

The Order 9651

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It was not a single palace, but a sprawling cluster of ice crystal buildings.

The main hall, towering a thousand feet high, was carved entirely from millennia-old black ice and icy jade from the earth's core. Crystal clear, it reflected the magnificent colors of the aurora borealis, yet retained a cold and austere sacred majesty.

Countless smaller palaces, towers, and covered bridges surrounded the main hall like stars around the moon, connected by ice crystal staircases and suspended corridors, forming a beautiful yet perilous ice crystal city.

Within the city, faintly visible, ice-blue lights flickered, and a powerful aura seemed to emanate from within.

The entire palace complex exuded an ancient, aloof, and inviolable aura, like a slumbering ice and snow deity.

"Finally, we've arrived..."

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord gazed at the blood lotus so close at hand, his eyes filled with both longing and anxiety.

With the protective array in front and the Northern Underworld Palace behind, the path to obtaining the medicine remained arduous.

Ling Shuang gripped her longsword tightly and whispered, "Senior, that array..."

"We must find a way to break it first."

Chen Ping's gaze swept past the icy pool and the array, landing on the distant Northern Underworld Palace. "And the solution must lie within the palace."

The three paused briefly to catch their breath before heading towards the Northern Underworld Palace.

The closer they got, the more they felt the grandeur and oppressive presence of this ice crystal city.

There were no city walls surrounding the palace; instead, there were concentric rings of ice crystal fences, hundreds of feet high and as sharp as knives, inscribed with defensive divine runes, radiating a cold sense of rejection.

The only entrance was a towering ice crystal archway, fifty zhang high.

On either side of the archway stood a ten-zhang-tall ice sculpture of a deity, each holding an ice halberd and gazing forward. Though inanimate, they gave the impression of being ready to come to life at any moment.

When Chen Ping and his companions were still a hundred zhang away from the archway, two figures slowly emerged from within.

One was tall, the other short; one muscular, the other thin, yet both exuded a suffocatingly terrifying aura.

The one on the left was nine chi tall, broad-shouldered and burly, with a rugged face sculpted like rock, a full beard, and large, piercing eyes.

He was bare-chested, revealing bronze-colored, scarred, muscular physique, clad only in an ice-blue battle skirt, and carried a massive ice crystal axe the size of a door.

Just standing there, he emanated a sense of overwhelming weight, like a mountain pressing down on you.

His aura had reached the peak of the eighth rank of the Celestial Immortal Realm, just like the Third Divine General, Han Yu!

The man on the right was tall and slender, with a sinister face. He appeared to be around thirty years old, his face as pale as paper, his thin lips tightly pressed together, and his long, narrow eyes as cold as a venomous snake.

He wore a magnificent ice-blue robe with wide sleeves, his hands tucked into them. He seemed frail, but the chill emanating from him was more concentrated and deadly than that of the giant.

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His aura was also at the peak of the eighth rank of the Celestial Immortal Realm, but the sense of danger he exuded was far greater!

“The First Divine General of the Northern Underworld Palace, Man Shan,” the giant spoke, his voice booming like a bell, causing the surrounding ice crystals to tremble.

“The Second Divine General of the Northern Underworld Palace, Xuan Ming,” the sinister man’s voice was shrill, like an ice needle slicing through glass.

The two stood side by side, blocking the entrance to the archway. Behind them, dozens of elite Divine Clan warriors could be vaguely seen standing ready within the archway.

“To have fought your way here, even falling to the Cold Prison, you do possess some skill.”

Xuanming’s slender eyes swept over Chen Ping and his companions, lingering on Chen Ping for a moment before revealing a hint of surprise. “First-grade Celestial Immortal Realm? Interesting... It seems you harbor many secrets.”

Manshan impatiently swung his giant axe, sending up a gust of cold wind: “Enough nonsense! Trespassing into the forbidden area of the Northern Underworld Palace and killing my people, you deserve to die! Boy, state your name, for my axe does not kill nameless ghosts!”

Chen Ping took a deep breath, stepped forward, and cupped his hands, saying, “I am Chen Ping. I have come with no ill intentions, only to retrieve the Thousand-Year Ice Soul Blood Lotus from the Blood Soul Cold Pool to save someone.”

“This item is of great use to me. I am willing to offer an equivalent treasure.” “An exchange, please, two divine generals, do me a favor.”

“Do me a favor?”

Man Shan laughed as if he’d heard the funniest joke in the world, his laughter cracking the ice. “Boy, have you lost your mind? The Blood Soul Cold Pool is the sacred pool of my Northern Underworld Palace; every blade of grass and every tree within belongs to the divine race!”

“You killed so many of us, and you expect us to do you a favor?”

Xuan Ming coldly interjected: “Hand over the sword you possess, along with the cultivation techniques and secret arts you practice, then cripple your own cultivation. Perhaps then you can be spared a complete corpse.”

“As for the two behind you... the man will have his soul extracted and refined, the woman will be used as a servant. This is the consequence of trespassing within the divine race!”

The arrogance and malice in his words were undisguised.

Chen Ping’s face darkened.

He knew negotiation was impossible, but the other side consisted of two peak eighth-grade Heavenly Immortals, far stronger than any enemy he had encountered before.

Though confident, he was not arrogant.

“Since that’s the case, then there’s nothing more to say.”

Chen Ping slowly drew his Dragon-Slaying Sword. “Today, I will take the Blood Lotus. Those who stand in my way—die!”

“Arrogant!” Man Shan roared, attacking first!

He took a step forward, the ice surface shattering with a deafening roar. His massive body moved with lightning speed, instantly covering fifty zhang (approximately 33 meters). His giant ice axe, wielding the force to split mountains and cleave the earth, cleaved down towards Chen Ping!

This axe strike, seemingly simple and brutal, contained terrifying power laws!

Before the axe blade even arrived, the immense pressure had already created a large crater in the ice beneath Chen Ping’s feet, the surrounding air being compressed and exploding!

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“Senior, be careful!” Ling Shuang exclaimed.

Chen Ping dared not take the blow head-on. He swayed, using the Dragon-Soaring Steps, narrowly dodging to the side.

“Boom!!!”

The giant axe struck the ice, and a hundred-zhang (approximately 33 meters) long, bottomless crack instantly spread out!

The violent shockwave forced Chen Ping back several steps, his blood churning.

“You dodged quickly!” Man Shan grinned, sweeping his giant axe, creating a flurry of icy blue axe shadows that blocked all of Chen Ping’s escape routes.

At the same time, Xuan Ming moved as well.

He didn’t advance, but instead extended his hands from his sleeves, his ten fingers moving rapidly in the air before him like playing a musical instrument.

With each finger strike, a thin, almost transparent, icy blue thread shot out.

These threads weren't physical; they were formed from the ultimate laws of ice, ignoring physical defenses and specifically targeting the soul and meridians!

"Xuan Ming Ice Soul Threads!"

Ling Shuang's expression changed drastically. "They specifically injure the soul and corrode the meridians; being hit by them is certain death! Senior, dodge quickly!"

Chen Ping also felt the deadly threat of those threads.

While dodging the giant axe of the barbarian mountain with his agility, he swung his Dragon-Slaying Sword, unleashing several chaotic sword energies in an attempt to sever the Ice Soul Silk.

However, the Ice Soul Silk was extremely tough and unpredictable. The chaotic sword energies struck it like water, only slightly distorting it, unable to completely sever it.

Instead, several threads pierced through the gaps in the sword energies, attacking Chen Ping!

Chen Ping's heart tightened. He hurriedly activated his chaotic immortal power to protect himself, while a golden light flashed between his brows, unleashing a faint dragon's might, which deflected the threads slightly, narrowly avoiding fatal blows.

But one thread still grazed his arm. Instantly, a bone-chilling cold seeped into his meridians, leaving his entire arm numb and stiff, and his immortal power sluggish.

"Not bad, you managed to dodge my Ice Soul Silk." Xuan Ming sneered. "But how many times can you dodge it?"

As he spoke, he flicked his fingers, sending even more Ice Soul Silk like a spiderweb enveloping Chen Ping from all directions. Meanwhile, Man Shan's giant axe followed closely, its attacks growing increasingly ferocious.

The two, one close, one at a distance, one strong, one skillful, coordinated flawlessly, completely suppressing Chen Ping!

"Ling Shuang, Senior, help me!" Chen Ping gritted his teeth and shouted.

Chen Ping, fighting two against one, had absolutely no chance of winning.

He could only rely on Crimson Cloud Demon Lord and Ling Shuang to hold one of them while he desperately killed the other!

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"Alright!"

Ling Shuang drew her longsword, transforming into a dragon, her sword energy like a rainbow, attacking Xuan Ming's flank, attempting to disrupt his Ice Soul Silk.

Crimson Cloud Demon Lord also roared, his dark red demonic energy transforming into a raging demonic cloud, from which howling ghosts attacked Man Shan's lower body.

"How dare an ant be so insolent?"

Xuan Ming didn't even glance at Ling Shuang. With a casual wave of his left hand, dozens of ice-soul threads reversed direction, instantly shredding Ling Shuang's sword energy and coiling towards her.

Ling Shuang's face turned deathly pale. She hurriedly changed her stance to defend, but was still struck by several threads. She groaned and flew backward, blood trickling from the corner of her mouth, clearly seriously injured.

Man Shan slammed his giant axe into the ground: "Get out of the way!"

A terrifying shockwave emanated from him, dispersing most of the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord's demonic clouds. The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord was also forced to retreat, his blood churning.

In just one exchange, Ling Shuang and the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord were both injured, barely able to restrain each other.

Chen Ping's pressure increased even more.

"Boy, you've managed to hold out against our combined attacks for so long; you have reason to be proud."

Man Shan laughed wildly, his giant axe attack like a storm. "But this ends here! Barbarian God's Mountain-Splitting Axe—Earth-Shattering!"

He held the axe with both hands, raising it high above his head. A blinding ice-blue light erupted from the axe, and a terrifying power was gathering!

The power of this axe strike was several times stronger than any of his previous attacks!

At the same time, Xuan Ming also went all out.

He clasped his hands together, chanting incantations. The ice crystal divine pattern between his brows shone brightly, and countless ice soul threads intertwined before him, condensing into a crystal-clear, thumb-sized ice-blue cone!

"Xuan Ming's Thrust—Soul-Shattering!"

The cone shot out silently, its speed exceeding the limits of divine sense!

Where it passed, space itself froze, cracking with fine black fissures—a manifestation of the condensation of the Ice Law to its extreme, reaching the spatial level!

One force, one soul—two deadly attacks descended simultaneously! Chen Ping’s pupils constricted sharply, sensing an unprecedented threat of death!

“I can’t take it head-on!”

His mind raced, and he made a decision in an instant.

“Little Fire Qilin!” Chen Ping released the Little Fire Qilin.

The Little Fire Qilin was a divine beast, a fire-type divine beast, thus countering the techniques of the Northern Underworld Palace.

“Roar—!!!”

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A deafening roar echoed across the icy plains!

From Chen Ping’s storage ring, a majestic Qilin divine beast, three zhang tall and engulfed in golden flames, stepped out!

After being constantly nurtured by Chen Ping in the Demon Beast Forest, the Little Fire Qilin’s body had grown considerably stronger!

Moreover, its aura had already reached the seventh rank of the Celestial Immortal Realm!

The golden flames swirling around its body were not ordinary fire, but contained a trace of innate fire source power, possessing a strong restraint on ice-type power!

The moment the little fire qilin appeared, it sensed its master’s danger and the threat of the two powerful enemies before it. Without hesitation, it opened its maw and spewed out a golden pillar of fire, several feet in diameter, directly at the giant axe that Man Shan was cleaving down!

At the same time, its flames surged, transforming into a fiery barrier that blocked Chen Ping's path!

“Boom—!!!”

The golden pillar of fire collided violently with the icy blue giant axe!

The extreme heat and extreme cold clashed, creating a terrifying explosion!

The energies of ice and fire collided and annihilated each other wildly, forming an energy storm tens of feet in diameter that instantly evaporated and froze the surrounding ice surface—a horrifying sight!

The little fire qilin grunted and staggered back several steps, its flames dimming considerably. Clearly, taking Man Shan's full-force axe blow had not been easy.

And at that moment, Xuan Ming's “Xuan Ming Thorn” arrived!

The icy blue prism ignored the little fire qilin's fiery barrier, piercing through it like an illusion, heading straight for Chen Ping's brow!

“Roar!”

The little fire qilin roared in desperation, trying to block with its body, but the cone-shaped attack was too fast; it was too late!

At the critical moment, a resolute glint flashed in Chen Ping's eyes.

He abandoned all defense, gripped his sword with both hands, and his mind raced back to the ancient, vast sword technique passed down to him by Wan Jianxing in the void passage—a technique imbued with the true meaning of severing all shackles.

He hadn't fully comprehended that sword technique, but at this critical juncture of life and death, he had no choice but to fight desperately!

The chaotic immortal power within Chen Ping circulated wildly along the special path of that sword technique, and a completely different, extremely sharp sword intent erupted from him!

"Slash—the—void—the—space!"

Chen Ping roared, and the Dragon-Slaying Sword slashed out with an unfathomable trajectory!

There was no sword energy, no light.

Only a will to "sever," a determination to "break through"!

This sword strike didn't sever matter, nor energy, but rather... a "connection"!

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"Clang!"

A soft sound rang out.

The deadly Xuanming Thorn, just three inches from Chen Ping's brow, suddenly froze.

The next moment, the invisible "connection" between it and Xuanming, formed by the laws of ice, was severed by Chen Ping's sword!

The Xuanming Thorn, now out of control, instantly disintegrated, transforming into primordial ice-elemental spiritual energy and vanishing into the air.

"What?!"

Xuanming's expression changed drastically for the first time, his eyes filled with disbelief. "You... how could you sever my connection of laws?! What kind of sword technique is this?!"

Man Shan was also stunned; he had never seen such a bizarre attack method.

After unleashing this sword strike, Chen Ping's face was ashen, he gasped for breath, and his entire body trembled.

Forcibly activating a sword technique he hadn't fully mastered, and severing the law connection formed by an eighth-grade Celestial Immortal, was too much of a burden for him. It almost drained his last bit of strength, and his soul felt a tearing pain.

The little fire qilin anxiously nuzzled against Chen Ping, whimpering.

Ling Shuang struggled to her feet, staggering to Chen Ping's side, supporting his swaying body, tears streaming down her face: "Senior!"

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord's eyes also reddened. He stood in front of Chen Ping, his demonic energy surging, ready to fight to the death.

"Hmph, a spent force!"

Xuan Ming quickly recovered from his shock, his killing intent intensifying. "No matter what kind of sword technique you have, you must die today! Such a sword technique must not fall into the hands of outsiders!"

Man Shan also grinned maliciously: "Boy, what other tricks do you have up your sleeve? Show them! Grandpa wants to see how many more moves you can last!"

The two closed in again, their killing intent palpable.

Chen Ping looked at the relentlessly approaching enemy, then at the heavily injured Ling Shuang beside him, the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord desperately protecting him, and the anxiously whimpering Little Fire Qilin, and a sense of powerlessness welled up inside him.

Could it be... that he was really going to die here?

He hadn't obtained Ling Yue's life-saving medicine yet, Senior Wan Jianxing was still trapped in the void passage, and he hadn't fulfilled his promise...

He was unwilling to accept this!

"I'll fight you to the death!"

A mad glint flashed in Chen Ping's eyes as he prepared to burn his source energy for a final, desperate gamble.

However, at that moment—

"Stop."

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A clear, ethereal, and otherworldly female voice suddenly echoed from the depths of the Northern Underworld Palace.

The voice wasn't loud, but it resonated clearly in everyone's ears, carrying an undeniable authority.

Man Shan and Xuan Ming froze, their faces simultaneously showing astonishment, confusion, and even a hint of fear.

Chen Ping was also startled, looking in the direction of the sound.

Deep within the Northern Underworld Palace, atop the tallest main hall, a thousand feet high, a white figure had appeared.

The person wore a long, flowing white dress, its hem billowing, appearing ethereal and otherworldly against the aurora and night sky.

She appeared to be about twenty-seven or twenty-eight years old, with exquisite beauty, skin as white as snow, and features like a painting, yet shrouded in an impenetrable layer of coldness and sorrow.

Her aura was ethereal and uncertain, seemingly blending into the surrounding ice and snow, yet giving off an unfathomable feeling.

She stood suspended in mid-air, descending step by step from the hall's rooftop, as if treading on an invisible staircase.

With each step, an ice crystal lotus bloomed beneath her feet, supporting her jade-like feet.

In just a few breaths, she arrived at the archway, landing between Chen Ping and the two divine generals.

“Palace Master!”

Man Shan and Xuan Ming bowed simultaneously, their tone respectful yet tinged with doubt. “Why have you emerged from seclusion? Such petty scoundrels can be dealt with by your subordinates.”

Palace Master?

Chen Ping's heart skipped a beat.

This woman before him, with her aloof and exquisite beauty, was the Palace Master of the Northern Underworld Palace?

The woman ignored the two divine generals, instead focusing her gaze on Chen Ping, or more precisely, on the Dragon-Slaying Sword in his hand, and the lingering, unique sword intent emanating from him.

Her gaze was initially icy, but the moment it met that sword intent, it trembled violently!

A storm of emotions suddenly surged within those eyes, which seemed as cold as millennia-old ice!

Shock, disbelief, longing, pain, hope... a complex tapestry of emotions raged within them!

“You...”

Her voice trembled slightly, her gaze fixed on Chen Ping. “The sword technique you just displayed...where did it come from?!”

Chen Ping was taken aback, not expecting this question.

He forced himself to remain calm despite his weakness and replied, “This sword technique was taught to me by a senior.”

“That senior...what is his name? Where is he?”

The Palace Master’s voice grew increasingly urgent, and she even took a step forward.

Chen Ping hesitated for a moment, but remembering that she was the Palace Master of the Northern Underworld Palace and might know something, he answered truthfully, “That senior called himself Wan Jianxing, and was trapped in a special void passage. I entered by chance and received his sword technique from him.”

Chen Ping didn’t mention the Heavenly Dragon Palace, nor did he mention that Wan Jianxing was a hall master of the Heavenly Dragon Palace.

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“Wan Jianxing... Wan Jianxing...”

The Palace Master murmured the name repeatedly, her delicate body swaying slightly, tears welling in her eyes. But the tears were instantly frozen by the extreme cold, turning into ice crystals that slid down her cheeks.

She took a deep breath, trying to calm her turbulent emotions, but her voice still trembled: “He... he’s still alive? He really... is still alive?”

“Yes, Senior Wan Jianxing is still alive, but he’s trapped and unable to escape,” Chen Ping affirmed.

“Impossible!”

Xuan Ming suddenly interrupted, his tone filled with astonishment and doubt. “Wan Jianxing violated the divine race’s prohibition, and...and...”

He glanced at the Palace Master, not daring to continue. “He should have been personally suppressed by the patriarch long ago, his soul and spirit annihilated! How could he still be alive? Boy, don’t spout nonsense and deceive the Palace Master!”

“I’m not lying.”

Chen Ping met his gaze calmly. “Senior Wan Jianxing himself said that he was cast into a void rift by the divine race patriarch with supreme divine power, imprisoned for eternity. If it weren’t for his extraordinary cultivation and special secret method protecting his soul, he would probably have perished long ago.”

The Palace Master closed her eyes, remaining silent for a long time.

When she opened her eyes again, the emotional storm in her eyes had subsided, returning to its previous coldness, but deep within that coldness lay an indescribable complexity.

“All of you, step back.”

She commanded Man Shan, Xuan Ming, and the divine race warriors within the archway.

“Palace Master!”

Man Shan cried out anxiously, “This boy’s origins are unknown. He trespassed into forbidden territory and killed our warriors. He must not be let go! Moreover, his words may not be credible. The matter of Wan Jianxing is a taboo of the Divine Race...”

“I said, step back.”

The Palace Master’s voice remained calm, yet carried an undeniable authority.

Man Shan and Xuan Ming exchanged a glance, both seeing the resentment in each other’s eyes, but ultimately dared not disobey the Palace Master’s command, bowing and saying, “Yes.”

The two led the warriors within the archway away swiftly, disappearing into the depths of the palace.

Only Chen Ping and his two companions remained, along with the mysterious Palace Master of Beiming.

The Palace Master’s gaze fell upon Chen Ping again, this time not with scrutiny, but with a complex assessment.

She slowly spoke, “Your name is Chen Ping?”

“Indeed.”

“You say Wan Jianxing is still alive, do you have any proof?” the Palace Master asked, her gaze fixed intently on Chen Ping’s eyes.

Chen Ping pondered for a moment, then said in a deep voice, "When Senior Wan Jianxing passed on his swordsmanship to me, he left behind a wisp of his innate sword intent, instructing me to show it to any trustworthy person as proof."

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As he spoke, he forcefully channeled a faint wisp of chaotic immortal power into the Dragon-Slaying Sword, simultaneously recalling the unique Daoist aura Wan Jianxing had imparted when teaching the swordsmanship.

The Dragon-Slaying Sword trembled slightly, and a wisp of extremely faint yet pure silver sword intent, containing the power to cleave through all laws and roam freely across heaven and earth, slowly rose from its blade.

This wisp of sword intent was very faint, almost dissipating at any moment, but the "flavor" it contained was unique!

The moment she saw this wisp of silver sword intent, the Palace Master's delicate body trembled violently, she staggered back half a step, her face instantly turning ashen.

She reached out a trembling hand, wanting to touch the wisp of sword intent, but stopped just before touching it, as if afraid it was a fragile dream.

"It really is him...it really is his sword intent..."

She murmured softly, her voice choked with emotion, "Thousands of years...I thought you had long...long ago..."

Two streams of tears finally slid uncontrollably down her cheeks, but before they could fall, they froze into glistening ice beads.

Chen Ping sheathed his sword intent and waited quietly.

He could sense that there was likely a very deep connection between this Palace Master and Wan Jianxing.

After a long while, the Palace Master calmed down. She wiped away the icy tears from her face, regaining her cool expression, but her gaze towards Chen Ping had softened considerably.

“This is not the place to talk. Follow me.”

She said, turning and walking towards the Northern Underworld Palace.

Chen Ping glanced at Ling Shuang and the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord beside him, then at the Blood Soul Cold Pool in the distance, and hesitated, “Palace Master, my friend urgently needs the Thousand-Year Ice Soul Blood Lotus from the Blood Soul Cold Pool to save his life, I wonder...”

The Palace Master paused, then said without turning her head, “We’ll talk about the Blood Lotus later. Follow me first, I have something to ask you, and some things... I need to tell you.”

Her tone left no room for argument.

Chen Ping was silent for a moment, then nodded to Ling Shuang and the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord: “Let’s follow.”

The three followed the Palace Master into the mysterious and majestic Northern Underworld Palace.

Passing through the tall archway, a completely different scene unfolded inside. Along the wide ice crystal avenue stood various exquisite ice sculptures and ice crystal lampposts, emitting a soft glow.

The palace complex was intricate and interconnected, with corridors and bridges, and cascading icefalls, beautiful as a dreamlike fairyland, yet eerily silent.

Along the way, they occasionally encountered patrolling divine warriors. These warriors bowed respectfully to the Palace Master, but cast curious, wary, and even hostile glances at Chen Ping and his

companions. However, under the Palace Master's imposing presence, no one dared to approach and question them.

Finally, the Palace Master led them to a relatively small but more exquisite side hall.

The hall was simply furnished, with only a few ice crystal chairs and an ice table. The walls were smooth as mirrors, reflecting their images.

"Sit," the Palace Master said, gesturing for Chen Ping and the others to sit. He himself took the main seat.

Once everyone was seated, the Palace Master's gaze returned to Chen Ping, and he slowly spoke: "Now, tell me everything you know about Wan Jian Xing. Don't leave anything out."

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Chen Ping nodded and recounted in detail how he had mistakenly entered the void passage, encountered Wan Jian Xing, and received his inheritance and instructions, omitting only the matter of the Heavenly Dragon Palace.

The Palace Master listened quietly, her face expressionless, but her tightly clenched hands and slightly trembling eyelashes betrayed her inner turmoil.

When she heard that Wan Jianxing had endured thousands of years of torment in the void passage, suffering the agony of spatial rifts day and night, yet still held onto hope and remembered his deceased loved ones, she finally couldn't help but close her eyes, taking several deep breaths to barely suppress her surging emotions.

"He...did he say anything else about me?"

The Palace Master opened her eyes, a glimmer of hope in them.

Chen Ping recalled for a moment, then shook his head. "Senior Wan Jianxing didn't mention a specific name, only saying...if there's an opportunity, help him find a former member of the Divine Race, tell them he's still alive, don't seek revenge, just live well."

Chen Ping made up a story; he had long suspected that the Palace Master and Wan Jianxing were not a simple couple.

They might have a secret affair, or perhaps even be lovers.

The Palace Mistress trembled, a bitter smile on her face. "Don't seek revenge... Live well... Sword Star, you're still so foolish."

She was silent for a moment before looking at Chen Ping again. "Do you know what my relationship with Wan Jianxing is?"

Chen Ping shook his head.

"We are lovers."

The Palace Mistress's voice was soft, yet filled with unbearable pain. "Ten thousand years ago, I was a Holy Maiden of the Divine Clan, and he was a stunning sword genius of the Divine Clan. We could have been the most enviable couple in the Divine Clan, but..."

Her eyes turned cold and resentful. "The Divine Clan has an ironclad rule: the Holy Maiden must remain pure and chaste, serve the Ice God for life, and cannot marry, much less have affairs with outsiders... no, with any man."

"Sword Star... he openly defied the clan rules for me, even trying to take me..." "They eloped."

"The clan leader was furious and personally suppressed them. I should have died, but Jianxing spared my life by bearing most of the punishment himself."

"Ultimately, I was stripped of my title as Holy Maiden and banished to this bitterly cold northern land, where I established the Northern Underworld Palace, effectively severing ties with the divine race."

“And Jianxing... the clan leader publicly declared that he had annihilated his soul as a warning to others. I searched desperately for thousands of years, but could never find a trace of him, and could only believe that he truly...”

Her voice choked at this point, unable to continue.

Chen Ping was deeply moved. He hadn't expected that Wan Jianxing and the palace master before him had such a tragic and heroic past.

Defying orders for love, willing to become an enemy of the entire divine race, ultimately ending up imprisoned for eternity...

Ling Shuang and the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord were also deeply moved.

“For thousands of years, I've constantly thought of avenging Jianxing, overthrowing those cruel clan rules, and overthrowing the patriarch who suppressed him!”

The Palace Master's eyes blazed with fury. “But I am weak and alone. Although I founded the Northern Underworld Palace, and it appears independent, it is still under the surveillance of the gods. I can only endure, accumulate strength, and wait for an opportunity.”

She looked at Chen Ping, a hint of gratitude in her eyes: “Thank you for telling me he's still alive. This is more important to me than anything else.”