-death situations, he understood that every serious injury was a form of tempering.

As long as he persevered, his strength would reach a new level.

He took out several pills, closed his eyes, and began guiding the medicinal power to repair his meridians.

The Demon-Suppressing Tower fell into silence.

Only a faint golden light slowly flowed around him.

Meanwhile, outside the secret chamber,

Long Zhan, after arranging the guards, led everyone away.

Yun Yao was placed in a guest room, with Liu Qianqian tending to her injuries.

Ming Li went to the city wall to continue monitoring the surrounding area.

Chen Wanqing stood on a high point in the city lord's mansion, gazing towards the secret chamber, silent for a long time.

She recalled Kai's return, his pale face, his weak breath, and an indescribable heartache welled up in her heart.

She also thought of the woman named Yun Yao, the way she leaned against Kai, and a strange bitterness rose in her heart.

She knew Kai was never short of women.

She also knew that her relationship with Kai was nothing more than a martial arts contest to choose a husband.

But she still couldn't help it...

She shook her head, smiled bitterly, and turned away.

Perhaps, this was fate.

...

While Kai recovered, the Demon Dragon leader Long Yuan had been alone deep within the Demon Realm for several days.

The Demon Realm was vast and boundless, and the deeper one went, the harsher the environment became.

The dark red lightning in the sky grew increasingly dense, each strike carrying earth-shattering power.

On the ground, boiling lava rivers flowed everywhere, emitting a pungent sulfurous smell.

The air was thick with demonic energy; a single breath from such an energy would cause an ordinary cultivator to lose their mind and become a bloodthirsty monster.

Long Yuan transformed into a dark red dragon, traversing the demonic energy.

His scales shimmered with an eerie light, resisting the corrupting influence of the demonic energy.

He flew for five full days.

Five days later, he finally arrived at the deepest part of the Demon Realm.

Here lay a desolate plain, barren of everything, devoid even of lava.

The ground was covered with black gravel, shimmering eerily under the reflection of dark red lightning.

In the center of the plain stood a colossal black palace.

This palace was several times more magnificent than the Demon Dragon Palace, constructed entirely of an unknown black crystal, its surface flowing with dark red patterns, like veins, faintly pulsating.

The palace was surrounded by a dense array of restrictions, each capable of annihilating a True Immortal Realm expert.

Long Yuan landed before the palace, transforming into human form and kneeling respectfully.

“Your subordinate, Long Yuan, requests an audience with Your Excellency,”

his voice echoed across the desolate plain.

A moment later, the palace doors slowly opened, and a beam of black light shot out, landing on Long Yuan.

“Come in,”

an aged voice said, devoid of any emotion.

Long Yuan took a deep breath, stood up, and stepped into the palace.

The interior was even more magnificent than the exterior.

The dome was immeasurably high, inlaid with countless dark red gems, radiating an eerie light.

The walls were covered with ancient runes, which swirled with a dark red light, seemingly alive.

In the very center of the hall stood a massive black throne.

Seated upon the throne was an old man.

The old man’s face was aged, deeply wrinkled, and his white hair cascaded over his shoulders.

His eyes were deep purple, so profound they seemed capable of swallowing all light.

His aura was restrained, its depth unreadable, but Long Yuan knew that this man was the true ruler of the Demon Realm.

He was none other than Mo Wuxin, the Demon Realm Lord who had transformed Long Yuan and the others into demonic dragons.

Beside Mo Wuxin stood two people:

a man and a woman, both young.

The man wore a long black robe, his face handsome, with sword-like eyebrows and bright eyes, a faint smile playing on his lips.

His aura was as deep as the sea, giving an impression of unfathomable mystery.

The woman wore a long purple dress, her beauty exquisite, her temperament aloof, her eyes bright as stars.

She stood quietly beside the man, her gaze fixed on Long Yuan, a scrutinizing look in her eyes.

Long Yuan glanced at the two, inwardly surprised.

He had never seen these two before.

Who were they?

Why were they standing beside the lord?

But he didn't ask further, only kneeling respectfully on the ground and kowtowing, saying, "Your subordinate, Long Yuan, greets Your Excellency."

Mo Wuxin slightly raised his hand, gesturing for him to rise.

"Rise. What brings you here?" Long Yuan stood up and said respectfully, "My lord, I have important matters to report."

He paused, then recounted the entire story in detail.

From the visit of the Grand Elder of the Temple to the emergence of the Heavenly Dragon Clan, to the young man with the bloodline of the Dragon Emperor, he told everything.

"...Now, Long Zhan has led the Heavenly Dragon Clan to occupy Cloud Immortal City, and that young man has disappeared without a trace. The Temple wants to join forces with my Demon Dragon Clan to kill him. I

dare not make this decision on my own, so I have come to ask for your permission, my lord."

After listening, a strange look suddenly flashed across Mo Wuxin's usually calm face.

"Dragon Emperor bloodline?"

he murmured, a glint of light flashing in his deep purple eyes. "Are you sure that young man really has the Dragon Emperor bloodline?"

Long Yuan quickly replied, "Although I didn't see it with my own eyes, according to the temple, when Kai was testing his bloodline, he manifested a five-clawed golden dragon phantom, its dragon might overwhelming and shocking everyone present.

Moreover, Long Zhan was able to lead the Heavenly Dragon Clan out of the mountains and into Cloud Immortal City, which must mean he recognized Kai's identity. Therefore, it can be inferred that Kai should indeed have the Dragon Emperor bloodline."

Mo Wuxin was silent for a moment, then suddenly asked, "What did you say that young man's name was?"

Long Yuan replied, "Reporting to my lord, his name is Kai."

As soon as he finished speaking, the young man standing beside Mo Wuxin visibly trembled.

A strange light flashed in his eyes, and the smile on his face froze slightly.

The woman in the purple dress noticed his unusual behavior, her brows furrowing slightly. She leaned close to his ear and asked in a voice only the two of them could hear, "Junior brother, that name Kai sounds familiar. Isn't he the one we met before?"

The young man didn't answer, only silently watching Long Yuan.

After a moment, he suddenly spoke, his voice clear and bright, “What realm is Kai at now?”

Long Yuan was taken aback and turned to look at the young man.

His gaze swept over the young man, a hint of disdain flashing in his eyes.

A mere junior dared to interrupt?

He snorted coldly, his tone carrying a trace of arrogance, “I am speaking with an elder. Who do you think you are, daring to interrupt?”

Upon hearing this, the atmosphere in the hall instantly froze.

The young man’s smile remained, but a cold glint flashed in his eyes.

Mo Wuxin’s expression changed, and he quickly shouted, “Long Yuan! Don’t be rude!”

Long Yuan was startled and looked at Mo Wuxin.

Mo Wuxin looked at him, his tone serious: “This is my grand-uncle. Please be more polite.”

“What?!”

Long Yuan’s eyes widened, his face full of disbelief.

Grand-uncle?!

This young man, who looked to be no more than twenty years old, was actually Mo Wuxin’s grand-uncle?!

What kind of existence was Mo Wuxin?

He was the Lord of the Demon Realm, an old monster who had lived for countless years.

What kind of seniority did his grand-uncle have?

Long Yuan felt a chill run from the soles of his feet to the top of his head, his legs went weak, and he almost knelt down again.

He quickly bowed and saluted, his tone extremely respectful: “This…this subordinate was blind and offended you, senior. Please forgive me!”

The young man looked at him, smiled faintly, and waved his hand.

“Ignorance is no excuse. Get up.”

His voice was gentle, but Long Yuan could hear an undeniable authority in it.

He quickly straightened up, but dared not look up at the young man again.

The young man asked again, “What realm is Kai at now?”

Long Yuan dared not be negligent and quickly replied, “Reporting to Senior, according to the temple, Kai is currently at the third rank of the Upper Immortal Realm.”

“Third rank of the Upper Immortal Realm?”

The young man was slightly taken aback, then smiled.

That smile carried a hint of amusement, a hint of nostalgia, and a hint of…excitement.

“Third rank of the Upper Immortal Realm…interesting.”

He turned his head and looked at the woman in the purple dress beside him.

The woman in the purple dress also looked at him, a complex expression flashing in her eyes.

The young man withdrew his gaze, looked at Mo Wuxin, and said lightly, “Mo Wuxin, I need to meet this Kai.”

Mo Wuxin was taken aback, then nodded, “Since Uncle-Master is interested, then go ahead. Long Yuan, you accompany Uncle-Master.”

Long Yuan quickly bowed, “Yes!”

The young man nodded and strode towards the outside of the hall.

The woman in the purple dress followed beside him and asked softly, “Junior Brother, is it really him?”

The young man did not answer, but the corners of his mouth slightly turned up, revealing a meaningful smile.

“Go and see, you’ll find out.”

Two figures disappeared at the palace gate.

Long Yuan hurriedly followed, his heart filled with turmoil.

Just who was this Kai? Why was even his master’s grand-uncle interested in him?

He didn’t know.

But he knew that what was about to happen was going to be quite interesting.

Above the Demon Realm, three figures sped past.

The young man at the head looked into the distance, a complex expression flashing in his eyes. ” Kai… long time no see. I didn’t expect you to have reached the fourteenth heaven so quickly.”

If Kai saw this man and woman, he would definitely be overjoyed.

Because the male cultivator was Ning Zhi, who had always wanted to kill Kai, and the female cultivator was Su Yuqi, whom Kai had been longing for.

However, Su Yuqi no longer recognized Kai.

He wondered how these two had ended up in the fourteenth heaven, and how Ning Zhi had become Mo Wuxin's grand-uncle.

Ning Zhi was now a disciple of the Flame Demon, so it seemed that Mo Wuxin also belonged to the Flame Demon clan, albeit with a lowly seniority.

As a direct disciple of the Flame Demon, it wouldn't be an exaggeration for a cultivator of the Flame Demon clan to address Ning Zhi as their grand-uncle.

On the edge of the Demon Realm, black mist lingers year-round, and howling winds whip up dark red sand.

The air is thick with violent and chilling demonic energy; any ordinary cultivator who ventures here will be consumed by it within moments, their soul and spirit annihilated.

In this desolate and barren place, a majestic palace, forged entirely from jet-black dragon bones and crimson iron, stands silently between heaven and earth, like a primordial beast dormant for millennia, radiating a chilling pressure.

This is the Demon Dragon Palace, the foundation of the Demon Dragon lineage.

Layers upon layers of restrictions are densely packed like a spiderweb outside the palace, with phantom images of demonic dragons appearing and disappearing in the void. Each restriction contains terrifying power enough to annihilate even a peak-level Upper Immortal; even a True Immortal who rashly enters will meet a gruesome end.

At this moment, three figures ignored all the barriers and strolled leisurely through layers of light, landing steadily on the white jade plaza in front of the main gate of the Demon Dragon Palace.

The leader, dressed in simple black robes, had a handsome face and a calm demeanor. There was no fluctuation of spiritual energy around him, yet he seemed to be one with heaven and earth, making him unfathomable.

He was Ning Zhi.

Beside him, Su Yuqi, dressed in flowing purple robes, possessed unparalleled beauty and a cold temperament like a snow lotus on a snowy mountain. Her eyes held a hint of curiosity as she quietly observed the eerie palace before her.

She stayed close to Ning Zhi, feeling safe and secure even in the perilous core of the Demon Realm because of the person beside her.

Ahead of the two, the Demon Dragon Palace Master, Long Yuan, was extremely humble. This leader of the Demon Dragon lineage, who had dominated the Demon Realm for millennia and struck fear into the hearts of countless forces, now acted like the most loyal servant, bowing and carefully leading the way.

Long Yuan stepped forward personally, extending his hand covered in fine dragon scales, and slowly pushed open the incredibly heavy palace door.

The moment the door opened, an extremely dense demonic energy, mixed with a luxurious yet eerie aura, rushed out. The hinges turned with a muffled rumble, like the low groan of an ancient beast awakening.

Long Yuan quickly stepped aside to make way, bowing slightly, his tone respectful to the point of obsequiousness: “Senior, please.”

Ning Zhi nodded slightly, without any formality, and stepped into the Demon Dragon Palace.

Su Yuqi followed closely behind, her slender footsteps lightly landing on the mirror-like floor, her gaze curiously scanning everything inside.

The scale of the Demon Dragon Palace far exceeded outside expectations. The hall soared into the clouds, its dome inlaid with countless dark red, top-grade demonic crystals, emitting a faint, eerie light that bathed the entire hall in a crimson glow.

Towering pillars, each requiring dozens of people to encircle, stood within the hall, their surfaces carved with lifelike reliefs of demonic dragons, their claws bared and eyes blazing in fury.

Every scale, every whisker, was exquisitely detailed. Bathed in the light of the magic crystals, the dragons in the reliefs seemed to come alive, poised to break free from the pillars and devour everything in their path.

The floor was paved with blood-red jade, smooth and warm to the touch, yet exuding a chilling coldness.

On either side of the hall were chairs crafted from the bones of rare demonic beasts, their backs inlaid with various gemstones, their luxurious design radiating an eeriness and domineering power, showcasing the strength and tyranny of the demonic dragon lineage.

Ning Zhi walked slowly to the center of the main hall, stopped, stood with his hands behind his back, and calmly swept his gaze around. His tone was even and unwavering: “This place of yours is quite nice.”

Long Yuan quickly followed, standing three steps away from Ning Zhi, his face plastered with a cautious, apologetic smile: “Senior, you flatter me. This junior’s Demon Dragon Palace is merely a remote and impoverished place in the Demon Realm, utterly shabby and unworthy of your attention. I apologize for the embarrassment.”

Ning Zhi smiled faintly, without replying.

His smile, seemingly gentle, made Long Yuan increasingly uneasy, completely unable to fathom the thoughts of this mysterious senior.

Long Yuan dared not be negligent in the slightest, and quickly gestured. Immediately, two Demon Dragon Guards clad in black demon armor stepped forward, bringing two chairs carved from ten-thousand-year-old warm jade, and respectfully placed them beside the main seat.

“Seniors have come from afar and must be tired from their journey. Please take a seat and rest.”

Long Yuan bowed and gestured for them to sit down. Only after Ning Zhi and Su Yuqi slowly sat down did he dare to stand to the side with his hands hanging down, not daring to even breathe loudly, let alone sit down on his own.

After the two were seated, Long Yuan cautiously spoke, his tone extremely respectful: “Senior has come from afar and must be tired from the journey. Why not rest comfortably in my Demon Dragon Palace for a few days?

I have already dispatched all my elite spies to search for Kai’s whereabouts. As soon as there is any news, they will report back immediately. I will personally accompany you then, without daring to delay in the slightest.”

Ning Zhi glanced at him, his deep eyes devoid of any emotion, and simply nodded slightly: “Very well, go and make the arrangements.”

Receiving Ning Zhi’s approval, Long Yuan felt as if he had been granted a pardon. He quickly bowed and turned to instruct his subordinates to immediately prepare the most luxurious guest room in the Demon Dragon Palace and gather the palace’s treasured spiritual fruits and teas, ensuring that this mysterious senior was treated with the highest honors.

In a short while, several beautiful maids quickly approached, carrying jade platters laden with rare spiritual fruits and steaming cups of spiritual tea. They gently placed the tea and fruits on the jade table in front of Ning Zhi and Su Yuqi, their movements quiet and discreet.

Ning Zhi picked up the white jade teacup in front of him, took a small sip of the spiritual tea, and savored the rich aroma mixed with a faint spiritual energy. He put down the teacup, his gaze slowly falling on Long Yuan standing to the side, and asked in a calm tone, “You just said that Kai is currently in Yunxian City?”

Long Yuan’s heart tightened, and he quickly stepped forward, bowing as he replied, “Reporting to Senior, according to the reports from my most elite scouts, Kai did indeed appear in Yunxian City a few days ago, and he even led the entire Tianlong Clan…” They established themselves in Yunxian City, making that major city in Zhongzhou their base.

However, strangely, when their scouts went to investigate in recent days, Kai had vanished into thin air. Only members of the Tianlong Clan remained in the city, and they couldn’t find any trace of him .

“I’ve tripled the manpower to monitor Yunxian City day and night. I believe it won’t be long before we find his exact whereabouts.”

Ning Zhi nodded slowly upon hearing this, saying nothing more, his gaze lowered, lost in thought.

Su Yuqi sat beside Ning Zhi, her beautiful eyes fixed on his face.

She observed that Ning Zhi’s expression was calm, his brows and eyes devoid of any emotion, yet deep within his profound eyes lay a complex emotion she had never seen before—expectation, coldness, and an unspeakable obsession.

In all the time she’d known Ning Zhi, she’d never seen him so attentive to anyone.

Who exactly was this Kai?

Why was he so concerned about her usually aloof junior brother?

Could it be the Kai she’d met on the Heavenly Ladder?

She opened her mouth, wanting to ask, but seeing Ning Zhi so lost in thought, she swallowed her words, suppressing her doubts.

Su Yuqi was utterly confused. The name Kai seemed familiar, yet utterly foreign.

Especially during the Heavenly Ladder, when they were trying to kill Kai, his behavior at the time made him seem like a close acquaintance.

Ning Zhi glanced at Su Yuqi, his expression instantly hardening. He was afraid she'd overthink things.

Although Su Yuqi had completely lost her memories, Ning Zhi was still afraid she might suddenly remember something!

After all, Su Yuqi and Kai were boyfriend and girlfriend, having longed for each other for so long.

If even a single memory were stirred within Su Yuqi, it would be troublesome.

Long Yuan glanced at Ning Zhi, realizing his presence would be inconvenient, and immediately bowed respectfully, saying, "If Senior has no further instructions, I will take my leave to personally supervise my subordinates in gathering information. I will not delay your affairs."

Ning Zhi waved his hand, signaling him to leave.

Long Yuan bowed again and slowly retreated until he was several feet away from the main hall before daring to turn and leave. In the vast main hall of the Demon Dragon Palace, only Ning Zhi and Su Yuqi remained .

"Senior Sister, rest for a couple of days. Your strength has increased too quickly recently. Even if you have a Fire Spirit Body, haste makes waste. Don't injure yourself,"

Ning Zhi said to Su Yuqi.

“Okay!” Su Yuqi nodded.

…

Outside the Demon Dragon Palace, on the white jade plaza, Long Yuan stood at the edge of the barrier, letting out a long breath.

He wiped the cold sweat from his forehead, composed himself, and with a gentle gesture, he calmed his mind.

A demonic dragon elder, dressed in a gray robe and exuding a chilling aura, immediately stepped forward and bowed respectfully: “Your subordinate greets the leader!”

Long Yuan’s expression darkened, and his tone became serious: “Immediately select the ten most astute and stealthy spies from within the palace and send them to Cloud Immortal City to investigate Kai’s whereabouts with all their might.

Remember, they must act in secret, without revealing their identities, and absolutely not alert the enemy. If they jeopardize your important mission, you will be beheaded!”

“Your subordinate obeys!”

The demonic dragon elder dared not delay in the slightest, and immediately turned and left after receiving the order.

Long Yuan turned around and looked again in the direction of the Demonic Dragon Palace, a complex expression flashing in his turbid eyes.

What was the origin of this suddenly appearing grandmaster uncle?

Just how powerful was he?

Why was he so interested in an unknown Kai?

He couldn’t understand any of these questions.

But he knew in his heart that from the moment this senior stepped into the Demonic Dragon Palace, the entire格局 (geju, a concept encompassing the overall structure and power) of the Fourteenth Heaven would likely be completely shaken.

What followed was no longer within his control as the Lord of the Demon Dragon Palace.

His only option was to do everything in his power to appease this senior, hoping to preserve the Demon Dragon lineage amidst the impending storm.

...

Meanwhile, in the main hall of the Divine Temple.

The atmosphere within was extremely tense, the air seemingly frozen, oppressive and suffocating.

The Divine Temple Lord, Shen Tong, sat high on the throne of the Lingxiao Palace, clad in a golden dragon-patterned robe, his face majestic, radiating an awe-inspiring holy aura.

Yet, at this moment, his face was as gloomy as the sky before a storm, his brows furrowed with malevolence.

Below, more than ten temple elders stood on either side, each possessing formidable auras, the weakest being at the peak of the Upper Immortal Realm, with several True Immortal Realm experts among them. Yet, at this moment, all the elders bowed their heads in silence, trembling with fear, none daring to break the deathly silence.

Shen Tong’s icy gaze slowly swept over the crowd below, his deep and authoritative voice echoing in the hall: “You should all already know the news of the Dragon Clan’s emergence from the mountains and the entire Heavenly Dragon Clan’s relocation to Cloud Immortal City.”

The elders hurriedly nodded, daring not to voice any objection.

Shen Tong snorted coldly, his tone filled with deep apprehension and killing intent: “That Kai is already exceptionally talented, with unpredictable methods, making him extremely difficult to deal with. Now, with the entire Heavenly Dragon Clan’s full support, his power is at its zenith.

If we allow him to continue developing like this, it won’t be long before he becomes a major threat to our temple, and may even threaten our temple’s dominance in the Fourteenth Heaven!”

He paused, his gaze falling on the Grand Elder standing at the forefront, and asked in a deep voice: “Grand Elder, you were ordered to go to the Demon Dragon lineage the other day to discuss a joint alliance with Long Yuan. What was the result?”

Upon hearing this, the Grand Elder immediately stepped forward, bowed respectfully, and replied… “Reporting to the Palace Master, I met with Long Yuan. However, Long Yuan’s attitude was very ambiguous. He neither explicitly agreed to join forces with my temple nor directly refused. He only said that this matter was of great importance and required time to consider, asking me to wait for news.”

Shen Tong frowned, a hint of disdain and anger flashing in his eyes: “Consider? Long Yuan is clearly deliberately stalling, waiting for us to increase our demands!”

He slowly stood up, his hands behind his back before the main seat, his gaze fixed on the sea of clouds outside the hall, his tone icy: “The appearance of the Heavenly Dragon Clan and the rise of Kai are not only troubles for my temple, but also mortal enemies for his Demon Dragon lineage.

That old fox Long Yuan…” ” Everyone knows perfectly well that the Demon Dragon lineage and the orthodox dragon race are sworn enemies. Kai, possessing the bloodline of the Dragon Emperor, will certainly not let them off the hook.

His current delay is simply a way to watch the two fight it out, waiting for us to offer more benefits before he'll make a move."

The Grand Elder quickly echoed, "The Palace Master is absolutely right! That Long Yuan is cunning and suspicious; he never acts without a clear benefit. Ordinary benefits are simply not enough for him.

If we want him to willingly join forces with our temple this time, we'll have to show him sufficient sincerity."

Shen Tong turned around, his gaze fixed intently on the Grand Elder, his tone firm: "This time, take more men to the Demon Dragon..." "Dragon Palace.

Gather three True Immortal Realm elders and select fifty elite Upper Immortal Realm warriors to accompany you."

The First Elder's heart skipped a beat, and he quickly replied, "Your subordinate obeys!"

A ruthless glint flashed in Shen Tong's eyes as he coldly said, "Upon arriving at the Demon Dragon Palace, if that Long Yuan is sensible and willing to join forces with my temple to kill Kai, everything will be fine, and the promised benefits will be doubled. But if he still doesn't know his place and deliberately delays..."

At this point, Shen Tong's voice suddenly turned cold, filled with murderous intent: "Then let him see the majesty of my temple, which is not something that a heretical demon dragon lineage can provoke at will!" "Understood!"

The Grand Elder's heart skipped a beat, knowing that the Palace Master was truly enraged. If Long Yuan didn't cooperate this time, he would have to resort to force.

Shen Tong nodded in satisfaction and waved his hand: "Go, set off immediately. I await your good news."

“Your subordinate takes his leave!”

The Grand Elder bowed and turned to leave quickly, immediately gathering manpower to prepare for the journey to the Demon Dragon Palace.

Chapter Twenty-Nine: The Temple Returns

Three days later, on the edge of the Demon Realm, outside the Demon Dragon Palace.

The sky was still shrouded in thick black mist, and dark red winds howled incessantly. However, today, a sacred aura, incompatible with the demonic energy of the Demon Realm, appeared on the white jade plaza of the Demon Dragon Palace.

A stream of light pierced through the black mist and landed majestically on the plaza. As the light dissipated, dozens of figures clad in golden divine robes appeared.

The leader was none other than the Grand Elder of the Temple. His hair and beard were completely white, his face imposing, and golden divine power flowed around him. His True Immortal realm aura was released without reservation, forcing the surrounding demonic energy to retreat.

Behind him, three equally powerful True Immortal realm elders stood to his left and right, while fifty Upper Immortal realm cultivators clad in elite divine armor formed a neat ranks, each with a solemn expression and an imposing presence.

This time, the Grand Elder was no longer subservient as before. He stood with his hands behind his back, head held high, his gaze fixed on the gates of the Demon Dragon Palace, radiating a superior and oppressive aura, clearly there to exert pressure.

A moment later, the heavy palace doors slowly opened, and Long Yuan’s figure emerged from within, standing atop the gates, looking down at the Temple’s entourage in the plaza.

When he saw the three True Immortal Realm elders and fifty elite Upper Immortal Realm cultivators behind the Grand Elder, his brows furrowed slightly, and a hint of displeasure flashed in his eyes, but he quickly concealed it, a meaningful smile spreading across his face.

“Grand Elder, it’s been several days. How have you been? I didn’t expect you to grace my Demon Dragon Palace with your presence again today, bringing so many elite experts. The entourage is far greater than last time; I am truly flattered.”

Long Yuan’s tone was somewhat teasing, yet neither humble nor arrogant.

The Grand Elder glanced at him indifferently, his tone cold and arrogant: “Chief Longyuan, I have come again on the orders of the Palace Master to discuss joining forces against Kai. I request that you grant me entry into the palace for further discussion.” Longyuan’s gaze slowly swept over the three True Immortal Realm elders behind him, a mocking smile playing on his lips: ” Grand Elder

, I am somewhat confused. Have you brought so many experts here today to discuss cooperation, or to demonstrate your power within my Demon Dragon Palace?”

The old man’s expression remained unchanged, his tone calm: “Chief, you are overthinking it. I have brought people here not only to discuss cooperation, but also to demonstrate the sincerity of my temple to the Demon Dragon lineage.

Dealing with Kai is of great importance, and my temple naturally needs to show sufficient resolve to prove our determination.”

Long Yuan stared at the Grand Elder for a moment, then suddenly burst into laughter: “Good! What sincerity! Since the Grand Elder is so sincere, then please come into the hall for a discussion!”

With that, he stepped aside to make way, gesturing for them to enter.

The Grand Elder snorted coldly, and led the three True Immortal Realm elders behind him into the Demon Dragon Hall, while the fifty Upper Immortal Realm elites were ordered to remain in the plaza outside the hall and were not allowed to enter without permission.

Inside the hall, Long Yuan went straight to the main seat and sat down, no longer as humble as before. The aura of a demon dragon slowly emanated from his body, displaying the majesty of the temple master.

The Grand Elder and the three temple elders sat in the guest seats, with the two sides seated on either side, and the atmosphere instantly became tense.

The Grand Elder cut to the chase without beating around the bush: “Chief Longyuan, last time I came to discuss the alliance with you, you said you needed time to consider it. Now several days have passed, I wonder how your consideration has been?”

Longyuan picked up the teacup in front of him, took a sip of spiritual tea, lowered his gaze, and did not answer immediately, deliberately delaying the time.

Seeing this, the Grand Elder was displeased, but still patiently continued, “Chief, you and I both know perfectly well that Kai possesses the bloodline of the Dragon Emperor, is the future of the Heavenly Dragon Clan, and is the mortal enemy of your Demon Dragon Clan.

Now he leads the Heavenly Dragon Clan to occupy Cloud Immortal City, and his power is growing stronger every day. If we don’t eliminate him soon, he will become a great threat in the future, and your Demon Dragon Clan will be the first to suffer!”

He paused, then offered a heavy-handed condition: “My Temple is willing to put aside past grievances with the Demon Dragon Clan and join forces to kill Kai.

After the deed is done, all the territory and resources of Cloud Immortal City will belong to the Demon Dragon Clan, and the Dragon Emperor’s

bloodline and the Dragon Clan's treasures on Kai will also be at your disposal. My Temple will not take a single penny!

This condition is far more generous than last time, which is enough to demonstrate the sincerity of my Temple, isn't it?"

Upon hearing this, a hint of emotion flashed in Long Yuan's eyes.

Yunxian City is vast and rich in resources. If it could be incorporated into the territory of the Demon Dragon lineage, the power of the Demon Realm would undoubtedly expand significantly.

Furthermore, the Dragon Emperor bloodline within Kai is something he has always dreamed of. If he could refine the Dragon Emperor bloodline, his strength would surely break through its bottleneck, reaching the second rank of True Immortal Realm, or even higher.

This offer is indeed extremely tempting.

But Long Yuan, being a shrewd and calculating man, remained outwardly calm, simply saying, "Elder, these conditions are indeed tempting, and I am quite interested myself.

However, I reiterate, this matter is of great importance and requires further consideration."

The Elder's brows furrowed instantly, his face darkening. "Chief, you still need to consider? My temple has already shown the utmost sincerity and offered the most generous terms. If you continue to make excuses, it would be incredibly tactless!"

Long Yuan shook his head, his tone calm yet firm. "Elder, I have seen the sincerity of your temple. But I also have my own difficulties.

Kai has the support of the entire Heavenly Dragon Clan, with numerous True Immortal Realm experts within their ranks; their strength should not be underestimated.

Although my Demon Dragon lineage is strong, we do not wish to waste our forces and make unnecessary sacrifices. Without absolute certainty, I will not easily send troops." Upon

hearing this, the Elder's face turned completely cold.

He slowly stood up, hands behind his back, his gaze fixed on Long Yuan, his tone carrying an undisguised threat: "Chief Long Yuan, I have something to say, but I don't know if I should."

Long Yuan raised his eyes to look at him, his expression indifferent: "Elder, please speak freely."

The Elder took a step forward, his golden divine power surging, his majestic voice echoing in the hall: "Chief, you should know better than anyone the current status of your Demon Dragon lineage!

You have betrayed the orthodox Dragon Clan, sided with the Demon Clan, and cultivated evil demonic arts. You have long been expelled from the Dragon Clan and have become heretics in the world!"

"And my Divine Palace is the orthodox lineage of the Nine Heavens Divine Clan, shouldering the heavy responsibility of guarding the Fourteen Heavens, eliminating evil demons, and stabilizing the world!

To put it bluntly, if my Divine Palace so desires, with just a single order, we can gather the power of the entire clan and, in the name of 'eliminating evil demons,' wipe out your Demon Dragon Palace and completely annihilate your Demon Dragon lineage!"

Upon hearing this, the atmosphere in the hall instantly froze.

The air seemed to stop flowing, and the golden divine power and dark red demonic energy collided, producing a hissing sound. The three True Immortal Realm elders behind the Grand Elder stood up simultaneously, their divine power surging, their gazes as cold as knives, fixed on Long Yuan. They would attack immediately at the Grand Elder's command.

Long Yuan's expression also darkened completely; his previous composure vanished, replaced by overwhelming rage.

He slowly rose, his dark red demonic energy surging wildly like a tsunami, the phantom of a ten-thousand-foot-long demonic dragon faintly appearing behind him, its roar shaking the heavens, its eyes flashing with chilling killing intent.

"Grand Elder! Are you threatening me?!"

Long Yuan's voice was like ice scraping, carrying boundless ferocity.

The Grand Elder sneered, showing no sign of backing down: "It's not a threat, just a reminder to the leader to face reality! Your Demon Dragon lineage is no longer the ancient dragon race of yesteryear, but merely a bunch of wretched demons clinging to life!

If you still don't know your place, don't blame my temple for being ruthless!"

"Fine! Fine, so-called orthodox lineage of the gods! Fine, so-called eradication of demons!"

Long Yuan laughed in fury, his demonic energy surging to its peak, the terrifying pressure of a first-grade True Immortal sweeping across the entire hall, "Do you really think my Demon Dragon lineage is easily intimidated?! Today I'll see how your temple will wipe out my Demon Dragon Palace!"

In an instant, the two terrifying auras collided violently within the hall, the void trembled, the demon dragon reliefs on the pillars emitted a series of buzzing sounds, and the blood-red jade marrow on the ground cracked with fine lines, a great battle was about to erupt.

The Grand Elder's face was icy cold as he sternly demanded, "Long Yuan, I'll ask you one last time: will you agree to join forces against Kai, or not?"

Long Yuan's eyes blazed with fury as he spoke each word with unwavering conviction: "I said I need to consider it! Unless the Temple offers me a guarantee that satisfies me, I will absolutely not send troops!"

The Grand Elder's eyes flashed with murderous intent as he coldly snorted, "Since you remain obstinate, don't blame me for being ruthless. I'll start with you to deter the demons of the Demon Realm!" Before

his words had even finished, the Grand Elder moved, his golden divine power condensing into a divine blade several meters long, which he slashed down towards Long Yuan

's head! Wherever the divine blade passed, the void distorted, demonic energy dissipated, and it carried the power to shatter everything, heading straight for Long Yuan's head!

"Attack!"

At the Grand Elder's command, the three True Immortal Realm elders behind him attacked simultaneously. One summoned a golden divine shield, sealing off Long Yuan's retreat;

another manipulated a hand seal, drawing upon divine lightning from the heavens, which thunderously crashed towards the main seat of the Demon Dragon Palace;

and the third condensed a divine seal, striking directly at Long Yuan's heart—each strike aimed to kill, leaving no room for retreat!

The combined attack of four True Immortal Realm experts was terrifying!

The entire Demon Dragon Palace shook violently, demonic crystals from the dome fell, and the pillars cracked, as if it were about to collapse at any moment.

Long Yuan's expression changed drastically; he hadn't expected the people of the Divine Palace to attack so suddenly, without any restraint.

He roared, and demonic dragon scales instantly covered his entire body. His hands manipulated a secret demonic dragon technique, and dark red demonic flames blazed fiercely: “Divine Palace brats, do you really think I’m afraid of you?!”

He unleashed a demonic dragon claw imprint, colliding violently with the Grand Elder’s divine blade!

“Boom!”

A deafening roar shook the heavens, divine power and demonic energy raged wildly, and shockwaves swept in all directions.

Long Yuan was forced back three steps, a trickle of demonic blood spilling from the corner of his mouth, clearly at a disadvantage.

After all, he was fighting four against one, and his opponents were elites of the temple; even Long Yuan could not withstand it.

Seeing this, the Grand Elder’s face showed a hint of disdain: “Long Yuan, if you knew this would happen, why did you do it in the first place? Today I’ll let you know the consequences of provoking my temple!”

Just as the four were about to attack again to completely suppress Long Yuan, a lazy and indifferent voice suddenly came from behind the screen at the back of the hall, carrying a hint of impatience and a condescending mockery.

“What’s all the noise about? Fighting on someone else’s turf, can’t you let people rest in peace?”

The voice was not loud, but it clearly entered everyone’s ears, instantly drowning out the roar and explosions in the hall.

Everyone was stunned, stopping what they were doing and turning to look at the back of the hall in astonishment.

Behind the screen, two figures slowly emerged, their steps unhurried and their demeanor relaxed.

The young man at the head, dressed in black, possessed a handsome face and a faint smile playing on his lips. His eyes were indifferent, as if the fierce battle before him was nothing more than child's play.

It was Ning Zhi.

Beside him stood Su Yuqi, her purple robes flowing, her beauty aloof and exquisite. She stood quietly beside Ning Zhi, her gaze calmly observing the people from the temple in the arena, showing no fear whatsoever.

When Long Yuan saw Ning Zhi appear, his expression changed drastically. Startled, he quickly suppressed his demonic energy and forcibly calmed the surging blood within him.

He then strode forward, bowing deeply, his posture even more humble than before: "Senior! This subordinate is incompetent, allowing these people to disturb your rest. This junior deserves to die a thousand deaths. Please punish me, Senior!"

He was filled with fear and dread, terrified that Ning Zhi would be angered by the disturbance, with unimaginable consequences.

Ning Zhi waved his hand, signaling him to rise. His gaze slowly fell on the Grand Elder, scrutinizing him from head to toe. A hint of amusement flashed in his eyes: "You're the Grand Elder of the Temple? The leader of this group of gods?"

The Grand Elder frowned, his heart filled with doubt and unease.

This young man before him looked no more than twenty years old, with no trace of divine power emanating from him. Why was Long Yuan so respectful to him ?

Even with deep awe?

Could this young man be some reclusive old monster?

But no matter how he investigated, he couldn't see through Ning Zhi's strength and could only regard him as an ordinary junior. He

immediately snorted coldly, his expression arrogant, his tone condescending and condescending: "That's me! Who are you? Just an unknown junior, yet you dare to interrupt when my Temple is conducting business? Quickly step aside, or don't blame me for dealing with you too!"

In his view, Ning Zhi was merely a guest elder invited by Long Yuan. Even if he had some strength, he could never be a match for the four True Immortal Realm experts of the Temple. Upon hearing this, Ning Zhi not only wasn't angry, but laughed instead. He walked to the center of the hall and casually found a spot to stand.

Then, he spoke calmly, "I heard clearly from behind that your temple is going to cooperate with the Demon Dragon lineage to deal with that guy named Kai? And you keep talking about the orthodox lineage of the gods, shouldering heavy responsibilities, and maintaining the stability of the Fourteenth Heaven?"

He shook his head, his tone full of undisguised sarcasm, "Tsk tsk tsk, those words sound so high-sounding, I almost believed them myself."

The Grand Elder's face darkened, and he shouted sharply, "You brat! What do you know? My temple acts with utmost integrity. How dare you spout nonsense and slander the dignity of the gods? Shut up immediately, or I will tear you to pieces!"

The three True Immortal Realm elders behind him also stepped forward at the same time, their divine power surging, their eyes fiercely fixed on Ning Zhi. As soon as the Grand Elder gave the order, they would immediately kill him.

Upon seeing this, Long Yuan's expression changed drastically. He immediately stepped in front of Ning Zhi, his demonic energy surging

once more as he glared at the Grand Elder: “Grand Elder! How dare you be so insolent!

This senior is a distinguished guest of my Demon Dragon Palace. If you dare to be disrespectful to him, you will be making an enemy of the entire Demon Dragon lineage!”

The Grand Elder sneered, his face full of disdain: “Distinguished guest? He’s just a greenhorn, how dare he be called a distinguished guest of the Demon Dragon Palace?

Long Yuan, I think you’ve lived for tens of thousands of years, and you’re getting more and more confused. You actually treat a junior like an honored guest, it’s utterly laughable!” Long

Yuan was furious and was about to make a move when Ning Zhi gently raised his hand to stop him.

Ning Zhi patted Long Yuan on the shoulder, his tone calm and confident: “No need to get angry, they’re just a bunch of clowns, not worth getting upset with. Leave it to me.”

Long Yuan was taken aback, looking at Ning Zhi’s composed expression, he felt inexplicably at ease, immediately nodded, and respectfully stepped aside, saying nothing more.

Ning Zhi slowly stepped forward, his gaze falling on the Grand Elder, the smile on his face slowly fading, replaced by a cold indifference: “You just said that I have no right to speak here? And that I’m just an unknown junior, ignorant of my own mortality?”

The Grand Elder raised his head high, arrogantly saying: “What? Did I say something wrong? You, a junior who hasn’t even stepped into the True Immortal Realm, don’t even have the right to speak in front of me!

In front of the four True Immortal Realm experts of my Divine Palace, you are no different from an ant, if you dare to spout nonsense again, you will surely die!”

Ning Zhi suddenly laughed.

The smile was gentle and calm, but in the eyes of the Grand Elder, it sent a chill down his spine, as if he were being watched by some primordial beast.

“Grand Elder, do you know?”

Ning Zhi’s tone was slow and deliberate, each word deliberate, “What I hate most in my life are people like you who claim to be the legitimate successors of the divine race, high and mighty, self-righteous and arrogant.”

The moment his words fell, Ning Zhi’s aura suddenly changed.

There was no earth-shattering roar, no dazzling light, but a terrifying pressure originating from the depths of their souls, like an ancient abyss, quietly spread out, instantly enveloping the entire Demon Dragon Palace!

The Grand Elder and the three other temple elders’ expressions changed drastically. They felt their bodies stiffen, their souls tremble, as if all the power in the world had been stripped away, leaving them without even the strength to raise their hands.

“You…who exactly are you?!”

The Grand Elder’s voice trembled, fear appearing in his eyes for the first time.

Ning Zhi did not answer, but slowly raised his right hand.

His movements were slow and effortless, as if he were merely brushing dust off his sleeves.

Yet, with the raising of his hand, the void instantly froze, the dark red demonic energy and golden divine power obediently submitting, daring not to make the slightest move.

“Arrogant brat! Do you really think we’re afraid of you?!”

A True Immortal Realm elder from the Divine Temple roared in shock and anger, pouring all his divine power into a golden divine fist, which he slammed towards Ning Zhi!

The divine fist tore through the air with boundless power, enough to shatter a mountain!

A hint of disdain flashed in Ning Zhi’s eyes, and he flicked his finger lightly.

A barely perceptible black energy burst forth, colliding violently with the divine fist.

“Pfft—!”

With a soft sound, the elder’s all-out divine fist shattered instantly, the black energy continuing its momentum, piercing straight through his dantian!

“Ah—!”

The elder let out a shrill scream. His dantian shattered, his cultivation completely destroyed. He flew backward like a kite with a broken string, crashing heavily into a pillar of the hall, and fell unconscious.

One move!

Just one move, and a True Immortal Realm elder was crippled!

The remaining Grand Elder and two Temple Elders were terrified, their arrogance vanishing, replaced by extreme fear.

“Attack together! Kill him!”

the Grand Elder roared, holding nothing back. He poured out thousands of years of cultivation, condensing a golden divine sword, its blade

shimmering with divine runes, its power boundless, and slashed towards Ning Zhi! The

other two elders also simultaneously unleashed their natal magic weapons, attacking Ning Zhi from the left and right!

The simultaneous attack of three True Immortal Realm magic weapons was terrifying beyond measure. The entire Demon Dragon Palace began to collapse, the dome falling, and debris flying everywhere.

Long Yuan's face was deathly pale. He instinctively wanted to retreat, but dared not leave Ning Zhi's side, and could only stand there, barely managing to stay in place.

Faced with the three's desperate attack, Ning Zhi remained indifferent, showing no sign of panic.

He lightly stepped forward, his figure flashing like a ghost, easily dodging their attacks.

"Too slow, too weak,"

Ning Zhi shook his head slightly, his tone full of disdain. "True Immortal Realm, in your hands, it's a waste of such cultivation."

As soon as he finished speaking, Ning Zhi lightly clenched his right hand.

In the void, countless black flames appeared out of thin air. The flames were as black as ink, without any temperature, yet they could burn all souls and spiritual power—the ultimate fire of the Flame Demon!

The black fire condensed into three fire whips, like serpents, lashing out at the three temple elders with lightning speed!

"Divine Shield Protection!"

The First Elder was terrified and hurriedly summoned his natal divine shield to block in front of him.

The other two elders also desperately activated their magical treasures for defense, but before the ultimate fire, all their divine shields and magical treasures were like paper, instantly burned to ashes, leaving not even a trace.

“Pfft! Pfft!”

Two muffled thuds echoed as the remaining two True Immortal Realm elders were engulfed by black flames. Their shrill screams reverberated throughout the hall, and in an instant, they were incinerated into ashes, their souls utterly destroyed.

The First Elder, relying on his profound cultivation, barely managed to hold out for a moment, but the black flames had already coiled around his arm, frantically burning his divine bones and soul.

“No… impossible! What kind of monster are you?!”

The Grand Elder’s face was contorted with rage, his eyes filled with despair and resentment. “I am the Grand Elder of the Temple, a True Immortal Realm expert! You cannot kill me! The Temple Master will not let you go!”

Ning Zhi slowly walked up to him, looking down at him with an indifferent gaze.

“Can’t kill you?”

Ning Zhi chuckled, his tone icy. “Before me, let alone a mere Grand Elder of the Divine Temple, even your Temple Master himself wouldn’t dare to be so insolent.”

He lightly raised his hand, a flick of black fire shooting from his fingertip, striking the Grand Elder directly between the eyebrows.

“Ah!”

The Grand Elder let out a final, shrill scream as his body was instantly engulfed by the black fire, turning to ashes and dissipating into the air without leaving a trace.

From the moment Ning Zhi made his move to the end, only a dozen or so breaths had passed.

Of the four True Immortal Realm experts from the Divine Temple, one was crippled and three were dead—a complete annihilation!

The main hall was a scene of utter devastation, with rubble scattered everywhere. Divine power and demonic energy intertwined and dissipated, leaving only endless silence.

Long Yuan stood rooted to the spot, completely dumbfounded, staring wide-eyed at Ning Zhi as if he were an invincible ancient god, his heart filled with extreme shock and fear.

True Immortal Realm experts were so utterly vulnerable before this senior!

He had been worried about offending the temple, but now he understood that in front of this mysterious senior, the so-called temple and the so-called True Immortal Realm were nothing more than ants that could be easily destroyed!

Thinking of his previous slight disrespect towards this senior, Long Yuan broke out in a cold sweat, a wave of indescribable fear washing over him.

If the senior had harbored murderous intent when he spoke disrespectfully, he would probably be dead long ago.

Su Yuqi stood beside Ning Zhi, her beautiful eyes showing no emotion, as if the killing before her was nothing out of the ordinary.

She was already used to Ning Zhi’s arrogance, but even so, Ning Zhi was always polite to her, his senior sister.

Because Su Yuqi's strength was far greater than Ning Zhi's.

Ning Zhi was being disobedient, so she slapped him twice.

Ning Zhi slowly withdrew the Netherworld Black Flame, dusted off his hands—non-existent dust—his expression indifferent, as if he had just done something trivial.

He turned to look at Long Yuan, who stood there dumbfounded, and said calmly, "What? You're scared after killing a few people from the Temple?"

Long Yuan snapped back to his senses, swallowed hard, and bowed hastily, his voice trembling, "Senior... Senior, I'm not scared, it's just... I just didn't expect your strength to be so overwhelming!

But the Temple's power is immense, and its master is a peak True Immortal Realm Second Grade expert, running rampant in the Fourteenth Heaven. Now that four True Immortal Realm elders have died in my Demon Dragon Temple, he must..." "They won't let this go easily. They'll definitely lead the temple's army to seek revenge. When that time comes..."

Ning Zhi interrupted him calmly, his tone filled with utter disdain and domineering: "Then let them come looking for me."

He raised his eyes to gaze beyond the nine heavens, his gaze indifferent: "A mere temple, a bunch of arrogant ants of the divine race relying on their ancestors' legacy, is it worth your fear?

Killing them is nothing, just crushing a few bugs. What's there to worry about?"

Long Yuan was utterly speechless.

A True Immortal Realm expert, in this senior's words, was merely an ant, a bug?

This was a top-tier combat force of the fourteenth heaven!

But seeing Ning Zhi's composed expression, he dared not utter a word of rebuttal, and could only nod repeatedly: "Yes, yes, yes! Senior is right! They're just a bunch of ants, nothing to fear!"

Ning Zhi stopped looking at him, his gaze fixed on the direction of Yunxian City, a cold glint flashing in his deep eyes: "You said before that Kai was in Yunxian City, just temporarily concealing his whereabouts?"

Long Yuan quickly composed himself and respectfully replied: "Yes! Senior! The scouts reported that Kai indeed did not leave Yunxian City, but he used some secret method to hide his aura, making him impossible to detect. But..." Be sure, he must still be in the city! "

Ning Zhi nodded slowly, with a meaningful smile on his lips: "Okay. Continue to inquire, and once you have accurate information about him, report it immediately.

This time, I want to go to Yunxian City in person to meet Kai, who shocked the entire fourteen days. "

Although Long Yuan was extremely confused and didn't understand why his senior was so persistent with Kai, he didn't dare to ask more questions. He just responded respectfully: "Yes! Junior, obey! Kai's whereabouts must be found as quickly as possible! " Ning

Zhi said no more, and took Su Yuqi with him, turning around and walking towards the back hall.

After walking a few steps, he suddenly stopped, looked back at Long Yuan, and said in a calm tone: "By the way, find someone to deal with the mess in the hall, and the trash in the temple outside. Don't make the place where I stay dirty, it's an eyesore.

"Yes!" Don't worry, senior! The junior will arrange it immediately to ensure that everything is cleaned up! "

Long Yuan quickly bowed and responded. He didn't dare to straighten up until Ning Zhi and Su Yuqi disappeared at the door of the back hall.

He looked at the mess and ashes in the main hall, then glanced in the direction Ning Zhi had left, and exhaled a long breath.

Just who was this mysterious and unpredictable senior?

His strength was boundless, killing people like chickens, yet he cared so much about Kai.

Long Yuan shook his head, not daring to think further. He immediately beckoned his subordinates to clean up the main hall and deal with the temple's elite troops outside.

He knew that with the fall of the four True Immortal elders of the temple, a storm sweeping across the entire Fourteenth Heaven was about to arrive.

And at the center of this storm was this mysterious young man in black before him, and Kai, far away in Yunxian City.

In the quiet courtyard of the rear hall,

Su Yuqi followed Ning Zhi, looking at the blooming spiritual flowers in the courtyard. After a long silence, she finally couldn't help but speak softly, "Junior brother, is the Kai you're so determined to find really the one we know?"

Ning Zhi stopped, looked up at the sky, and a deep, mysterious smile appeared on his lips.

He didn't answer directly, but spoke softly, his tone carrying a hint of expectation and a touch of coldness.

"Senior Sister, no need to rush."

"Once we arrive in Yunxian City, you'll soon know everything."

Su Yuqi looked at Ning Zhi's profile, a complex emotion flashing in her beautiful eyes. The main hall of the Divine Temple, the Lingxiao Hall.

Thirty-six ancient star beads hang high in the dome, revolving day and night, illuminating the entire hall in a golden brilliance. The floor is paved with a single piece of Heavenly River Divine Jade, its surface

so smooth it reflects light, every inch exuding supreme majesty. This is the core of the Divine Temple's power, a sacred place revered by cultivators from all realms. Normally, the hall is always orderly and solemn, but today, it is shrouded in an oppressive, deathly silence.

Shen Tong sits enthroned on the main throne of the Lingxiao Hall.

He wears a black robe trimmed with gold, the hem embroidered with patterns of divine clouds from the nine heavens and the worship of countless beasts. He wears a purple-gold crown, his face usually dignified and solemn, possessing an air of looking down upon all living beings.

But at this moment, his usually calm face is as gloomy as the sky before a storm, overcast with dark clouds, as if a world-destroying thunderbolt is about to descend.

His fingers tightened slightly, his palm clutching a life tablet that had just shattered completely.

The life tablet, crafted from ancient spirit wood, was a symbol of an elder's status and life. Originally, it bore three powerful, ancient characters exuding boundless majesty—"Grand Elder."

But now, the life tablet, which had carried the life force of a True Immortal Realm First-Rank expert, was shattered into pieces, cracks spreading like a spiderweb. Its once warm spiritual light had completely dissipated, leaving only a deathly gray.

This meant that the tablet's owner had been utterly destroyed, his body and soul scattered, leaving not even a trace of his soul behind.

The hall was deathly silent.

More than ten cultivators dressed in elder robes stood with their heads bowed, lined up on either side, breathing very softly, each one as silent as a cicada in winter, not daring to even breathe loudly.

They were all high-ranking figures in the temple, usually ruling their respective regions and wielding great influence. Yet, under the oppressive rage of Shen Tong, they didn't even have the courage to look him in the eye.

Everyone knew the Grand Elder's status in the temple.

He was not only one of the temple's pillars but also Shen Tong's most trusted and relied-upon confidant, having followed him for thousands of years, risking his life in countless battles, unwavering in his loyalty, and handling numerous thorny problems. He was one of the temple's true pillars of stability.

Now that the Grand Elder's life tablet had shattered, it was tantamount to severing one of Shen Tong's arms. The temple master's rage was enough to incinerate everything. In

this suffocatingly silent moment , a shrill and urgent cry rang out from outside the Lingxiao Palace. The voice was sharp and trembling, filled with undisguised fear, shattering the tranquility of the hall. The next moment, a cultivator dressed in the robes of an inner disciple of the temple staggered into the hall, his clothes disheveled, his hair askew, his face covered in cold sweat and panic. He rushed into the hall, his legs buckling, and he knelt heavily on one knee, his forehead almost touching the cold, jade-like floor. "Reporting...Reporting to the Hall Master!" The disciple's teeth chattered, his voice trembling uncontrollably, each word seemingly squeezed from his throat. "The fifty elite soldiers sent to the Demon Dragon Hall...all...all wiped out! Not a single one survived!" "What?!" A shout filled with shock and rage suddenly rang out. The red-faced elder at the head of the left-hand side abruptly rose, his spiritual energy surging, his wide robes billowing without wind. His eyes widened in disbelief, the redness on his face instantly vanishing, leaving only shock and panic. "Fifty elites? Those are the strongest warriors

handpicked by my temple, each with a cultivation level of at least the eighth rank of the Upper Immortal Realm!" The red-faced elder stepped forward, his voice trembling. "Where are the Grand Elder and the others? Where is the Grand Elder?! Wasn't he personally leading the team to put pressure on the Demon Dragon Palace? How could he have ended up like this!" The kneeling disciple trembled violently, his body almost collapsing to the ground, his forehead pressed tightly against the earth, as he replied in a trembling voice, "Reporting to the red-faced elder... not only the Grand Elder... but also the three True Immortal Realm elders who accompanied him... their life tablets... were all shattered in the Life Tablet Hall just now! Not even a wisp of spiritual light remained... they... they have... completely perished!" "Boom!" It was as if a thunderclap exploded in the hall. The once deathly silent Lingxiao Hall instantly erupted into chaos! "Impossible! This is absolutely impossible!" A tall, thin elder exclaimed in shock, his face ashen. "The Grand Elder is a peak True Immortal Realm First Grade cultivator with a profound foundation and vast supernatural powers. That Demon Dragon Palace Master, Long Yuan, is only a True Immortal Realm First Grade cultivator. Their realms are similar, but their strengths are worlds apart. How could he possibly kill the Grand Elder?!" "Could it be... could it be that there are still hidden old monsters in the Demon Dragon lineage that haven't yet emerged?" Another elder, his face aged, frowned, his voice tinged with suspicion. "Or... could it be that the Demon Clan made a move?! Rumor has it that the Demon Dragon lineage has long colluded with the Demon Clan. Could it be that this time, a powerful Demon Clan member launched a sneak attack?" "This is outrageous! This is simply outrageous!" "The Demon Dragon lineage is nothing but a secluded heretical sect, yet they dare to openly kill an elder of our temple and slaughter our elite troops! If this grudge is not avenged, how can our temple maintain its dignity? In the future, who in all the heavens and myriad realms will still take our temple seriously!" Angry discussions rose and fell, all the elders' faces filled with shock, anger, and killing intent. The Grand Elder held extremely high prestige within the temple. Although strict, he was fair and impartial, deeply respected by all the elders and disciples. Now, he had died tragically in the Demon Dragon Temple, along with three True Immortal Realm elders and fifty elite troops. For the temple, this was not only a heavy loss but also a great disgrace. An elder with a sinister face and eyes as sharp as a hawk suddenly stood up, strode into the hall, and bowed respectfully to the

Divine Power. Then, a powerful voice, filled with resolute killing intent, declared: “Palace Master! The Demon Dragon lineage harbors wolfish ambitions, attacking our Temple and killing our elders! This enmity is irreconcilable! I request permission to immediately lead the Temple’s army to raze the Demon Dragon Palace to the ground, leaving no one alive, to avenge our Great Elder!” “I also request permission! I am willing to join Elder Yin Zhi on this expedition, and we will not rest until the Demon Dragon is destroyed!” “And me! When has our Temple ever suffered such humiliation! Please give the order, Palace Master! We are willing to be the vanguard, to tear Dragon Abyss to pieces!” In an instant, the crowd in the hall was filled with righteous indignation. More than ten elders stepped forward, bowing and volunteering for battle, their eyes bloodshot, brimming with undisguised killing intent. Rage burned in their chests; they wished they could immediately storm out of the Lingxiao Palace and raze the Demon Dragon Palace to the ground. Shen Tong remained seated in the main seat, silent. He lowered his eyes, his gaze fixed on the pile of shattered life tablet fragments in his palm. The rage in his eyes was like a volcano dormant for millennia, about to erupt, threatening to completely devour his reason. The Grand Elder had followed him for thousands of years. From when he was still an ordinary cultivator, the Grand Elder had never abandoned him, assisting him all the way to the position of Palace Master, clearing obstacles for him, stabilizing the temple, and handling countless sect affairs. He was his most trusted right-hand man. This bond had long transcended the hierarchy, resembling that of brothers and sisters.

But now, the Grand Elder was dead.

He died at the hands of an unknown Demon Dragon Palace Master, leaving no trace of his body, his life tablet shattered, his soul returning to the heavens and earth. A

soft cracking sound rang out.

Shen Tong abruptly raised his hand, without a single unnecessary movement, and slammed his palm hard onto the armrest of the chair.

That armrest, forged from ten-thousand-year-old black iron mixed with divine metal, was incredibly hard; even a full-force attack from an

ordinary Upper Immortal cultivator would struggle to leave a mark. Yet, under his furious strike, it instantly turned into dust, falling in a flurry.

“Boom!”

An extremely violent aura, centered on Shen Tong, swept across the entire Lingxiao Palace!

The shockwave surged like a tsunami, the star beads on the dome shook violently, and all the tables and chairs in the palace shattered.

The expressions of more than ten elders changed drastically. They all circulated their spiritual power to resist, but were still forced to retreat repeatedly, staggering, and finally bowed their heads in unison, trembling with fear.

The entire hall was filled only with Shen Tong’s suppressed rage.

“Longyuan!”

Shentong suddenly looked up, his voice like thunder from the heavens, echoing throughout the hall, making everyone’s eardrums buzz and their hearts tremble.

“I will tear you to pieces! I will grind your bones to dust! I will wipe your demonic dragon lineage from the world!”

His eyes were filled with murderous intent, golden light surged, and his spiritual power surged endlessly, as if he would burst out of the sky at any moment and attack the Demonic Dragon Palace.

Shentong suddenly stood up, his aura rising to its peak, about to give the order to mobilize all the army of the temple to flatten the Demonic Dragon Palace.

But at this moment, his steps suddenly stopped.

Rage burned in his heart, but the reason buried deep in his bones held him back at the most critical moment.

Shentong slowly closed his eyes, took a deep breath, and then another.

He forcibly suppressed the raging anger in his heart that was about to burst out of his chest, and the violent aura around him gradually subsided.

He stood there, silent for a long time, his mind racing, rapidly processing and deducing.

Long Yuan.

Only a True Immortal Realm First Grade.

The Grand Elder was a peak True Immortal Realm First Grade expert, his strength far surpassing Long Yuan's. Add to that three other True Immortal Realm elders and fifty elite disciples, and this lineup would be more than enough to overpower even a mid-tier sect.

Even if the entire Long Yuan Demon Dragon lineage went all out, fighting desperately, it would be impossible for them to kill the Grand Elder and his group in such a short time, without even a single one escaping to report back.

This was utterly illogical.

Unless...

Shen Tong suddenly opened his eyes.

The anger in his eyes subsided considerably, replaced by a solemn and cold expression.

Unless, within the Demon Dragon Palace, a hidden powerhouse intervened.

And that powerhouse's strength was definitely far beyond True Immortal Realm First Grade, perhaps even... at the same level as him, or even higher!

He instantly realized that the Demon Dragon lineage was not as simple as it seemed. Behind them stood the infamous Demon Clan, a pawn planted in this region by the Demon Clan.

Could it be... that a powerful Demon Clan member had personally intervened?

At this thought, the anger in Shen Tong's heart was instantly replaced by a chilling apprehension.

The Demon Clan was ruthless and cunning, possessing immense strength. If they were truly involved, then the Temple's hasty deployment of troops now would be tantamount to walking into a trap.

Shen Tong slowly walked back to his main seat, sat down again, his expression

shifting between anger and uncertainty. Below, the elders, seeing their Temple Master remain silent for so long, their fury turning to silence, couldn't help but feel a growing sense of doubt.

The earlier outrage and calls for battle gradually subsided.

The red-faced elder suppressed his urgency, stepped forward, and respectfully clasped his hands in a fist salute to Shen Tong. He asked in a deep voice, "Palace Master, what are you still hesitating about?

The Demon Dragon lineage killed my elder and insulted my temple. This is an irreconcilable feud. If we don't take revenge immediately, how can we face our fallen brothers? How can we face all the disciples of the hall?"

Shen Tong raised his eyes, glanced at him, and said in a low, cold voice, "Do you think I don't want revenge?"

“The Grand Elder has followed me for thousands of years, like a brother. His tragic death has enraged me more than anyone else. I want to tear Long Yuan to pieces!”

He slowly stood up, stood with his hands behind his back, and his gaze swept over each elder present like a blade. His tone was heavy and clear: “But have you thought about this carefully? How could Long Yuan, a mere True Immortal Realm First Grade, possibly kill the Grand Elder, three other True Immortal Realm elders, and fifty elite soldiers?”

“He doesn’t have that ability!”

“The Demon Dragon lineage doesn’t have that strength either!”

“Therefore, he must have a powerful figure secretly assisting him! And that powerful figure’s strength is probably… no less than mine!”

Upon hearing this

, all the elders in the hall paled simultaneously. Their initial anger was instantly extinguished, replaced by deep shock and apprehension.

No less than the Hall Master?

That meant the opponent was at least a peak second-grade True Immortal, or even a third-grade being?

Currently, besides Divine Power, no one else in the Divine Hall possessed such strength!

Seeing the palpable expressions on everyone’s faces, Shen Tong continued his deep analysis: “During this period, our temple’s three sacred mountains were destroyed, and several True Immortal Realm elders perished one after another. The sect’s strength is far from what it used to be,

and its vitality has been severely damaged.” “If we rashly start a war with the Demon Dragon lineage now, even if we win in the end, it will

inevitably be a pyrrhic victory, and we will pay an extremely heavy price!”

“At that time, will the two major forces, the Divine Hall and the Divine Palace, which have always coveted our temple, let go of this opportunity to kick us while we’re down and destroy our temple in one fell swoop?”

“They won’t!”

He paused, and a deeper layer of apprehension appeared in his eyes.

“Moreover, Kai is still in Yunxian City, colluding closely with the Tianlong Clan. Kai is ruthless and possesses unpredictable strength, repeatedly jeopardizing our temple’s important affairs.

If our temple launches a full-scale attack on the Demon Dragon Palace, he could seize the opportunity to launch a sneak attack from behind, cutting off our army’s retreat and heading straight for our temple’s main hall. At that time, our temple will be attacked from both sides; how can we resist?” ”

Caught in a pincer movement, beset by internal and external troubles, our temple will be plunged into utter ruin!”

His words were clear and logical, each one piercing to the heart.

The elders, who had been furious, now exchanged glances, their fervor and anger gradually replaced by solemnity and reason.

They fell silent, carefully considering the temple master’s words, growing increasingly alarmed and fearful.

Yes, they had only thought of revenge, neglecting the most perilous situation at hand.

After much hesitation, an elder cautiously asked, “Palace Master… do you mean… we should… let the Demon Dragon lineage go for now? Swallow this insult?”

Let go?

Swallow?

A chilling killing intent flashed in Shen Tong's eyes, so intense that it sent a shiver down the spines of all the elders present.

How could he possibly let them go?

The Grand Elder's blood could not be shed in vain.

The lives of fifty elite soldiers could not be lost in vain.

The humiliation of the temple could not be swallowed so easily. Shen Tong nodded slowly, his voice as cold as ten thousand years of ice: "It's not letting them go, it's a temporary halt."

"The temporary pause isn't out of fear of them, but for the sake of better revenge."

"Once we've dealt with Kai, eliminated the major threat of Yunxian City and the Tianlong Clan, and secured our rear, we'll turn back to settle accounts with the Demon Dragon Clan! By then, no one will be able to help them, no one will be able to stop the wrath of my temple!"

He turned around, his gaze fixed on the direction of Yunxian City, his eyes flashing with golden light, revealing a greedy and resolute nature.

"That Kai possesses the rare Five-Clawed Golden Dragon bloodline, a supreme treasure of the world, a divine object coveted by countless cultivators!"

"If we can capture him alive, extract his Five-Clawed Golden Dragon bloodline, and supplement it with ancient divine medicine, my cultivation will surely break through to the second rank of True Immortal, reaching the third rank, and even potentially the fourth rank!"

“At that time, my strength will greatly increase, the Divine Palace will return to its peak, and seeking revenge against Long Yuan, and crushing the Demon Dragon Palace, will be as easy as turning my hand, effortless!”

These words pointed the way for all the elders and ignited hope in their hearts.

First, kill Kai, seize the dragon blood, break through realms, and strengthen the Divine Palace!

Then, destroy the Demon Dragon, avenge the blood feud, wipe away the humiliation, and restore prestige!

Shen Tong whirled around, his gaze sweeping over the crowd. His tone was firm and unwavering: “Pass on my orders!”

“Immediately gather all the elite forces of the Divine Palace, prepare for battle, and accompany me on my personal expedition to Yunxian City!”

“Remember! This battle is not for the massacre of the city, nor for the extermination of the clan, but for one goal: to capture Kai alive!”

“No matter the cost, bring Kai back to the Divine Palace!”