

The Order 10541

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This bond had long transcended superior and subordinate, like that of brothers.

But now, the Grand Elder was dead.

Dead at the hands of an unknown Demon Dragon Palace Master, not even a trace of his body remained, his life tablet shattered, his soul returned to the heavens.

“Crack...”

A soft cracking sound rang out.

Shen Tong abruptly raised his hand, without a single unnecessary movement, and slammed his palm heavily onto the armrest of his chair.

The 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 enraged strike, it instantly turned to dust, falling in a flurry.

“Boom!”

An extremely violent aura, centered on Shen Tong, swept across the entire Lingxiao Palace!

The shockwave churned 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.

"Long Yuan!"

Shen Tong suddenly raised his head, his voice like a thunderclap from the heavens, echoing throughout the hall, making everyone's eardrums buzz and their minds tremble.

"I will tear you to pieces! I will grind your bones to dust! I will wipe your Demon Dragon lineage from the world!"

His eyes blazed with murderous intent, golden light surging, and his spiritual energy churning within him, as if he were about to burst forth and storm the Demon Dragon Palace.

Shen Tong abruptly rose, his aura reaching its peak, about to issue the order to mobilize the entire army of the temple to raze the Demon Dragon Palace to the ground.

But at that moment, his steps faltered.

Rage burned within him, but the reason buried deep within his bones held him back at the most crucial moment.

Shen Tong slowly closed his eyes, took a deep breath, then another.

He forcibly suppressed the overwhelming rage within him, the violent aura around him gradually subsiding.

He stood there, silent for a long time, his mind racing, rapidly processing and deducing.

Dragon Abyss.

However, they were only at the first rank of True Immortal Realm.

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The Grand Elder was at the peak of the first rank of True Immortal Realm, 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 capable of overwhelming a mid-tier sect.

Even if the entire Long Yuan Demon Dragon lineage were to fight to the death, it would be impossible for them to have killed the Grand Elder and his group in such a short time, without even a single one escaping to report back.

This simply defies logic.

Unless...

Shen Tong suddenly opened his eyes.

The anger in his eyes had subsided considerably, replaced by a solemn and cold expression.

Unless, a hidden powerhouse within the Demon Dragon Palace intervened.

And that powerhouse's strength was definitely far beyond the first rank of True Immortal Realm, 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 cold apprehension.

The Demon Clan was ruthless and cunning, possessing formidable strength. If they truly intervened, 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 rage 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, asking 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 followed me for thousands of years, like a brother. His tragic death has enraged me more than anyone else. I want to shatter the Dragon Abyss." "Torn to pieces!"

He slowly stood up, hands behind his back, his gaze sweeping over each elder present like a blade. His tone was heavy and clear: "But have you all considered 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, there must be a powerful figure secretly assisting him! And that powerful figure’s strength is probably... no less than mine!”

Upon hearing this,

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the expressions of all the elders in the hall changed simultaneously. The anger that had just risen was instantly extinguished by a bucket of cold water, replaced by deep shock and apprehension.

No less than the Hall Master?

Doesn’t that mean the opponent is at least a True Immortal Realm Second Grade Peak, or even a Third Grade existence?

Currently, besides Divine Power, no one else in the Divine Temple possesses 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 inferior to what it once was, 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, who have always coveted our temple, let go of this opportunity to kick us while we’re down and annihilate our temple in one fell swoop?”

“They won’t!”

He paused, a deeper layer of apprehension appearing in his eyes.

“Moreover, Chen Ping is still in Yunxian City, colluding closely with the Tianlong Clan. Chen Ping is ruthless, possesses unpredictable strength, and has repeatedly jeopardized our temple’s affairs.

If our temple launches a full-scale attack on the Demon Dragon Palace, he could seize the opportunity to launch a surprise attack from behind, cutting off our army’s retreat and heading straight for our main temple. At that point, our temple would be attacked from both sides; how could we possibly defend ourselves?”

“A pincer attack, 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 initially furious, now exchanged bewildered glances. Their fervor and anger gradually gave way to solemnity and reason.

They fell silent, carefully considering their temple master’s words. The more they thought about it, the more alarmed and fearful they became.

Yes, they had only thought of revenge, neglecting the most perilous situation they now faced.

After much hesitation, an elder cautiously asked, “Palace Master... do you mean... we should... spare the Demon Dragon lineage for now? Swallow this insult?”

Spare?

Swallow?

A chilling killing intent flashed in Shen Tong’s eyes, so intense that it sent a shiver down the spines of every elder present.

How could he possibly spare them?

The Grand Elder's blood could not be shed in vain.

The lives of fifty elite warriors could not be lost in vain.

The Temple's humiliation could not be swallowed so easily.

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Shen Tong nodded slowly, his voice as cold as ice: "It's not letting them go, it's a temporary halt."

"The temporary respite isn't out of fear, but for the sake of better revenge."

"Once we've dealt with Chen Ping, eliminated the formidable threat of Yunxian City and the Heavenly Dragon Clan, and secured our rear, we'll turn our attention to the Demon Dragon Clan! Then, no one will be able to help them, no one will be able to stop the wrath of my temple!"

He turned, his gaze fixed on the direction of Yunxian City, his eyes flashing with golden light, revealing a greedy and resolute glint.

"That Chen Ping 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 the Five-Clawed Golden Dragon bloodline from his body, 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 having a chance to challenge 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 the hope in their hearts.

First, kill Chen Ping, seize the dragon blood, break through realms, strengthen the Divine Palace!

Then, destroy the Demon Dragon, avenge the blood feud, wipe away the humiliation, and restore our prestige!

Shen Tong whirled around, his gaze sweeping over the crowd, his tone firm and unwavering: "Pass on my orders!"

"Immediately mobilize 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 slaughter of the city, nor for the extermination of the clan, but for one goal: to capture Chen Ping alive!"

"No matter the cost, bring Chen Ping back to the Divine Palace!"

Upon hearing this, the last trace of hesitation in the hearts of the elders vanished completely. They bowed deeply, their expressions solemn, their voices resounding in unison throughout the Lingxiao Palace: "Yes, Your Majesty! The Palace Master is wise!"

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Yunxian City.

This city, nestled among the mountains, was not among the most prosperous places in the myriad realms, but because of the presence of the Heavenly Dragon Clan and Chen Ping, it had become exceptionally peaceful.

In the past, it was always sunny, with a clear blue sky, not a cloud in the sky, and fresh air.

In the distance, dozens of colossal dragons could often be seen circling and soaring on the horizon, their golden scales shimmering brilliantly in the sunlight.

The dragon roars, clear and resonant, echoed faintly, their majestic and solemn presence enveloping the entire Cloud Immortal City in a powerful protective aura.

The city's inhabitants were long accustomed to this sight.

They could see dragons soaring whenever they looked up, and often heard their roars. Far from feeling fear, they felt pride.

With the powerful Heavenly Dragon Clan protecting them, and with a peerless expert like Chen Ping presiding over the city, Cloud Immortal City was like a peaceful paradise in this chaotic world. Who dared to invade?

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But today.

This long-held tranquility was utterly shattered.

An aura of destruction swept in from the distant horizon.

On the city wall of Cloud Immortal City.

The Heavenly Dragon Clan Chief, Long Zhan, stood with his hands behind his back, his posture as upright as a pine tree.

He wore a long golden robe embroidered with dragons, his face resolute, his eyes like stars, usually exuding composure and authority.

But now, his brows were tightly furrowed, forming a deep “川” shape, his eyes filled with solemnity and unease.

His gaze was fixed on the distant horizon.

There, a blinding golden light was slowly emerging.

At first, it was just a faint glimmer, but in moments, the light grew closer and stronger, like a golden tsunami, sweeping across the sky, spreading wildly, instantly dyeing half the sky a dazzling gold, obscuring the sunlight.

The world seemed to be filled only with this chilling gold.

From within the golden light, countless figures flew in, densely packed, stretching as far as the eye could see.

At the forefront was an enormous golden warship.

The warship, hundreds of feet long, stretched across the sky, its entire body forged from rare celestial divine metal. Heavy and imposing, its hull was covered with dense, intricate divine runes, each shimmering with spiritual light and radiating a terrifying yet oppressive pressure.

On either side of the warship, hundreds of elite temple warriors, clad in identical golden divine armor, stood in perfect formation.

Each of them possessed a sharp aura, cold eyes, and a steady yet powerful fluctuation of spiritual energy. The lowest among them was a seventh-grade Upper Immortal. Their expressions were solemn, their killing intent palpable, like iron-blooded warriors emerging from mountains of corpses and seas of blood. They remained silent, yet exuded a terrifying aura.

Behind the golden warship, an even denser array of temple disciples followed.

At a glance, there were at least a thousand of them, spread across the sky like a golden wave, completely obscuring the heavens.

They flew in perfect formation, their spiritual energy flowing smoothly, subtly forming a massive military array. Their oppressive aura, like a towering mountain, pressed down upon Yunxian City.

At the very forefront of this army, at the very center of the warship's bow,

stood a figure.

It was none other than the Temple Master, Shen Tong.

He still wore that golden dragon-patterned robe, its hem fluttering in the wind. He wore a purple-gold crown, his face cold and stern, his eyes flashing with golden light, radiating supreme majesty and domineering power.

The terrifying pressure of a peak second-grade True Immortal was released without reservation.

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That pressure, like the collapse of the heavens, like the overturning of mountains and seas, pressed down fiercely upon Yunxian City from the sky.

On the city wall.

Long Zhan's expression changed drastically, his pupils contracted sharply, and a storm of shock surged within him.

"The Temple...it's the Temple's army!"

Behind him, a Heavenly Dragon Clan elder's face was deathly pale, his voice trembling uncontrollably, filled with undisguised horror: "Clan Chief...the Temple...they're going to use the entire clan's strength to attack my Cloud Immortal City?! How dare they...how dare they mobilize such a large force!"

Long Zhan took a deep breath, forcibly suppressing the horror and gravity in his heart. His dragon aura surged slightly, stabilizing his stance. He knew that the more critical the situation, the less he could afford to panic.

He was the Heavenly Dragon Clan Chief, the guardian of Cloud Immortal City. If he panicked, everyone would collapse.

“Quickly!”

Long Zhan’s voice was low and urgent, carrying an unquestionable command, “Immediately activate the city’s protective array! Fully activate it! Summon all clansmen, everyone to the city walls, prepare for battle!”

“Yes!”

The Heavenly Dragon Clan experts behind him responded in unison, not daring to delay for the slightest, immediately turning to act.

“Woo—!”

A deep, urgent, and heavy horn sounded, booming across the sky above Yunxian City.

One horn after another pierced the air, echoing throughout every corner of the city.

This was a warning horn, a war horn!

The city’s inhabitants had been going about their daily tasks, merchants hawking their wares, pedestrians coming and going, children playing—a scene of peace and tranquility.

But when the horn sounded, when they instinctively looked up at the sky, everyone froze, completely rooted to the spot.

“What...what is that?”

“The sky...why is it all golden light? Such a terrifying aura...”

“It’s the temple! Those are temple attire! It’s the temple’s army!”

“Heavens... so many cultivators, such a massive force... Is the temple... is it going to destroy our Yunxian City?!”

Fear, like the most terrifying plague, swept through the entire Yunxian City in an instant.

The calm and tranquility on the faces of the people were instantly replaced by terror.

They panicked, became chaotic, and were terrified.

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The once bustling streets instantly descended into chaos.

Vendors hastily abandoned their stalls, scattering their goods everywhere, not even bothering to pick them up, fleeing in panic;

Pedestrians, their faces pale, ran frantically towards their homes;

Children, terrified by the atmosphere, cried out shrilly; women clung tightly to their children, letting out terrified screams; men, their faces ashen, yet filled with despair, dragged their families to find hiding places.

Cries, screams, shouts, running, the shattering of objects...

A cacophony of sounds mingled together, creating chaos. The entire city of Yunxian instantly transformed from a paradise into a place of terror.

Those forces that had previously allied themselves with the Chen family and sought refuge in Yunxian City were now terrified, their faces ashen.

They hid in their homes, tightly shutting their doors and windows, peering through the narrow cracks at the overwhelming, murderous army of the temple in the sky, their hearts filled with despair and regret.

“It’s over...it’s all over...”

“The temple is serious now, they’re going to massacre the city!”

“If only...if only we hadn’t stayed in Yunxian City, hadn’t sided with the Chen family...now we can’t leave!”

The city’s protective array, under full force, slowly activated.

A pale golden light curtain rose from all sides of the city, like a giant protective shield, enveloping the entire city of Yunxian.

The light barrier shimmered with spiritual energy, radiating protective power, yet under the terrifying pressure of the temple army, it appeared so fragile, so insignificant, as if it would shatter at the slightest touch.

Atop the city wall.

Long Zhan stood tall and imposing at the forefront.

Behind him, dozens of powerful Heavenly Dragon Clan warriors stood ready, each radiating dragon energy, their expressions solemn.

Their numbers were vastly outnumbered by the temple’s thousand elite troops, yet not one retreated, not one showed fear.

They were Heavenly Dragons, proud descendants of the dragon race, who would rather die than surrender!

Long Zhan took a deep breath, raised his head, gazed at the massive golden warship in the sky, channeled all his spiritual power, and shouted at the top of his lungs.

A voice like thunder echoed through the heavens and earth, resounding in all directions: “Lord of the Divine Power Palace!”

“Your Divine Power Palace has mobilized a massive army without cause, pressuring my Cloud Immortal City. What is your intention?!”

At the bow of the golden warship.

The Divine Power Palace, high above, looked down upon the tiny Cloud Immortal City below, and upon Long Zhan atop the city walls. His face was expressionless, his tone indifferent and cold, carrying an undeniable air of authority.

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“Long Zhan.”

“I have come today for one thing only: to hand over Chen Ping.”

His words clearly reached everyone’s ears.

Long Zhan’s expression changed drastically, his heart sinking.

As expected, they were after Young Master Chen!

The Divine Power Palace ultimately refused to let Chen Ping go, even resorting to mobilizing such a massive army to threaten Cloud Immortal City!

Long Zhan’s eyes flashed with a sharp light, his voice resounding without the slightest hint of evasion: “Chen Ping is the Dragon Emperor recognized by my Heavenly Dragon Clan, a distinguished guest of my

Cloud Immortal City! If you want to capture him, you'll have to get past me first! You'll have to step over the corpses of every single one of my Heavenly Dragon Clan members!"

A cold, disdainful smirk curled at the corner of Shen Tong's lips.

"Dragon Battle."

His tone was indifferent, yet brimming with utter contempt. "Your Heavenly Dragon Clan is but a few hundred strong. Even if each one is an elite, so what? Behind me are thousands of elite warriors from the Divine Palace, and countless True Immortal Realm experts."

"Do you really think that with your meager numbers and this dilapidated city-protecting formation, you can withstand a single blow from my Divine Palace army?"

He paused, his tone growing even colder, carrying a blatant threat: "I'll say it again: hand over Chen Ping."

"I promise to capture only him. This matter has nothing to do with your Heavenly Dragon Clan, nor with the people of Cloud Immortal City.

If you know what's good for you and obediently hand him over, I might spare your lives and order that no innocent person in the city be harmed."

"Otherwise..."

He didn't finish his sentence.

But the unfinished words, the chilling killing intent, the terrifying pressure—all conveyed the threat perfectly.

Otherwise, slaughter the entire city!

Otherwise, leave no one alive!

Behind Long Zhan, several elders of the Heavenly Dragon Clan's expressions changed slightly, their faces showing hesitation.

They looked at Long Zhan, their lips moving slightly, yet they hesitated to speak.

They weren't afraid of death, but they feared the annihilation of the Heavenly Dragon Clan, feared the innocent civilians in the city being implicated, fearing rivers of blood.

On one side was Dragon Emperor Chen Ping, on the other were the lives of their entire clan and the entire city.

A dilemma.

But Long Zhan didn't even turn his head once.

He remained fixed on the divine power in the sky, his gaze resolute, unwavering, speaking each word clearly and decisively: "If you want to capture the Dragon Emperor, you'll have to step over my dead body first."

"My Heavenly Dragon Clan, we would rather die than betray!"

"My Cloud Immortal City, we would rather die than surrender!"

A sudden surge of killing intent erupted in the divine power's eyes.

He was utterly enraged by Long Zhan's stubbornness, and sneered, his voice chillingly cold: "Fine, fine, a death wish! Since you've chosen to die, then I'll grant your wish!"

As soon as he finished speaking,

Shen Tong abruptly raised his right hand and waved it through the air.

“Attack!” The command was given.

In the sky, thousands of temple disciples stepped forward in unison, their movements perfectly synchronized.

They simultaneously raised their hands, various spiritual energy spells coalescing in their palms—golden, blue, red light... dazzling and illuminating the entire sky. The terrifying fluctuations of spiritual energy caused the heavens and earth to change color.

A great battle was about to erupt.

The air seemed to freeze; the shadow of death loomed over the entire Cloud Immortal City.

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Deep within the City Lord’s Mansion, outside a secret chamber.

A solitary yet imposing figure, like a rock, stood guard before the tightly closed door of the chamber.

It was Ming Li.

He was clad in black, his face deathly pale, devoid of any color. Beads of cold sweat trickled down his forehead, dripping onto the ground.

In his hand, he gripped the black ghost blade that had been with him for many years, the hilt almost crushed in his hand.

His gaze was fixed on the massive golden warship in the sky, on the overwhelming army of the temple.

The pressure of the True Immortal Realm pressed down on him like a mountain, making it difficult to breathe, his legs trembling slightly.

Yet he did not retreat a step, nor move an inch, standing there silently, guarding.

Behind him was the secret chamber.

Inside the secret chamber was Chen Ping.

Liu Qianqian stood beside Ming Li, her simple blue robes fluttering in the fierce wind, her black hair flying wildly.

Her cultivation was only at the Upper Immortal Realm. Under the terrifying pressure of the Divine Palace army, she swayed precariously, almost unable to stand, her face as pale as paper.

Yun Yao stood behind them.

Her injuries were not yet fully healed. Old wounds hadn't healed, and new pressure had added to her already pale face, devoid of color. Her figure was thin, as if a gust of wind could topple her.

She looked up at the despairing golden waves in the sky, her eyes filled with fear and unease, her delicate body trembling slightly.

Yun Yao's steps remained firm.

She too stood guard at the entrance to the secret chamber.

The young master had saved her life, giving her a new lease on life.

Today, the young master was in danger, and she would risk her life to protect him.

Chen Wanqing stood at the forefront.

She wore a simple white dress, ethereal and otherworldly, her beauty unparalleled. Yet, at this moment, her cold face was expressionless, only solemn.

She gripped a long sword tightly in her hand, the blade trembling slightly, revealing a hint of unease.

Her cultivation was the highest among the four present, but facing the thousand elite warriors of the temple, facing the divine abilities of a second-grade True Immortal, she felt no chance of victory, no confidence whatsoever.

Strong, too strong.

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The opponent's strength was like an insurmountable chasm.

But she did not retreat.

Chen Wanqing slowly turned her head, her gaze falling on the tightly closed door of the secret chamber behind her, a complex expression flashing in her eyes.

Worry, concern, determination, resolve...

Chen Ping was inside. He was in seclusion, healing his wounds, refining his power, and recovering his strength.

He was completely unaware of what was happening outside.

He didn't know the temple army was pressing in, didn't know Cloud Immortal City was in imminent danger, didn't know countless people were risking their lives for him.

But he had to live.

As long as he lived, there was hope.

As long as he lived, there was still a chance for things to turn around.

Chen Wanqing took a deep breath, suppressing all her emotions, slowly turned her head, and looked up at the sky again, her gaze becoming firm and calm once more.

She looked at Yun Yao behind her, her voice calm yet carrying an undeniable concern: "Yun Yao, your injuries haven't healed yet, your spiritual energy is unstable. Step back, we'll handle things here."

Yun Yao shook her head, her eyes filled with fear, her voice trembling slightly, yet revealing an unwavering stubbornness: "Sister, I won't retreat."

"Young Master saved me, my life originally belonged to him."

"Today, even if I die, I will die here, guarding Young Master's door."

Chen Wanqing looked into her clear and resolute eyes, a complex and indescribable emotion welling up within her.

She could see that this woman was truly devoted to Chen Ping, genuinely willing to give everything for him.

Chen Wanqing didn't say anything more, only nodded slightly, tacitly agreeing to her staying.

Beside them, Ming Li, who had been silent for a long time, suddenly spoke.

His voice was hoarse and dry, like sandpaper scraping, tinged with bitterness: "Miss Chen, do you think... we can survive this time? Can we hold out until Mr. Chen emerges from seclusion?"

Chen Wanqing remained silent for a moment.

She gazed at the approaching killing intent in the sky, gently shook her head, her voice calm: "I don't know."

She didn't know if they could win.

She didn't know if they could survive.