

The Order 9751

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The deeper one ventures, the higher the temperature rises, the air thick with pure fire-attribute spiritual energy.

Occasionally, crimson crystals are exposed, radiating a warm glow.

“The entrance to the forbidden area is just ahead,” Huo Ling’er said, pointing to a seemingly ordinary mountain wall. “Multiple illusion arrays and defensive formations are set up here; only core members of the Earthfire Pavilion know how to enter.”

She formed hand seals and chanted incantations. Crimson runes flew from her fingertips, merging into the mountain wall.

The mountain wall rippled like water, revealing a deep cave entrance.

Inside the cave was a downward stone staircase, its sides inlaid with glowing crimson crystals, barely illuminating the path ahead.

“Follow me,” Huo Ling’er said, stepping inside first.

Chen Ping and the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord followed closely behind.

Upon entering the cave, the mountain wall behind them closed again, isolating them from all outside sound.

The cave was eerily quiet, save for the echoing footsteps of the three.

The stone steps spiraled downwards, the temperature rising with each step. After about fifteen minutes, the cave opened up before them.

It was a massive underground cavern, about thirty zhang high and a hundred zhang in circumference.

In the center of the cavern was a lava pool ten zhang in diameter. Crimson lava flowed slowly within, radiating terrifying heat and pure fire elemental energy.

Around the lava pool grew rare fire-attribute spiritual herbs and medicinal plants, some even a thousand years old.

The cave walls were inlaid with densely packed crimson crystals, bathing the entire cavern in a fiery red glow.

“This is the forbidden area of the Earthfire Pavilion, the ‘Heart of Earthfire’,”

Huo Ling’er explained. “It is said that the ancestor of the Earthfire Pavilion comprehended the Great Dao of Fire here and founded the pavilion. The concentration of fire spiritual energy here is a hundred times that of the outside world, which is extremely helpful for cultivating fire-attribute techniques.”

She paused, somewhat embarrassed, “However... the temperature here is too high; ordinary cultivators cannot stay for long. Chen Ping, your injuries have not healed; can you withstand it?”

Chen Ping felt the rich fire spiritual energy in the air. His chaotic immortal power circulated automatically, converting this spiritual energy into pure immortal power, nourishing his damaged meridians.

“It’s alright, this place suits me very well.”

Chen Ping nodded. “Thank you, Princess.”

“I told you to call me Ling’er.”

Huo Ling’er waved her hand. “Then you should stay here and recover peacefully. I will send you pills and food regularly. As for Father... I’ll keep it from you until you’ve recovered.”

“Your Highness’s great kindness will be forever remembered by Chen Ping.”

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Chen Ping solemnly clasped his hands in a fist salute.

Huo Ling’er blushed and whispered, “Then you should take good care of your injuries. I’ll go back now. I’ll come see you again tomorrow.”

With that, she turned and left, her figure disappearing at the end of the stone steps.

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord watched the direction Huo Ling’er had left in and clicked his tongue, “That little girl is really good to you. She even dared to secretly bring you to the forbidden area.”

Chen Ping didn’t reply. He walked to the edge of the lava pool and sat down cross-legged.

He could sense that the fire elemental energy here was not only abundant but also contained an ancient and pure aura of law, which would be of great benefit to healing injuries and improving cultivation.

“Senior, I need to enter the Demon-Suppressing Tower to heal. One day outside is equivalent to a hundred days inside the tower. This way, my injuries will heal in just a few days.”

Chen Ping took out the Demon-Suppressing Tower and said to the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord, “Senior can protect me outside the tower, or we can enter together to cultivate.”

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord shook his head and said, “My body is fine. I’ll go outside to protect you and also study the fire laws here.”

Chen Ping nodded and tossed the Demon-Suppressing Tower into the air.

The Demon-Suppressing Tower grew taller in the wind, transforming into a three-zhang-tall pagoda, hovering above the lava pool.

The tower exuded an ancient and vast aura, faintly resonating with the fire laws within the cave.

Chen Ping took a deep breath and stepped into the Demon-Suppressing Tower.

The space inside the tower was vast, and the flow of time was completely different from the outside.

Chen Ping arrived at the cultivation room, sat cross-legged, took out the Nine-Turn Crimson Flame Pill and the Earth Fire Spirit Fruit given to him by Huo Ling'er, and began to focus all his efforts on healing.

The chaotic immortal energy slowly circulated, like spring rain on a parched riverbed, beginning to repair the damaged meridians and body.

The Golden Dragon bloodline activated on its own, strands of golden blood flowing through the body, mending the loss of vitality.

The Nine-Turn Crimson Flame Pill melted upon entering the mouth, transforming into a scorching yet gentle medicinal power that surged throughout the body.

The Earth Fire Spirit Fruit provides pure fire-attribute energy, which fuses with the Chaos Immortal Power to accelerate the recovery process.

Time flowed silently within the tower.

One day, two days, three days...

Three hundred days passed inside the tower.

Chen Ping's injuries healed at an astonishing speed.

The severed meridians reconnected, the shattered bones healed completely, and most of his depleted qi and blood were replenished.

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His aura was more solid and profound than before.

“Hoo...”

Chen Ping slowly opened his eyes, a flash of light passing through them.

He felt the surging immortal power within him and his strong physique, a slight smile curving his lips.

“My injuries have healed, and my cultivation has even improved slightly. The environment of this Earth Fire Heart is indeed extraordinary.”

He rose and walked out of the cultivation room, preparing to leave the Demon Suppression Tower.

However, just as he was about to step out of the tower gate,

a sudden change occurred in the cave!

The magma pool suddenly boiled violently, crimson lava shooting skyward and coalescing into a blurry humanoid figure!

This figure was composed of pure flame and magma, its face indistinct, except for a pair of eyes burning with golden flames, like two small suns, radiating an ancient and majestic aura.

Even more bizarrely, at the same moment this fiery humanoid appeared, the fire laws of the entire cave seemed to come alive, like subjects bowing in reverence to a king!

“This is...” Chen Ping’s pupils constricted sharply.

The fiery humanoid slowly spoke, its voice ancient and distant, as if traversing countless ages: "The Demon-Suppressing Tower... I never imagined that in my lifetime I would see such a treasure..."

Its gaze fell upon Chen Ping, its golden, flame-like eyes seemingly piercing through everything: "Little fellow, you possess the bloodline of the Golden Dragon, wield the Demon-Suppressing Tower, yet you are so severely injured... It seems the outside world is still far from peaceful."

Alarm bells rang in Chen Ping's mind. His Chaotic Immortal Power instantly surged to its limit, the Dragon-Slaying Sword already in hand: "Who are you?!"

The fiery humanoid let out a soft laugh, a laugh tinged with vicissitude and self-mockery: "Who am I? A lonely ghost who should have died long ago, yet has lingered on until now."

"You can call me... Ancestor of Earth Fire."

"Ancestor of Earth Fire?"

Chen Ping frowned. "The founder of the Earth Fire Pavilion?"

"That's right." The Earth Fire Ancestor's fiery body rippled slightly, seemingly fluctuating in emotion. "The Earth Fire Pavilion is my..." It can be done, but it's a pity that I was too conceited back then and thought I could suppress the Earth-centered Demonic Flame by myself. As a result... Haha, my body collapsed and my soul was severely injured. Only this residual soul was left, hiding in the Heart of Earth-Fire to survive."

His eyes fell on the Demon Suppression Tower again, and a trace of passion flashed in his eyes: "However, God will not stop me. The Demon Suppression Tower...this legendary treasure actually appeared here. Little guy, how about lending it to me?"

Chen Ping's eyes turned cold: "Senior, do you want to take it by force?"

"Robbery?"

The Earth Fire Ancestor shook his head, "I am just a remnant soul now, and my strength is not as strong as what I was in my heyday. How can I take it by force? But... how about making a deal?"

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"What deal?"

"I exchange the exact location of the Earth's Heart Chalcedony Milk for the opportunity for you to use the Demon Suppressing Tower to help me condense my soul and reshape my physical body."

The Earth Fire Patriarch said slowly, "You should be in great need of Earth Core Chalcedony Milk, right?"

Chen Ping was shocked.

Earth Core Jade Marrow Milk!

This was precisely his primary objective upon arriving at the Eleventh Heaven!

But how did the other party know?

He had never mentioned it here.

"Do you know where the Earth Core Jade Marrow Milk is?" Chen Ping asked in a deep voice.

"Of course."

The Earthfire Ancestor said proudly, "In these eleventh heavens, no one understands the Earth's Core Demon Abyss better than me. The Earth's Core Jade Marrow Milk originates from the Lava Heart at the deepest part of the Demon Abyss, but it's guarded by the Earth's Core Demon Flame, making it inaccessible to ordinary cultivators."

“However, with my guidance, coupled with your Golden Dragon bloodline and the Demon Suppression Tower... there might be a chance.”

Chen Ping was silent for a moment, then said, “How can I trust you?”

“You can choose not to believe me,”

The Earthfire Ancestor said calmly, “but this is your only chance. A single drop of Earth’s Core Jade Marrow Milk is obtained only once every ten thousand years. While the Earthfire Pavilion has some clues, they certainly don’t know its exact location. And... do you think that brat Huo Fentian would easily tell such a precious clue to an outsider like you?”

These words struck a nerve with Chen Ping.

Indeed, the Earthfire Pavilion might have clues, but they would never hand them over easily.

And the Earth’s Core Jade Marrow Milk was related to the life and death of the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord’s woman; the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord couldn’t afford to wait.

“What do you need the Demon-Suppressing Tower for?” Chen Ping asked.

“To condense my soul and reshape my physical body,” the Earth Fire Ancestor said.

“My remnant soul is too weak to leave the Heart of Earth Fire. But if I can cultivate within the Demon-Suppressing Tower, utilizing its time flow and special laws, I can solidify my soul in a short time and then find a suitable body to possess... or, use a secret technique to reshape my physical body.”

“Don’t worry, I won’t use your treasures for nothing. Besides the clues to the Earth Core Jade Marrow Milk, I can also pass on the complete version of the Earth Fire True Scripture to you, and... help you find the traitor within the Earth Fire Pavilion.”

“You know who the traitor is?” Chen Ping’s eyes narrowed.

“Although I am but a remnant soul, the Heart of Earthfire is still connected to the entire protective array of the Earthfire Pavilion.”

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“Everything that happens within the Earthfire Pavilion, as long as it involves fluctuations of fire-attribute spiritual energy, cannot escape my perception.”

The Earthfire Ancestor sneered, “That brat named Yan Lie secretly contacted the outside world three days ago using a communication talisman. The aura of the talisman... is exactly the same as the aura of the Evil Path Hall that you all possess.”

Yan Lie!

It really was him!

A cold glint flashed in Chen Ping’s eyes.

“So? Will you take this deal?” the Earthfire Ancestor asked.

Chen Ping pondered for a long time, then slowly nodded: “I can. But I have a few conditions.”

“Speak.”

“First, the clues about the Earth Core Jade Marrow Milk must be completely true, and you must help me obtain it.”

“Second, while I help you condense your soul body, you must not do anything detrimental to me.”

“Third, the evidence to expose the traitor must be irrefutable.”

The Earth Fire Ancestor laughed heartily: “Little fellow, you’re quite cautious. Alright, I agree. However, I also have a condition.”

“What condition?”

“After you obtain the Earth Core Jade Marrow Milk, you must help me reshape my physical body. At that time, I will need a drop of your Golden Dragon Essence Blood as a catalyst.”

The Earth Fire Ancestor said, “Of course, I will give you sufficient compensation.”

Chen Ping frowned.

Golden Dragon Essence Blood was incredibly precious; every drop contained his life essence.

But if he could obtain the Earth Core Jade Marrow Milk and revive the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord’s woman, this price... would be worth it.

After all, the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord had saved him countless times along the way.

“Alright.”

Chen Ping finally nodded, “But only one drop.”

“Deal.”

The Earth Fire Ancestor’s fiery body rippled, appearing quite excited. “Then, shall we begin now? I can’t wait to experience the feeling of a complete soul again.”

Chen Ping shook his head: "No rush. I need to recover from all my injuries first before making preparations. Besides... there are people waiting for me outside."

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He was referring to the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord.

The Earth Fire Ancestor understood: "Alright, I'll give you three days. We'll officially begin in three days."

"On Yan Lie's body..."

After speaking, his fiery body slowly dissipated, merging back into the lava pool.

The cave returned to calm, as if nothing had happened.

But Chen Ping knew that his plan needed to be readjusted.

The clue to the Earth Core Jade Marrow Milk was there, the identity of the traitor was confirmed, and now there was the mysterious Earth Fire Ancestor...

The road ahead seemed clearer, but also more complicated.

He put away the Demon-Suppressing Tower, left the cave, and returned to the stone steps.

Just as he stepped onto the steps, he heard Huo Ling'er's anxious voice from above: "Chen Ping! Chen Ping, are you there? Something's happened!"

Chen Ping's heart skipped a beat, and he quickly walked up.

At the entrance to the forbidden area, Huo Ling'er's face was pale, her eyes filled with panic.

“What happened?” Chen Ping asked.

“Senior Brother Yan Lie... he told Father that you secretly infiltrated the forbidden area with ill intentions!” Huo Ling’er said urgently, “Father is bringing several elders this way! You must leave quickly!”

Chen Ping’s expression remained unusually calm after hearing Huo Ling’er’s words.

He turned to look into the depths of the cave; the lava pool remained as calm as ever, as if everything that had just happened was merely an illusion.

“Princess, do not panic.”

Chen Ping said calmly, “Since the Pavilion Master wants to come, then let him come. Some things should be laid out clearly.”

“But Chen Ping, the forbidden area is the most core secret of the Earth Fire Pavilion. Unauthorized entry is a capital offense according to the Pavilion’s rules!”

Huo Ling’er stamped her foot anxiously, “Senior Brother Yan Lie is determined to kill you this time! You should leave first and wait until Father’s anger subsides!”

“Leave? Where to leave?”

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord frowned and said, “The Earth Fire Pavilion has a protective array around its perimeter, which must be fully activated now.” “If we go out, we’ll be treated like fugitives and killed without mercy.”

He looked at Chen Ping: “Chen Ping, what are your plans?”

A cold glint flashed in Chen Ping’s eyes: “Since Yan Lie wants to play, then I’ll play along to the end. But...”

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He looked at Huo Ling'er, somewhat apologetically: "But it will implicate the princess."

Huo Ling'er gritted her teeth: "I'm not afraid! I was the one who brought you in, punish me if you must! And...and I believe Father will distinguish right from wrong!"

Just then, hurried footsteps and commotion came from outside the cave.

"They're here!" Huo Ling'er's face paled.

Chen Ping, however, straightened his robes and stood calmly at the entrance to the forbidden area.

The Crimson Cloud Demon Lord also returned to his usual appearance, standing beside Chen Ping.

"Boom!"

The illusion array at the entrance to the forbidden area was forcibly broken, the mountain walls shook, and rubble fell in a shower.

A group of people stormed in aggressively.

The leader was none other than Huo Fentian, the Pavilion Master of the Earth Fire Pavilion!

He wore a crimson-gold robe, his face imposing, and the oppressive aura of a peak ninth-grade Celestial Immortal was undisguised, raising the temperature of the entire cave several degrees.

Behind him were five elders of the Earth Fire Pavilion, each possessing a profound aura, all above the seventh-grade Celestial Immortal realm.

Yan Lie stood behind the elders, a smug, cold smile playing on his lips.

When Huo Fentian saw Chen Ping, the Crimson Cloud Demon Lord, and his daughter Huo Ling'er standing at the entrance to the forbidden area, his eyes blazed with fury.

"Ling'er! You really are here!"

Huo Fentian roared, "And you two outsiders, how dare you! Daring to trespass into the forbidden area of the Earthfire Pavilion!"

Yan Lie immediately stepped forward, pointing at Chen Ping and shouting, "Pavilion Master, this disciple saw it with my own eyes! Chen Ping and this demonic cultivator sneaked into the back mountain under the cover of night, using a secret technique to break the forbidden area's formation, intending to steal the Earthfire Pavilion's core secrets!"

"Fortunately, this disciple discovered and reported it in time, otherwise the consequences would have been unimaginable!"

He paused, then added, "Moreover... this disciple suspects that they are traitors from the Evil Path Hall! They infiltrated the Earthfire Pavilion to gather intelligence..." "Report! Coordinate with the Evil Path Hall's ambush!"

"You're lying!"

Huo Ling'er trembled with anger. "I was the one who brought them in! Chen Ping was seriously injured and needed a quiet place to heal, so I..."

"Junior Sister Ling'er, stop making excuses for them!"

Yan Lie interrupted her, his face contorted with pain. "I know you're kind-hearted and have been deceived by Chen Ping."

"But think about it, why would you risk violating the rules by bringing an outsider like him into the forbidden area? He must have used some evil magic to bewitch you!"

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“1...”

Huo Ling'er was speechless.

She couldn't very well say that she brought Chen Ping in recklessly because she was in love with him, could she?

Huo Fentian's face was ashen, his gaze fixed on Chen Ping as if he were already dead: “Chen Ping, what else do you have to say?”

Chen Ping remained calm, clasping his hands in a fist salute: “Sect Master, I did indeed trespass into the forbidden area. This was all thanks to the Princess's kindness, for which I am deeply grateful. But if you say I am a traitor within the Evil Path Hall...”

He looked at Yan Lie, a cold smile playing on his lips: “Why doesn't the Sect Master first ask Steward Yan Lie who he contacted in his room late three nights ago using a communication talisman? Why is the aura on that talisman exactly the same as that of a cultivator from the Evil Path Hall?”

Upon hearing this, everyone was stunned.

Yan Lie's face turned deathly pale instantly, but he roared, “You're spouting nonsense! When did I ever use a communication talisman? Pavilion Master, this person is sowing discord; he can't be trusted!”

“Is that so?”

Chen Ping said calmly, “Then may I ask, Deacon Yan Lie, why is there a trace of the unique ghostly aura of a Yin Soul Communication Talisman remaining on the third button inside your left sleeve? This kind of communication talisman is one of the signature talismans of the Evil Path Hall.”

Yan Lie subconsciously looked at his left sleeve, a flicker of panic in his eyes.

But he quickly forced himself to calm down: “Nonsense! I just changed these clothes today, where would I find any Netherworld Aura? If the Pavilion Master doesn’t believe me, you can have the elders check!”

An elder stepped forward, scanning Yan Lie’s sleeve with his divine sense, and frowned, saying, “Pavilion Master, indeed, no Netherworld Aura was detected.”

Yan Lie breathed a sigh of relief, looking smugly at Chen Ping: “Chen Ping, what else do you have to say?”

Chen Ping, however, remained unperturbed: “Oh? Perhaps I’m mistaken. But... Pavilion Master, could you check what’s hidden under the third floor tile under the bed in Deacon Yan Lie’s room?”

Yan Lie’s expression froze completely.

Under that floor tile lay another communication talisman he used to contact the Evil Path Hall, and... a bottle of “Blood Fiend Pills”—the reward Elder Blood Soul had given him!

“You...how did you know?”

Yan Lie blurted out, then realized his mistake and hurriedly corrected himself, “I meant there’s nothing under my bed! You’re framing me!”

But it was too late.

Huo Fentian, a man of great stature, immediately saw through Yan Lie’s abnormality.

He coldly snorted, “Go investigate!”

The two elders obeyed and left.

Yan Lie tried to stop them, but Huo Fentian's gaze froze him in place, cold sweat pouring down his back.

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The atmosphere became terrifyingly tense.

Huo Ling'er looked at Chen Ping in surprise, then at the ashen-faced Yan Lie, seemingly understanding something.

Less than a quarter of an hour later, the two elders returned, carrying a jet-black communication talisman and a blood-red jade bottle.

"Sect Master, we found these two items under Yan Lie's bed."

An elder said in a deep voice, "Upon examination, the communication talisman does indeed possess the unique Netherworld aura of the Evil Path Hall, and this bottle of pills... is a Blood Fiend Pill refined by the Evil Path Hall, made with the essence of living beings; it is extremely malevolent."

"Boom...!"

Terrifying flames erupted from Huo Fentian's body, and the entire cave trembled.

He stared intently at Yan Lie, enunciating each word clearly: "Yan... Lie! What else do you have to say?!"

Yan Lie's legs went weak, and he knelt on the ground, his face ashen. "Sect Master... I... I was forced! The Evil Path Hall captured my parents and forced me to work for them! I didn't want to! Please, Sect Master, spare my life!"

"Parents?"

Huo Fentian's eyes grew even colder. "Your parents died twenty years ago due to cultivation going awry. Where did you get parents?"

Yan Lie trembled, realizing he had let something slip. Despair flashed in his eyes, then turned to madness: "Yes! I'm from the Evil Path Hall! So what? What is the Earth Fire Pavilion?"

"The Evil Path Hall is the true ruler of the Eleventh Heaven! Huo Fentian, do you think you can kill me?"

He suddenly pulled out a blood-red jade slip from his robes and crushed it!

"Boom!"

A crimson mist erupted from the jade slip, transforming into a crimson pillar of light that shot skyward, piercing through the rock strata above the cave and soaring into the clouds!

"Not good! He's summoning reinforcements from the Evil Path Hall!"

An elder exclaimed in alarm.

Huo Fentian was enraged, slamming his palm towards Yan Lie: "You beast! Die!"

The furious strike of a peak ninth-grade Celestial Immortal was terrifying!

A gigantic, crimson fiery palm blotted out the sky, crashing down with the power to incinerate everything!

A mad glint flashed in Yan Lie's eyes as he summoned a crimson shield to block, roaring at the same time, "Hall Master Zhan! Save me!"

"Hehehe... Huo Fentian, did you ask me before attacking anyone from my Evil Path Hall?"

A sinister voice echoed from within the crimson pillar of light.

Within the pillar of light, a crimson figure slowly materialized—it was Zhan E!

Although it was merely a projection, its aura was still terrifying!

A crimson hand emerged from the pillar of light, colliding with Huo Fentian's fiery giant hand!

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“Boom...!”

The entire cave shook violently, countless rocks fell, and the lava pool surged with enormous waves.

The terrifying shockwave forced everyone except Huo Fentian and Chen Ping to retreat.

“Zhan E! How dare you project yourself into the forbidden area of my Earth Fire Pavilion!”

Huo Fentian's hair and beard bristled with rage.

“What wouldn't I dare?”

Zhan E's projection sneered, “Huo Fentian, if you know what's good for you, hand over Chen Ping and obediently submit to my Evil Path Hall, otherwise... the Earth Fire Pavilion will be expelled from the Eleventh Heaven today!”

“Arrogant!”

Huo Fentian roared, “Just a projection clone of yours?”

“One isn’t enough, how about a few more?”

Three more pillars of blood-red light descended from the sky, landing in the cave.

The pillars of light dissipated, revealing three blood-red figures—projections of the three elders of the Evil Path Hall!

A terrifying aura of bloodlust permeated the entire cave, rivaling Huo Fentian’s crimson flames!

“Huo Fentian, how are you now?”

Zhan E grinned maliciously, “Although the four of us are merely projections, our combined strength is enough to hold you off for a while. Meanwhile, the army of my Evil Path Palace has already assembled outside the Earth Fire Pavilion, ready to breach the protective mountain formation at any moment!”

Huo Fentian’s face was extremely grim.

He hadn’t expected the Evil Path Palace to mobilize so heavily, with Zhan E personally coming, and a large army pressing in from outside!

While the Earth Fire Pavilion was not weak, its chances of victory against the well-prepared Evil Path Palace were slim.

“Father...”

Huo Ling’er’s face was pale, tightly gripping Huo Fentian’s sleeve.

Several elders of the Earth Fire Pavilion also wore solemn expressions, each summoning their magical treasures, ready for battle.

Seeing this, Yan Lie became arrogant again: “Huo Fentian, it’s not too late to surrender! As long as you hand over Chen Ping and offer up all the treasures of the Earth Fire Pavilion, the Evil Path Hall might spare your life!”

“You’re courting death!”

Huo Fentian’s eyes blazed with killing intent, and he was about to attack again.