

The Order 10771

Chapter: 10771

“Master... Master...”

“That’s right, Master was afraid you would be hurt by a man again.” Ning Zhi’s voice was like a venomous snake’s whisper, “You were seriously injured by the man you loved before, have you forgotten? It was Master who saved you.”

A surge of intense hatred welled up in Su Yuqi’s eyes. Her sword was drawn.

A fiery red sword beam, like a fire dragon, swept towards Chen Ping, carrying scorching heat.

Chen Ping didn’t dodge.

He couldn’t dodge.

He feared that if he dodged, the sword beam would injure Jiang Xuelan behind him.

He was even more afraid that if he retaliated, he would hurt Su Yuqi.

The fiery red sword beam struck him squarely in the chest.

“Pfft...”

Chen Ping spat out a mouthful of blood, his entire body thrown back several steps.

A deep wound was torn open in his chest, golden blood gushing from it, dripping onto the ground with a sizzling sound.

“Chen Ping!” Jiang Xuelan cried out, rushing to his side.

Chen Ping raised a hand to stop her, his gaze never leaving Su Yuqi.

“Yuqi, I won’t fight back.” His voice was hoarse, yet unusually firm. “If you really want to kill me, then kill me.”

Su Yuqi’s hand trembled slightly.

She looked at the wound on Chen Ping’s chest, at the golden blood, and a strange, sharp pain welled up in her heart.

That feeling...it was strange.

She clearly didn’t know this person, so why did seeing him injured cause her such pain?

“Senior Sister, don’t be fooled by his sweet words,” Ning Zhi’s voice rang in her ear. “Kill him. Kill him, and it will all be over.”

Su Yuqi gritted her teeth and raised her sword again.

The fiery red sword light was even more intense and ferocious than before.

She poured all her spiritual power into this sword strike, aiming for Chen Ping’s throat.

Chen Ping closed his eyes.

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He didn't dodge.

The sword light stopped three inches from his throat.

Su Yuqi's hand trembled.

Her hand gripped the sword hilt, her knuckles white, veins bulging.

Sweat covered her face, her eyes filled with helplessness and confusion.

"I...I can't do it..." her voice trembled, "I don't know why...I can't do it..."

The sword slipped from her hand and clattered to the ground.

She clutched her head, crouched on the ground, trembling all over.

"Why...why is this happening...I don't even know him...why does my heart hurt so much..."

Jiang Xuelan watched this scene, a complex emotion welling up inside her.

She understood.

This woman was the wife Chen Ping had spoken of.

The woman Chen Ping would rather die than fight back.

She took a deep breath and walked to Chen Ping's side.

"Leave it to me."

Her voice was soft, yet carried an undeniable strength, "You deal with Ning Zhi, I'll deal with her. I promise, I won't hurt her."

Chen Ping glanced at her, hesitated for a moment, and finally nodded.

"Don't hurt her," he repeated.

"I know."

Chen Ping turned to look at Ning Zhi.

His eyes changed.

No longer the gentle, tender gaze of before, but a cold, razor-sharp killing intent.

"Ning Zhi, what did you do to Yuqi?"

Ning Zhi wiped the blood from the corner of his mouth and smiled.

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"Nothing. Just let her see the truth."

“The truth?” Chen Ping’s voice was icy. “The truth you’re talking about is erasing her memories, turning her into your tool?”

Ning Zhi’s smile froze.

“I didn’t erase her memories. I just... shielded her from some things she shouldn’t have.”

“Then give those things back to her.”

Ning Zhi shook his head: “Impossible. She’s awake now; she won’t be fooled by you anymore.”

Chen Ping fell silent.

He raised the Dragon-Slaying Sword, purple chaotic power gathering on its blade.

“Then I’ll beat you until you return her memories.”

Ning Zhi gritted his teeth, his demonic energy surging once more.

The two clashed again.

This time, Chen Ping held nothing back.

The purple sword light was like a storm, each strike faster and more ruthless than the last.

Each strike carried world-destroying power, each capable of leveling a mountain.

Ning Zhi fought back with all his might, but his strength was like a mantis trying to stop a chariot before Chen Ping.

The first strike shattered his protective demonic energy.

The second strike slashed a deep, bone-revealing wound into his left arm.

The third strike pierced his chest, blood gushing out.

Ning Zhi knelt on one knee, gasping for breath. His face was ashen, his eyes dimmed to the core.

“You...when did you become so strong...”

Chen Ping stood before him, the Dragon-Slaying Sword pressed against his throat. “Give Yuqi her memories.”

Ning Zhi raised his head, looking at him.

A bleak smile appeared on his blood-stained face. “Impossible. Never.”

Chen Ping’s sword tip moved closer, a trickle of blood seeping from Ning Zhi’s throat.

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“You think killing me will do any good?”

Ning Zhi’s smile grew even more manic. “Her memories are sealed deep within her sea of consciousness. Only I know the way to unseal them. If I die, her memories will never return.”

Chen Ping’s hand trembled slightly.

Just then, the battle on the other side also came to a conclusion.

Jiang Xuelan's icy blue divine light clashed dozens of times in the air with Su Yuqi's fiery red sword light. The clash of ice and fire turned the surrounding area of several hundred feet into a wasteland of scorched earth and frozen ruins.

Although Su Yuqi was not weak, she was still far inferior to Jiang Xuelan, an ancient monster who had lived for tens of thousands of years.

Jiang Xuelan's ice needles pierced through Su Yuqi's protective flames, precisely sealing seven major acupoints on her body.

Su Yuqi's body instantly froze, standing motionless like an ice sculpture.

"Don't hurt her!" Chen Ping shouted.

"I know," Jiang Xuelan replied calmly, withdrawing the icy blue divine light from her hand.

Su Yuqi was frozen in place, unable to move, but her consciousness remained clear.

Her gaze passed over Jiang Xuelan and landed on Chen Ping.

In those eyes, there was confusion, struggle, and a complex emotion that she herself couldn't quite define.

Jiang Xuelan walked to Chen Ping's side, glancing at Ning Zhi kneeling on the ground. "What should we do with this person?"

Chen Ping was silent for a moment. "Make him return Yuqi's memories."

Ning Zhi laughed, his laughter full of mockery. “Chen Ping, you’re still so naive. Do you think I’d obediently listen?”

He raised his head, looking in Su Yuqi’s direction.

A barely concealed glint flashed in his eyes.

“Senior Sister, let’s go.”

As soon as he finished speaking, a blinding flame suddenly erupted from his body.

That flame wasn’t ordinary fire, but a power Chen Ping had never seen before. It wasn’t demonic energy, nor spiritual power, but a more primal, more ancient force.

The flame enveloped Ning Zhi, forming a blazing pillar of light.

The pillar of light shot into the sky, tearing a huge gash in the clouds.

“He’s trying to escape!” Jiang Xuelan shouted, unleashing an icy blue divine light towards the pillar of light.

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The power of the pillar of light was terrifying; Jiang Xuelan’s divine light was repelled the moment it touched her.

The pillar of light extended to Su Yuqi, engulfing her as well.

The ice encasing Su Yuqi melted rapidly in the flames, and her body was lifted by the power of the pillar of light, drifting towards Ning Zhi.

“Yuqi!” Chen Ping rushed forward, trying to grab her hand.

But the power of the pillar of light was too strong; his hand was bounced back the moment it touched the edge, his palm scalded and torn.

Su Yuqi’s body drifted further and further away, her gaze fixed on Chen Ping.

Suddenly, something shattered in her eyes.

Just before the pillar of light completely engulfed her, her lips moved slightly.

Chen Ping didn’t hear a sound, but he understood her lip movements.

“Chen Ping...it hurts so much...”

Then, a flash of fire, and Ning Zhi and Su Yuqi vanished simultaneously.

Only the torn cloud and the charred air remained in the sky.

Chen Ping stood there, staring blankly in the direction the two had disappeared.

His hand was still dripping blood, and the wound Su Yuqi had inflicted on his chest still throbbed, but none of that compared to the pain in his heart.

“I’m in so much pain...”

She wasn’t talking about physical pain.

It was the pain in her heart.

Although she didn't remember him, although her memories were sealed, although Ning Zhi had been manipulating her, her heart still remembered.

She remembered who he was, remembered what they had once shared.

Chen Ping crouched down, his hands on the ground, panting heavily.

Jiang Xuelan stood behind him, silent for a long time.

Then, she sighed softly, walked to his side, knelt down, and placed her hand on his shoulder.

"She'll come back."

Chen Ping didn't speak.

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He simply stared in the direction Ning Zhi and Su Yuqi had disappeared, a cold killing intent flashing in his eyes.

"Ning Zhi, next time we meet, I won't give you another chance to escape."

He stood up, wiped the blood from the corner of his mouth, and sheathed his Dragon-Slaying Sword.

"Let's go." His voice was hoarse, yet unusually firm. "Back to Yunxian City."

Jiang Xuelan nodded and followed behind him.

The two walked south, one after the other.

“Chen Ping, what happened to your wife...? And what deep-seated hatred do you have with Ning Zhi?”
Jiang Xuelan asked curiously.

She didn't know the whole story.

But it seemed Chen Ping and Ning Zhi were old acquaintances, and how could Su Yuqi have become like this, not recognizing Chen Ping?

“Ah, it's a long story. My hatred for Ning Zhi started in the mortal realm...”

Chen Ping sighed softly, a cold glint in his eyes. “With Ning Zhi's strength alone, he couldn't control Yuqi's consciousness at all. It's all because of that Flame Demon...”

“Sooner or later, I'll cut off that old Flame Demon's head and kick it around like a ball.”

Feeling the terrifying aura emanating from Chen Ping, Jiang Xuelan dared not speak. Although she didn't know who the Flame Demon was, she knew he was incredibly powerful.

But even facing such a powerful person, Chen Ping remained filled with killing intent, showing no fear or hesitation.

She felt she had chosen the right person to follow. With Chen Ping, she was certain the Ice God lineage could regain its former glory.

Chen Ping and Jiang Xuelan traveled south, traversing ice plains and barren frozen tundra, finally setting foot on the road to Yunxian City.

After flying for about five days, the silhouette of a majestic city appeared on the distant horizon.

Yunxian City.

This city, once ravaged by war, has now recovered seventy to eighty percent of its former strength.

The city walls have been reinforced, and the number of cultivators patrolling them has doubled.

Caravans and independent cultivators come and go at the city gates in a steady stream. While not exactly prosperous, it is at least no longer a desolate place.

“This is Cloud Immortal City?” Jiang Xuelan looked at the distant city, raising an eyebrow slightly. “It’s larger than I imagined.”

“A top ten city in the Fourteenth Heaven, of course it’s not small.”

Chen Ping said, “But compared to your Divine Palace, it’s still far smaller.”

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Jiang Xuelan chuckled: “The Divine Palace only has me, what’s so big about it? Your Cloud Immortal City, just the cultivators patrolling the walls alone number no less than three hundred.”

The two talked as they walked towards the city gate.

The guards at the city gate recognized Chen Ping and quickly bowed, “Mr. Chen is back!”

Chen Ping nodded, “How’s the situation in the city lately?”

“Reporting to Mr. Chen, everything is fine,” the guard replied respectfully. “Lord Long Zhan has managed the city very well. It’s just...”

“Just what?”

The guard glanced at Jiang Xuelan beside Chen Ping, hesitated for a moment, and whispered, “It’s just that Miss Chen Wanqing keeps asking when you’ll return...”

Chen Ping: “...”

Jiang Xuelan gave him a half-smile.

“Let’s go.” Chen Ping coughed and strode through the city gate.

The City Lord’s Mansion of Yunxian City was located in the very center of the city, a vast estate.

Two guards stood at the entrance of the mansion. Seeing Chen Ping return, they immediately ran inside to report.

Before Chen Ping even entered the courtyard, a black figure rushed out.

It was Yun Xi.

She was dressed in a black, fitted outfit, her long hair tied up high, looking both capable and dashing.

“Chen Ping!” She rushed up to Chen Ping, grabbing his arm. “You finally decided to come back! Do you know how many days you’ve been gone? Almost a month! You said you’d only have seven days left!”

“If I had come back a few days later, I would have led my men to attack the Divine Palace...”

Chen Ping hurriedly explained to Yun Xi, "There was an accident, I was delayed."

Then Chen Ping glanced at Jiang Xuelan, his face full of apology, but Jiang Xuelan just smiled, not taking Yun Xi's words to heart.

"An accident? What accident?" Yun Xi's gaze passed over Chen Ping, landing on Jiang Xuelan behind him.

Her eyes narrowed slightly.

It was an extremely beautiful face.

Her features were delicate and aloof, her eyebrows like distant mountains, her eyes like cold stars.

Her white robes were as white as snow, her long hair as black as ink, and she exuded an innate noble air.

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Most importantly, this woman was beautiful.

It wasn't the kind of beauty that was deliberately cultivated, but a natural, captivating beauty.

Yun Xi's gaze lingered on Jiang Xuelan for three seconds before turning to Chen Ping.

"Who is she?"

Her voice was calm, so calm it was almost dangerous.

Before Chen Ping could answer, another person emerged from the courtyard.

Chen Wanqing.

She wore a light blue dress, her long hair flowing over her shoulders, her face gentle and refined.

But her eyes narrowed slightly the moment she saw Jiang Xuelan.

“Chen Ping, you’re back.” Her voice was gentle as water, but beneath that gentleness lay a barely perceptible wariness. “And this is?”

Chen Ping looked at the two women before him, suddenly feeling extremely uneasy.

He instinctively looked at Jiang Xuelan, hoping she would explain.

Jiang Xuelan, however, simply stood there calmly, a slight smile playing on her lips, an expression of anticipation.

Chen Ping: “...”

He took a deep breath and forced himself to speak: “This is Jiang Xuelan, the Palace Master of the Divine Palace.”

The courtyard instantly fell silent.

Yunxi’s eyes widened in surprise: “The Palace Master of the Divine Palace? That most mysterious Divine Palace of the Divine Race?”

Chen Wanqing was also taken aback: “The Palace Master of the Divine Palace? Isn’t that a legendary figure?”

Jiang Xuelan nodded slightly, her tone calm: "That is indeed me. However, the Divine Palace no longer exists; I am now merely a rogue cultivator."

Yunxi and Chen Wanqing exchanged a glance, both seeing shock in each other's eyes.

Especially Yunxi, whose eyes held a hint of embarrassment, after all, she had just said she would attack the Divine Palace.

However, the Divine Palace was the oldest place of inheritance for the Divine Race, more mysterious than the Divine Temple and Divine Hall combined.

Legend has it that the Palace Master's strength was unfathomable, and even True Immortal Realm experts dared not easily provoke him.

How could such a legendary figure have returned with Chen Ping?

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Chen Wanqing's gaze darted back and forth between Chen Ping and Jiang Xuelan, her jealousy intensifying.

"Chen Ping, what is your relationship with her?" Yunxi asked directly. Chen Ping opened his mouth, unsure how to answer.

His relationship with Jiang Xuelan... was indeed somewhat complicated.

If they were friends, they had cultivated together under the Tree of Life.

If they were Daoist partners, it was merely a transaction.

If they were unrelated, they had gone through life and death together, and Jiang Xuelan had even given him the Heart of the Northern Abyss.

“She helped me revive my friends,” Chen Ping finally chose the safest explanation, “In exchange, I helped her with some things.”

Yun Xi was clearly not satisfied with this answer, but she didn’t press further.

Chen Wanqing didn’t say much, but simply walked over and gently took Chen Ping’s hand.

“It’s good that you’re back,” her voice was gentle, “Everyone is waiting for you.”

Chen Ping felt a warmth in his heart and tightened his grip on her hand.

“Where’s Long Zhan?”

“In the council hall,” Chen Wanqing said. “He’s been studying the Demon Realm’s movements these past few days, saying that the Demon Dragon lineage has been acting strangely lately.”

Chen Ping nodded, looking at Jiang Xuelan: “You rest for a bit, I’ll go check on things.”

Jiang Xuelan shook her head: “Don’t worry about me, you go about your business.”

Yun Xi glanced at her, her tone indifferent: “I’ll take Palace Master Jiang to the guest rooms to rest.”

Jiang Xuelan glanced at Yun Xi, a slight smile playing on her lips: “Thank you for your trouble.”

The two women exchanged a glance, something seeming to crackle in the air.

Chen Ping coughed lightly, pulling Chen Wanqing towards the council hall.

Behind them, Yun Xi and Jiang Xuelan walked one after the other towards the guest rooms.

Yun Xi took a few steps, then suddenly spoke, "Palace Master Jiang, your relationship with Chen Ping... is it really just a transaction?"

Jiang Xuelan didn't stop, replying calmly, "What do you think?"

Yun Xi bit her lip. "I don't think so. The way you look at him doesn't seem like you're looking at a business partner."

Jiang Xuelan stopped and turned to look at her.

A hint of a smile flashed in her deep eyes.

"Then what kind of look do you think it should be?"

Yun Xi felt a little uncomfortable under her gaze and turned her head away. "How should I know?"

Jiang Xuelan chuckled softly and continued walking.

"Don't worry, I won't take your place."

Her voice was soft, yet clearly reached Yun Xi's ears. "I have my mission, and he has his path. We're just... walking together for a while."

Yun Xi paused, standing there, watching Jiang Xuelan's figure disappear at the end of the corridor.

A complex emotion welled up within her.

This woman... isn't so bad after all.

To be precise, her relationship with Chen Ping was nothing more than a transaction; it's just that over this period of time, she had gradually come to like Chen Ping.

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Inside the council chamber, Long Zhan frowned as he stared at a massive map.

The map marked the terrain of the Demon Realm, its cities, and the distribution of power within the Demon Dragon lineage.

The red markings were dense, covering almost the entire northern half of the map.

"Mr. Chen!" Seeing Chen Ping enter, Long Zhan quickly stood up, a flicker of surprise in his eyes. "You're finally back!"

Chen Ping walked to the map and glanced at the markings. "What's the situation?"

Long Zhan's expression turned grave. "Not optimistic. The Demon Dragon lineage has been amassing forces recently, seemingly preparing for some major operation. Our scouts report that Long Yuan has recalled all the Demon Dragons scattered throughout the region; there are now at least a thousand Demon Dragons gathered deep within the Demon Realm."

"A thousand?" Chen Ping frowned.

"Yes."

Long Zhan pointed to several red markers on the map. "And it's not just the Demonic Dragon. Long Yuan also brought in a demonic cultivator from the depths of the Demon Realm, whose strength is said to be unfathomable. Our scouts saw him from afar and said that the demonic cultivator was surrounded by black flames, turning the sky within a hundred miles black."

Chen Ping's brows furrowed even more.

Black flames...a demonic cultivator...

Could it be Ning Zhi?

No, it shouldn't be.

Ning Zhi's demonic energy is pure black, without any flames.

Besides, Ning Zhi just appeared at the Divine Palace; it's impossible for him to have gone to the Demon Realm so quickly.

"What is the background of that demonic cultivator?" Chen Ping asked.

Long Zhan shook his head: "We can't find out. That person's whereabouts are extremely secretive; he never shows his true face. Our scouts only saw his demonic energy from afar; they didn't even see what he looked like."

Chen Ping was silent for a moment.

"However..."

Long Zhan hesitated for a moment, "There's something strange. Although the Demon Dragon lineage has been gathering, they haven't launched an attack on Yunxian City. Given Long Yuan's personality, he should have attacked long ago. But he hasn't moved, as if he's waiting for something."

"Waiting for what?"

"I don't know." Long Zhan shook his head. "Maybe they're waiting for reinforcements, maybe they're waiting for some opportunity."

Chen Ping pondered for a moment, then raised his head, a cold glint in his eyes.

“We won’t wait any longer. We’ll take the initiative.”