

The Order 10641

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The Qingxuan Sect Master trembled all over, his eyes filled with fear and despair.

“You...who exactly are you...”

Chen Ping looked at him and said calmly, “My name is Chen Ping.”

As soon as he finished speaking, he struck down with his palm.

The Qingxuan Sect Master’s head instantly exploded, and all his life force vanished.

A second-grade True Immortal Realm expert died just like that.

Chen Ping withdrew his hand, stood with his hands behind his back, his robes still spotless.

He turned to look at Yun Xi and the others.

“Let’s go, let’s destroy this Holy Purity Sect.”

Yun Xi nodded.

Ming Li and Liu Qianqian exchanged a glance, their eyes filled with shock.

Yun Yao looked at Chen Ping, her eyes filled with admiration.

Half an hour later, within the Holy Purity Sect's mountain gate, not a single person remained alive.

Those wicked disciples, those elders who aided and abetted the evil, were all dead.

Blood flowed like a river.

Bones piled up like mountains.

Chen Ping stood outside the mountain gate, glancing back.

That once majestic mountain peak was now a ruin.

A faint smile appeared on his lips.

"Let's go."

He turned and, leading Yun Xi and the others, disappeared into the distance.

Behind them, thick smoke billowed and flames soared into the sky above the ruins of the Holy Purity Sect.

The once invincible Holy Purity Cult was utterly destroyed.

Meanwhile, at the foot of Holy Light Peak in the Holy Domain of Light,

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in a simple stone hut, Shen Tong sat cross-legged on a futon, eyes closed, meditating.

Since being assigned to patrol the foot of the mountain, he had lived in this stone hut.

The hut was small, containing only a bed, a table, and a futon—pitifully simple. Compared to the magnificent palace of the former Temple Master, this was worse than a doghouse.

But Shen Tong didn't complain.

He endured it.

These past few days, he led the Temple disciples on patrols and handover ceremonies daily, daring not to slacken in the slightest.

The Temple members would occasionally come to inspect, scrutinizing them with condescending eyes, occasionally offering criticism.

Shen Tong endured it all.

He was waiting.

Waiting for an opportunity.

Once the Divine Hall lowered its guard, once his injuries healed, and once he found the right opportunity, he would lead his disciples away to seek another way out.

As for the secret of the Holy Mountain... that was his last trump card.

With those resources and the physical bodies of those Venerables, he had leverage.

Whether negotiating with the Divine Hall or making a comeback later, those things were his capital to turn the tables.

Shen Tong opened his eyes and looked out the window.

Outside the window, several disciples of the Divine Hall sat on stones, staring blankly into the distance.

Their eyes had long lost their former sharpness, leaving only numbness and exhaustion.

Shen Tong felt a pang of pain in his heart.

It was all because of his incompetence as the Hall Master that these disciples had suffered.

“Just a little longer,” he murmured softly, “just a little longer, there will always be an opportunity...”

Before he finished speaking, the door of the stone house was pushed open.

Shen Tong frowned and looked up.

Entering was one of his few remaining elders, surnamed Zhou, an old man who had followed him for thousands of years.

Elder Zhou’s face was filled with anxiety, his forehead covered in cold sweat, and his lips trembled.

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“Your...Your Highness...Something terrible has happened!”

Shen Tong’s heart tightened, and he quickly stood up: “What happened? Is the Divine Hall going to attack us?”

“No...no...” Elder Zhou gasped for breath, his voice trembling, “It’s...it’s the Holy Mountain...our Divine Hall’s Holy Mountain...”

Shen Tong’s pupils shrank: “What happened to the Holy Mountain?!”

Elder Zhou knelt on the ground with a thud, tears streaming down his face: “All destroyed! Several Holy Mountains are all destroyed! The Venerable’s physical body...is also completely destroyed!”

Boom—!

Shen Tong felt a deafening explosion in his mind, his entire body froze on the spot, his face instantly turning ashen.

“You...what did you say?”

He grabbed Elder Zhou by the collar, his eyes bloodshot, his voice hoarse: “Say it again! What happened to the Holy Mountain?!”

Elder Zhou cried, “Palace Master, I just received a message from my spies in the Fourteenth Heaven, saying...saying someone broke into our Holy Mountain, destroyed all the protective formations, and...destroyed all the Venerable’s physical bodies! Not a single one was left!”

“Who?! Who did it?!”

“It was...it was Chen Ping!”

Chen Ping!

These two words exploded like thunder in Shen Tong’s mind.

That reincarnation of the Dragon Emperor, the culprit who caused the Temple’s utter defeat!

He destroyed the Temple, not only that, but he also destroyed the Holy Mountain, destroying his last hope!

“Ah—!”

Shen Tong roared to the sky, unleashing a palm strike. A violent burst of spiritual power erupted, instantly shattering the entire stone house, sending shards of stone flying and dust billowing into the sky.

He stood amidst the ruins, trembling violently, his eyes bloodshot, his spiritual energy in turmoil, nearly driven to madness.

“Chen Ping! Chen Ping!!!”

He roared, his voice like that of a wounded beast, filled with rage, despair, and resentment.

“You destroyed my temple! You killed my disciples! Now you won’t even spare my last trump card! I, Shen Tong, am sworn to be your enemy! We will fight to the death!!”

He unleashed another palm strike, the ground shattering, debris flying everywhere.

Several temple disciples rushed over upon hearing the commotion. Seeing their temple master in this state, they knelt in terror, unable to move.

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Shen Tong, having vented his power for so long, finally collapsed, kneeling on one knee, gasping for breath.

His eyes were bloodshot.

His heart was filled with despair.

It's over.

It's all over.

The Holy Mountain is destroyed, the Venerable's physical body is destroyed, his last trump card is gone.

What could he offer to negotiate with the Divine Hall?

What could he offer to rebuild his strength?

What could he offer to avenge his fallen disciples?

Elder Zhou crawled to his side, weeping, "Hall Master, please take care of yourself! We...we haven't reached the end of the road yet..."

Shen Tong raised his head, looked at him, and smiled bitterly: "Not at the end of the road? Tell me, what road is left?"

Elder Zhou opened his mouth, but couldn't say anything.

Yes, what road was left?

The Divine Hall was gone, the Holy Mountain was gone, and only a little over two hundred disciples remained.

Now they were living under someone else's roof, being treated like dogs.

Once the Divine Hall found out the Holy Mountain was destroyed, once they knew they had no leverage left...

Shen Tong trembled.

The Divine Hall!

If Yao Chen knew the Holy Mountain was destroyed, once he knew they had no bargaining chips left, what would that ruthless fellow do?

He recalled Yao Chen's gentle smile, the nonchalant way he casually annihilated his elders, and his words, "Wait until they've squeezed every last drop of value out of us."

Now, the value was gone.

Then... what reason did they have to exist?

"No...no..."

Shen Tong abruptly stood up, his face ashen. "He can't know! Absolutely not!"

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He turned to the elders who had gathered around him, his voice low, urgent and fierce: "Listen! The news of the Holy Mountain's destruction must not leak out! No one is allowed to say a word! Especially not the people from the Divine Hall!"

The elders were horrified: "Palace Master,...can this be kept secret?"

"It must be kept secret, even if it's impossible!"

Shen Tong gritted his teeth. "As long as Yao Chen doesn't know, we have time! We have a chance!"

He paused, a resolute glint in his eyes.

"We can't stay here any longer."

"The Palace Master means..."

"Go." Shen Tong said, each word distinct. "Leave the Holy Land of Light and continue our escape."

Elder Zhou trembled. "But...but Palace Master, where can we go? We can't go back to the Temple, we can't stay in the Holy Land of Light, are we supposed to go to the Fifteenth Heaven? That's even more dangerous than here!"

Shen Tong was silent for a moment, then slowly said, "Go to the Demon Realm."

Upon hearing this, several elders were shocked.

"The Demon Realm?! Palace Master, those are a bunch of lunatics! We have a grudge against them!"

"So what if we have a grudge?"

Shen Tong said coldly, "Ning Zhi and the Demon Dragon lineage are powerful now. Since they can run rampant in the Fourteenth Heaven, they must have a place in the Demon Realm as well. Let's go to them, let's seek refuge with them!"

"But...but they killed so many of our people!"

Shen Tong closed his eyes and took a deep breath.

“I know.”

He opened his eyes, his gaze filled with bitterness and resolve.

“But what other choice do we have now? The Divine Hall won’t accept us, and we can’t return to the Temple. Only the Demon Realm, only Ning Zhi’s side, might offer a glimmer of hope.”

“That Ning Zhi...” an elder hesitated, “Will he take us in? He killed the Grand Elder when we discussed cooperation.”

Shen Tong remained silent for a long time, then slowly said, “I don’t know. But it’s better than waiting to die here. Besides, this isn’t cooperation, it’s about surrendering to him.”

He turned around, looking at the Temple disciples who had gathered around him. Seeing the confusion and fear in their eyes, his heart ached.

“Gentlemen,” he said in a deep voice, “I know I’ve made you suffer with me. The temple is gone, the holy mountain is gone, and I, as the temple master, have given you nothing.”

“But now, we still have a path. A very dangerous path, one that may lead to death, one that may make you wish you were dead. But at least, it’s a path.”

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He paused, then said, slowly and deliberately, “Those who are willing to come with me, gather outside the mountain gate at midnight tonight. Those who are unwilling... stay and fend for yourselves. I won’t blame you.”

The disciples looked at each other, silent for a moment, then knelt down in unison.

“We swear to follow our temple master to the death!”

Shen Tong looked at them, his eyes reddening, and nodded heavily.

“Good! Good! You’re all commendable!”

He turned around, gazing into the distance, a ruthless glint in his eyes.

Chen Ping, you wait.

And Yao Chen, you wait too.

As long as I, Shen Tong, live, this score will be settled sooner or later!

Meanwhile, atop Holy Light Peak, in the main hall of the Divine Hall.

Yao Chen sat regally on his throne, a communication jade slip in his hand, his brow slightly furrowed.

“Chen Ping... destroyed the Divine Hall’s sacred mountains?”

Below, a guardian elder bowed and replied, “Yes, Hall Master. We just received news that Chen Ping, with his men, destroyed all the remaining sacred mountains of the Divine Hall. The physical bodies of those Venerables have also been reduced to ashes.”

Yao Chen remained silent for a moment, then suddenly smiled.

“Interesting.”

He set down the jade slip, a hint of amusement flashing in his eyes.

“This Chen Ping is quite a character. The Temple besieged him, yet he turned the tables and wiped out their stronghold. That old codger Shen Tong probably can’t even cry now, can he?”

The Elder Protector tentatively asked, "Master, should we... keep Shen Tong and the others? With the Holy Mountain destroyed, they're worthless."

Yao Chen glanced at him and said calmly, "What's the rush?"

He stood up, slowly descended the steps, and stood with his hands behind his back.

"Shen Tong is probably more panicked than anyone else right now. He knows that once I find out the Holy Mountain is destroyed, they'll be useless. He'll definitely try to escape."

"Then we..."

"Let them escape."

A cold smile curled at the corner of Yao Chen's lips. "Send men to follow them and see where they're going. If we can follow the trail and find other things they've hidden, wouldn't that be even better?"

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"Master is wise!"

Yao Chen waved his hand, and the Elder Protector bowed and withdrew.

Only Yao Chen remained in the hall.

He gazed out the window, his eyes deep and thoughtful.

"Chen Ping..."

He murmured softly, the smile on his lips growing increasingly meaningful.

“Interesting, increasingly interesting.”

Night fell at the foot of Holy Light Peak.

Shen Tong, leading over two hundred disciples, silently left their camp under the cover of darkness.

They dared not use the teleportation array, fearing discovery by the Divine Hall. They could only proceed on foot, traversing mountains and valleys, rushing towards the border of the Holy Light Domain.

Shen Tong led the way, his eyes wary, his spiritual energy subtly circulating.

Behind him, the disciples followed closely, not daring to make a sound.

The night wind blew, swirling fallen leaves.

Shen Tong’s figure appeared exceptionally lonely in the moonlight, yet it exuded a stubborn, unyielding spirit.

And behind Shen Tong and his companions, a faintly visible figure followed closely!

Night fell, a deep, inky blanket enveloping heaven and earth, with only a solitary moon hanging in the sky, its cold, pale light casting a ghastly white glow over the desolate mountains and wilderness.

The wind howled, and all was deathly silent.

Deep in the darkness, a large, dark procession trudged along the rugged mountain path, aided by the moonlight.

The leader, tall and imposing yet utterly disheveled, was none other than the once-powerful Temple Master, Shen Tong.

Behind him followed over two hundred remaining disciples, each ragged, haggard, with bloodshot eyes, their steps unsteady yet daring not to falter.

During their escape, they deliberately chose treacherous, rarely traveled paths, hiding by day and moving by night.

During the day, they hid in dark caves or deep within the jungle, afraid to light fires, subsisting only on dry rations and cold fruit; the slightest disturbance made them as easily startled as birds startled by a bow.

Shen Tong walked at the front, each step feeling as if it were made of lead.

His face was grim, his muscles tense, his once deep and sharp eyes now only showing weariness, humiliation, and despair.

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The nightmare of the destroyed Holy Mountain constantly haunted his mind; Chen Ping's cold face and the horrific scene of the Holy Mountain collapsing and the Venerable One turning to ashes repeatedly appeared in his mind, hatred and fear almost consuming him.

"Palace Master."

Elder Zhou lowered his voice, warily scanning the surroundings, "A hundred miles ahead is the border of the Holy Domain of Light. Beyond this lies the Demon Realm, a forbidden zone for the righteous path; the pursuers should not dare to set foot here."

Shen Tong slowly nodded, his gaze fixed on the horizon.

There, the brilliant golden holy light abruptly ceased, replaced by a gray world and surging crimson demonic mist, like a lurking beast, exuding a ferocious aura.

The Demon Realm, the domain of demons, was rife with demonic energy, teeming with demonic beasts, and feared by righteous cultivators.

Shen Tong felt a deep sense of sorrow and humiliation, and gave a bitter laugh.

He, once a powerful True Immortal, wielding immense authority, was now like a stray dog, forced to abandon his dignity and flee to the universally despised Demon Realm for refuge.

But the temple was destroyed, his disciples were dead and wounded, and Chen Ping's power hung like a sword over his head. He had no choice but to seek refuge with the opposing demons.

"Go."

Shen Tong forced out the word through gritted teeth, quickening his pace and rushing towards the chilling demonic mist.

Though fear gripped his disciples, their will to survive compelled them to follow closely behind.

As night deepened, the group, having traversed for two hours, were panting, their clothes soaked and icy cold.

Finally, the first wisp of dark red demonic mist brushed against their cheeks; they had crossed the border and set foot on the land of the Demon Realm.

Instantly, the pungent smell of sulfur mixed with dense demonic energy filled their nostrils, causing them to cough incessantly. Those with weaker cultivation turned pale, barely managing to suppress their coughs by circulating their spiritual power.

Before their eyes lay a desolate plain, the dark red earth cracked and barren.

In the distance, a range of dark mountains stretched out, their peaks ablaze with perpetually burning volcanoes. The flames and demonic energy intertwined, staining the sky a oppressive dark red, conveying a sense of apocalyptic desolation.

Shen Tong suppressed his unease and signaled to the group to steady their minds and continue onward.

The Demon Realm was fraught with danger, not only with ferocious demonic beasts but also with bizarre demonic creatures that could bewitch the soul.

His former True Immortal strength had plummeted to a mere half-step True Immortal due to damage to his soul, leaving him only with the foundation of an Upper Immortal. However, to protect his disciples, he could only force his way through, slaying scattered low-level demonic beasts.

For three days and three nights, the group dared not rest, eating dry rations, drinking river water tinged with demonic energy, and taking turns standing guard in hidden mountain caves.

Along the way, several weaker disciples were scratched by demonic creatures, their bodies engulfed by demonic energy and driven mad. His divine power, however, forced him to painfully end their attacks. Overwhelmed with grief and powerless to help, he could only lead the remaining people towards the territory of the Demon Dragon lineage.

On the third day at dusk, a majestic and ferocious black palace came into view.

The palace stood atop a mountain peak, entirely constructed of jet-black demonic jade. Countless ferocious dragon reliefs were carved on the ceiling, their eyes bloodshot, fangs bared, and their bodies wreathed in demonic energy, radiating overwhelming ferocity and oppressive power.

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This was the Demon Dragon Palace, the residence of the Demon Dragon leader, Long Yuan. Shen Tong stopped, gazing at the Demon Dragon Palace, his heart filled with mixed emotions.

Just months ago, he had led his elite troops in a siege of Yunxian City, radiating power and arrogance, showing no regard for the demon race; now, his family was destroyed, and he had to humbly beg his former defeated foes for refuge.

This stark contrast and humiliation suffocated him, yet he had no choice but to accept it.

“Let’s go.”

Suppressing his emotions, Shen Tong forced a humble expression and strode towards the foot of the mountain.

The disciples behind him bowed their heads, nervously holding their breath.

Just as they reached the foot of the mountain, before even stepping onto the stone steps, a sharp shout suddenly rang out: “Halt! Who goes there? How dare you trespass into the forbidden area of the Demon Dragon Palace!”

Before the words had even finished, dozens of black figures darted out like ghosts, instantly surrounding the group.

These demon dragon warriors wore jet-black dragon-patterned armor, wielded demon-patterned spears, their eyes cold and their killing intent palpable.

The young general, whose cultivation had reached the peak of the Upper Immortal Realm, swept his sharp gaze over Shen Tong and the others. Noticing the temple’s attire, his brow furrowed. “You are from the temple? What is your purpose?”

Shen Tong quickly stepped forward, bowing deeply. “I am Shen Tong, the temple master. I have come to see the leader of Longyuan. Please inform him that I have important matters to discuss.”

The young general’s expression changed drastically. Shock flashed in his eyes, then turned to wariness and hostility. He took a step back and shouted sharply, “Alert! All troops on alert! Enemy attack! The people of the temple have come for revenge!”

Instantly, alarm bells rang, and countless demonic dragon warriors surged forward like a tide, surrounding the group in layers, spears pointed, demonic energy soaring into the sky. The atmosphere was extremely tense.

Shen Tong's expression changed drastically. He waved his hands frantically, explaining, "Misunderstanding! General, please don't misunderstand! I haven't come for revenge; I've come to join Chief Long Yuan! I have no ill intentions!"

The young general sneered, "Join? A dignified Temple Master, a True Immortal Realm expert, joining a demonic dragon? You showed no mercy in hunting down my clan back then, and now you say you're joining? Who would believe that!"

Shen Tong was sweating profusely, wanting to explain but not knowing where to begin, filled with despair.

At the critical moment, a terrifying pressure swept in from the depths of the hall, carrying a strong demonic dragon aura, forcing the warriors to lower their heads and dare not breathe.

Shen Tong's heart sank; he knew Long Yuan had arrived.

Several figures landed swiftly, the leader being none other than Long Yuan.

He wore a dark gold robe with dragon patterns, his face resolute, his eyes cold, followed by several True Immortal Realm elders.

Long Yuan sized up Shen Tong, noticing his ragged clothes and lack of authority. A flicker of surprise crossed his eyes, followed by a cold, mocking smile: "So it's Palace Master Shen Tong. Quite bold, daring to trespass into my Demon Dragon Palace. Have you not had enough of losing in Cloud Immortal City, and come seeking revenge?"

With that, Long Yuan waved his hand and barked a command: "Form ranks! Prepare to meet the enemy! Trespassers will be killed without mercy!"

"Roar!"

The Demon Dragon warriors roared in unison, their killing intent soaring, poised to attack.

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Shen Tong was terrified, his body trembling. He knew his cultivation had plummeted, and his forces were only remnants; he was no match for them.

In desperation, he disregarded his dignity, kneeling heavily before Long Yuan, his knees slamming into the ground with a dull thud.

“Chief Long Yuan! Please calm your anger! It’s a misunderstanding! I’m not here for revenge, I’ve come to seek refuge with you! Please, Chief, take me in!”

Shen Tong’s voice was hoarse and choked with sobs, filled with bitterness and humility. Long Yuan froze, staring in disbelief at the kneeling, utterly humble Shen Tong, even thinking it was a hallucination.

He looked up at the sky to confirm it was real before frowning and asking, “What did you say? You’re surrendering?”

A high-ranking True Immortal realm expert, a proud divine cultivator, kneeling and begging for surrender—it was utterly absurd.

Shen Tong, his forehead pressed to the ground, recounted his plight in a bitter voice: “Leader, the temple is destroyed, the sacred mountain is scorched earth, my disciples are almost all dead or wounded, and I have been severely injured, my cultivation greatly diminished, leaving me with nowhere to go. I only beg the leader to have mercy and give me a place to stay.”

He looked up, his eyes bloodshot, full of pleading: “I, Shen Tong, swear that from this day forward I will completely submit to the Demon Dragon lineage, serving them like a dog, braving fire and water without hesitation, with absolutely no disloyalty! If I disobey, may I be struck down by heaven and earth!”

Long Yuan remained silent for a moment. Seeing that Shen Tong’s pitiful state didn’t seem fake, and recalling the news of the sacred mountain’s destruction, he began to believe him somewhat.

He then burst into laughter, a laugh filled with mocking glee: “Shen Tong, Shen Tong, so this is what you’ve come to! Back then, you were so powerful, besieging my tribe, slaughtering my people, seizing my territory—how arrogant you were! Now, fallen on hard times, you think of begging me for shelter?”

Shen Tong gritted his teeth, bowing his head, his hands clenched so tightly they bled from his palms. He felt utterly humiliated but dared not refute, silently enduring the pain.

Seeing that he dared not speak his anger, Long Yuan grew even more pleased, coldly saying, “You say you’re surrendering? What qualifications do you have? The temple is gone, the power is gone, only two hundred remnants remain, and you yourself are a stray dog, your cultivation greatly diminished.

If I take you in, I’ll have to provide food and drink, adding two hundred mouths for nothing—what benefit is there?”

Shen Tong quickly looked up, his eyes flashing with hope: “Leader! Although my cultivation has greatly diminished, my foundation remains. I was originally a second-grade True Immortal. As long as I recuperate, I can return to my peak and even advance further.

True Immortal realm combat power is top-tier in the Demon Realm. In the future, when the leader conquers and expands, I will definitely charge into battle and make great contributions! I am willing to be loyal forever, with no disloyalty!”

Long Yuan’s eyes flickered as he fell into deep thought.

Shen Tong was, after all, a former True Immortal realm expert. Even a fallen camel is bigger than a horse; his recovery would greatly enhance the Demon Dragon lineage’s combat power. This deal wasn’t a loss.

After a moment of silence, Long Yuan spoke calmly, “Get up.”

Shen Tong was stunned for a moment, then overjoyed. He struggled to his feet, repeatedly bowing and thanking Long Yuan, “Thank you for taking me in, Chief! I swear to be loyal to you to the death, and I will never disobey!”

Long Yuan’s eyes were icy cold as he warned, “Don’t be too happy yet. Taking you in is fine, but you must remember clearly, from now on you are no longer the Temple Master, but merely a dog of my Demon Dragon lineage.

I can't order you west, I can't let you live, I can't let you die. Obey my orders in everything, and do not disobey, understand?"

These words were like sharp blades piercing his heart. Shen Tong's face stiffened, intense humiliation flashed in his eyes, his cheeks flushed red, his fists clenched, and his heart was filled with resentment and anger.

But seeing the warriors around him still brimming with murderous intent and the terrified disciples behind him, and realizing his desperate situation, he finally suppressed his humiliation and lowered his head humbly, saying, "Your subordinate understands, I will obey all orders, thank you, Chief."

Long Yuan nodded in satisfaction and was about to give instructions when a cold, indifferent voice carrying boundless pressure suddenly came from behind: "Long Yuan, what are you doing?"