

The Order 9611

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He began methodically collecting his spoils—mountains of spirit stones and magic crystals; various high-grade demonic materials and ores;

most importantly, the Ten Thousand Souls Demon Sect's treasure trove accumulated over millennia!

He plundered all valuable resources, regardless of whether they were from the demonic or righteous path, storing them in his storage ring.

These resources would be crucial for stabilizing his realm, further enhancing his strength, and even venturing into higher worlds.

Having done all this, Chen Ping gazed at the distant horizon.

The Heavenly Fire Sword Sovereign, Ling Yan, had already departed, his whereabouts unknown.

The Fire Spirit Star Lord and the Blazing Fire Demon Lord had also fought in other worlds, the outcome unknown.

The grudges of the Tenth Heaven were temporarily settled.

The Soul Devouring Lord had fled to the Eleventh Heaven, becoming a new threat and target.

Chen Ping took a deep breath, feeling the new power surging within him, the power belonging to the Celestial Immortal Realm, his eyes gleaming with unwavering determination.

“Eleventh Heaven... Soul Devouring Venerable... Chaotic Origin Fire... I’m here.”

He didn’t linger, transforming into a chaotic dragon shadow, soaring into the sky and disappearing into the horizon of the Tenth Heaven.

He needed to find a safe place to thoroughly consolidate his Celestial Immortal Realm cultivation, digest what he had gained, and then... plan his journey to that higher, wider world!

Just as Chen Ping left, a figure appeared.

“Hmm, this should be it. I sensed his aura, but where did he go?”

Looking at the ruins of the Myriad Souls Demon Sect, the newcomer frowned slightly.

When the man turned around, a somewhat weathered face was revealed; it was the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord.

He had come to the Tenth Heaven to find Chen Ping.

He had just sensed Chen Ping’s aura, but upon arriving, he found that Chen Ping was already gone.

Deep within a secluded valley, far removed from the hustle and bustle of the world and brimming with spiritual energy, lay the Tenth Heaven.

Chen Ping sat cross-legged beside a spiritual spring, his body enveloped in a faint chaotic glow and a subtle, almost imperceptible, dragon’s might.

The seven-colored auspicious clouds and vortexes of spiritual energy that had gathered above the valley after his breakthrough had long since dissipated, restoring its former tranquility.

But within his body, earth-shattering changes continued.

The Celestial Immortal Realm—this was a completely different level.

It wasn't merely a surge in total power, but a sublimation of the essence of life, a qualitative leap in his perception and initial application of the laws of heaven and earth.

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Within his dantian, the ocean of chaotic immortal power had become even more vast. At its center, a chaotic fire lotus and a trace of true dragon blood essence intertwined and nourished each other, forming a more stable and powerful core of strength.

His soul and body, tempered by the breakthrough, had also undergone comprehensive strengthening. His divine sense could cover thousands of miles, and his physical strength rivaled that of a high-grade defensive magic weapon.

He was immersed in comprehending and solidifying his newfound power, carefully sensing every thread of the laws, adapting to the mysteries of his Celestial Body.

However, this tranquility did not last long.

“Buzz...”

Outside the valley, a slight but continuous fluctuation emanated from the concealment and alert array he had casually set up. It wasn't an attack, but more like a restrained probe and...call?

Chen Ping frowned slightly, awakening from his meditation. His golden vertical pupils flashed briefly before returning to normal, and his divine sense spread outwards like a tide.

When his divine sense clearly saw the newcomer, a hint of surprise appeared on his face.

Standing at the entrance of the valley was someone he hadn't expected—the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord!

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord was still wearing his signature dark red robe with cloud patterns, but his face appeared more weathered and weary than when he had recovered in the Nine Heavens.

A layer of unyielding melancholy and urgency shrouded his brows.

He cautiously probed the array Chen Ping had set up with his own demonic energy, not forcibly entering, seemingly afraid of causing a misunderstanding.

“Senior?” Chen Ping’s voice, penetrating the array, reached the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord’s ears directly, tinged with a hint of doubt, “How did you come to the Tenth Heaven...”

He waved his hand, removing the restriction at the entrance, revealing the passage.

Upon hearing this, a glint of joy flashed in the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord’s eyes. He quickly strode into the valley, and upon seeing Chen Ping sitting cross-legged by the spring, he quickened his pace even further.

“Chen Ping! It really is you!”

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord’s voice carried a hint of excitement, but even more so, a sense of relief and relief, “I finally found you! This Tenth Heaven is vast and chaotic. I followed the faint trace of your remaining dragon might and battle marks for several days before finally finding this place.”

Chen Ping stood up, gesturing for the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord to sit on the nearby bluestone, and handed him a pot of tea brewed with spiritual spring water, imbued with gentle spiritual energy.

“Senior, why did you cross the boundary barrier to seek me out in the Tenth Heaven instead of guarding your beloved woman in the Nine Heavens? What brings you here?”

Chen Ping was genuinely curious. Given the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord’s status and strength in the Nine Heavens, he would never easily leave his base and risk coming to this higher realm unless something of immense importance was at stake.

Moreover, the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord was also guarding the body of his beloved woman, awaiting news of her resurrection.

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord took the teapot, but had no heart for it, simply holding it tightly in his hand.

He took a deep breath, looking at Chen Ping, his eyes revealing a deep pleading and undisguised pain.

“Chen Ping, to be honest, I have come here... I have a request, and I am also desperate, having no other choice but to seek you out.”

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord’s voice lowered, trembling slightly, “It’s... it’s for Lingyue.”

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“Fairy Lingyue?”

Chen Ping was taken aback.

“Indeed.”

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord’s face showed even greater pain. “I thought that by guarding Lingyue’s body, I could wait for that slim chance of resurrection.”

“However... recently, Lingyue’s body... has begun to show a barely perceptible sign of decay! Although extremely slow, but... I can feel the trend of life force fading and deathly energy eroding it!”

He suddenly grabbed Chen Ping’s arm, the force revealing his inner anxiety: “Chen Ping, you should know that the body is the dwelling place of the soul, and the foundation for future resurrection!”

“If the body completely decays and the soul is gone, the hope of resurrection will become extremely slim, perhaps even forever! I... I cannot stand by and watch Lingyue...”

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord couldn't continue; his breath became labored with emotion.

He couldn't bear to watch his beloved woman's body slowly decay and vanish, never to be resurrected again.

Chen Ping's expression turned grave.

Although he didn't understand the art of ghostly resurrection, he grasped the importance of preserving the physical body.

For someone as powerful as the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord to be so distraught, the situation must be extremely critical.

"Senior, what do you need me to do? Is it to find some treasure or method that can preserve a physical body?"

Chen Ping asked in a deep voice.

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord nodded heavily, a glimmer of hope igniting in his eyes: "I've consulted countless ancient texts and finally discovered an ancient formula—the 'Nine-Turn Body-Shaping Pill'!"

"This pill doesn't directly resurrect the body, but rather locks in the body's vitality to the greatest extent possible, isolating it from the corrosive influence of death energy, strengthening the physical body, and buying invaluable time for the subsequent true resurrection process. It can even slightly nourish the body!"

"But the materials required for this 'Nine-Turn Body-Restoring Pill' are all rare treasures! Several key ingredients cannot be found even in the Nine Heavens! We must travel to a higher level of the world!"

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord took out an ancient jade slip from his robes and handed it to Chen Ping. "The required key ingredients are all recorded here. Especially the Thousand-Year Ice Soul Blood Lotus of the Tenth Heaven, the Earth Core Jade Marrow Milk of the Eleventh Heaven, and the Nine Aperture Divine Soul Grass of the Twelfth Heaven! These three are the core of the core; none can be missing!"

Chen Ping took the jade slip and immersed his divine sense within it.

It contained a detailed record of the “Nine-Turn Body-Shaping Pill’s” formula and required materials, each labeled with its characteristics and possible growing conditions—truly rare and unheard-of treasures.

The three core ingredients were further specified as requiring specific, extremely rare locations within their corresponding realms to potentially mature, with incredibly demanding conditions.

“The Thousand-Year Ice Soul Blood Lotus grows in the Blood Soul Cold Pool deep within the Eternal Ice Plains of the Tenth Heaven’s far north. It requires the absorption of a thousand years’ worth of cold poison and the earth’s vein blood energy to take shape, blooming once every hundred years, with a flowering period of only three days...”

“Earth Core Jade Marrow Milk, produced in the Earth Core Jade Vein at the very bottom of the Lava Demon Abyss of the Eleventh Heaven. Nourished by the purest earth fire and earth spirit for ten thousand years, only a single drop can be obtained. It possesses the divine effects of strengthening the foundation, nourishing the essence, and locking the soul...”

“Nine-Aperture Divine Soul Grass, growing only in certain Netherworld Ancient Caves or Dream Realms containing innate soul power in the Twelfth Heaven. This grass has nine orifices and can spontaneously absorb and release soul power, making it a supreme treasure for stabilizing and nourishing the divine soul...”

Each item is a peerless treasure capable of causing bloodshed; the difficulty of obtaining them is unimaginable.

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Chen Ping put down the jade slip, looked at the expectant Crimson Cloud Demon Lord, and understood.

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord was unfamiliar with the Tenth Heaven, and his strength wasn’t top-tier in this realm. Obtaining these treasures would be like searching for a needle in a haystack, potentially even leading to his death.

He came to him because he trusted his character and abilities, and also because of their relationship.

“Senior wants me to help you find these medicinal herbs?” Chen Ping asked.

“Exactly!”

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord pleaded earnestly, “Chen Ping, I know this is difficult, like climbing to heaven! But I truly have no other choice!”

“Ling Yue...she can't wait much longer! If you're willing to help, I, Crimson Cloud, hereby swear a great oath of my heart, that for the rest of my life, I will serve you, go through fire and water, without hesitation!”

“All my resources will be at your disposal! I only ask...I only ask to bring Ling Yue a glimmer of hope!”

As he spoke, this once-powerful demonic figure, who dominated the Nine Heavens, actually bowed to Chen Ping!

Chen Ping quickly helped him up.

He held deep respect for the unwavering love between the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord and the Spirit Moon Fairy, a love that transcended the boundaries of good and evil, and endured life and death.

Moreover, the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord had helped him many times over the years.

It was only right and wrong that he should help.

“Senior, you don't need to go to such lengths. Given our relationship, even if it means my own destruction, I will help you.”

“However, my understanding of the Tenth Heaven is limited, especially detailed information about these kinds of rare treasures...”

He pondered for a moment, then his eyes lit up: “But there is someone who might be able to provide us with some clues.”

“Who?” the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord asked hastily.

“Sect Master Ling Yunzi of the Xuantian Sword Sect,” Chen Ping said.

“The Xuantian Sword Sect is a renowned and righteous sect with a long history in the Tenth Heaven. Their understanding of the geography, resources, and secrets of the Tenth Heaven far surpasses ours.”

“Especially the Eternal Ice Plains where the Thousand-Year Ice Soul Blood Lotus resides; the Sword Sect may have some records or even have explored it.”

Upon hearing this, the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord’s face lit up with joy: “Excellent! However... I am a demonic cultivator; going to the Xuantian Sword Sect rashly might...”

“It’s alright.”

Chen Ping waved his hand. “Sect Master Ling Yunzi is not a pedantic person, and I just helped the Sword Sect out of a predicament; I still have some face to offer. Without further ado, let’s set off for the Xuantian Sword Sect.”

Chen Ping’s injuries had basically stabilized, and his cultivation level had begun to adapt. It was also a good time to explain the follow-up matters to Ling Yunzi.

The two did not delay any longer. Chen Ping flicked his sleeves, and with the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord, they transformed into a swift stream of light, flying towards the Xuantian Sword Sect in the Ten Thousand Swords Mountains.

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...

The Xuan Tian Sword Sect, after several days of repairs, though traces of the great battle were still visible, had restored order to the sect. The protective array was under intensive repair, and the sect radiated a vibrant, post-apocalyptic energy.

When Chen Ping arrived at the sect gates with the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord, it immediately alerted the guarding disciples.

However, upon recognizing Chen Ping, the disciples showed expressions of reverence and excitement, quickly bowing respectfully and announcing the arrival.

Soon, Ling Yunzi, having received the news, personally came out to greet them.

His injuries had not yet healed, and his face was still somewhat pale, but his spirits were high. Seeing Chen Ping's safe return, he beamed with joy.

"Senior Chen! It's wonderful that you've returned safely!"

Ling Yunzi bowed respectfully, then looked with a hint of doubt at the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord beside Chen Ping, whose aura was profound and who was clearly a demonic cultivator. "And who is this fellow Daoist?"

"Sect Master Ling, this is Fellow Daoist Crimson Cloud, an old friend from my time in the Nine Heavens."

Chen Ping gave a brief introduction, not elaborating on the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord's background to avoid unnecessary trouble. "I've come to ask Sect Master Ling about something."

Ling Yunzi, recognizing Chen Ping's old friend, despite the latter being a demonic cultivator, politely bowed as well: "So you are Fellow Daoist Crimson Cloud, a pleasure to meet you. Senior Chen and Fellow Daoist Crimson Cloud, please speak freely; I will answer all your questions."

The three entered the main hall and took their seats, as host and guest.

Chen Ping got straight to the point, informing Ling Yunzi of the Nine-Turn Rejuvenating Body-Shaping Pill and the core ingredient, the Thousand-Year Ice Soul Blood Lotus, that the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord needed, and showed him the jade slip containing the pill formula.

Ling Yunzi's expression turned serious upon hearing this.

He took the jade slip and carefully examined the description of the Thousand-Year Ice Soul Blood Lotus, his brows furrowing slightly.

"The Thousand-Year Ice Soul Blood Lotus...this thing is indeed recorded in the scriptures of my Xuan Tian Sword Sect."

Ling Yunzi slowly spoke, "Just as the formula states, it only grows in the Blood Soul Cold Pool, the core area of the Eternal Ice Plains in the far north."

"That 'Eternal Ice Plains' is one of the most famous forbidden areas in the Ten Heavens, perpetually frigid, with gale-force winds, an extremely harsh environment; even ordinary Heavenly Immortal cultivators who venture into it face nine deaths perish."

"And that 'Blood Soul Cold Pool' is one of the most dangerous and mysterious forbidden areas in the Ice Plains; it is said that the Cold Pool..." "The water is incredibly cold and contains a strange blood poison that can corrode spiritual power and the soul. Furthermore, unknown powerful beasts may lurk within the pool."

"Fellow Daoist Chiyun, forgive my bluntness, but obtaining this 'Millennium Ice Soul Blood Lotus' is extremely difficult and perilous."

"Moreover, this thing blooms only once every hundred years, and its flowering period is extremely short. If the timing is wrong, even reaching the icy pool will result in returning empty-handed."

“Our sect’s records state that about three hundred years ago, a senior at the eighth rank of the Celestial Immortal realm ventured into the depths of the icy plains and seemingly discovered the Blood Soul...”
“We searched for the Blood Lotus, but ultimately returned severely injured, failing to obtain it and instead damaging our Dao foundation.”

Upon hearing this, the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord’s face paled slightly, but his eyes remained resolute:
“Thank you for informing me, Sect Master Ling. No matter what, even if there’s only a sliver of hope, I will brave mountains of knives and seas of fire!”

Chen Ping pondered, “Sect Master Ling, do you know the approximate location of the Blood Lotus Cold Pool? And approximately when the next Blood Lotus bloom will be?”

Ling Yunzi thought for a moment and said, “The specific location is vaguely recorded in the ancient texts, only mentioning ‘the belly of the icy plains’...” “The place is surrounded by three towering ice peaks arranged in a triangular pattern.”

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“As for the flowering period... based on scattered records, the last time the Blood Lotus bloomed and its influence was detected was approximately 280 years ago.”

“If we calculate based on a century-long cycle, the next flowering period might be... within the next twenty years! But whether it’s this year, next year, or a dozen years from now is uncertain.”

“Within twenty years...” The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord’s eyes shone with even brighter hope; for a cultivator, this wasn’t a very long time.

“I possess supreme fire and also have ice-type origins; obtaining that Blood Lotus shouldn’t be difficult.”

Chen Ping was extremely confident.

He possessed supreme fire origins, especially after absorbing the Chaos Origin Fire, which greatly enhanced his supreme fire origins.

A small, icy pool held no fear.

Upon hearing this, Ling Yunzi stroked his long beard, pondered for a moment, and then slowly spoke, his voice tinged with solemnity:

“Senior Chen, even if you are determined to go despite the dangers of the Eternal Ice Plains, there is something else that might be even more troublesome than the frigid winds and the ferocious beasts in the pool.”

“Why?” Chen Ping looked at Ling Yunzi.

“The Eternal Ice Plains is not unclaimed land, or rather, its core area has always been considered a forbidden zone by an extremely special and arrogant race.”

Ling Yunzi paused, then uttered four words, “The Northern Underworld God Clan.”

“The Northern Underworld God Clan?” Chen Ping had never heard of this name before. “Are these people all gods?”

“That’s right.”

Ling Yunzi nodded. “This race has a long history. Legend has it that they possess the bloodline of an ancient ice god, are naturally close to the laws of ice, have powerful bodies, and long lifespans.”

“They have lived for generations in the deepest part of the Eternal Ice Plains, establishing a power called the ‘Northern Underworld Palace,’ controlling most of the precious resources of the Ice Plains, especially the core area...” “Located in a secret location, the Blood Soul Cold Pool is likely also under their control or surveillance.”

“The people of the Northern Underworld God Clan are cold and aloof, considering themselves divine descendants. They have always disdained dealing with ‘mortal’ cultivators outside the Ice Plains, and are extremely xenophobic.”

“Let alone human cultivators, even powerful individuals from other races, if they trespass into their designated forbidden zones without invitation or special reason, will be either expelled or killed outright, with no room for negotiation.”

“Within the Ten Heavens, there have been numerous examples of those who, relying on their superior cultivation, went to the Ice Plains to search for treasures, only to perish at the hands of the God Clan.”

After hearing this, Chen Ping understood that the so-called Northern Underworld God Clan was actually a branch of the God Clan.

But their personalities were all the same—incredibly arrogant and disdainful of everyone...

The reason they had this personality was because they hadn't been beaten enough.

A few more beatings, and they'd behave.

Chen Ping himself, with his Golden Dragon bloodline, had never been so arrogant!

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord's face turned extremely ugly, his clenched fists turning slightly white at the knuckles.

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This was like adding insult to injury; not only was the environment treacherous and the treasures rare, but he also had to face such a troublesome local tyrant.

“So what if they're gods?”

Chen Ping's voice was calm, yet carried an undeniable firmness. “I'm going to fight the gods. Even if it's not a branch of the gods, even if it's the true territory of the gods, I'll still storm it.”

“Senior, rest assured, since I promised you, I will definitely find a way to obtain the Blood Lotus. However, the strategy needs to change; we can't just blindly charge in.”

Chen Ping wasn't afraid of the gods, and besides, he still needed to find the god patriarch and get him to release Wan Jianxing.

Ling Yunzi saw that Chen Ping's mind was made up, knowing that further persuasion was futile and would only be looked down upon.

He pondered for a moment, then said, "Senior Chen is truly righteous and courageous, which I greatly admire. Since you are determined to go, although my Xuan Tian Sword Sect has little connection with the Bei Ming Divine Clan, we at least have records of the terrain, climate changes, and certain potentially dangerous areas in the outer reaches of the Eternal Ice Plains and even parts of the Central Region."

"You are new to the Tenth Heaven and completely unfamiliar with this place. Having someone familiar with the area to guide you may avoid many unnecessary troubles and conflicts."

He looked outside the hall and called out, "Shuang'er, come in."

The hall door opened slightly, and Ling Shuang, dressed in a plain white sword outfit and possessing a cold and aloof demeanor, stepped in. She first bowed to Ling Yunzi and Chen Ping, saying, "Father, Senior Chen."

Her gaze swept over the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord, pausing slightly, but without much surprise, clearly having overheard something outside.

"Shuang'er, Senior Chen and Fellow Daoist Chiyun wish to travel to the Eternal Ice Plains in search of a life-saving elixir."

"You once accompanied the Heavenly Fire Sword Venerable on his travels throughout the Ten Heavens, so you are quite familiar with the area. You will guide Senior Chen and must assist him wholeheartedly."

Ling Yunzi instructed, his eyes showing both trust in his daughter and a hint of barely perceptible worry.

Ling Shuang did not hesitate, clasping her hands in a fist salute, "Yes, Father. Your daughter will do her utmost."

She turned to Chen Ping, "Senior Chen has shown the Sword Sect and Ling Shuang a life-saving grace. Whatever your command, Ling Shuang will obey even unto death."

Ling Shuang was extremely grateful to Chen Ping. If it weren't for Chen Ping, the Xuan Tian Sword Sect would be gone, and even she might have been in danger.

If Chen Ping asked her to strip naked and serve him now, Ling Shuang would not hesitate.

To be able to serve a great hero like Chen Ping was an honor for her.

To be played with by such a man was also a kind of pride.

Chen Ping looked at Ling Shuang and saw admiration and devotion in her eyes.

Having encountered so many women, Chen Ping could instantly understand their gazes and thoughts; none of them could resist falling for him in the end.

It seemed Ling Shuang was no exception. The journey to the Ice Plains wouldn't be lonely and boring anymore; having a woman to confide in and cultivate together would be quite nice.

"In that case, thank you very much, Sect Leader Ling. I'm grateful for your help, Miss Ling Shuang," Chen Ping said, bowing in thanks.

Crimson Cloud Demon Lord quickly rose and bowed deeply to Ling Yunzi and Ling Shuang: "Great kindness needs no words of thanks, Crimson Cloud will remember it forever!"

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"Time is of the essence."

Chen Ping decisively said, "We shall depart immediately. Sect Master Ling, the sect is newly established and we still need your presence to oversee and manage it. We shall take our leave now."

Ling Yunzi rose to see them off, escorting them all the way to the mountain gate. He gave Ling Shuang a few more words of advice, and finally solemnly said to Chen Ping, "Senior Chen, the strength of the Northern Underworld Clan is unfathomable, especially on their home turf, the Ice Plains, where they are even more formidable."

"If things become unfavorable, please prioritize your own safety. There will be other opportunities in the future. The Sword Sect will always welcome you."

Chen Ping nodded: "Sect Master Ling, rest assured, I know what I'm doing."

With that, the three transformed into a streak of light even faster and more dazzling than before, soaring into the sky and heading straight towards the far north of the Tenth Heaven Continent.

The further north they flew, the more rapidly the temperature plummeted.

The landscape below gradually transformed from verdant mountains and clear waters to barren frozen wastelands, and then to continuous snow-capped mountains and glaciers.

The howling wind began to carry ice crystals and snowflakes, striking the protective aura and producing a fine rustling sound.

Even ordinary cultivators, without venturing deeper, would need to circulate their magical power to resist the extreme cold here.

Ling Shuang was indeed quite familiar with the route, frequently offering directions to avoid known but easily disorienting blizzard zones or hidden spatial rifts.

Her words were concise and clear, displaying an efficiency befitting her appearance.

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord remained silent throughout, spending most of his time meditating with his eyes closed, adjusting his state to its peak. Only occasionally, when he glanced at the vast white expanse to the north that seemed to connect with the sky, would a flash of urgency and determination appear in his eyes.

Chen Ping, meanwhile, flew while silently sensing the unique laws of nature in this far north.

Here, the laws of ice and water were exceptionally active and abundant, while other attributes were relatively dormant.

The chaotic immortal power within him flowed, simulating and evolving icy properties, subtly adapting to the environment.

His divine sense occasionally activated, piercing through the swirling snow and wind, gazing into the far distance, attempting to detect any trace of the so-called divine race or any unusual energy fluctuations.

The blizzard in the far north grew increasingly violent. Lead-gray clouds hung low over the icy plains, and howling winds whipped up ice shards that crackled against the protective auras of the three.

After flying for two full days, Ling Shuang pointed to a natural cave surrounded by giant ice floes ahead: "Senior Chen, Fellow Daoist Chi Yun, that ice cave ahead offers shelter from the blizzard. Let's rest for the night and continue our journey tomorrow."

Chen Ping nodded, and with a flick of his sleeve, a gentle surge of chaotic immortal energy pierced through the blizzard, escorting the three to the cave entrance.

The cave interior was unexpectedly dry, the ground covered with a thin layer of ice crystals. In the corners, icicles of various shapes clung, emanating a faint chill.

Chi Yun, the Demon Lord, remained silent, finding a corner to sit cross-legged, closing his eyes to meditate, his body enveloped in a faint aura of demonic energy, isolating him from external interference.

Ling Shuang took out several pieces of warm jade and spread them on the ground. She then took out spiritual fruit and water from her storage bag and handed them to Chen Ping, saying, "Senior Chen, you must be tired from your journey. Please replenish your spiritual energy."

Her movements were gentle; her slender white fingers gleamed in the dim light. Her eyes held a hint of barely perceptible unease as she spoke, and the lingering blush on her cheeks from the journey made her even more radiant.

Chen Ping took the spiritual fruit, his fingertips inadvertently brushing against the back of her hand, feeling its coolness.

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"Thank you for your trouble, Miss Ling Shuang," he said softly, his gaze fixed on her slightly shy face.

Ling Shuang quickly withdrew her hand, twisting the hem of her clothes, and said softly, "Senior is too kind. You have done me a great service to the Xuan Tian Sword Sect; this is what I should do."

She paused, as if gathering her courage, and then asked, "Senior, are you confident in facing the Northern Netherworld Clan on your journey to the Eternal Ice Plains?"

"We'll meet force with force," Chen Ping said calmly, yet with unwavering confidence. "They're just some arrogant branches of the divine race; they can't stop me."

A hint of admiration flashed in Ling Shuang's eyes as she said softly, "Senior is indeed incredibly powerful. Actually... I've heard of the Northern Netherworld Clan's domineering nature when I traveled with the Heavenly Fire Sword Venerable. Almost no one dares to provoke them on the Ice Plains. Senior, you must be extremely careful on your journey."

Her voice was filled with genuine worry, her eyes fixed on Chen Ping, full of concern.

Chen Ping understood.

Since their departure from the Xuan Tian Sword Sect, every time they rested, Ling Shuang would find various topics to chat about with him, from the sect's past to her cultivation insights, and even the local customs and traditions along the way. Her admiration and affection were obvious in her words.

With his experience, he naturally understood the girl's feelings.

Looking at Ling Shuang's flushed cheeks and evasive eyes, he suddenly spoke, "Miss Ling Shuang, is there something you want to tell me?"

Ling Shuang stiffened, abruptly raising her head to meet Chen Ping's deep gaze. Her cheeks instantly turned bright red, like a ripe apple.

She opened her mouth, but hesitated, unsure how to respond. Her eyes darted away in a flustered manner, her voice barely audible: "I...I just felt that Senior's cultivation was profound, and I wanted to ask you more questions about cultivation."

Chen Ping chuckled, his tone playful but not frivolous: "Ask about cultivation? I think you want to cultivate with me, don't you?"

"Ah!"

Ling Shuang exclaimed in surprise, as if her secret had been exposed. She was instantly flustered, tears welling up in her eyes.

"Senior...I...I didn't mean it..."

She hurriedly explained, "I just felt that Senior is a genius, and if I could cultivate with you, not only would my cultivation improve rapidly, but I could also better assist you in finding the Ice Soul Blood Lotus...I didn't mean anything else. If you don't want to, just pretend I didn't say anything..."

Looking at her incoherent, tearful appearance...

Chen Ping's joking expression vanished, his tone becoming serious: "Ling Shuang, you don't need to be shy. On the path of cultivation, it's common to have a cultivation partner. I can see you're interested in me; and I have no aversion to you."

He paused, then continued, "We are both cultivators, and strength is paramount. Dual cultivation can both enhance our relationship and rapidly improve our cultivation—a win-win situation."

"This journey to the Eternal Ice Plains is fraught with danger. More strength means more security. If you truly have this intention, there's no need to hide it; just come directly."

Ling Shuang was stunned, staring blankly at Chen Ping, seemingly not expecting him to be so direct.

She had thought there would be more buildup, and had even prepared herself for rejection, but she hadn't anticipated Chen Ping's straightforwardness.

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Deep within a secluded valley, far removed from the hustle and bustle of the world and brimming with spiritual energy, lay the Tenth Heaven.

Chen Ping sat cross-legged beside a spiritual spring, his body enveloped in a faint chaotic glow and a subtle, almost imperceptible, dragon's might.

The seven-colored auspicious clouds and vortexes of spiritual energy that had gathered above the valley after his breakthrough had long since dissipated, restoring its former tranquility.

But within his body, earth-shattering changes continued.

The Celestial Immortal Realm—this was a completely different level.

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“Buzz...”

Outside the valley, a slight but continuous fluctuation emanated from the concealment and alert array he had casually set up. It wasn't an attack, but more like a restrained probe and...call?

Chen Ping frowned slightly, awakening from his meditation. His golden vertical pupils flashed briefly before returning to normal, and his divine sense spread outwards like a tide.

When his divine sense clearly saw the newcomer, a hint of surprise appeared on his face.

Standing at the entrance of the valley was someone he hadn't expected—the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord!

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord was still wearing his signature dark red robe with cloud patterns, but his face appeared more weathered and weary than when he had recovered in the Nine Heavens.

A layer of unyielding melancholy and urgency shrouded his brows.

He cautiously probed the array Chen Ping had set up with his own demonic energy, not forcibly entering, seemingly afraid of causing a misunderstanding.

“Senior?” Chen Ping’s voice, penetrating the array, reached the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord’s ears directly, tinged with a hint of doubt, “How did you come to the Tenth Heaven...”

He waved his hand, removing the restriction at the entrance, revealing the passage.

Upon hearing this, a glint of joy flashed in the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord’s eyes. He quickly strode into the valley, and upon seeing Chen Ping sitting cross-legged by the spring, he quickened his pace even further.

“Chen Ping! It really is you!”

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord’s voice carried a hint of excitement, but even more so, a sense of relief and relief, “I finally found you! This Tenth Heaven is vast and chaotic. I followed the faint trace of your remaining dragon might and battle marks for several days before finally finding this place.”

Chen Ping stood up, gesturing for the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord to sit on the nearby bluestone, and handed him a pot of tea brewed with spiritual spring water, imbued with gentle spiritual energy.