

The Order 9531

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A teeth-grinding sound of bones shattering rang out!

The bone hammer, forged from the bones of an unknown demonic beast and incredibly hard, cracked instantly like rotten wood under Chen Ping's seemingly pale and slender hand, then shattered into countless fragments with a loud "bang!"

Not only that, but the leader of the fused beasts also heard clear cracking sounds from the arms that held the hammer.

He was struck as if by an invisible, immense force, screaming as he flew backward, spitting blood, and crashing heavily onto rocks dozens of feet away. His bones were broken, and he could no longer rise.

All of this happened in the blink of an eye.

From Chen Ping's appearance and killing of the Demonic Sect elder to crushing the bone hammer and severely injuring the fused beast leader, only two or three breaths had passed.

The scene fell into a deathly silence.

All the surviving Demonic Sect disciples and fused beast warriors stared in utter terror at the young man in blue robes standing with his hands behind his back.

Their two strongest leaders, one dead and the other severely injured, in a single exchange—this was completely beyond their comprehension.

The Sword Sect disciples were utterly dumbfounded, their sword-wielding hands trembling slightly.

Having previously served as the Sword Sect's commanders, they had heard rumors, but never witnessed it firsthand, harboring some doubts.

Now, witnessing Chen Ping effortlessly dispatch two powerful enemies as if crushing insects, the visual and emotional impact was unparalleled!

Ling Shuang's crimson longsword had fallen limply.

She stared blankly at Chen Ping's back. The figure in the blue robe, who had previously appeared arrogant in her eyes, now seemed incredibly tall and unfathomable.

She remembered her father's words, Chen Ping's indifferent gaze, her previous contempt and disdain... A powerful wave of shame and unprecedented shock overwhelmed her.

So... what her father said was true.

So... she was the one who was the ignorant, narrow-minded fool.

What kind of being was he?

Chen Ping ignored the shock of the crowd.

His gaze swept over the remaining enemies, his voice calm yet carrying an undeniable authority: "Surrender, or die."

Those four simple words struck the hearts of the remaining Demon Sect disciples and Fusion Beast warriors like a hammer blow.

Looking at the elder's corpse on the ground, hearing the painful groans of the Fusion Beast leader not far away, their last vestiges of fighting spirit crumbled instantly.

"Clang!"

"Clang!"

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The sounds of weapons hitting the ground rang out one after another. The dozen or so surviving enemies all knelt on the ground, their faces pale, trembling.

Chen Ping then turned to look at Ling Shuang, who was still not fully recovered from her shock.

When Ling Shuang met his gaze, her delicate body trembled slightly. She instinctively looked away, her cheeks burning. A mix of emotions welled up inside her—fear, gratitude, and an overwhelming sense of shame.

“Miss Ling, have the battlefield cleaned up, interrogate the prisoners, and find out the defenses in this area, and... the direction the Rift Heaven Sect Master and the others might have fled.”

Chen Ping’s tone remained calm, as if his swift and decisive actions just now were not his doing.

“...Yes.”

Ling Shuang lowered her head, her voice barely audible, her previous arrogance completely gone.

She took a deep breath, forcing herself to calm down, and began directing the still somewhat dazed disciples.

When she secretly glanced again at the figure in green robes walking to the side, gazing towards the Ten Thousand Beasts Mountain Range, her eyes had completely changed.

There was no longer any contempt or resentment in them; instead, there was deep awe, and a hint of curiosity and inquiry that even she herself hadn’t noticed rising.

Just who is this Senior Chen...?

The battle in the desolate valley had brought about a complete transformation in Ling Shuang’s attitude towards Chen Ping.

The previous disdain and skepticism vanished, replaced by heartfelt reverence and a barely perceptible dependence.

She began to actively seek Chen Ping's opinion, glancing at him frequently when directing her disciples, only feeling reassured when he nodded slightly.

The interrogation of the prisoners went smoothly. Under the absolute intimidation of force and the unique interrogation techniques of the Sword Sect disciples, the remaining Demon Sect disciples and Beast Fusion Warriors quickly revealed the information they knew.

"My lord, spare our lives! We were merely ordered to patrol this area, searching for the remnants of the Myriad Beasts Sect who had escaped, especially the sect leader Lie Tian and his confidants... oh, and spies from the Xuan Tian Sword Sect."

A Demon Sect disciple confessed tremblingly, "We were told to signal immediately upon discovering any trace, and experts would lead a team to encircle and annihilate them."

"What is the defense situation in this area? How many patrols are there? Where are the experts distributed?" Ling Shuang asked coldly.

"Well... I only know that our team is led by Elder Liu and Commander Fang."

"The others... I heard that Sect Master Zheng Gu and several important figures from the Wan Hun Demon Sect are stationed at the Wan Beast Sect headquarters, while the outer perimeter is searched by mixed teams of various Fusion Beast races and Demon Sect disciples, divided into different areas. I really don't know the exact number of teams."

Another Fusion Beast warrior provided slightly different information: "Sect Master Zheng Gu has ordered a focused search of several old hunting grounds and abandoned mines in the northwest and southwest directions, saying that those places are easy to hide in..."

Chen Ping listened quietly, memorizing this information.

The northwest and southwest directions... this might be the escape route that Lie Tian and the others might choose.

After dealing with the prisoners, the team rested briefly. Chen Ping studied the map, pondered for a moment, and then said, "We'll move southwest, carefully concealing our tracks along the way."

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"If Sect Master Lietian and the others really retreat in this direction, we might find clues. At the same time, avoid known patrol routes."

"Yes, Senior Chen," Ling Shuang immediately replied, then instructed her disciples to use concealment spells to hide their auras and proceed according to Chen Ping's instructions.

For the next two days, Chen Ping and his group moved like ghosts through the complex terrain of the Ten Thousand Beasts Mountain Range.

They avoided three sizable patrol teams and discovered several places that appeared to have been battles, but they found no definite trace of Lietian and the others.

Chen Ping's brows furrowed deeper and deeper.

The mountain range was vast, and Lietian and the others had deliberately concealed themselves; searching like this was like looking for a needle in a haystack.

Moreover, he could sense that the search was tightening.

The Fusion Beast Clan's familiarity with the mountain range far surpassed that of outsiders, and with the tracking methods provided by the Demonic Sect, Lietian and the others' situation was likely becoming increasingly dangerous.

Ling Shuang also felt the pressure. Seeing the seriousness in Chen Ping's eyes, she couldn't help but whisper, "Senior Chen, searching like this isn't working. Shouldn't we..."

Before she could finish, Chen Ping suddenly raised his hand to signal silence, his sharp gaze fixed on a dense ancient forest to his left.

A moment later, an extremely faint rustling sound came from the forest, almost imperceptible to Chen Ping if not for his powerful divine sense.

Immediately afterward, two cautious figures, almost blending into their surroundings, quietly emerged from the shadows of the forest.

They were two beastmen!

They remained in a half-beast form, one resembling a wolf, the other a leopard, both bearing wounds, their auras weakened, their eyes filled with vigilance and exhaustion.

When they saw Chen Ping and his group, especially Chen Ping and Ling Shuang, they were initially startled and assumed a defensive posture. But upon recognizing Chen Ping's face, the wolf-like beastman's eyes suddenly blazed with unbelievable joy!

"It's...it's Senior Chen?!"

The wolf-like beastman's voice trembled, almost letting out a cry, but he forcefully suppressed it.

Chen Ping recognized the man; he was a rather clever fourth-rank Celestial Immortal elder from Lie Tian's side, named Ji Feng.

"Elder Ji Feng?" Chen Ping stepped forward, lowering his voice, "Where is Sect Master Lie Tian? Where are the others?"

Elder Ji Feng, seeing Chen Ping, was as if he had seen a savior. His eyes reddened with excitement, and he hurriedly said, "Senior! It really is you! The Sect Master and the others...they're in a hidden valley not far ahead!"

“Everyone...everyone’s condition isn’t good. Many brothers are injured, and the Sect Master’s injuries are especially severe. We were sent out to scout and search for resources...”

“Lead the way!” Chen Ping said without hesitation.

Led by Elder Ji Feng, the group moved even more cautiously, bypassing several natural mazes and a seemingly calm but actually treacherous swamp.

Finally, they arrived at the entrance to a valley completely concealed by vines and strange rocks.

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The entrance was rudimentary yet ingeniously constructed illusion array and warning barriers, clearly a hastily put arrangement.

Elder Jifeng cast several specific beastman hand seals, causing the illusion array to ripple slightly, revealing a gap just wide enough for one person to pass through.

The group quickly slipped inside.

The valley’s interior was small but quite deep.

More than twenty disciples of the Myriad Beasts Sect were either sitting or lying down, most bearing injuries and weak breaths. A faint smell of blood mixed with herbs permeated the air.

Seeing Jifeng bring back strangers, many of the wounded struggled to rise and be wary. However, upon seeing Chen Ping, and especially when some of the older disciples beside Lietian recognized him, a suppressed, excited gasp echoed through the valley.

“Senior Chen!”

“Senior has arrived!”

Deep in the valley, on a relatively flat boulder, Lie Tian sat leaning against the wall, his face as pale as paper, his chest wrapped in thick bandages, with faint traces of blood seeping out.

Upon seeing Chen Ping, his dim eyes suddenly blazed with light, and he struggled to stand:
“Senior...you...you’ve finally come!”

Chen Ping flashed to his side, pressing down on his shoulder: “Don’t move.”

At the same time, his divine sense swept over him, his heart sinking slightly.

Lie Tian not only suffered severe external injuries, but his internal organs had also been significantly shaken. Multiple meridians were damaged, and the traces of demonic energy corrosion were obvious; he had clearly been through a fierce battle.

“How could he be so badly injured?”

Chen Ping frowned, took out several healing pills he had refined, and without a word, stuffed them into Lie Tian’s mouth. Simultaneously, he channeled a wisp of pure chaotic immortal power to help him neutralize the medicinal effects and clear the blocked meridians.

The pill melted instantly upon entering his mouth, its pure medicinal power and gentle yet powerfully vital energy rapidly spreading. A trace of color returned to Lie Tian’s pale face, and his breathing became much more stable.

He let out a long sigh, looking gratefully at Chen Ping: “Thank you, Senior. If it weren’t for your timely arrival and the gift of this elixir, Lie Tian would probably...”

“This is not the time for such talk.”

Chen Ping interrupted him, his gaze sweeping over the remaining disciples of the Myriad Beasts Sect in the valley, a surge of anger rising within him.

The once bustling and prosperous Ten Thousand Beasts Sect is now reduced to a mere few dozen wounded and defeated soldiers. "Where's Elder Xiong Tuo? Where are Shi Yan and Ying Wu? I can't find them!"

Mentioning Xiong Tuo, Lie Tian's eyes instantly filled with deep sorrow and anger, his voice choked with emotion: "Elder Xiong Tuo... to cover our retreat, he was besieged by the Zheng Gu and the Demonic Sect traitors... he's... he's fallen..."

Although he had a premonition, hearing the news with his own ears still caused Chen Ping a pang of pain in his heart.

That fiery yet loyal Elder Xiong...

He closed his eyes, suppressing the killing intent in his heart, and continued to ask, "Where are Shi Yan and Ying Wu?"

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Lie Tian, forcing back his grief, said, "After breaking through the encirclement that day, we dispersed and agreed to meet here."

"Shi Yan and Ying Wu's injuries were relatively minor, and they had a close relationship with the senior, so I sent them each with a team of clever disciples to scout the area near the Xuan Tian Sword Sect and the former site of the Ten Thousand Beasts Sect, respectively, to gather information and search for the senior's whereabouts."

"We agreed that regardless of whether we found anything, we must return here within ten days. Now... eight days have passed, but there is still no sign of them, nor have we received any communication talismans from them..."

Chen Ping's heart sank!

An ominous premonition arose within him.

Shi Yan and Ying Wu were both cautious people; unless there were special circumstances, they would never fail to return on time, much less fail to send a message.

“Which direction did they go? Any distinguishing features or pre-arranged markings?”

Chen Ping pressed, his tone unconsciously becoming urgent.

Lie Tian explained in detail the direction the two had gone and the possible routes they might have taken, as well as some simple pre-arranged markings.

Chen Ping quickly memorized them.

Just then, a leopard clan disciple responsible for guarding the valley entrance rushed in, his face pale, and said in a low, urgent voice, “Sect Master! Senior! Something terrible has happened! Outside...outside, we’ve discovered a large amount of enemy activity!”

“They’re searching in our direction! They’re less than a hundred miles away! There are many of them, at least three patrol teams have converged, and two of them have extremely strong auras, they’re probably...probably experts at the sixth rank of the Heavenly Immortal Realm!”

“What?!”

Everyone’s expression changed drastically.

Lie Tian struggled to get up and give orders, but Chen Ping held him down.

“The enemy came prepared, outnumbered and with superior experts; a direct confrontation offers no chance of victory.”

Chen Ping calmly analyzed, “Although this valley is secluded, it’s not absolutely safe. Being discovered is only a matter of time. We must move immediately.”

“But...but where can we go?”

An elder said despairingly, “The mountain range is vast, but the Fusion Beast Clan knows this place intimately, and the Myriad Souls Demon Sect has its tracking techniques. With so many wounded, we can’t move fast at all. No matter where we hide, we’ll be found sooner or later.”

“How about going to my Xuan Tian Sword Sect?” Ling Shuang couldn’t help but speak up. “Our sect’s protective array is sturdy enough to protect everyone.”

“And this is?” Lie Tian looked at Ling Shuang, his face full of doubt. He didn’t recognize her.

“This is Sect Master Ling’s beloved daughter, Ling Shuang,” Chen Ping introduced.

Upon hearing this, Lie Tian quickly greeted her, then shook his head with a wry smile, saying, “Miss Ling, I appreciate your kindness. However, this place is far too far from the Ten Thousand Swords Mountain Range, and there will undoubtedly be numerous checkpoints along the way. Our team has no chance of crossing safely.”

Silence fell upon the group, an atmosphere of despair spreading through the valley.

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Pursuers were behind them, and there was no way forward. Were they truly destined to perish here?

Just then, Ling Shuang’s eyes lit up, as if she had remembered something.

After hesitating for a moment, she looked at Chen Ping, then at Lie Tian, and said, “There is another place that might offer temporary refuge.”

“Where?” Chen Ping asked her.

“The Blazing Fire Secret Realm,”

Ling Shuang said. "This secret realm is an independent small world discovered by my master, the Heavenly Fire Sword Master. Its entrance is hidden and requires a special token and incantation to open."

"The interior of the secret realm is vast and complex, with a dense concentration of fire-attribute spiritual energy. Ordinary people cannot stay there for long, but it is an excellent place to evade capture."

"Most importantly, it is less than two days' journey from our current location, and the route is relatively remote."

"The Blazing Fire Secret Realm?" Chen Ping's heart stirred.

Secret realms usually have unique rules, which can indeed block most tracking methods.

Lie Tian and the other elders of the Ten Thousand Beasts Sect also showed hope, but their expressions quickly dimmed: "Miss Ling, such a precious secret realm... we outsiders..."

"We can't worry about that now!"

Ling Shuang decisively said, "My master often taught me that the path of a sword cultivator is to uphold righteousness and help those in distress."

"The Ten Thousand Beasts Sect has suffered such a calamity, and the Demonic Sect is rampaging. How can my Xuan Tian Sword Sect sit idly by? Besides, this is also my father's wish."

She looked at Chen Ping, "Senior Chen, what do you think?"

Chen Ping pondered for a moment; this was indeed the best choice at the moment.

He looked at Lie Tian: "Sect Master Lie Tian, what do you think?"

Lie Tian took a deep breath, cupped his hands, and bowed deeply to Ling Shuang: "Miss Ling, your great kindness is unforgettable! If we can survive this calamity, the entire Ten Thousand Beasts Sect will repay you with all our might in the future!"

"Sect Master Lie Tian, you flatter me."

Ling Shuang quickly returned the bow, then said solemnly, "Time is of the essence; we must set off immediately and leave before the enemy encircles us. I know a relatively safe shortcut."

Chen Ping shook his head: "You go first."

"Senior?" Ling Shuang and Lie Tian were both taken aback.

"I'll go find Shi Yan and Ying Wu." Chen Ping's gaze was firm. "They haven't returned on time; they must have encountered trouble. I can't abandon them."

"But Senior, there are search parties everywhere outside. It's too dangerous for you to act alone!" Ling Shuang said anxiously, her eyes revealing genuine worry.

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Lie Tian also advised, "Senior, Shi Yan and Ying Wu are both alert children. Perhaps they were just delayed by something, or are hiding somewhere. If you go out now, what if..."

"There's no 'what if'."

Chen Ping's tone was calm, yet carried an undeniable determination. "I came to the Ten Thousand Beasts Sect with them. It's my responsibility to find them and get them out of here safely."

"You go to the secret realm first. Tell me the exact location and how to enter. After I find them, I will meet up with you."

Seeing that Chen Ping's mind was made up, Ling Shuang knew that further persuasion was useless.

She bit her lip, took out a fiery red, feather-shaped jade pendant from her bosom, and handed it to Chen Ping: “Senior, this is the Blazing Fire Pendant, one of the keys to opening the entrance to the secret realm.”

“The entrance to the secret realm is located about 20,000 miles southwest, at the deepest part of the Crimson Flame Canyon, where there is a crimson rock wall that burns eternally.”

“Holding the Blazing Fire Pendant, circulate your fire-attribute spiritual power to activate it, and simultaneously use your divine sense to inscribe the seal I’m passing on to you. This will open the temporary entrance.”

As she spoke, she transmitted a complex and profound seal into Chen Ping’s mind using her divine sense.

Chen Ping sensed it briefly and memorized it, then took the Blazing Fire Pendant and put it away.

“Senior, please be careful! We’ll be waiting for you in the secret realm!” Ling Shuang looked at Chen Ping, her eyes filled with complex emotions.

“Senior Chen, take care!” Lie Tian and the other disciples of the Myriad Beasts Sect also bowed, their eyes filled with gratitude and anticipation.

Chen Ping nodded, said nothing more, and with a flicker, disappeared from everyone’s sight as if merging into thin air. Not even the slightest spatial fluctuation was caused.

Ling Shuang stared blankly in the direction Chen Ping had disappeared, stunned for a moment before snapping back to reality. Suppressing the strange emotions within her, she turned to Lie Tian and said, “Sect Master Lie Tian, we must set off immediately!”

“Please have the less seriously injured disciples help support the severely wounded. We’re leaving now!”

Led by Ling Shuang, this mixed force, composed of elites from the Xuan Tian Sword Sect and remnants of the Ten Thousand Beasts Sect, silently withdrew from the hidden valley, stealthily heading southwest towards the Crimson Flame Canyon.

...

After leaving the valley, Chen Ping pushed his spatial escape techniques and concealment abilities to their limits.

He moved like an invisible shadow, swiftly traversing the dense forest, rocky cliffs, and shadows. His divine sense, like the most sophisticated radar, radiated outwards in all directions from his own center.

He meticulously searched for any trace that might be related to Shi Yan and Shadow Dance, while skillfully avoiding squads of visible and hidden sentries.

He first followed the route provided by Lie Tian, searching a distance towards the Xuan Tian Sword Sect. He discovered several faint traces of fighting and the unique, hidden markings of the Ten Thousand Beasts Sect.

The markings pointed in another direction—seemingly a secluded path leading to the former site of the Ten Thousand Beasts Sect.

Chen Ping's heart tightened. Had the two of them been exposed while scouting the former site of the Ten Thousand Beasts Sect?

He immediately changed direction, following the markings.

The closer he got to the outer area of the former site of the Ten Thousand Beasts Sect, the denser the patrols became, and the more tense the atmosphere grew.

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Chen Ping had to be even more cautious, sometimes needing to lie in wait for long intervals between patrol shifts to pass through.

Along the way, he discovered more signs of battle, and... bloodstains.

Judging from the aura, it was mixed with the scents of Shi Yan and Ying Wu!

Chen Ping's heart sank.

Finally, near a narrow mountain stream about a hundred miles from the original core area of the Ten Thousand Beasts Sect, Chen Ping discovered strong residual energy and a large amount of fresh blood. The rocks on both sides of the mountain stream bore obvious marks of sword and magic strikes, a scene of utter devastation.

In the air, besides the auras of Shi Yan and Ying Wu, there were at least five or six different, ferocious auras of fused beasts, and two chilling auras of demonic cultivators.

"They were ambushed here..."

Chen Ping's eyes were icy.

Judging from the traces at the scene, the battle was quite fierce. Shi Yan and Ying Wu had clearly put up a fierce resistance, but the enemy outnumbered them and seemed to have come prepared.

He searched carefully and found a small piece of black clothing torn from a crevice in the rocks, carrying Ying Wu's faint scent, and stained with a few drops of blood.

Chen Ping held the piece of clothing, his knuckles turning slightly white.

Following the faint lingering scents and some barely perceptible drag marks on the ground, Chen Ping tracked them.

The tracks eventually disappeared near the entrance of a cave halfway up the mountain, hidden by dense vines.

The cave entrance was concealed by a simple barrier, but faint sounds of voices and... a woman's sobs and struggles could be heard from within!

Chen Ping's eyes suddenly turned cold, his killing intent almost tangible. He moved with lightning speed, silently passing through the rudimentary barrier and entering the cave.

The cave interior was quite spacious, illuminated by several eerie green soul lamps.

Seven or eight Fusion Beast Warriors of various forms were sitting together, laughing and talking loudly, sharing food and wine. Scattered on the ground were some odds and ends taken from Shi Yan and Ying Wu.

Deep within the cave, two people were bound to two thick stone pillars.

It was Shi Yan and Ying Wu!

Shi Yan's condition was extremely bad. He was covered in blood, with multiple deep wounds exposing bone, and one arm was unnaturally bent, clearly broken.

His head hung low, his breath weak, and he was in a semi-conscious state.

And Ying Wu... her condition fueled Chen Ping's rage even more!

Her outer garment was torn in half, revealing her blood-stained undergarments, and her fair skin was covered in bruises and wounds.

A leader of the Fusion Beasts, with goat-like, crooked horns and a lewd face, grinned lewdly.

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He reached out to tear off her remaining clothing, his breath reeking of alcohol: "Little beauty, don't struggle. After I've had my fill, maybe I'll spare your life and offer you as a plaything to the Sect Master of the Ferocious Bone Sect, hahaha!"

Yingwu struggled desperately, her eyes filled with tears of despair and humiliation, but her spiritual power was sealed, and her injuries were severe; she was powerless to resist.

“Stop!”

Shi Yan barely managed to raise his head, roaring angrily, but this only drew a vicious kick from a nearby Fusion Beast warrior into his chest, causing him to spit out another mouthful of blood.

“Heh, you piece of trash, you’ve got guts, huh? I’ll deal with this little wench first, then I’ll slowly torment you!”

The goat-horned leader leered, his hand already close to Shadow Dance’s shoulder.

Just at this critical moment—

“Boom!”

The rudimentary barrier at the cave entrance shattered like paper!

A chilling, violent, terrifying killing intent, like a primordial beast awakening, swept through the entire cave like a tangible tide!

The laughter of all the Fusion Beast warriors abruptly ceased, like ducks being choked.

They turned in horror, only to see a figure in a green robe standing at the cave entrance.

The person stood there, seemingly calm, but their eyes were like ancient ice, or a volcano about to erupt, containing a rage capable of destroying everything.

Just a glance from them was enough to plunge these normally ferocious Fusion Beast warriors into an ice cave, their blood seemingly freezing.

“You...who are you?!”

The goat-horned leader, jolted awake by the murderous intent, shouted menacingly, his voice trembling uncontrollably.

Chen Ping didn't answer.

His gaze fell on Shi Yan and Ying Wu. Seeing their miserable state, especially the fleeting glimmer of hope in Ying Wu's eyes, like seeing a savior, followed by the flood of tears of grievance, his anger reached its peak.

“You...all deserve to die.”

Five simple words, yet like a death sentence.

The next instant, Chen Ping moved.

No earth-shattering display, no flashy moves.

He simply raised his right hand, fingers spread, and gently clenched it around everyone in the cave except Shi Yan and Ying Wu.

“Buzz—!”

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The air in the cave seemed to vanish instantly, time itself seemed to freeze for a moment.

Then, under the horrified, speechless gazes of all the Beast Fusion Warriors,

their bodies, along with their weapons, the wine jars beside them, and even the soul lamps, were as if gripped by an invisible giant hand, and then—

“Pfft! Pfft! Pfft! Pfft!...”

A series of muffled explosions rang out!

The seven Beast Fusion Warriors, including the goat-horned leader at the fourth rank of the Celestial Immortal Realm, didn't even have time to scream before their bodies exploded on the spot!

They turned into a cloud of blood mist and fragments of flesh and bone, splattering across the cave walls!

A thick stench of blood instantly filled the air.

The entire cave, except for Shi Yan and Ying Wu bound to the pillar, was devoid of any living creature.

Chen Ping withdrew his hand, as if merely dusting off some dirt.

He strode to the pillar, and with a flick of his fingers, the specially made beast tendon ropes binding the two men snapped.

Yingwu lost her footing and slumped forward, but Chen Ping caught her just in time.

She leaned against Chen Ping's chest, feeling his strong, reliable arms and his familiar, faint scent.

The fear, grievances, and despair of the past few days finally erupted. She clutched Chen Ping's clothes tightly, buried her face in his chest, and burst into tears, her delicate body trembling uncontrollably.

“Senior...Senior...You really came...I knew...you would come...”

She sobbed, her words incoherent.

Chen Ping sighed inwardly, gently patting her back and channeling a wisp of gentle, chaotic immortal energy to calm her and alleviate her injuries.

Then he looked at Shi Yan, who was struggling to his feet.

Although Shi Yan was severely injured, his eyes burned with fierce anger and lingering fear. He knelt on one knee, his voice hoarse: "Senior! Shi Yan is incompetent. I failed to protect Yingwu and even caused you to risk your life..."

"Get up, this isn't the time to talk about this."

Chen Ping helped him up, channeling his immortal energy to heal his injuries and giving him a pill. "How did you end up in their hands?"

Shi Yan took the pill and felt a warm current spread through him, easing his injuries considerably. He then quickly recounted what had happened.

It turned out that after they split up, Shi Yan's group had made better progress, sneaking to the outskirts of the Ten Thousand Beasts Sect's former site.

They captured a lone Beast Fusion Warrior, extracting some information about the sect's inner workings. Just as they were preparing to leave, they unexpectedly encountered Ying Wu's group.