

## **The Order 10801**

Chapter: 10801

The surviving divine cultivators helped him, and they scrambled away.

Silence returned to the riverbed.

Chen Ping turned to look at the ghost warriors, the elderly, women, and children.

They were looking at him with complex expressions.

There was gratitude, surprise, but mostly a cautious wariness.

Like a small animal that had been wounded countless times, hesitant to trust anyone's kindness.

The elderly leader struggled to his feet, walked to Chen Ping, and bowed deeply.

"Thank you for saving my life, benefactor," he said, his voice hoarse and weary. "I am Youying, an old servant from Youyue Kingdom."

Chen Ping helped him up. "No need for formalities. You are badly injured; sit down and talk."

Youying shook his head. "It's nothing, just superficial wounds. But you, benefactor..."

He looked at Chen Ping's pale face and the unhealed wounds on his body, a flicker of guilt in his eyes. "Our benefactor's injuries worsened while saving us. This old man..."

"I told you there's no need for such formalities," Chen Ping interrupted him. "I was just passing by and couldn't bear to see it."

He paused, then asked, "Are you the Ghost Clan? Were those who hunted you the God Clan?"

Youying nodded, a hint of hatred flashing in his eyes: "The people of the God Clan's Judgment Hall. They've been hunting our Ghost Clan for thousands of years. My people... are either dead or scattered, and now only the old, weak, and disabled remain."

His voice grew softer and softer, until it was almost a muttering to himself.

Chen Ping was silent for a moment.

He remembered what Yunxi had said: the God Clan, under the guise of "eradicating demons," had launched a massacre against the Ghost Clan.

Nine out of ten Ghost Clan members survived, the survivors hiding in all directions.

So these were Yunxi's people.

"Where are you going?" Chen Ping asked.

"We need to go back to Youyue Kingdom," said Youying. "That's the last hiding place for the Ghost Clan. It's deep in the Youming Mountains; the God Clan can't find it yet."

He glanced at the elderly, women, and children behind him and smiled bitterly. "There were originally over three hundred of us, but we were hunted down all the way, and now only these are left."

The little girl was still clinging to Chen Ping's leg, refusing to let go.

Tear streaks still clung to her face, but she had stopped crying. She just looked at Chen Ping with her bright black eyes, as if afraid he would disappear.

Chapter: 10802

Youying looked at the little girl and sighed. "This is Xiaoyou, her parents... in that battle just now..."

He didn't finish his sentence, but the meaning was clear.

Chen Ping looked down at the little girl and reached out to pat her head.

"Your name is Xiaoyou?"

The little girl nodded, her voice small. "Yes."

"Where's your grandfather?"

Xiaoyou's eyes reddened again. "Grandpa... Grandpa protected me..."

She couldn't continue, burying her face in Chen Ping's leg, her shoulders shaking. Chen Ping didn't ask any further questions.

He was silent for a moment, then said to Youying, "I'll take you back."

Youying was taken aback: "My benefactor, how could I accept this..."

"Just call me Chen Ping."

Chen Ping interrupted him, "Besides, I have a friend who is also a member of the Ghost Clan. She was swept away by the spatial storm and might be nearby. I'll take you back and look for her while I'm at it."

Youying's eyes suddenly lit up: "A friend? Also a member of the Ghost Clan?"

Chen Ping nodded: "Her name is Yunxi."

Youying's body trembled violently.

"Yunxi...Princess?"

His voice trembled, "You know Princess Yunxi?"

"Yes!" Chen Ping nodded.

Overwhelmed with emotion, Youying burst into tears: "Princess Yunxi is the princess of our Youyue Kingdom! She is the daughter of King Yunquan!"

Princess Yunxi left some time ago, saying she was going to find the Gate of Reincarnation, and there has been no news of her since. The King is still worried about her..."

He grasped Chen Ping's arm, his voice trembling: "My benefactor, is the princess... is she still alive?"

Chen Ping nodded: "She is alive. She got separated from me in the spatial storm, but she should be out of danger."

Youying knelt down, tears streaming down his face: "Heaven has eyes... Heaven has eyes..."

The ghost warriors, the elderly, women, and children behind him, upon hearing the news that Princess Yunxi was still alive, also knelt down. Some wept, some laughed, and some murmured to themselves.

Chapter: 10803

Chen Ping helped them up one by one: "Get up, don't kneel. Once we return to Youyue Kingdom, I'll find a way to find her."

Youying wiped away her tears and nodded repeatedly: "Okay, okay. My benefactor... no, Mr. Chen Ping, let's set off now. Youyue Kingdom is deep in the Youming Mountains, still two days' journey away."

Chen Ping nodded, bent down, and picked up Xiaoyou.

Xiaoyou nestled on his shoulder, her little hands tightly gripping his clothes, and soon fell asleep.

The group headed towards the Youming Mountains.

Behind them, the wind on the wasteland whipped up gray-black sand, slowly burying the bloodstains and traces of battle on the riverbed.

Under the purple sky, two suns shone brightly, casting long, long shadows.

Two days later, Chen Ping and his group finally arrived at the Youming Mountains.

This was a mountain range shrouded in black mist, with steep peaks, deep valleys, and strangely shaped rocks and unknown plants everywhere.

Black mist flowed through the mountains, blocking out the sunlight and shrouding the entire mountain range in darkness.

"This is the Netherworld Mountains,"

The Shadow said softly. "It's shrouded in ghostly energy year-round; outsiders easily lose their way. Our ghost race has hidden here for thousands of years, and the gods have never been able to find our exact location."

Chen Ping nodded and followed the Shadow into the black mist.

The Shadow knew the terrain intimately, leading the group through the mountains, avoiding all traps and dangerous areas.

After walking for about two hours, they arrived at a massive mountain gate.

The gate was natural, forming a natural archway between two mountain peaks, beyond which lay a deep, dark canyon.

The rock walls on both sides of the canyon were covered with ancient runes, emitting a faint blue glow.

"These runes were left behind by our ancestors," the Shadow explained.

"They can block outside detection and also resist the holy light of the gods."

Passing through the canyon, the scenery suddenly opened up before them.

This was an ancient underground city.

The ancient city was built against the mountainside, layer upon layer, extending from the bottom of the canyon all the way into the depths of the mountain.

The buildings were constructed of a black stone, ancient and heavy, and although weathered by time, their former glory was still evident.

But that glory days are long gone.

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Now, the ancient city is in ruins, littered with collapsed buildings and dried blood.

Countless attack marks mark the city walls, some still bearing the scorch marks of holy light.

Several demon warriors stand at the city gate, clad in the same black armor as Youying and his companions, but far more weary and haggard.

Seeing Youying return, a young warrior runs over: "Elder Youying! You're back!"

His gaze falls on Chen Ping, instantly hardening: "This is..."

"One of our own," Youying says. "He's a friend of the princess, he saved us."

"The princess?" The young warrior's eyes widen. "Princess Yunxi?"

"The princess is alive," Youying's voice chokes slightly. "This Mr. Chen Ping is the princess's friend."

The news spreads, and the ancient city erupts in commotion.

Demons pour out from all directions, surrounding Chen Ping, bombarding him with questions about Yunxi.

"Is the princess really alive?"

“Is she alright?”

“When will she return?”

Chen Ping was surrounded, unsure who to answer.

Just then, a deep voice came from behind the crowd.

“Make way.”

The crowd parted automatically, clearing a path.

A tall, middle-aged man stepped out from the crowd.

He wore a long black robe, his face was gaunt, his eyes sunken, and his temples were already gray.

His eyes were bloodshot, and his face was etched with the marks of time and hatred. But even in his weary and haggard state, he still possessed an aura that commanded respect.

His gaze fell on Chen Ping, lingering for a long time.

Then, his eyes suddenly widened.

“You... carry Xi'er's scent.”

Chen Ping looked at the haggard middle-aged man, a complex emotion welling up within him. “Are you Yun Xi's father?”

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The middle-aged man nodded, his voice hoarse. “I am Yun Quan. The ruler of Youyue Kingdom.”

He walked up to Chen Ping, scrutinizing him from head to toe, his eyes filled with indescribable emotions—concern, pain, and a sliver of hope suppressed for too long.

“Xi’er... she’s still alive?”

Chen Ping nodded. “Alive. She was swept away by the spatial storm, and we don’t know where she landed. But I assure you, she is still alive.”

Yun Quan’s body trembled slightly.

He closed his eyes, took a deep breath, and when he opened them again, the tears in his eyes had vanished, replaced by a heavy, resolute determination.

“Come in.” He turned and walked deeper into the ancient city. “Tell me, what exactly happened?”

In the council hall of the ancient city, Yun Quan sat in the main seat, listening to Chen Ping recount his journey from the fourteenth to the fifteenth heaven.

When he heard about Yun Xi’s experiences in the Fourteenth Heaven, his brows furrowed and relaxed intermittently.

When he heard that the void passage had been interfered with and the three of them had been separated by the spatial storm, his expression darkened.

“Mr. Chen, could you tell me if Xi’er obtained the Gate of Reincarnation?” Yun Quan asked.

Chen Ping shook his head and then recounted the situation regarding the Gate of Reincarnation to Yun Quan.

Upon learning that obtaining the Gate of Reincarnation was not guaranteed, Yun Quan’s expression turned very grim.

“The Reincarnation Bureau is a place where the souls of our Ghost Clan cultivators transit.”

“Its purpose is to house and protect the souls of Ghost Clan cultivators who died in war.”

“For tens of thousands of years, the Reincarnation Bureau has been the place where countless Ghost Clan cultivators have been reincarnated and reborn...”

“But in the last few centuries, for some unknown reason, the souls within the Reincarnation Bureau have been unable to leave. Tens of thousands of Ghost Clan cultivators’ souls are trapped there.”

His voice grew heavy: “If these souls could be released, the Ghost Clan would have hope for revival.”

“Is there any other way?” Chen Ping asked.

Yun Quan remained silent for a moment.

“Yes. But it’s very difficult.”

Yun Quan sighed softly. “Ancient texts record that as long as three supreme treasures are gathered and the Netherworld Lamp is lit, the Path of Reincarnation can be opened, releasing all trapped souls.

The three supreme treasures are the Netherworld Lamp, the Core of Reincarnation, and the Soul-Guiding Fire. Unfortunately, the Ghost Clan has been hunted for so many years, and these three treasures have been lost; their whereabouts are unknown.”

“However, there are rumors that the Netherworld Lamp is in the hands of the God Clan’s Judgment Hall, the Core of Reincarnation is in the hands of the Demon Clan’s Shadow Hall, and the Soul-Guiding Fire is in the hands of the Beast Clan’s Heavenly Wolf Tribe.”

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“With our current strength, we can barely protect ourselves, let alone gather these three supreme treasures.”

“As long as there’s another way, that’s fine.” Chen Ping breathed a sigh of relief.

If the only option was the Gate of Reincarnation, Chen Ping was truly in a dilemma. He couldn’t contact Mr. Shi; did he have to face death again?

Perhaps Mr. Shi would appear when he was about to die.

But Chen Ping didn’t want to do that. Since there were other methods, that was fine!

“I beg you, please help us,” Yun Quan pleaded, looking at Chen Ping.

Chen Ping remained silent for a long time.

He wasn’t a saint and didn’t want to get involved in the messy grudges of the Heavenly Realm.

But he had to deal with the Ghost Clan matter, for Yun Xi’s sake, for Ming Li’s sake.

“Don’t worry, I’ll help you,” Chen Ping nodded. “Not for the Ghost Clan, but for Yun Xi.”

Yun Quan was taken aback by Chen Ping’s words and gave him a scrutinizing look.

He opened his mouth, wanting to say something, but didn’t.

Then he only said, “Thank you.”

Chen Ping smiled slightly. "Don't thank me. You should send someone to look for Yun Xi, and my other friend, Jiang Xuelan."

"Don't worry, Mr. Chen. I've already sent people. Since you're here, Xi'er and the others can't be too far away. The opening of the void passage has its limitations."

Chen Ping breathed a sigh of relief.

He stood up, walked to the entrance of the council hall, and looked at the dim sky outside.

Purple sunlight filtered through the black mist, casting an eerie hue over the ruins of the ancient city.

Outside the council hall, Xiao You sat on the steps, clutching a tattered rag doll.

Seeing Chen Ping emerge, she ran to him and tugged at his sleeve.

"Uncle Chen, are you leaving?"

Chen Ping crouched down, looking into her eyes. "No. I'll take you home."

Xiao You's tears flowed again, but this time she didn't cry out loud; she simply nodded firmly.

"Yes."

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Chen Ping picked her up and walked deeper into the ancient city.

Behind them, Yun Quan stood at the entrance of the council hall, watching Chen Ping's retreating figure, motionless for a long time.

"Xi'er, this Chen Ping, is he related to you..." he murmured.

Then, he turned and entered the council hall.

Chen Ping carried Xiao You for a while through the ancient city.

Xiao You nestled on his shoulder, her small hands gripping his clothes tightly, her breathing gradually settling.

She was asleep, tears still clinging to the corners of her eyes, but a slight smile played on her lips, as if she were having a sweet dream.

Chen Ping slowed his pace, not wanting to wake her.

The streets of the ancient city were narrow, the buildings huddled together, their walls covered in ancient ghostly runes.

Some runes had faded, while others still emitted a faint blue glow, like fireflies flickering in the darkness.

The ghostly cultivators he encountered on the road stopped, looking at Chen Ping with complex expressions.

There was gratitude, curiosity, but mostly awe.

They had heard about what had happened on the riverbed: a human cultivator, at the Upper Immortal Realm, had repelled a True Immortal Realm third-grade divine race adjudicator with a single punch.

Just who was this young man?

“Mr. Chen.”

Youying caught up from behind, panting, and said, “I’ll take you to your lodgings. The King said you are a distinguished guest of our Youyue Kingdom and has arranged the best room for you.”

Chen Ping nodded and followed Youying through several streets to a relatively intact stone hall.

The stone hall wasn’t large, but it was very clean.

Two ghost warriors stood guard at the entrance, immediately straightening their backs upon seeing Chen Ping approach.

“This was the princess’s former residence.”

Youying pushed open the door, his voice tinged with emotion, “After the princess left, the King had it kept cleaned, saying he was waiting for her to return. Please rest here for now, until we find the princess...”

He didn’t finish, but the meaning was clear: once Yunxi was found, this would be her home.

Chen Ping entered the stone hall; the interior was simply furnished.

A stone bed, a stone table, a few stone chairs, and a painting hanging on the wall.

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The painting depicted a young woman with delicate features, bearing a resemblance to Yun Xi in her eyes and brows.

“That’s the Queen Mother,” Youying said softly.

“Many years ago... she died at the hands of the gods.”

Chen Ping was silent for a moment, then gently placed Xiao You on the stone bed and covered her with a thin blanket.

Xiao You turned over, mumbled something, and fell into a deep sleep again.

“Mr. Chen, please rest. I’ll go prepare some cultivation resources for you,” Youying said, turning to leave.

“Wait a moment.”

Chen Ping called after him, “Elder Youying, I want to ask you something.”

Youying stopped. “Please speak, Mr. Chen.”

“How many people are there in the Ghost Clan...?”

Youying fell silent.

He stood in the doorway, his back to Chen Ping, his shoulders trembling slightly.

After a long while, he finally spoke, his voice hoarse as if sandpaper were being rubbed.

“Originally... there were tens of millions.”

He said, "Thousands of years ago, the gods began slaughtering us. Ghost cultivators either died, fled, or escaped to the lower realms."

"I don't know exactly how many ghosts are left in the entire Heavenly Realm, but we..."

Youying paused, looking at Chen Ping, her eyes reddening.

"Now, in the Youyue Kingdom, fewer than three hundred people can wield weapons. Including the elderly, women, and children, there are less than a thousand. A thousand... Mr. Chen, our Youyue Kingdom once had a population of one hundred thousand, and now only a thousand remain."

His voice trembled.

"We are not demons. We are simply...born as ghosts. We cultivate ghostly energy because of our bloodline. We don't harm or kill; we only want to live peacefully.

But the gods say we are demons, that we pollute the spiritual energy of the celestial realm, that our existence is a desecration of it."

"They kill our men, steal our women, and throw our children into the fire to burn them. They say this is purifying the celestial realm."

Youying's tears finally fell.

"Mr. Chen, what did we do wrong?"

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Chen Ping didn't speak.

He didn't know how to answer that question.

He thought of the humans and demons of the Celestial Realm, of the innocent people slaughtered indiscriminately because of their race.

He thought of Great Stone Village, of the villagers slaughtered by the demons.

This world has never changed.

"Elder Youying," Chen Ping's voice was soft, "I will help you."

Youying looked up at him, her eyes blurred with tears.

"It's not for any grand cause, nor for the revival of any race," Chen Ping said.

"It's simply because it shouldn't be like this. You shouldn't be treated like this."

"One day, I will establish a completely equal celestial realm, even a universe without classes."

"Regardless of race, all should live together equally. Intermarriage between races is permissible; there is no distinction of rank."

Youying opened his mouth, wanting to say something, but ultimately only bowed deeply.

Then he turned and left. He knew Chen Ping's idea was good, but what use was it?

The Way of Heaven is such; who can defy its laws?

Chen Ping sat down beside the stone bed, looking at Xiaoyou's peaceful sleeping face, a complex emotion welling up within him.

This child, her parents are dead, her grandfather is dead.

She's only a few years old, yet she already knows what loss is, what fear is.

But she's still smiling.

She smiled in his arms.

Perhaps that's why he was willing to help them.

Not because of righteousness, not because of a promise, but simply because...

A child smiled in your arms, and you wanted to protect her.

That's all.

Chen Ping had just closed his eyes to rest when a series of hurried footsteps sounded outside.

Chapter: 10810

"Quick! Quick!"

"Assemble! Everyone assemble!"

"Take the children to the basement! Quick!"

Chen Ping jerked his eyes open and jumped out of bed.

Xiao You was awakened by the noise, rubbing her eyes as she sat up, groggily asking, "Uncle Chen, what's wrong?"

"Nothing." Chen Ping patted her head. "You wait here, Uncle will go check."

He strode out of the stone hall and saw chaos on the streets outside.

Ghost warriors were running, some towards the city gate, some towards the city walls.

Elders were carrying children to the basement, women were gathering supplies, and everyone's face was filled with tension and fear.

Chen Ping's heart sank.

Could it be that the gods have attacked?

He grabbed a demon warrior running past him and asked, "What happened?"

The warrior recognized Chen Ping and quickly said, "Mr. Chen, the King sent me to invite you. He's waiting for you at the city gate!"

Chen Ping followed the warrior through the chaotic streets to the city gate.

Yun Quan was standing on the city wall, looking at the distant sky.

His face was even paler than yesterday, but his eyes were bright, almost frighteningly so.

“King Yun Quan, what happened?” Chen Ping asked as he walked up the city wall.

Yun Quan turned to look at him, his expression grave.

“Mr. Chen, we found her. We found Xi’er.”

Chen Ping was stunned: “Found her?”

“Yes.” Yun Quan pointed to a demon cultivator on the city wall, “We just received news that our scouts discovered Xi’er’s aura in the eastern section of the Netherworld Mountains. She... she’s still alive.”

Chen Ping’s heart skipped a beat: “Where is she?”

Yun Quan turned around and pointed east.

“The Heavenly Fire Pit.”