

The Order 10571

Chapter: 10571

He thought he would have to endure countless life-and-death experiences, withstand countless moments of loneliness, before he could see her again.

But now, she stood there, standing not far from him on the horizon, clearly appearing before him.

Without any warning, without any preparation. The person he had longed for day and night was right before him.

“Yu...Yuqi...”

Chen Ping finally managed to call out, his voice hoarse and trembling, filled with endless longing, excitement, grievance, and ecstasy. Every word seemed to be squeezed from the depths of his heart.

He could no longer control his emotions, no longer caring about the army of demonic dragons in the sky, no longer caring about Ning Zhi whom he hated to the core, no longer caring about the dangers around him.

His feet moved.

Like an arrow released from a bow, he rushed towards the purple figure in the sky without regard for anything else.

“Yuqi!”

He shouted, his voice hoarse, yet filled with an unwavering obsession.

At this moment, his eyes were fixed only on that purple-clad figure; the entire world seemed to consist of only her.

At this moment, he was no longer the decisive and ruthless Dragon Emperor who shook the fourteenth heaven.

No longer the composed and fearsome power that made countless forces tremble.

He was simply Chen Ping.

Chen Ping, driven mad by longing for his beloved, lost control, and became reckless.

Years of separation, years of worry, all transformed into the courage to rush towards her the moment he saw her.

From the sky, Ning Zhi took in Chen Ping's distraught, frenzied, and utterly dejected state. His smile deepened, becoming increasingly smug and mocking.

This was the effect he wanted.

He wanted Chen Ping to appear so pathetic, so utterly insignificant, under the watchful eyes of everyone.

He wanted to see Chen Ping suffer, to see Chen Ping despair, to see Chen Ping completely lose control because of Su Yuqi.

This was the best torture for Chen Ping, a thousand times more satisfying than killing him outright.

Ning Zhi slowly turned his head, glancing at the bewildered Su Yuqi beside him. A fleeting, almost imperceptible coldness flashed in his eyes, quickly replaced by gentle warmth.

Su Yuqi's brows furrowed tightly, her exquisite face filled with confusion and bewilderment.

She looked down at the figure rushing towards her recklessly, at his reddened eyes, at his trembling voice, at the intense, unyielding longing and love in his eyes, and a complex, indescribable emotion welled up within her.

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That figure, that face, those eyes filled with deep affection and pain...

So familiar.

So incredibly familiar.

So familiar, as if she had seen it a thousand times, deep within her soul.

But she couldn't remember.

Not a single thing.

She desperately searched her memory, desperately tried to recall everything about this boy, but her mind was blank, filled only with sharp, throbbing pains.

It was as if an incredibly strong seal had firmly sealed away all her memories, preventing her from touching them, from breaking through them.

"Do I...know him?"

Su Yuqi murmured to herself, her voice cold yet filled with deep confusion and bewilderment, and a hint of heartache she herself didn't even realize.

She only remembered seeing Chen Ping when she ascended the Heavenly Ladder; Chen Ping had felt the same excitement upon seeing her then.

Ning Zhi didn't answer immediately, but simply watched Chen Ping, who had lost control in mid-air, savoring the thrill of revenge.

Chen Ping soared into the air, golden light radiating from his body, dragon might permeating the air. Just as he was about to reach Su Yuqi, he was instantly stopped by Long Yuan, who was prepared, along with several powerful demonic dragons.

"Halt!"

Long Yuan roared, his voice like thunder, his demonic energy surging. Several demonic dragons instantly formed a solid defensive line, blocking Chen Ping's path. Their ferocious heads roared, spewing dragon breath, obstructing Chen Ping's advance.

Chen Ping seemed not to hear her, his gaze fixed intently on Su Yuqi, unwavering. His voice trembled with pleading, filled with endless expectation: "Yuqi! It's me! It's Chen Ping! Look at me, don't you really remember me?! Have you forgotten everything we went through together?!"

Su Yuqi looked at him, at the expectation and pain in his eyes, and the ache in her heart intensified, her brows furrowing even deeper.

Does he remember?

Does he really remember?

Should he remember?

She didn't know.

She couldn't remember anything.

But why, seeing his distraught, pained state, did her heart ache as if pricked by needles?

Why did she feel an irresistible urge to reach out and soothe the pain in his eyes?

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Ning Zhi spoke slowly, his voice indifferent and mocking, like a cold blade slicing through the sky, reaching everyone's ears: "Chen Ping, long time no see. I never expected someone of the Golden Dragon bloodline to be so disoriented. It truly is an eye-opener."

This voice forcibly pulled Chen Ping back to reality from his uncontrollable reverie.

Chen Ping's gaze finally shifted from Su Yuqi to Ning Zhi's face.

The longing, excitement, and ecstasy in his eyes receded like a tide, replaced by overwhelming hatred, icy killing intent, and suppressed rage.

"Ning Zhi!"

Chen Ping gritted his teeth, each word carrying boundless killing intent, almost freezing the air.

"What did you do to Yuqi?! What did you do to her?!"

He knew very well that Su Yuqi would never forget him, would never look at him with such unfamiliar eyes.

All of this must be Ning Zhi's doing!

Ning Zhi must have used some evil means to seal Su Yuqi's memories!

Ning Zhi laughed loudly, his laughter filled with endless smugness and mockery, utterly arrogant.

"What did you do?"

He leaned slightly forward, his tone flippant and cruel. "I didn't do anything. I just helped her find her true self. Before, she was blinded by you, a mere ant, losing her true self. Now, she has awakened and completely rid herself of you, this burden."

He paused, his gaze sweeping mockingly over Chen Ping's pale face, his tone growing even more cruel: "She doesn't recognize you anymore, Chen Ping. In her heart, you are now nothing more than an insignificant stranger. Do you believe that with just one word from me, she would draw her sword against you?"

Chen Ping's heart felt as if it had been gripped tightly by an invisible hand and then crushed, excruciating pain instantly engulfing his entire body.

His face was deathly pale, his body swayed uncontrollably, a metallic taste rising in his throat, which he forcibly swallowed back.

He didn't want to believe it, he refused to believe it.

He looked at Su Yuqi again, his eyes filled with expectation, pleading, humility, and helplessness—a look never before seen on the once arrogant Dragon Emperor.

"Yuqi...you really don't remember me? We once roamed the mortal world together, we made promises together...we..."

Chen Ping's voice choked, unable to continue.

Because he clearly saw that Su Yuqi's gaze was still unfamiliar, still confused, still devoid of the tenderness and affection he remembered.

Those eyes, once brimming with love, now held only blankness.

Su Yuqi gently shook her head, a hint of apology and confusion on her beautiful face, her voice cold and lost, each word clearly reaching Chen Ping's ears:

"I...I don't know you."

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Six short words.

Like six incredibly sharp knives, they pierced Chen Ping's heart, twisted his chest, and tore his soul to pieces.

Every word was filled with excruciating pain.

Chen Ping's body swayed violently again, his face turning deathly pale. The golden light around him dimmed, and the light in his eyes went out completely.

On the city wall, Long Zhan watched this scene, a surge of indescribable sorrow and anger welling up inside him. He gripped his broken sword tightly, utterly powerless.

Outside the secret chamber, Ming Li, Chen Wanqing, Yun Yao, and Liu Qianqian were all stunned.

They had never seen Chen Ping like this before.

The Chen Ping who was always calm, always composed, always decisive, and never defeated by any difficulty.

The once indomitable Dragon Emperor, now, resembled a utterly abandoned child, lost and wretched, his eyes filled only with despair and pain.

Yun Yao's eyes instantly reddened, tears streaming down her face. She covered her mouth, afraid to cry out.

Chen Wanqing bit her lower lip tightly until it bled, her eyes filled with heartache and helplessness. She desperately wanted to rush forward and comfort the agonizing boy, but she knew that at this moment, no one could soothe the pain in his heart.

Ming Li gripped his ghost blade tightly, his knuckles white. His heart burned with rage, and he wanted nothing more than to rush forward and fight Ning Zhi to the death, but Liu Qianqian held him back firmly, gently shaking her head.

Going up there would only be suicide; it would only distract Chen Ping further.

In the sky, Ning Zhi took in Chen Ping's despair, a surge of indescribable pleasure and satisfaction welling up within him.

So many years.

Years of forbearance and lurking, from the mortal realm to the celestial realm, and then to the heavenly realm, he had been defeated time and again by Chen Ping, humiliated time and again, forced to flee in disarray like a stray dog.

He hadn't forgotten a single moment of those humiliations, those pains, those resentments.

Now, he finally possessed the power to crush Chen Ping, finally stood atop Chen Ping, finally could torment and humiliate him at will.

This feeling was even more exhilarating than conquering the world.

He wasn't in a hurry to kill Chen Ping.

Death would be too easy for him.

He wanted to play with him slowly, torment him slowly, let Chen Ping taste all the pain and despair in the world, let him experience everything he had endured, and then, he would personally end his life, letting him die in the deepest despair.

Ning Zhi's lips curled into a cruel smile. His tone was casual, yet filled with endless mockery and oppression: "Chen Ping, rest assured, I won't kill you while you've just emerged from seclusion and your injuries haven't healed. Winning that way would be dishonorable."

"I will wait for you, wait until you're fully recovered, wait until you reach your peak, wait until you unleash all your power, and then... I will defeat you fair and square, making you die with a sense of honor."

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He paused, his gaze icy, each word piercing: "Just like back then, when you repeatedly defeated and humiliated me. This time, I will make you taste all the bitterness of defeat, make you pay the price for everything you've done."

"You're only at the fourth rank of the Upper Immortal Realm now. Your cultivation speed is very disappointing..."

At this moment, Ning Zhi looked down on Chen Ping. Chen Ping, at only the fourth rank of the Upper Immortal Realm, was no longer worthy of his attention.

Chen Ping slowly raised his head.

His listless, pale, and desperate face gradually lost all its weakness.

The pain, confusion, and humiliation in his eyes gradually vanished.

In their place lay endless coldness, a dormant killing intent, a chilling aura that seemed to freeze everything, and the rekindled majesty and pride of the Dragon Emperor.

He would not fall.

nor would he be broken by this pain.

He would help Su Yuqi regain her memories.

He would repay a hundredfold, a thousandfold, all the humiliation and pain Ning Zhi had inflicted upon him and upon Su Yuqi.

“Ning Zhi.”

Chen Ping spoke slowly, his voice low and hoarse, yet carrying a chill that seemed to shake the very heavens and earth. Each word was as if forged from ice, resounding and powerful.

“I, Chen Ping, swear here and now that I will make you pay a hundredfold, a thousandfold, until death do us part for everything you’ve done to Yuqi.”

“As for you...”

He raised his eyes, his gaze clashing fiercely with Ning Zhi’s in mid-air, sparks flying. Demonic energy clashed with dragon energy, whipping up a howling gale.

Chen Ping’s tone grew colder and more resolute: “I’d also like to see just how much skill you’ve gained in all this time, daring to be so arrogant before me.”

“You are my defeated opponent, you were before, you are now, and you will never change.”

The two locked eyes, and the world fell silent.

All sound vanished.

The demonic dragon army ceased its roar, Long Zhan held his breath, and everyone in Yunxian City stared wide-eyed, holding their breath, their hearts pounding, their eyes glued to the two figures facing off in mid-air.

It was a fateful duel.

It was the prelude to the complete eruption of grudges accumulated over countless lifetimes.

Su Yuqi remained standing quietly beside Ning Zhi, her purple robes fluttering, her gaze fixed on Chen Ping's face, the confusion and struggle in her eyes growing stronger.

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That figure, that familiarity, became clearer and clearer.

The pain in her heart intensified.

Why, when she didn't recognize him, did it hurt so much?

Why, when she couldn't remember, did it bother her so much?

Her brows furrowed deeper, her head throbbed more and more, as if something was about to break free of its seal and burst forth.

Finally, she couldn't help but raise her hand and gently press her throbbing temples, her delicate brows furrowed.

Ning Zhi noticed Su Yuqi's unusual behavior beside him. His brows furrowed slightly, a hint of wariness flashing in his eyes, before he regained his calm and gentle demeanor.

He spoke softly, his tone gentle, carrying an undeniable reassurance: "Senior Sister, don't think about it. The past isn't worth your worry. Just remember, I'm your junior brother, and I'll always protect you. That's enough."

Su Yuqi slowly raised her head, looking at Ning Zhi's gentle face. A complex emotion flashed in her eyes—confusion, bewilderment, and a barely perceptible distance.

She nodded gently, forcibly suppressing the throbbing pain and memories in her mind, refusing to think about it anymore.

But that figure, bathed in golden light, with cold and resolute eyes, was like a brand, deeply etched into her heart, indelible and impossible to erase.

Above Yunxian City, demonic energy surged, dragon might roared, killing intent permeated the air, and the atmosphere was tense to the extreme.

Fated rivals, reunited lovers, forgotten memories, an irreconcilable feud.

All of this converged at this moment.

A final, epic feud, spanning lifetimes and destined to shake the fourteen heavens, is about to begin.

No one knows how this duel will end.

Above Cloud Immortal City, the heavens and earth changed color. Demonic energy surged like a raging torrent, and a thick, oppressive fog almost completely obscured the sky. Within the dense, impenetrable darkness, flashes of scarlet lightning occasionally streaked across the heavens, exuding a ferocious, world-destroying power.

At the same time, a mighty dragon's might awakened like a sacred mountain slumbering for millennia, distorting the void and filling the air with visible golden ripples. Wherever it passed, even the demonic energy was forced to retreat.

Two completely different yet equally terrifying auras collided and tore at each other in mid-air. Each clash unleashed a devastating gale, carrying debris and sword energy that swept in all directions.

The walls of Yunxian City trembled violently, and the cultivators within prostrated themselves in terror, too terrified to even look up. They felt the two oppressive forces pressing down on them like two mountains, making it hard to breathe, their very souls trembling.

Chen Ping and Ning Zhi stood a full hundred feet apart, facing each other amidst the raging wind and demonic energy. Their auras locked firmly on each other, neither yielding an inch.

Their gazes clashed fiercely in mid-air. It wasn't an ordinary exchange of glances, but a direct clash of souls and cultivation, sparks seemingly bursting and exploding in the void, accompanied by deafening sonic booms.

The oppressive atmosphere was incredibly thick, like solidified ice, suffocating everyone. Even the ferocious demonic dragons coiled behind Ning Zhi ceased their roars, their massive wings slightly folded, daring not to utter a sound.

Pairs of scarlet eyes were fixed on the figure bathed in golden light. Their bestial instincts made them acutely aware of the deadly threat, a reverence emanating from the depths of their bloodlines that prevented them from making a move.

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Golden dragon energy slowly rose around Chen Ping, like a golden sea of clouds enveloping him, each wisp of energy exuding sacred majesty.

The phantom of a five-clawed golden dragon flickered behind him, its scales clearly visible, its whiskers fluttering in the wind. Its roar echoed faintly between heaven and earth, deep and resonant, making one's eardrums tingle—the majesty of the supreme dragon race, not to be profaned by any evil spirit.

He had just emerged from his secluded cultivation; his breathing was not yet fully stable, and the spiritual energy within his body was still surging and harmonizing wildly in his meridians.

Yet, the aura of dominance and arrogance emanating from his very bones instilled awe in all the cultivators present. Even the veteran powerhouses of the Celestial Realm dared not underestimate him in the slightest.

Although his aura was overwhelmingly powerful, Chen Ping's gaze remained fixed on the figure in purple. It was as if an invisible thread held his mind captive, drawing all his attention to her.

The figure in flowing purple robes stood quietly half a step away from Ning Zhi. Her robes fluttered in the wind, outlining her slender yet graceful figure. She was ethereal and otherworldly, like a fairy descended from the heavens, untouched by worldly dust.

The coldness in her eyes was like ice that had never melted, yet in Chen Ping's eyes, that face remained etched deep within his soul, a face that haunted his dreams.

Her gaze was filled with unfamiliarity and confusion, devoid of any former tenderness, affection, or dependence, not even a trace of familiarity. It was as if they were complete strangers.

Chen Ping's heart felt as if it were being gripped, kneaded, and torn apart by an invisible hand. A sharp pain spread through his limbs, making it almost impossible for him to breathe, even causing a momentary disruption in the dragon energy surrounding him.

He desperately wanted to rush over, to embrace the person he longed for day and night, to tell her how much he missed her. But the barrier between them was like an insurmountable chasm, making it impossible for him to move an inch.

But he couldn't fall.

Even more importantly, he couldn't fall now.

The thousands of cultivators in Yunxian City were still waiting for him, his friends were still waiting for him. Even with the excruciating pain in his heart, he had to hold on.

Chen Ping took a deep breath, his chest heaving, forcefully suppressing the surging pain and longing in his heart. He forced the overflowing emotions deep within his soul, slowly raising his right hand and gently clenching it towards the void.

In an instant, golden light flashed!

The dazzling golden light pierced through the demonic energy, and a longsword, entirely black yet with fine golden patterns flowing across its blade, appeared out of thin air in his hand. The blade was broad and thick, the hilt engraved with dragon patterns, warm to the touch, carrying a familiar feel.

This was the Dragon-Slaying Sword.

The sword trembled slightly, emitting a deep and resonant sword cry, as if a divine weapon slumbering for millennia had awakened, responding to its master's call, or as if proclaiming to the heavens and earth that its master, after enduring countless hardships, had finally returned.

The golden patterns on the sword spread along Chen Ping's palm, merging with the dragon energy within him, radiating an even more formidable aura.

Chen Ping gripped the Dragon-Slaying Sword, its tip pointing diagonally at the ground. The chaotic aura around him gradually calmed, and the pain in his eyes was completely replaced by a chilling killing intent.

He was like a volcano dormant for millennia, about to erupt; the surface appeared calm and undisturbed, but within surged a power capable of destroying everything. That killing intent was directed directly at Ning Zhi, without any concealment.

Ning Zhi, watching Chen Ping's restrained yet resolute demeanor, smiled even more broadly, his eyes filled with mockery and derision, as if looking at a clown. The demonic energy around him surged even more intensely, making his face appear even more sinister.

"Oh? The Dragon-Slaying Sword?"

He spoke lightly, his voice not loud, but carried throughout Cloud Immortal City by the demonic energy, clearly reaching everyone's ears. His contempt was undisguised. "Chen Ping, you really are nostalgic. So many years have passed, and you're still using this broken sword. How has the mighty Golden Dragon bloodline fallen so low that you can't even produce a decent divine artifact?"

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He paused, his gaze sweeping disdainfully over the Dragon-Slaying Sword in Chen Ping's hand. His tone grew even more contemptuous, even carrying a hint of condescending mockery: "That's right, you're only at the fourth rank of the Upper Immortal Realm now, your cultivation is at the bottom of the fourteenth heaven. Even if you wield..." "How much power can this ancient Dragon-Slaying Sword possibly unleash?"

It probably can't even execute a complete sword technique. With such meager strength, you dare to fight me? It's utterly humiliating."

Chen Ping calmly looked at him, unperturbed, her face expressionless. She simply spoke, her voice cold and devoid of emotion: "Ning Zhi, you talk too much. If you want to fight, then fight. Why bother with this endless chatter, only to annoy everyone?"

"Heh."

Ning Zhi sneered, a cruel smile curving his lips. He was about to continue his taunts when a sharp, clear female voice suddenly broke the silence from below.

"Chen Ping!"

Chen Wanqing's figure soared into the sky from the depths of the City Lord's mansion. Her white robes were already stained with blood, the bloodstains fluttering in the wind like a flickering candle, seemingly on the verge of collapse, yet possessing a resolute beauty born of desperation, a heartbreaking resilience.

She channeled the last of her spiritual energy, rushing to Chen Ping's side without hesitation. Her hand trembled slightly as she gently grasped his sleeve. Her beautiful face was filled with solemnity and worry, her eyes reddening, clearly indicating she had just endured a fierce battle.

"Chen Ping, listen to me."

Chen Wanqing's voice was urgent and low, tinged with barely concealed panic. Her eyes were fixed warily on Ning Zhi not far away, fearing he might suddenly attack. "This person is extremely powerful, far beyond your imagination. He's simply not someone you can contend with now.

Just before you emerged from seclusion, the Temple Master, Shen Tong, personally intervened to suppress this fiend, but he... severely injured him with a single blow, forcing him to flee in a sorry state. He even broke the Temple's protective array!"

Chen Ping's pupils contracted slightly, a storm of shock raging within him.

Temple Master Shen Tong?

That was one of the true top experts of the Fourteenth Heaven, his cultivation already at the peak of the second rank of True Immortal, standing at the pinnacle of the Fourteenth Heaven, a being looked up to by countless cultivators, his divine abilities and techniques reaching the heavens and the earth.

Such an expert was actually severely injured by Ning Zhi in a single blow, without even the power to retaliate, forced to flee in a sorry state?

Chen Ping's heart grew even heavier. He knew that Ning Zhi's strength would surge after falling into the demonic path, but he hadn't expected it to surge to this extent, already surpassing the ordinary realms of the Heavenly Realm.

"This person clearly reached such a level by devouring the souls and cultivation of countless cultivators. The demonic energy surrounding him even has a corrosive effect on the soul."

Chen Wanqing gripped Chen Ping's sleeve tightly, her voice filled with urgency. "Chen Ping, you must be careful. Don't be careless, and definitely don't engage in a direct confrontation. Let's find a way to retreat first, then devise a strategy to defeat him."

Chen Ping remained silent for a moment, looking at Chen Wanqing's worried expression, then nodded slightly, his voice calm yet resolute: "I understand."

Of course, he wouldn't be careless.

From the first moment he saw Ning Zhi, he clearly sensed that unfathomable aura, that terrifying power lurking within the dense demonic energy, enough to crush everything—a pressure that even he found daunting, something the Ning Zhi of the past could never possess.

Ning Zhi was no longer the stray dog he had repeatedly defeated and forced to flee in disarray.

Ning Zhi now certainly had the right to stand before him, the right to challenge him, and even the right to take his life.

But so what?

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A defeated opponent is still a defeated opponent.

Even if he had fallen into the demonic path and his cultivation had skyrocketed, in Chen Ping's heart, he was still that petty person who only knew how to resort to underhanded tricks.

Chen Ping's gaze returned to Ning Zhi, his eyes showing no fear, only a chilling fighting spirit and suppressed killing intent. The dragon energy around him surged once more, and the sword's hum grew even more rapid.

Ning Zhi took in the intimate scene between Chen Wanqing and Chen Ping, a fleeting, almost imperceptible coldness and jealousy flashing in his eyes, which then transformed into a more mocking smile, even carrying a hint of provocation.

He turned his head to look at Su Yuqi beside him, his tone flippant and deliberate, his voice just loud enough for Chen Ping to hear: "Senior Sister, look, those are Chen Ping's women.

Oh, right, not just one, there are several more down there, all guarding the entrance to the secret chamber, completely devoted to him, each one crying their eyes out, afraid something might happen to him. Tsk tsk, that Chen Ping guy, he's really got a lot of luck with women, always surrounded by beautiful women wherever he goes."

Su Yuqi stood quietly, her gaze following Ning Zhi's words to Chen Wanqing, carefully scrutinizing the woman before her.

She was an extremely beautiful woman, her white clothes stained with blood, her demeanor aloof and cold, her eyes filled with concern and worry. She tightly gripped Chen Ping's sleeve, as if afraid he might be harmed in any way; her concern was genuine, without any pretense.

The two stood together, so intimate, so natural, like long-time lovers, without the slightest barrier between them.

For some reason, a sudden, indescribable bitterness welled up in Su Yuqi's heart, like a sour stone lodged in her chest, dull and aching.

It was a completely unfamiliar emotion, so unfamiliar that she couldn't understand it, much less control it; she could only let it spread within her.

Why was she so bitter?

She didn't even know that person, had no connection to him whatsoever, so why did she feel bitterness because he was intimate with another woman?

But why, seeing him standing with another woman, seeing that other woman so intimately holding his sleeve, seeing the gentle look in his eyes towards that woman, did her heart feel as if it had been pierced by something sharp, a dull ache, making even breathing difficult?

Su Yuqi's brows furrowed tightly, her beautiful face filled with confusion and bewilderment. She tried to suppress this inexplicable emotion, but found it impossible; the bitterness and piercing pain grew stronger, making her restless.

She desperately suppressed the turmoil in her heart, forcibly averting her gaze from Chen Ping and looking elsewhere, refusing to look at the intimate figures, trying to calm herself.

Ning Zhi took in Su Yuqi's subtle reactions, his smile deepening, a smug gleam in his eyes.

This was exactly the effect he wanted.

To inflict pain on Chen Ping, to drive him to despair, to make him utterly lose his dignity in front of Su Yuqi, to see his beloved become a stranger to him, even jealous because of him—this was a thousand times more satisfying than simply killing Chen Ping.

He wanted to destroy Chen Ping's spirit bit by bit, to break him in agony.

“Chen Ping.”

Ning Zhi spoke again, his tone increasingly arrogant, the demonic energy around him churning even more violently. “You want to fight? Fine, I’ll give you that chance, to fulfill your obsession.”

He slowly raised his right hand, making a casual gesture of invitation, his face full of mockery and disdain, his eyes practically overflowing with contempt: “Come on, let me see just how much power a fourth-grade Upper Immortal can unleash.”

Chen Ping calmly looked at him, saying nothing, his aura already reaching its peak.

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He simply slowly raised the Dragon-Slaying Sword, its tip pointing directly at Ning Zhi. Golden light surged around him, dragon might permeating the entire sky, forcing the demonic energy to retreat. His aura instantly reached its peak, his spiritual power surging wildly within him, preparing for a full-force attack.

But just as he was about to take his first step and strike, Ning Zhi suddenly laughed.

That smile, brimming with endless smugness and cruelty, exuded a chilling ruthlessness that sent a shiver down the spines of every cultivator present.

“However...”

Ning Zhi abruptly changed the subject, his tone nonchalant, as if discussing a trivial matter, “Dealing with someone like you is unnecessary; I don’t need to dirty my hands.”

He turned to Su Yuqi beside him, his voice instantly becoming gentle and warm, carrying an undeniable certainty, as if he were issuing a perfectly ordinary order.

“Senior Sister, I’d like to trouble you to teach this arrogant fool a lesson, to show him who he should and shouldn’t mess with,” Ning Zhi said.

A deathly silence fell over the entire area.

Time seemed to stand still. The howling wind ceased, the churning demonic energy stopped, and all sound vanished, leaving only the rapid breathing of the crowd.

The cultivators of Yunxian City stared wide-eyed, their faces filled with disbelief. They never imagined that Ning Zhi would actually send Su Yuqi to deal with Chen Ping.

Chen Ping was struck dumb, frozen in place, unable to move. He nearly dropped the Dragon-Slaying Sword from his hand, and the dragon energy around him instantly became chaotic and violently fluctuated.

He looked at Ning Zhi in disbelief, his eyes filled with anger and killing intent. Then he abruptly turned to Su Yuqi, his eyes filled with shock, pain, and despair—a collapse from heaven to hell that made his very soul tremble.

“Ning Zhi!!!”

Chen Ping roared, his voice hoarse and frantic, filled with boundless grief and rage. His eyes blazed with murderous intent, almost tearing Ning Zhi to shreds. “You dare let Yuqi make a move?! You despicable scoundrel, are you even human?!”

Ning Zhi merely smiled faintly, as if he hadn’t heard Chen Ping’s roar. His eyes were indifferent, even somewhat playful, as he continued softly to Su Yuqi, “Senior Sister, go. This person is nothing but an insignificant ant, a clown. No need to show mercy, just cripple him.”

Su Yuqi’s brows furrowed tightly, her resistance growing stronger.

She looked at Chen Ping, frozen in place below, at his deathly pale face, at the intense, unyielding pain and despair in his eyes, at his trembling body, and an indescribable resistance welled up within her.

It was an instinctive resistance that made her unwilling to take a single step, unwilling to lay a hand on this man.

She didn't want to act.

She didn't know why, there was no reason in her heart, but she just didn't want to attack that person, even if Ning Zhi ordered it.

"Senior Sister?"

Ning Zhi's voice rang out again, still gentle, but carrying a hint of barely perceptible coldness, a subtle threat permeating the air. "What's wrong? Is there a problem? Or is it that you can't bear to lay a hand on him?"

Su Yuqi turned her head to look at Ning Zhi.

Ning Zhi's face still wore that gentle, harmless smile, but deep within his profound eyes lay a sinister and obsessive nature she couldn't decipher. That emotion instinctively made her feel uneasy, her heart pound.