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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 the forces there are complex. It would be more convenient for me to go alone. Taking you along would require me to take care of you."

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

She knew Chen Ping 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 Chen Ping.

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

Chen Ping nodded, saying nothing more.

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

"Your Majesty, I have something to say, but I'm unsure if I should."

Chen Ping looked at him: "Speak."

Long Zhan's expression was solemn. He said in a deep voice, "Your Majesty's journey to the Holy Land of Light is to find the Divine Hall and revive the soul within the Soul Crystal. This matter is of paramount 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 growing even more serious: "The Holy Land of Light is a gathering place for righteous cultivators of the Fourteenth Heaven."

There are numerous powerful forces and sects there, but they all share one thing in common: they are extremely hostile towards 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 detect him. At that point, 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 tried to hide it, the ghostly aura on his body could not be completely eliminated.

In other parts 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.

Chen Ping listened quietly, his expression unchanged.

He looked at Ming Li.

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

A moment later, he raised his head, forcing a smile. "Mr. Chen, the Dragon Clan Chief is right. I... I can't go to the Holy Land 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 wanted to follow Chen Ping wherever he went, whatever danger he faced, he was willing to follow.

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

Chen Ping looked at him and suddenly spoke, "Who said you would cause me trouble?"

Ming Li was taken aback.

Chen Ping's tone was flat: "You are my person, not a burden."

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

Chen Ping 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, so he definitely can't. Although Miss Liu Qianqian is human, her cultivation is still shallow. A place like the Holy Light Domain is teeming with powerful figures, including many True Immortals. It would be equally dangerous for her to go."

Liu Qianqian lowered her head, remaining silent.

She knew Long Zhan was right.

Her cultivation was indeed too low.

Chen Ping 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...”

Chen Ping 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 ultimately could only nod silently.

Liu Qianqian nodded gently, a hint of reluctance in her eyes, but said nothing more.

Chen Ping turned to Chen Wanqing: “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 array is a relic from ancient times, capable of connecting 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.”

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Chen Ping nodded, saying 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 moved, transforming 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 yet firm: "Respectfully seeing off 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.

Several guardians stood around the stone hall, all possessing the cultivation of an Upper Immortal.

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

"Greetings, Your Excellency!"

Although they didn't recognize Chen Ping, they had clearly seen the earth-shattering dragon roars and the dozens of giant dragons circling above Cloud Immortal City.

How could they possibly offend someone who could command the utmost respect from the Dragon Clan?

Chen Ping ignored them and walked straight into the teleportation hall.

Inside the hall, a massive teleportation array stood silently.

The array was circular, about ten zhang in diameter, its ground densely engraved with 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. Seeing Chen Ping, he quickly bowed and greeted him, "This old man greets you, sir. Do you wish to use the teleportation array?"

Chen Ping nodded: "To the Holy Domain of Light."

The old man paused slightly, then nodded: "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, Chen Ping had already taken out a storage bag from his storage ring and casually tossed it to him.

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

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Inside were four hundred bottles of immortal liquid, neatly arranged.

“My lord, this... is too much,” the old man hurriedly said.

Chen Ping waved his hand: “Consider the extra a reward.”

The old man was overjoyed, thanking 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.

Chen Ping 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.”

Chen Ping nodded.

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

Outside the hall, 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 increasingly intense, enveloping him entirely.

“Buzz—”

A deep buzzing sound rang out.

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

Chen Ping’s figure vanished from the teleportation array.

The teleportation hall returned to silence.

The old man gazed at the empty array, exhaled a long breath, and murmured, “This lord... what is his background? To be able to make the Dragon Clan 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 beside her, silent.

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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.

It also illuminated the road leading into the distance.

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

“Clan Chief Long, from today onwards, Yunxian City is entrusted to you.”

Long Zhan bowed respectfully: “Miss Chen, rest assured, your subordinate will do everything in his power to protect this city and everything His Majesty has entrusted to me.”

Chen Wanqing nodded.

She raised her head and looked up 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 this day forward, Yunxian City belonged to the Chen family.

The man who gave her new life and gave her hope had already embarked on his journey to the Holy Land of Light.

“Chen Ping, you must come back safely.”

She silently prayed in her heart.

Meanwhile, the Grand Elder of the Temple, carrying a jade slip 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 was thick with the acrid smell of sulfur and decay.

The Demon Dragon lineage hid here.

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

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

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

This was the core of the Demon Dragon lineage: the Demon Dragon Palace.

At this moment, the atmosphere within the Demon Dragon Palace was strange and heavy.

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

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

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

It must be said that after these demon dragons pledged allegiance to the Demon Race, through the fusion of demonic techniques and dragon blood, their strength surpassed that of the Heavenly Dragons.

Seated in the central seat of the main hall was a burly middle-aged man.

He wore a dark red robe embroidered with dragon patterns, his face stern, his brows conveying a chilling and authoritative aura.

His eyes were dark gold, and when they opened and closed, it seemed as if two eerie flames were burning within them.

His aura was as deep and unfathomable as an abyss, clearly that of a terrifying being at the second rank of the True Immortal Realm.

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

This Long Yuan was not that Long Yuan.

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

The man before him was the leader of the Demonic 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.

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

It was indeed the Grand Elder of the Temple.

The Grand Elder wore a smile, his posture humble yet dignified.

He bowed slightly, his tone respectful and polite:

“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, and 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.

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“Chief Longyuan, before you 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 from that time. Now, I bring this jade slip to discuss a cooperation with you.”

“Cooperation?”

A hint of amusement flashed in Longyuan’s eyes. 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 Chen Ping.

This boy is merely a third-grade Upper Immortal, yet he has destroyed three sacred mountains of my Divine Palace, 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 a Dragon Clan emperor, with close ties to the orthodox Dragon Clan. However, your noble family and the orthodox Dragon Clan are mortal enemies.

The enemy of my enemy is my friend. I have come here to join forces with your noble family to kill this boy.”

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

“Join forces to kill Chen Ping?”

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

The Grand Elder’s expression remained unchanged, his tone sincere: “Chief Longyuan, my temple and the nobles have no enmity. Chen Ping 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 smile tinged with sarcasm.

“Elder, your temple is powerful, with countless strong individuals. Is a mere third-grade Upper Immortal cultivator worth such a large mobilization? 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, “Chief Longyuan is joking. If my temple couldn’t handle him, why would we cooperate with you?”

However, Chen Ping 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.

Your Highness, on the other hand, has been an enemy of the Dragon Clan for generations and knows their situation best. If you were willing to intervene, your chances of victory would naturally be greater.”

Longyuan remained silent, simply observing the Elder.

His gaze seemed to see right through one’s heart.

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, simply to get my Demon Dragon lineage to help your temple eliminate Chen Ping. But have you considered why I should help you?”

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

Chen Ping possesses the bloodline of the Dragon Emperor, 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 likely..."

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"Afraid of 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 merely stating the facts; I have no intention of threatening you."

Long Yuan coldly stared at him, his aura surging slightly, an invisible pressure enveloping the entire hall.

Cold sweat beaded on the Elder's forehead, but he stubbornly refused to retreat.

A moment later, Long Yuan suddenly smiled.

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

"Grand Elder, you are quite a character," he said calmly.

"To dare speak such words to me, you have quite the nerve."

The Grand Elder quickly bowed: "Chief Long Yuan, you flatter me. I merely sincerely wish 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."

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

He bowed respectfully and said, "In that case, I will take my leave. If Chief Long Yuan makes a decision, you may send someone to contact my temple at any time. The doors of my temple are always open to your noble family."

Long Yuan 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 Demon Dragon Elder stepped forward, frowning. "Chief," he said, "why don't you just agree? Since Chen Ping is of Dragon Emperor blood, he's undoubtedly a major threat to our Demon Dragon lineage. Wouldn't it be better to eliminate him with the help of the Divine Palace?"

Another elder nodded in agreement. "Indeed, Chief," he continued. "Chen Ping destroyed three sacred mountains of the Divine Palace 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 Divine Palace to eliminate him."

Long Yuan glanced at them and said calmly, "Do you think the Divine Palace 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, sending us to deal with Chen Ping while they reap the benefits. Whether they'll turn their backs on us afterward is another matter."

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He paused, then continued, "Moreover, that Chen Ping... 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 Chen Ping's background first. We'll make plans after we've found out."

"Yes!"

An elder accepted the order and left.

A powerful dragon elder, responsible for intelligence, rushed into the hall, kneeling on one knee and speaking 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 emerged from the mountains!"

"What?!"

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

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

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

“Long Zhan? He’s still alive?”

Long Yuan’s brows furrowed, a complex emotion flashing in his eyes.

Long Zhan, the patriarch of the Heavenly Dragon lineage, his mortal enemy who once vied with 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, we can seize this chance to attack and wipe them out! Those remnants of the Heavenly Dragon lineage have been hiding for so many years; they’ve finally come out. This is a godsend!”

“Yes! Chief, let’s march! Let’s slaughter them without leaving a single survivor!”

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

Instantly, 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. If it weren’t for comparison with 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 their dragon race would remain.

At that moment, they would be the true dragons!

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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.

After a moment, 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 quickly 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, along with the Temple. Later, Chen Ping appeared, destroyed the Wu family, destroyed the Temple's branch temple, and took control of Yunxian City. Now, he has sent Long Zhan to lead the Heavenly Dragon Clan into Yunxian City, but he himself has disappeared without a trace."

A glint of light flashed in Long Yuan's eyes: "Chen Ping... it's him again."

He stood up, hands behind his back, gazing into the distance outside the hall.

"Chief, let's send troops!" an elder 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 Chen Ping. 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 Cloud Immortal City, it means he has already acknowledged Chen Ping's identity. In other words, Chen Ping 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 Chen Ping. A mere third-grade Upper Immortal cultivator has rendered the Temple helpless. Do you think that's normal?"

He paused, his tone growing more serious. "It's not normal. This shows that Chen Ping does indeed have the Dragon Clan backing him. Furthermore, the fact that Long Zhan brought the Heavenly Dragon Clan out of the mountains indicates that Chen Ping's status within the Dragon Clan is higher than we imagined."

An elder frowned. "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. Moreover, the Temple is watching us closely, waiting for us and the Dragon Clan to both suffer heavy losses."

He turned around, looking at the gray sky outside the hall, his tone growing even more grave.

"That Chen Ping... destroyed three sacred mountains of the Divine Temple and killed three True Immortal Realm elders. This strength, this courage, is extraordinary. The fact that he could make Long Zhan submit and persuade the Heavenly Dragon Clan to leave the mountain proves 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?”