

The Order 9991

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But every day, it is disappointment.

Demon Lord Chiyun finally gave up.

He bumped his head three times against the empty altar.

“Boy, you saved Lao Tzu’s life. Lao Tzu wrote down this affection.”

“Don’t worry, your relatives and friends, Lao Tzu will take care of you. If you really die in it, wait for Lao Tzu to save your beloved and become a great success, you must find a way to split this place of reincarnation and bring your bones out!”

After speaking, he resolutely turned around, turned into a stream of blood, and flew in the direction of the Nine heavens.

He was going to rescue the woman who had waited for him for countless years.

Then, he would return to fulfill his promise.

Chen Ping and Ming Li traveled south, traversing tens of thousands of miles of the Northern Dark Wasteland.

The further south they went, the denser and purer the spiritual energy became, far surpassing that of the Twelfth Heaven.

Chen Ping could sense that the laws of the Thirteenth Heaven were more complete and rigorous, making cultivation twice as efficient, but also demanding a higher foundation from the cultivator.

The circulation of his Concentration Technique within his body, after adapting to the laws of this realm, was actually smoother and more powerful than when he was in the Twelfth Heaven.

Three days later, a majestic ice and snow city appeared on the horizon.

The city walls were hundreds of feet high, entirely constructed of some kind of dark blue-green ice, their surface shimmering with pale blue runes, clearly protected by a powerful defensive array.

At intervals along the city walls stood cultivators clad in ice-blue armor, their auras deep and concentrated, at least at the Heavenly Immortal realm.

Above the city gate, three ancient seal characters, written in a flamboyant and powerful style, exuded a chilling aura—"Cold Abyss City."

"Mr. Chen, this is Cold Abyss City,"

Ming Li introduced. "This city has a history of over ten thousand years and is one of the most important gathering places for cultivators in the southern part of the Northern Underworld Ice Plains, with over one hundred thousand permanent residents."

"The city lord, True Person Cold Abyss, is a powerful rogue cultivator at the fifth rank of the Upper Immortal Realm. It is said that he received the inheritance of an ancient immortal in his early years, making his strength unfathomable. Moreover, he is relatively fair and does not participate in the conflicts between major forces, so many rogue cultivators and small sects are willing to settle here."

Chen Ping nodded, and the two walked towards the city gate.

Dozens of guards were checking people at the city gate. The leader was a burly, scarred man with a fierce aura, whose cultivation had clearly reached the second rank of the Upper Immortal Realm.

Chen Ping was somewhat speechless. In the Thirteenth Heaven, even Upper Immortals were only used as gatekeepers.

“Halt!”

The scarred man stopped Chen Ping and his companion, sizing them up. “Unfamiliar faces? Where are you from? What brings you into the city?”

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Chen Ping remained calm: “Chen Ping, a rogue cultivator. This is my companion, Ming Li. We’ve just arrived in the Northern Ice Plains and wish to stay in the city temporarily to familiarize ourselves with the surroundings.”

“Rogue cultivator?”

The scarred man’s eyes were suspicious, focusing intently on Chen Ping. “Recently, the city lord has ordered a strict inspection of all outside cultivators. Do you have identification? Or, is there anyone who can prove your origins?”

Chen Ping frowned slightly.

Identity?

They just came from the twelfth heaven; where did they get thirteenth heaven identities?

Ming Li quickly stepped forward, taking out a jet-black domino from his robes, and said with a forced smile, “Brother, we come from the depths of the Northern Dark Wasteland.”

“Our ancestors were a declining family, who have been living in seclusion and cultivating in the wasteland ever since. This is our ancestral emblem. We’ve come out of seclusion this time to broaden our horizons and seek some opportunities.”

The scarred man took the domino and examined it. His expression softened slightly, but he still shook his head: “Without a proper identity jade token, according to the rules, it needs to be temporarily confiscated until your identity is verified.”

“The city has been rather unsettled lately. One of the city lord’s important magical artifacts has been stolen, and it’s suspected to be the work of outsider cultivators, so all unfamiliar faces are being strictly investigated.”

“What?” Chen Ping was taken aback.

A magical artifact stolen?

That reason sounded rather far-fetched.

“Brother, please be lenient.”

Ming Li secretly slipped a small bag of spirit crystals to him. “We are truly benevolent cultivators, with absolutely no ill intentions.”

The scarred man weighed the bag in his hand, a glint of greed flashing in his eyes, but he quickly looked troubled. “It’s not that I’m unwilling to be lenient, but the city lord has given a strict order this time.”

“Detain all outside cultivators without clear identities. Anyone who dares to let them pass will be killed without exception. I’m just following orders; don’t make things difficult for me.”

He waved his hand. “Men, take them to the temporary detention area. We’ll talk after we’ve investigated.”

Four guards at the first rank of the Upper Immortal Realm immediately stepped forward, carrying specially made cold iron chains.

Chen Ping’s eyes turned cold, and the chaotic power within his body fluctuated slightly.

With his current strength, these guards were no match for him; forcing his way through wouldn’t be difficult.

But being new here, he didn't want to cause trouble right away and become an enemy of the city lord.

"Mr. Chen, please calm down."

Ming Li transmitted his voice, "Go with them first and see how things go. Master Han Yuan has a good reputation; he shouldn't make things difficult for us without reason. Once our identities are verified, he'll naturally let us out."

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Chen Ping took a deep breath, suppressing his urge to fight, and allowed the guards to fasten the cold iron chains around his wrists.

A chilling sealing force emanated from the chains, attempting to seal his magical power, but the slight flow of chaotic energy easily dissolved this sealing force.

Chen Ping pretended to be restrained, offering no resistance.

Ming Li did the same; with his numerous Ghost Clan secret techniques, chains of this level couldn't restrain him at all.

The two were escorted through the bustling streets.

Han Yuan City was quite lively, with shops lining both sides of the streets selling pills, magical treasures, and cultivation techniques; there were restaurants, inns, and even an auction house.

The auras of the passing cultivators varied in strength, but they were generally a cut above those of the twelfth heaven. Upper Immortals were everywhere, but not a single Heavenly Immortal was to be seen.

Chen Ping also concealed his aura, making sure no one could discern his Heavenly Immortal level.

"It seems the thirteenth heaven is indeed the middle realm, its overall strength far surpassing that of the lower realms," Chen Ping thought to himself.

Soon, they were led to a heavily guarded building in the west of the city.

The building was constructed of thick, mysterious ice, heavily guarded at the entrance, with a plaque bearing three large characters: Inspection Division.

Entering the Inspection Division, they passed through several dimly lit corridors and were pushed into a huge cell.

Dozens of cultivators, men, women, and children, were already imprisoned in the cell, their cultivation levels ranging from the first and second ranks of the Upper Immortal realm, with even some at the third rank. All of these cultivators wore expressions of fear, anger, or resentment.

The walls of the cell were covered with sealing runes, and a suffocating atmosphere filled the air.

“Two more unlucky souls.”

“Sigh, when will this ever end...”

“Is True Immortal Han Yuan truly determined to purge all outside cultivators this time?”

The prisoners whispered among themselves, their gazes towards Chen Ping and Ming Li a mixture of pity and indifference.

Chen Ping found a corner to sit down, closed his eyes to rest, and secretly observed the situation within the cell.

Ming Li, on the other hand, approached several prisoners who appeared more approachable, quietly inquiring about the situation.

“Fellow Daoists, what exactly is going on? We were arrested as soon as we entered the city, and they say the city lord lost a magic weapon?” Ming Li asked.

An old cultivator with a withered face smiled bitterly: "What lost magic weapon? That's just an excuse! The real purpose is to purge all cultivators from the Eastern Region, or anyone who might have connections to the Eastern Region!"

"The Eastern Region? Qingming Immortal Continent?" Chen Ping opened his eyes. "Exactly."

The old cultivator lowered his voice. "True Master Hanyuan received a secret report that the major human sects of Qingming Immortal Continent have been making frequent moves recently, seemingly secretly gathering forces to expand their territory into the Northern Underworld Ice Plains."

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"They may have already sent many spies to infiltrate Hanyuan City to gather intelligence, and even prepare for an inside-outside attack."

"Therefore, the city lord would rather kill the innocent than let the guilty go free, arresting all the cultivators who recently entered the city and whose identities are unknown."

"Especially those of us who fled from the Eastern Region...sigh, it's truly..." "An undeserved calamity!"

"Escape?"

Chen Ping astutely grasped this phrase. "Qingming Immortal Continent is a sacred land for human cultivation. Why would anyone flee?"

The old cultivator looked around, lowering his voice even further: "Fellow Daoist, you may not know, but Qingming Immortal Continent is no longer ruled by humans!"

"About several hundred years ago, a group of self-proclaimed divine cultivators took control of Qingming Immortal Continent. They were powerful, of noble blood, and extremely arrogant, utterly looking down on us humans."

"The divine race?"

Chen Ping's eyes narrowed.

The divine race again!

Wan Jianxing was imprisoned by the patriarch of the divine race!

"That's right, the God Race."

Fear and resentment flashed in the old cultivator's eyes. "They used some unknown means to control the high-ranking members of several top sects in the Azure Nether Immortal Continent. Now, the entire Azure Nether Immortal Continent is nominally ruled by human sects, but in reality, it's all being manipulated by the God Race."

"They ruthlessly oppress human cultivators, plunder resources, and brutally suppress any resistance. Many sect disciples and rogue cultivators couldn't bear it and fled."

"We couldn't stand the oppression of the God Race. We barely escaped with our lives to reach the relatively peaceful Northern Nether Ice Plains, hoping to settle down here. We never expected... to escape one danger only to fall into another!" The old cultivator's eyes reddened as he spoke.

A young cultivator beside him excitedly interjected, "Those bastards from the Divine Race don't treat us like human beings at all! They say we're an inferior race, only fit to be their slaves!"

"My master was turned into a puppet because he refused to submit! I must avenge him!"

"Keep your voice down!"

The old cultivator quickly covered his mouth. "Walls have ears! If the guards hear us, we're dead!"

Chen Ping listened silently, his heart churning with emotion.

The Divine Race... truly arrogant and domineering!

“Isn’t anyone doing anything about it? What about the major powers of the Central Region’s Tianyuan Sacred Continent?” Ming Li asked.

“Manage? Who’s in charge?”

The old cultivator smiled bitterly. “The Divine Race has a mysterious origin and immense power. It’s said they have powerful backers in the Central Region.”

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“Moreover, they don’t directly rule the Azure Nether Immortal Continent; they control it indirectly by controlling human sects.”

“Those major powers are indifferent, keeping to themselves. As long as we don’t infringe on their core interests, who would stand up for us small cultivators and sects?”

A heavy silence fell over the cell.

Just then, the cell door slammed open, and a group of fierce-looking guards rushed in.

“Everyone, stand up! Line up!”

The head guard captain shouted sternly.

“What? Are they letting us out?” someone asked hopefully.

“Release them?”

The guard captain sneered. "The city lord has ordered that all suspected spies be taken to the execution platform at the northernmost point of the city and executed on the spot as a warning to others!"

"What?!"

"Injustice! We're not spies!"

"Master Hanyuan, you can't kill innocent people indiscriminately!"

The cell erupted in chaos, filled with cries, curses, and pleas for mercy.

"Shut up!"

The guard captain lashed the loudest cultivator with his whip, tearing his skin. "Any further disturbance, and you're all dead! Take them all away!"

The guards rushed forward like wolves, slinging heavier shackles over each prisoner and forcibly dragging them out of their cells.

Chen Ping's eyes were icy cold.

He had initially intended to wait for identity verification, but now it seemed the City Lord of Hanyuan was determined to use this as an excuse to purge outsider cultivators.

Since that was the case, he couldn't just sit idly by.

"Mr. Chen, what should we do?"

Ming Li asked telepathically, a flash of killing intent in his eyes.

Although he was a member of the Ghost Clan, he wasn't someone to be trifled with.

"We'll play it by ear," Chen Ping replied calmly.

The group was escorted through the chilling streets, heading north of the city.

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A number of onlookers had gathered on both sides of the street, pointing and whispering, but no one dared to stop them.

Clearly, the City Lord of Hanyuan held absolute authority in Hanyuan City.

Soon, the group was brought to a massive high platform.

The high platform, constructed of millennia-old black ice, exuded a chilling aura. Thick ice pillars stood in its center, stained with dark red blood—this was the "Execution Platform," the place where Cold Abyss City executed serious criminals.

Below the platform, thousands of cultivators had gathered, including residents of Cold Abyss City and outsiders, all watching the spectacle.

Directly in front of the platform lay an ice jade throne, currently empty.

Clearly, the City Lord, True Person Cold Abyss, had not yet arrived.

"Kneel!"

The guards forcibly pressed the prisoner to the ground, facing the throne.

"The City Lord has arrived!" a loud shout rang out.

From afar, a streak of icy blue light streaked through the air and landed before the throne.

The light dissipated, revealing a middle-aged Taoist priest in an icy blue robe, with a gaunt face and a cold, aloof demeanor.

His eyes gleamed with a sharp light, his aura unfathomable; he was none other than Han Yuan Zhenren, the Lord of Han Yuan City, a fifth-rank Immortal!

With his arrival, the temperature around the execution platform plummeted, an invisible pressure enveloping the entire area, and the noisy crowd immediately fell silent.

Han Yuan Zhenren's gaze swept coldly over the dozens of prisoners on the platform, as if they were ants.

"Lord City Lord! We're innocent! We're not spies from Qingming Immortal Continent! We were forced to flee here by the oppression of the Divine Race!"

The young cultivator could no longer hold back, screaming hoarsely, his voice shrill.

"Insolence! You dare to argue even when death is imminent!" The guard captain stepped forward, ready to strike.

"Wait," Han Yuan Zhenren said calmly.

The guard captain immediately stopped, bowed, and retreated.

Master Hanyuan looked at the young cultivator, his voice icy: "Oppression by the Divine Race? Escape? How would I know? This isn't just an excuse you fabricated to infiltrate Hanyuan City?"

"If Qingming Immortal Continent is truly controlled by the Divine Race, why hasn't any news reached the Eastern Region?"

“Because the Divine Race’s power is immense; they’ve sealed off the news! Anyone who dared to spread it has been silenced!”

The young cultivator exclaimed excitedly, “If the City Lord doesn’t believe us, you can send someone to Qingming Immortal Continent to investigate! We swear on our Dao hearts that if we utter even a single falsehood, may we be struck down by heaven and earth, never to be reincarnated!”

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The other prisoners also swore oaths, tears streaming down their faces.

Master Hanyuan frowned slightly, seemingly wavering.

He wasn’t a bloodthirsty person; this purge was due to immense pressure. If Qingming Immortal Continent was truly preparing to invade the north, Hanyuan City would be the first to bear the brunt. He had to ensure there were no traitors within the city.

But what if... these people were truly innocent?

Just then, Chen Ping spoke. His voice, though not loud, carried clearly throughout the entire area, carrying a strange calm yet powerful quality:

“Lord Hanyuan, what they said is true.”

Whoosh!

All eyes instantly focused on Chen Ping.

Master Hanyuan's gaze was like lightning as he looked at Chen Ping: "And who are you? How can you be so certain?"

Chen Ping slowly rose.

The cold iron shackles on his wrists had already been quietly shattered by the power of chaos, and now they were merely resting on his hands.

This rise immediately tensed the surrounding guards.

"Insolence! Kneel!"

The guard captain shouted sharply, striking Chen Ping's shoulder with his palm, trying to force him back down.

Chen Ping didn't even look at him, simply raising his left hand casually and lightly tapping with his index finger.

Thud!

The guard captain's palm, powerful enough to split mountains and shatter rocks, abruptly stopped three inches from Chen Ping's shoulder.

He was frozen in place, as if struck by a spell, his face contorted in a ferocious expression, his eyes filled with terror. He found himself completely unable to move, even his internal magical power had solidified!

"Hmm?"

Master Hanyuan's eyes narrowed, a serious expression appearing for the first time.

He recognized that Chen Ping's finger strike contained an extremely obscure and advanced power, instantly sealing the entire cultivation of a second-grade Upper Immortal!

Moreover, Chen Ping's cultivation level was revealed the moment he made his move—a seventh-grade Heavenly Immortal!

“I am Chen Ping, from the twelfth heaven of the lower realm.”

Chen Ping calmly looked at Master Hanyuan. “As for why I am so certain... it is because I have an old grudge against the Divine Race.”

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He flicked his wrist, and the seemingly fixed cold iron chains shattered inch by inch, turning into scattering ice shards.

At the same time, a vast, boundless, chaotic aura, seemingly capable of encompassing and evolving all things, slowly emanated from his body.

This aura wasn't domineering, yet it caused all the cultivators present, including True Person Han Yuan, to feel a pressure originating from their very life force!

“What...what kind of power is this?”

True Person Han Yuan was shaken.

He had cultivated for thousands of years, witnessing various techniques and supernatural abilities, but he had never felt such a peculiar, primal power!

“The power of chaos.”

Chen Ping said calmly, “The City Lord should be able to sense that this power is fundamentally different from the powers of reincarnation, the divine race, and so on. If I were truly a spy for the Azure Nether Immortal Continent, why would I cultivate such an incompatible power?”

True Person Han Yuan remained silent.

Indeed, the aura of the power of chaos was too peculiar, unlike any known cultivation system; it couldn't possibly be a disguise.

“As for them...”

Chen Ping pointed to the prisoners, “If the City Lord doesn't believe me, I can vouch for them. If it is later proven that any one of them is a spy, I, Chen Ping, am willing to accept any punishment.”

“You vouch for them? What qualifications do you, a mere Celestial Immortal, have to vouch for them?”

True Person Han Yuan narrowed his eyes. “Just because I was able to come to the Thirteenth Heaven from the Lower Realm,” Chen Ping said calmly.

“Isn't the City Lord curious how I broke through the barrier between the two realms and arrived here with the cultivation of a Celestial Immortal?”

These words finally moved True Person Han Yuan!

The barrier between the two realms, the membrane of the laws!

These are hard rules!

Lower Realm cultivators, without reaching the Upper Immortal Realm and without sufficient comprehension of the laws, simply cannot come to the Middle Realm!

Forcibly breaking in will only result in being crushed by the laws!

This Chen Ping, able to arrive at the Thirteenth Heaven with only the seventh rank of the Celestial Immortal Realm, has only two possibilities: either he has an unimaginably powerful figure behind him, or he himself is so special that the laws give him special treatment!

Both ways mean that this person is definitely not simple!

True Person Han Yuan's expression changed. Finally, he took a deep breath and waved his hand: "Release them."

"City Lord?" The other guards were astonished.

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"I said, release them."

Master Hanyuan repeated, his voice carrying an undeniable authority.

The guards dared not disobey and quickly released all the prisoners' shackles.

The prisoners, having escaped death, cast grateful glances at Chen Ping, some even kneeling in thanks.

"You, come with me."

Master Hanyuan said to Chen Ping, then glanced at Ming Li, "and your companion."

With that, he transformed into a streak of icy blue light and flew towards the City Lord's Mansion.

Chen Ping nodded to Ming Li, and the two also took to the air, following closely behind.

Leaving behind the survivors on the execution platform, and the stunned onlookers below.

“Who...who was that person?”

“A seventh-grade Celestial Immortal, actually managed to change Master Hanyuan’s mind?”

“His aura was terrifying...”

“It seems Hanyuan City is about to change...”

...

City Lord’s Mansion, Reception Hall.

Master Hanyuan dismissed his attendants, leaving only Chen Ping and Ming Li.

He personally poured Chen Ping a cup of spiritual tea, his attitude completely different from before:
“Fellow Daoist Chen, please forgive my earlier rudeness. The pressure has been immense lately, forcing me to act with extreme caution.”

Chen Ping accepted the teacup, saying calmly, “You’re too kind, City Lord. I understand your concerns.”

Master Hanyuan sat down, his gaze fixed intently on Chen Ping: “Fellow Daoist Chen, let’s not beat around the bush. How exactly did you arrive at the Thirteenth Heaven? What kind of inheritance does your Chaos Power possess? And... you mentioned an old grudge against the Divine Race; could you elaborate?”

Chen Ping took a sip of tea, pondered for a moment, and decided to reveal part of the truth.

Master Hanyuan’s change in attitude clearly indicated his intention to befriend him, and he seemed to harbor no goodwill towards the Divine Race.

“I come from the twelfth heaven of the lower realm. I was able to come to this realm with the help of a senior.”

Chen Ping vaguely mentioned Mr. Shi’s presence. “As for the power of chaos, I obtained it by chance.”

“As for the gods... I had some conflicts with them when I was in the lower realm.”

“A friend of mine, named Wan Jianxing, was imprisoned by the patriarch of the gods.”

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“This time, I came to the thirteenth heaven not only for training but also to cause trouble for those gods.”

“Wan Jianxing... I’ve never heard of him.”

True Man Hanyuan shook his head. “However, the gods are indeed arrogant and domineering, not only in Qingming Immortal Continent, but also throughout the entire thirteenth heaven, and even higher realms...” “Their reputation is terrible. They consider themselves of noble blood, regard other races as servants, act tyrannically, and have made countless enemies.”

He changed the subject: “Fellow Daoist Chen, were you sincere in vouching for those Eastern Region cultivators just now?”

“Of course.”

Chen Ping nodded. “I believe what they said. Moreover, I deeply abhor the behavior of the Divine Race.”

A hint of appreciation flashed in Han Yuan Zhenren’s eyes: “Good! Fellow Daoist Chen is straightforward and a man of principle! Since that’s the case, I will trust you this once. I will properly settle those Eastern Region cultivators and will not make things difficult for them again.”

“Thank you, City Lord.” Chen Ping cupped his hands in thanks.

“However...”

Master Hanyuan’s expression turned grave. “The situation in Qingming Immortal Continent is probably even more severe than they say. I’ve received some clandestine intelligence; the Divine Race seems to be plotting something big in Qingming Immortal Continent, not just simple territorial expansion.”

“They very likely intend to use Qingming Immortal Continent as a springboard to gradually erode the entire Thirteen Heavens!”

Chen Ping frowned deeply: “If that’s the case, we must stop them.”

“It’s difficult.”

Master Hanyuan sighed. “The Divine Race is powerful and has a deep foundation.” “Even with my Cold Abyss City alone, or even the entire Northern Underworld Ice Plains, we can hardly contend with them. Unless... we can unite with other major domains to fight them together.”

He looked at Chen Ping, a hint of expectation flashing in his eyes: “Fellow Daoist Chen, although you are only a Celestial Immortal, your strength is extraordinary, your potential is limitless, and you also have an old grudge against the Divine Race.”

“Would you be interested in making a trip to the Azure Underworld Immortal Continent to secretly investigate the Divine Race’s strength and true purpose? If you can obtain conclusive evidence, I can contact the forces of the Central Domain and other major domains to jointly deal with them.”

Chen Ping’s heart stirred.

He was already planning to go to the Azure Underworld Immortal Continent to find Senior Mu Sha, and investigating the Divine Race’s situation was also part of his plan.

Now, with True Person Cold Abyss’s request and support, it would be much easier to proceed.

“Alright,” Chen Ping agreed. “I was already planning to go to Qingming Immortal Continent. Firstly, to find an old friend; secondly, to investigate the true nature of the Divine Race and find a way to free my imprisoned senior.”

“Excellent!”

True Master Hanyuan was overjoyed. “Fellow Daoist Chen, please don’t hesitate to ask for any support you need! I also have several secret contact points in Qingming Immortal Continent that can provide you with assistance.”

The two discussed some details, and True Master Hanyuan gave Chen Ping a brief map of Qingming Immortal Continent, contact information, and a considerable amount of Yuan Crystals as travel expenses.

It was already late when they left the City Lord’s Mansion.