

The Order 9731

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Elder Yan Xin gritted his teeth, took out a crimson jade talisman, and crushed it.

The talisman transformed into a crimson light barrier, temporarily replacing the broken array.

But this talisman could only hold on for a moment.

“Yan Lie, take Ling’er and go first!”

Elder Yan Xin roared, “I’ll cover the rear!”

“Elder!” Yan Lie hesitated.

“Go quickly!”

Elder Yan Xin spat out a mouthful of blood essence, pouring it into the fiery red gem at the tip of his cane.

The gemstone erupted with blinding light, transforming into a crimson fire python that lunged at the Flame Dragon, attempting to buy time.

Yan Lie gritted his teeth and grabbed Huo Ling’er’s hand: “Junior Sister Ling’er, let’s go!”

“But Elder... he...” Huo Ling’er struggled.

“If we don’t leave now, we’ll all die!” Yan Lie forcefully pulled her towards the edge of the basin.

However, the Flame Dragon had already noticed them.

Or rather, the Flame Dragon noticed Huo Ling’er—the pure and rich fire spirit aura emanating from her held a natural attraction for the Flame Dragon.

“Roar!”

The Flame Dragon swatted away Elder Yan Xin’s fire python with a single claw, its massive tail sweeping across, sending Elder Yan Xin flying and crashing into a rock wall, his fate unknown.

Then, it turned its head, its golden dragon eyes locking onto Huo Ling’er, and opened its massive maw, unleashing a second golden flame!

This flame was more solid and terrifying than the first; wherever it passed, even the ground melted into magma!

Yan Lie’s face turned deathly pale. He released Huo Ling’er’s hand and dodged to the side first, abandoning her!

“Senior Brother?!”

Huo Ling’er was stunned.

Just as the torrent of flames was about to engulf her—

A figure in azure, like a shooting star, descended from the sky, blocking her path.

Chen Ping!

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He clasped his hands in front of his chest, unleashing a torrent of chaotic immortal power that transformed into a swirling gray vortex.

The golden torrent of flames crashed into the vortex, only to be quickly disintegrated, devoured, and annihilated, like a mud ox entering the sea!

But the Flame Dragon's flames were too powerful. Although Chen Ping blocked them, he still groaned, a trickle of blood spilling from the corner of his mouth, and staggered back three steps before regaining his footing.

"Chen Ping!" Huo Ling'er was both surprised and delighted.

"Get behind me."

Chen Ping wiped the blood from his mouth, staring intently at the Flame Dragon, his eyes grave.

Peak Ninth Rank Celestial Immortal, indeed terrifying.

He had barely managed to block that attack using all his strength, and had even suffered minor injuries.

Seeing its attack blocked, the Flame Dragon roared in fury, its massive body leaping completely out of the lava lake, hovering in mid-air, blotting out the sun.

It stared at Chen Ping, a flicker of doubt in its dragon eyes. This tiny human could actually withstand its dragon breath?

But then, doubt transformed into rage. Its dragon might intensified, and the temperature of the entire basin soared once more!

"Chen Ping, run! Don't worry about me!" Huo Ling'er cried urgently, "It's too strong, you can't beat it!"

Chen Ping didn't respond, his mind racing.

A direct confrontation was definitely out of the question. While Chaotic Immortal Power was profound, the difference in cultivation level was too great; the total amount and quality of his immortal power were far inferior to the Flame Dragon's. Dragging it out would inevitably lead to defeat.

The only way...

Chen Ping thought of his True Dragon bloodline.

Among dragons, bloodline suppression was extremely severe. This fiery dragon, though powerful, was merely an ordinary dragon, its bloodline not pure.

Chen Ping, however, possessed the bloodline of a five-clawed golden dragon, the king of dragons!

If he fully activated his golden dragon bloodline, he might be able to intimidate it and buy time to escape.

But once he activated his bloodline, his identity might be exposed.

The golden dragon bloodline was too conspicuous; what if someone with ulterior motives saw it...?

Chen Ping glanced at the pale-faced Huo Ling'er behind him, then at Elder Yan Xin, whose fate was unknown in the distance, and at Yan Lie, who had escaped to the edge of the basin but was looking back...

"I can't worry about that now."

Chen Ping took a deep breath and made his decision.

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He formed an ancient and complex hand seal, and his blood and qi began to boil.

“Roar—!”

The fiery dragon attacked again. This time, it swooped down, its massive claws tearing through the air, aiming for Chen Ping!

Even before the claws arrived, the terrifying pressure caused the ground to crack and rocks to turn to dust! Huo Ling'er closed her eyes in despair.

However, the expected death did not come.

She opened her eyes and witnessed a scene she would never forget—

Chen Ping stood there, roaring to the heavens!

It wasn't a human roar, but... a dragon's cry!

A high-pitched, majestic, soul-shaking dragon's cry!

With this dragon's cry, a dazzling golden light erupted from Chen Ping's body!

That golden light was so pure, so sacred, as if it could dispel all darkness and evil in the world!

Within the golden light, the faint phantom of a five-clawed golden dragon could be seen, coiled around Chen Ping, its head held high, its eyes like the sun and moon, looking down upon all living beings!

The terrifying dragon's might was ten times, a hundred times stronger than that of a fire dragon!

It was a suppression from the deepest part of one's bloodline, the absolute dominion of a superior over a subordinate!

The swooping fire dragon, upon hearing the roar and seeing the golden dragon's phantom, was struck as if by lightning, abruptly halting its descent!

Its enormous dragon eyes were filled with disbelief, terror, and...awe!

"Roar..."

The fire dragon let out a low, almost mournful roar, its massive body trembling.

The dragon race has a strict hierarchy of bloodlines. The five-clawed golden dragon is the king of the dragons, a legendary being capable of commanding all dragons.

Even a mere trace of its bloodline pressure is enough to make ordinary dragons tremble, unable to muster the slightest thought of resistance.

Although this fire dragon's cultivation had reached the peak of the ninth rank of the Celestial Immortal Realm, its bloodline was only of medium quality. Faced with Chen Ping's fully activated five-clawed golden dragon bloodline, it instinctively felt fear and wanted to submit.

Chen Ping seized the opportunity, taking a step forward, the golden dragon's phantom moving in response, its dragon might intensifying!

He pointed at the Fiery Dragon, uttering in ancient dragon language, "Retreat!"

A single, simple word, yet it carried the undeniable authority of an emperor's decree.

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“Woo...”

The Fiery Dragon let out a mournful cry of resentment, its massive body slowly retreating until it sank back into the lava lake.

Its golden dragon eyes gazed deeply at Chen Ping, filled with awe and doubt, but ultimately, they disappeared beneath the churning lava.

The crisis was averted.

Chen Ping immediately withdrew his bloodline power, the golden light and the golden dragon’s phantom rapidly dissipating. His face was pale, and his body swayed—fully activating his golden dragon bloodline had been extremely taxing, draining nearly thirty percent of his vital energy and immortal power.

“Chen Ping!”

Huo Ling’er quickly helped him up. “Are you alright?”

“I’m fine, let’s go.”

Chen Ping said urgently, “The Flame Dragon is only temporarily intimidated; it could react at any moment. Take Elder Yan Xin with you now and leave immediately!”

Huo Ling’er nodded and ran to Elder Yan Xin’s side. She found that although he was severely injured and unconscious, he was still breathing.

She quickly took out a crimson pill and put it in the elder’s mouth, then looked at Yan Lie at the edge of the basin: “Senior Brother, come help!”

Yan Lie then seemed to snap out of a daze, his expression complex as he ran over and, together with Huo Ling'er, helped Elder Yan Xin up.

His eyes, looking at Chen Ping, were filled with shock, jealousy, fear... and a deeply hidden killing intent.

He had seen that scene clearly.

Golden Dragon Bloodline!

This Chen Ping actually possesses the Golden Dragon Bloodline!

No wonder he's so powerful! No wonder the princess treats him so differently!

"He must be eliminated..."

This thought surged in Yan Lie's mind. "Otherwise, will I still have a place among the younger generation of the Earth Fire Pavilion? The princess's heart will likely be completely stolen by him..."

But on the surface, he showed gratitude: "Fellow Daoist Chen, thank you for saving us! The Earth Fire Pavilion will repay this kindness!"

Chen Ping glanced at him and said indifferently, "Let's leave first."

The three carried the unconscious Elder Yanxin away from the Flame Spirit Basin.

On the way, Huo Ling'er gripped Chen Ping's arm tightly, her eyes red: "Chen Ping, thank you... If it weren't for you, I would have..."

"Princess, you're too kind."

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Chen Ping said calmly, "I was entrusted with this task, and I must be loyal to it. Since I accepted the escort mission, it's natural to protect the princess's safety."

Huo Ling'er looked at his calm profile, a complex emotion welling up inside her.

The scene of Chen Ping standing in front of her, activating his Golden Dragon bloodline to intimidate the Flame Dragon, was deeply etched in her heart.

At that moment, he was like a god descended to earth, majestic and powerful, inspiring awe, and even more so... a stirring of the heart.

"What was that just now..." she couldn't help but ask.

"Just some life-saving trump cards," Chen Ping interrupted her. "Princess, please keep this a secret. I don't want to cause unnecessary trouble."

Huo Ling'er was taken aback, then nodded emphatically: "I understand! Don't worry, I absolutely won't tell anyone! Senior Brother Yan Lie, you must keep it a secret too!"

Yan Lie forced a smile: "Of course, Fellow Daoist Chen is our Earth Fire Pavilion's benefactor, how could I harm him?"

But in his heart, that thought grew stronger and stronger.

The group quickly reunited with Crimson Cloud Demon Lord, Lin Feng, Shi Meng, and others on the outer perimeter.

The other guards had long since disappeared; only Lin Feng and Shi Meng remained loyal, waiting in a safe area.

Seeing Chen Ping and the others emerge safely, the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord breathed a sigh of relief: "Thank goodness you're alright. That dragon roar just now... did you use your bloodline power?"

Chen Ping nodded: "The situation was urgent, I had no choice."

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord glanced at Yan Lie and transmitted his voice: "That kid saw it?"

"Yes."

"Troublesome. He probably won't keep it a secret."

"Let's take it one step at a time."

The group dared not linger and retreated from the Crimson Flame Canyon at full speed.

They had come cautiously, but left in a panic. Fortunately, the Flame Dragon didn't pursue them, and they didn't encounter any other powerful ferocious beasts along the way.

Two hours later, the group finally escaped the canyon and returned to safety.

Elder Yan Xin awoke under Huo Ling'er's care; although her injuries were serious, her life was not in danger.

He looked at Chen Ping, his expression complex: "Young friend Chen, I will forever remember your life-saving grace. The Earth Fire Pavilion owes you a great favor."

Chen Ping shook his head: "Elder, you flatter me. Since I accepted the mission, it's what I should do."

"No, it's different."

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Elder Yan Xin looked at him deeply, “That Flame Dragon was at the peak of the ninth rank. Your ability to save us from its claws demonstrates strength and courage far beyond what ordinary guards should do.”

He paused, then added: “Young friend, rest assured, the Earth Fire Pavilion will give you a satisfactory explanation for today’s events.”

“Double the reward is the bare minimum. Furthermore, you can choose three treasures from the Earth Fire Pavilion’s treasury. I will also personally inquire about clues regarding the Earth Core Jade Marrow Milk.”

This promise was truly weighty.

Chen Ping clasped his hands in thanks: “Thank you, Elder.”

Beside him, Yan Lie lowered his head, a cold glint in his eyes.

He secretly crushed a communication talisman—not for the Earth Fire Pavilion, but for... the Evil Path Hall!

The talisman contained only a brief message: “Target: Chen Ping, possessing the bloodline of the Golden Dragon, recently engaged in fierce combat with the Flame Dragon, possibly injured. Currently located thirty miles north of Crimson Flame Canyon.”

Having done this, he looked up, his face regaining its grateful expression: “Fellow Daoist Chen, thank you so much this time. Upon returning to the Earth Fire Pavilion, I will definitely inform my father and request a reward for you!”

Huo Ling’er added, “Yes! I will have Father Emperor reward you handsomely!”

Chen Ping looked at them and smiled faintly: “Then thank you in advance. However, the most urgent matter is to leave here as soon as possible. Although the Flame Dragon is intimidated, it’s hard to guarantee it won’t pursue us.”

“Fellow Daoist Chen is right,” Elder Yan Xin nodded, “Set off immediately and return to Crimson Flame City!”

The group set off again, but the atmosphere was completely different.

When they arrived, Chen Ping was merely a marginalized mercenary guard, used as cannon fodder.

Now, he was everyone’s savior, a distinguished guest of the Earthfire Pavilion.

Huo Ling’er followed him almost constantly, showering him with concern, her eyes filled with undisguised affection.

Yan Lie appeared respectful, but his heart burned with murderous intent.

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord was secretly on guard, warning Chen Ping to be careful.

Chen Ping himself, while recovering, pondered his next move.

The Golden Dragon bloodline had been exposed, though only Yan Lie and Huo Ling’er had seen it for the time being, but Yan Lie... was not to be trusted.

The Evil Path Hall’s pursuit was relentless; he had to improve his strength as soon as possible.

The clue to the Earth Core Jade Marrow Milk still needed to be obtained from the Earthfire Pavilion...

The convoy sped towards the edge of the canyon.

Behind them, deep within the Crimson Flame Canyon, in the lava lake, the Flame Dragon slowly opened its eyes, a flicker of confusion in its pupils before turning into deep awe.

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It let out a low roar, its voice carrying a hint of... submission?

Meanwhile, from the shadows on the outskirts of Crimson Flame Canyon, several figures in black robes silently emerged.

Leading them was Elder Blood Soul of the Evil Path Hall.

His crimson eyes gazed in the direction the caravan had departed, a cruel smile curving his lips: "Golden Dragon Bloodline... truly an unexpected delight. Bone Demon, is the formation set up?"

Beside him, a strange figure covered in pale bone spurs chuckled, "Elder, rest assured, the Myriad Ghosts Devouring Soul Formation is complete. Once they step into the 'Dragon Burial Ravine' on the outskirts of the canyon, they won't be able to escape!"

"Very good."

Elder Blood Soul licked his lips. "Notify everyone to prepare to close the net. This time, I, the elder, will personally extract his Golden Dragon Bloodline... that's a great tonic..."

The killing intent, like an invisible net, quietly tightened.

...

After leaving the Crimson Flame Canyon for a hundred miles, Chen Ping's convoy entered a treacherous mountain ravine called "Dragon Burial Ravine."

The terrain here was unique, with towering, dark red cliffs hundreds of feet high on either side. These cliffs were riddled with honeycomb-like holes, said to be where a true dragon once perished, its blood staining the cliffs for millennia, hence the name "Dragon Burial Ravine."

The ravine contained only a narrow passage, no more than three feet wide, winding and dimly lit.

A faint, decaying stench permeated the air, starkly different from the vibrant heat of other parts of the Flame Domain.

“Speed faster, get through Dragon Burial Ravine as quickly as possible.”

Elder Yan Xin sat in the carriage, his face still pale despite taking healing pills.

He ordered in a deep voice, “The Yin energy here is extremely heavy; we should not linger.”

Upon hearing this, the disciples of the Earth Fire Pavilion urged their Crimson Flame Beasts to increase their speed.

Chen Ping and the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord continued to fly alongside the convoy, vigilantly observing their surroundings.

Ever since leaving the canyon, Chen Ping had had a premonition of something ominous.

It was too quiet.

Although the Burial Dragon Ravine was known for its yin energy, a small number of ferocious beasts adapted to this environment would usually roam.

But now, apart from the rumble of wheels and the thud of the Crimson Flame Beasts, the surroundings were deathly silent; not even the wind could be heard.

“Something’s wrong,” the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord transmitted telepathically.

“The yin energy here is too heavy; even my demonic arts are becoming restless.”

Chen Ping nodded, his Chaotic Immortal Power quietly circulating within him, expanding his perception to its maximum range.

He could sense faint life force emanating from the holes in the cliffs on either side, but that energy was cold and obscure, unlike that of natural ferocious beasts; it seemed more like... cultivators practicing evil arts!

“An ambush.”

Chen Ping suddenly transmitted his voice to everyone, “Prepare for battle!”

Almost simultaneously with his transmission—

“Hehehe...Quick reaction, but too late!”

A sinister, shrill laugh echoed from all directions, reverberating through the mountain stream, its exact direction indiscernible.

Immediately afterward, countless ghastly green lights suddenly blazed forth from the honeycomb-like holes on the cliffs on either side!

Each beam of light was a pair of eyes!

Hundreds upon hundreds of black-robed figures leaped from the holes, like locusts swarming across, instantly covering the cliffs on both sides of the stream.

They were all uniformly dressed in the distinctive black robes of the Evil Path Temple, their faces adorned with demonic masks, and wielding various bizarre and malevolent weapons.

Even more terrifying, the instant these black-robed figures appeared, countless ghastly green runes simultaneously illuminated the ground, cliffs, and air of the entire Burial Dragon Stream!

The runes intertwined, forming a massive array covering the entire mountain stream!

“The Myriad Ghosts Devouring Souls Formation, activate!”

The eerie voice rang out again. Two ghastly green light curtains, each ten feet high, rose simultaneously at the entrance and exit of the ravine, completely sealing off the entire Burial Dragon Ravine!

The formation activated, and countless translucent vengeful spirits crawled out from the runes, emitting shrill screams as they wandered within the formation.

A chilling wind howled, and the temperature plummeted. Despite being a fiery region, it felt as if one had plunged into an icy abyss!

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“The Evil Path Hall!”

Elder Yan Xin’s expression changed drastically. “How did you know our whereabouts?!”

“Hahaha, old man Yan Xin, you should ask Yama, the King of Hell, that question!”

At the highest point of the cliff, a blood-red figure slowly emerged.

It was Elder Blood Soul of the Evil Path Hall!

He was enveloped in a blood-red mist, his scarlet eyes like two ghostly lamps, fixed intently on Chen Ping in the caravan.

“You are Chen Ping?”

Elder Blood Soul licked his lips, his eyes filled with greed. “The Golden Dragon Bloodline... truly a treasure bestowed by heaven. Today, this elder is determined to have it!”


Before he finished speaking, he waved his hand: “Kill! Leave no one alive! Chen Ping must be alive!”

“Kill—!”

Thousands of Evil Path Hall cultivators roared in unison, their voices like the wails of ten thousand ghosts, shaking the mountain stream.

They surged down from both sides of the cliff like a tidal wave, while at the same time, the vengeful spirits and vengeful ghosts within the formation shrieked as they rushed towards the caravan!

“Form a defensive array!”

Although Elder Yan Xin was severely injured, he remained calm in the face of danger. He mustered his immortal power and slammed his cane heavily on the ground: “Earth Fire Profound  Array!”

The dozen or so surviving Earth Fire Pavilion disciples quickly formed an array, and a crimson light barrier rose again, protecting the three chariots within.

However, this time the light barrier was noticeably dimmer—having endured the continuous attacks of the Flame Dragon and the elder’s severe injury, the Earth Fire Pavilion disciples had exhausted their immortal power and were in extremely poor condition.

Chen Ping, the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord, and the few remaining guards protected the outer perimeter of the array, facing the first wave of attack from the Evil Path Hall.

“Heh heh, ants dare to block your way?”

Three Evil Path Hall deacons, all at the seventh rank of the Heavenly Immortal Realm, were the first to arrive. One wielded a bone staff, one a blood-stained blade, and one controlled a ghost banner, attacking Chen Ping from three directions.

A bone staff swung, unleashing a torrential downpour of bone spikes;

A blood-red blade slashed, tearing through the air with crimson light;

A ghost banner fluttered, and dozens of vengeful spirits lunged forward, baring their fangs and claws.

Chen Ping's eyes turned cold, and the Dragon-Slaying Sword was finally drawn!

“Clang—!”

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A clear, resonant sword cry echoed through the mountain stream, and a hazy, chaotic sword aura soared into the sky.

One sword strike, and chaos was cleaved!

The gray sword aura swept across, shattering bone spikes, shattering blood-red blades, and vanishing vengeful spirits wherever it passed!

Three Evil Path Hall deacons screamed and staggered back. The one wielding the bone staff was grazed on the shoulder by the sword aura, his entire arm severed at the root, blood gushing forth!

“A fine sword!”

Elder Blood Soul's eyes lit up. “This sword must also belong to me!”

He had taken matters into his own hands!

Elder Blood Soul's figure blurred, transforming into a blood-red afterimage, instantly traversing a hundred-zhang distance. A massive blood-red hand materialized out of thin air, carrying overwhelming bloodthirsty energy, and grabbed towards Chen Ping!

A full-force attack from a peak eighth-grade Celestial Immortal!

Chen Ping dared not be careless, unleashing the full power of his Dragon-Slaying Sword. The hazy sword energy collided with the blood-red hand.

“Boom—!”

A terrifying energy shockwave erupted, sending several Evil Path Hall cultivators flying backward, coughing up blood.

Chen Ping staggered back seven steps, a sweet taste rising in his throat, forcibly swallowing back the surging blood.

Elder Blood Soul took three steps back, a look of surprise flashing in his eyes: “Good lad, you can still withstand an attack from me while injured? It seems the defeat of Black Wind Valley was indeed not accidental.”

“However, this ends here!”

“Boundless Blood Sea, Ten Thousand Ghosts Pay Homage!”

Elder Blood Soul formed hand seals, his body enveloped in surging blood mist, transforming into a crimson ocean that dyed half the mountain stream scarlet.

Within the blood sea, countless hideous ghost faces emerged, emitting piercing shrieks, sweeping towards Chen Ping!

This was Elder Blood Soul’s signature technique—Blood Sea Ghost Domain!

Once caught in it, not only would the physical body be corroded by the blood sea, but the soul would also be torn apart by ten thousand ghosts, a fate worse than death!

Chen Ping took a deep breath, knowing he could no longer hold back.

He pressed his left hand, fingers forming a sword shape, to his brow and uttered a low growl: “Dragon Soul, Awaken!”

“Roar—!”

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A high-pitched dragon roar resounded again, but this time it didn’t emanate from Chen Ping’s body, but from the Dragon-Slaying Sword!

The Dragon-Slaying Sword trembled violently, the ancient dragon patterns on its blade seeming to come alive. A phantom of a five-clawed golden dragon rose from the sword, much smaller than the previous phantom Chen Ping had activated, but its dragon might was still awe-inspiring!

This Dragon-Slaying Sword had once slain a true dragon, and a wisp of dragon soul was sealed within it!

Now, awakened by Chen Ping’s own golden dragon bloodline, its power surged!

The golden dragon phantom hovered above Chen Ping’s head, its mouth opening to spew forth a golden dragon breath that collided fiercely with the encroaching sea of blood!

“Sizzle sizzle sizzle—!”

The golden dragon breath and the blood-red ocean clashed and corroded each other, erupting into a piercing sound and a cloud of blood mist.

The myriad ghosts in the sea of blood, upon touching the dragon’s breath, melted away like ice and snow meeting the blazing sun.

“What?!”

Elder Blood Soul's expression changed drastically. "You can actually summon a golden dragon?"

Chen Ping didn't answer. Taking advantage of Elder Blood Soul's momentary shock, he unleashed the full power of the Dragon-Slaying Sword: "Dragon-Slaying—Breaking Army!"

The golden dragon soul merged with the sword energy, transforming into a hundred-zhang-long golden-gray sword aura that tore through the sea of blood, slashing directly at Elder Blood Soul!

Elder Blood Soul roared, summoning a blood-red shield to block in front of him.

"Clang—!!!"

The sound of metal clashing echoed through the mountain stream. A deep crack appeared in the blood-red shield, and Elder Blood Soul was sent flying backward, blood trickling from the corner of his mouth, clearly suffering a serious injury.

But Chen Ping wasn't faring much better.

After the continuous battle with the Flaming Dragon and forcibly summoning the golden dragon, more than half of his immortal power had been depleted, and his blood and qi were severely depleted.

His face was ashen, and his hand gripping the sword trembled slightly.

"Chen Ping!"

Huo Ling'er, seeing this clearly from within the formation, cried out in desperation, "Are you alright?!"

She wanted to rush out of the formation to help, but Yan Lie held her back tightly: "Junior Sister Ling'er, don't go out! It's too dangerous outside!"

"But Chen Ping..." Huo Ling'er struggled.

“He’s strong; he has his own methods!”