

Villain 851

Chapter 851: This power does not belong to you; you have been living in lies

The older man in his black robe floated in the sky like an unyielding shroud of darkness. His bent form carried an air of exceptional age.

“Barbara...” He called out to her, his voice filled with curiosity and concern.

Why have you transformed like this? Who is responsible for such a change?

His gaze settled on the girl standing before him, her demeanor as cold as ice. He found it difficult to believe, so he ventured to speak further.

Barbara remained unchanged, her icy eyes fixed upon him. “Do you still intend to hide it from me at this moment?”

“Hide what?” He questioned, seemingly taken aback by her words.

Barbara’s eyes grew even colder, devoid of any warmth.

It appears you have grown, no longer the little girl who used to revolve around her grandfather.

The black-robed man was incredulous at her words and couldn’t help but murmur, “Do you believe discussing this now will change anything?”

Barbara’s eyes remained unyielding. “Is there any point in continuing to conceal it?”

Upon hearing this, the black-robed man was momentarily stunned, staring straight at Barbara. He knew these words came directly from her, not someone else.

“Hehe...”

Suddenly, he broke into unabashed laughter, no longer concealing his amusement. The face beneath the hood resembled a withered tree trunk with hollow eye sockets. It bore none of the gentleness Barbara had once known but exuded indifference.

“I’m curious how you orchestrated all of this,” the black-robed man inquired as he surveyed the harrowing, purgatorial scene before him. His demeanor remained indifferent as he addressed Barbara.

He had sensed a disturbance in the pawns he had placed within the Barbarian God Sect. The vitality had vanished, and communication was lost. He couldn’t arrive here from his tribe, let alone witness the horrors before him firsthand.

In his perspective, Barbara, who had adhered to the rules and followed a predetermined destiny, should never have uncovered the truth. Furthermore, the massacre that had befallen the entire Barbarian God Sect was beyond anyone’s ability to withstand. Corpses and bloodshed littered the landscape, and resistance seemed futile.

It was an utterly astonishing sight. Barbara’s entire body was drenched in blood, resembling a delicate flower caught in a torrential downpour of crimson rain. Her porcelain-like face, marred by the same blood, remained impassive as she spoke.

I’m even more curious why you’ve concealed the truth from me all this time, my dear grandfather.

Lying to me all this time? I find that hard to believe.

Am I the one who’s lying? Or has your memory of the past ten years been fabricated?

“If you had been honest and adhered to the predetermined path of growth, then I would still call you my grandfather.”

“But you were never supposed to know the truth in advance.”

Upon hearing this, the older man in the black robe suddenly smirked. Barbara interpreted his smile as ironic and scornful.

Still my grandfather? Is that the answer you’re giving me?

Barbara's eyes betrayed some tumultuous emotions.

"Grandfather..."

But for the sake of addressing me as Grandpa, I'll tell you this: Regardless of the reason, you knew the truth in advance.

"But you can't escape the destiny that awaits you."

"This is the destiny from which you cannot break free."

The black-robed man's words were cold, and the smile on his lips was cruel.

Destiny?

Barbara heard the word again, her expression still icy, unfazed by it.

"You deceived me, ensnared me—does that fit your definition of destiny?"

"You even remember being ensnared; it seems you've regained your past memories," the black-robed man sneered even more.

Past memories?

Barbara was shocked. She hadn't expected to hear such a mind-boggling revelation. In other words, she had previously possessed different memories—perhaps more distant ones.

At this moment, a splitting headache gripped her like the world-shattering before her. Chaotic memories surged, intertwining the false and the real, creating a vortex of confusion.

Barbara found herself trapped in a perplexing blur, uncertain of what was reality and what was mere illusion.

“Hehe, it appears you remain unaware,” the black-robed old man taunted. There was a trace of pity in his eyes.

Descending methodically from lofty heights, he emitted a daunting aura, attempting to bend Barbara to his will to restore the world to its original course. Yet, Barbara’s momentary confusion swiftly dissipated.

Her gaze turned icy, a radiant power surging within her palm like exploding stars. It bore the strength granted to her by Gu Changge, endowing her with almost boundless, invincible might in her current world. Even the mightiest elder of the Barbaric God Sect had fallen before her.

This isn’t your power. Who is aiding you?

The black-robed man’s expression shifted dramatically. His eyes darted about, no longer looking down upon her, searching for clues. Barbara couldn’t have acquired such power in so short, even with her regained memories of past lives.

In other words, a peerless expert lurked by her side. This individual illuminated certain truths and bestowed upon her this terrifying might. For the black-robed older man, these actions posed a direct threat to his plans, compelling him to uncover this person and take action to rectify matters.

It seems you’re unable to perceive Senior’s presence.

Barbara deduced the truth from the black-robed man’s expression. After all, Gu Changge stood beside her in the visible void, yet her grandfather remained entirely blind to him.

With this realization, Barbara felt an overwhelming sense of reassurance. Her senior’s strength and origin were nothing short of unfathomable. Although she remained oblivious to the conspiracies and schemes that lay ahead, the presence of her old at her side steadied her resolve.

Attack!!!

Barbara’s voice was cold as ice as she moved, akin to a female Shura drenched in blood rain, launching an assault on the black-robed older man.

“You underestimate the river you swim in. Do you truly believe that, with the assistance of an expert, you can escape your predetermined destiny?” The black-robed man’s tone was condescending.

You cannot.

“You remain oblivious to what awaits you.” His sneer was contemptuous as he raised his colossal palm, obscuring the sky and the sun, and brought it crashing down upon Barbara.

At this moment, his aura had surged beyond even the so-called ninth-level cultivators. Yet, there were no witnesses among the local cultivators to behold this spectacle.

The battleground, which happened to be the Barbarian God Sect, could hardly endure such destruction. The heavens and earth quaked and rumbled as ancient laws and order were disrupted, and runic symbols were obliterated. The aftermath was nothing short of devastating. Vast mountains were reduced to ash and ruin.

The fabric of the sky and earth seemed to shift, radiating a divine brilliance sweeping tens of thousands of miles. For ordinary cultivators, this was a once-in-a-millennium phenomenon.

The battle between the two titans was cataclysmic. Even the black-robed older man was astounded and disbelieving afterward. His power had surpassed the Ninth Realm of this world, yet he found it exceedingly difficult to subdue Barbara.

“Who is that person behind you?” The black-robed man shouted, his eyes dimming. A portal appeared behind him, revealing the primal, ancient aura of the barbarian tribe where Barbara resided.

“Curse you,” Barbara realized his intentions and reluctantly ceased her assault, her eyes icy.

She wished to shatter the image of the man she once held in the highest regard as a grandfather-like figure.

“It’s unwise to be overly sentimental. This strength isn’t yours, and you can’t protect the loved ones behind you,” the black-robed man sneered, somewhat self-satisfied.

After all, he had been like a grandfather to Barbara and understood her temperament well. He knew she was emotional and wouldn't allow her tribe to be ignored.

"Tell me the source of your power." The smile vanished from his face, replaced by indifference.

"Do you really want to know?" Barbara's expression carried a hint of sarcasm.

"What do you mean?" The black-robed man was momentarily puzzled, sensing Barbara's mockery, which sent a foreboding chill through him.

"Senior, he's been here all along. Can't you see him?" Barbara jeered.

The black-robed man's heart quivered, realizing Barbara wasn't attempting to deceive him. Could a formidable presence be lurking in the shadows, obscuring his vision of reality?

It appears Your Excellency is determined to intervene in this matter?

"Are you determined to be my adversary?" His gaze turned cold as he scanned the space before him. Although he couldn't perceive Gu Changge's presence, he detected subtle alterations in the world.

"I'm just passing by and aiding the poor little one."

"However, to be your adversary? You're not worthy."

Soft words emanated from the void, and Gu Changge reappeared, draped in white attire purer than snow, radiating an otherworldly charm and a jade-like spiritual essence, resembling an exiled immortal in the mortal realm.

"Who are you?" The black-robed man's pupils contracted, and his heart filled with dread. He had yet to sense Gu Changge's arrival.

Gu Changge stood there, an embodiment of the world itself, his presence overwhelming, suppressing everything.

“Who am I? You are unworthy of knowing,” Gu Changge responded lightly, his gaze casually shifting towards the trembling black-robed man.

The older man in the black robe felt like he had been struck by lightning, paralyzed and powerless, his soul and blood congealing, a chill gripping his limbs.

Senior...

Barbara hadn't anticipated that Gu Changge's presence would render the black-robed man so terrified that he couldn't move.

“I...I let Senior down. Even with such immense power, I couldn't resolve this on my own,” Barbara expressed her remorse and guilt.

She sensed that, with her current strength, she could defeat the black-robed man, perhaps even slay him. However, she was restrained on all sides and could only exert about sixty to seventy percent of her power. She had been threatened as well, forcing her to stop.

Gu Changge shook his head, not blaming her.

You've done well. Confronting your former kin, knowing he deceived you, how many could bring themselves to kill him? This is human nature. Even though you are destined to become a demon, true demons need not annihilate their humanity.

Barbara was taken aback, realizing that Gu Changge's words were a form of comfort. Before this encounter, her senior had been stern and unyielding.

She understood that Gu Changge refrained from scolding her in front of her grandfather, preserving her dignity.

“Who the hell are you? Why have you intervened in this world?” Barbara's grandfather, still immobilized, was terrified. He felt trapped in space, unable to move.

But he was confident that Gu Changge did not hail from this world.

“I’ve told you, you are not entitled to know,” Gu Changge said, his gaze still fixed.

Judging by the cultivation standards of the upper realms, Barbara’s grandfather hadn’t even reached the Sacred Realm. Nonetheless, he counted as a pinnacle figure in this remote corner of the lower domain, surpassing the so-called ninth-level cultivators.

If not for Barbara’s anomaly, Gu Changge would have hardly looked at this world. After all, he could effortlessly obliterate countless such worlds with a mere snap of his fingers.

“You can ask him any truth you wish to uncover,” Gu Changge told Barbara.

Having reached this juncture, he had no intention of prolonging the matter further, though Barbara had yet to attain the level of growth he desired. She needed refinement; this raw jade would eventually shine and reflect the heavens.

“The truth I wish to know...” Barbara wore a conflicted and hesitant expression. Though she had initially been eager to uncover it, she now hesitated, her resolve faltering.

“What’s troubling you? Is it because you lack the courage to accept it, or because you’d rather remain ignorant?” Gu Changge inquired, his gaze unwavering.

“I don’t know. It’s as if my mind is in disarray, as though there are things I didn’t know before...” Barbara shook her head, her eyes reflecting her confusion.

“Whether you wish to know or not, it’s your choice, and I won’t force you,” Gu Changge affirmed.

After a moment of contemplation, Barbara’s face gradually regained its composure.

“I believe... I’ve been living a lie all this time...”

“Not only now, but also in the distant past.” Her voice grew somber.

Gu Changge extended his hand, resting it on her head, and spoke calmly, “If you’ve chosen to accept it, then you must have the courage to bear it. Whether it’s a reflection or a dream, someone must awaken.”

Barbara nodded, her determination resurfacing. She lifted her head regarding her terrified and immobilized grandfather.

“Barbara, even if you kill me, it won’t change anything. I’m just following orders...” Her grandfather, sensing the murderous intent in Barbara’s eyes, grew increasingly uneasy. He struggled in vain but quickly despaired, for he couldn’t move, his soul trapped.

He felt like a helpless insect pinned to the ground by an overwhelming force.

“Puff...”

The next instant, Barbara didn’t allow him to finish his sentence. She plunged the short sword in her hand directly into his heart.

Chapter 852: Every death is equivalent to going through reincarnation, and the ninth life is the deception

With a sudden, gruesome splatter of blood, the dagger pierced through, and the black-robed older man’s face contorted in disbelief and despair.

He hadn’t anticipated that Barbara would take action and end his life with her own hands, and so decisively at that.

It appears I am truly changed...

I’m no longer the girl I used to be.

Yet, there was a trace of relief in the corner of his mouth as he muttered softly.

Barbara’s expression remained impassive, devoid of emotion in response to his words. She silently performed the technique Gu Changge had taught her, attempting to draw the soul of the black-robed older man and subsequently devour it.

A billowing demonic aura engulfed the area like a thick fog, swiftly enshrouding the now-ruined Barbarian God Sect.

Is this his memory?

Barbara observed the imprint contained within the spirit, ancient and inscribed with cryptic symbols.

Gu Changge glanced at it and explained, “This is a slave mark. He was merely a slave to someone else.”

“A slave?” Barbara was taken aback, lowering her gaze as if she were learning this concept for the first time.

Did that mean her grandfather had merely been following orders? But Gu Changge offered no further explanations.

He flicked his finger, and a brilliance descended upon the slave mark, causing it to disintegrate and crumble.

Barbara also witnessed her grandfather’s spirit gradually clarifying, as if it were on the verge of dissipating.

Without delay, she began to devour and absorb the memories within the soul, utilizing the nameless technique taught by Gu Changge. It encompassed many things she longed to know, including her origin, true parents, and why she found herself in this world.

She feared she might never have another chance to uncover the truth if she missed this opportunity.

Buzz!!!

The spirit, now free from the shackles of the slave mark, began to dissipate into a translucent and crystal-clear form. As Barbara continued to draw and absorb it, she finally glimpsed the scene within.

For a brief moment, she stood there, stunned, disbelief coursing through her.

There was a resounding sacrificial atmosphere, figures filling every direction. An ancient altar stood in their midst, surrounded by robed figures fervently praying. Many barbarian ancestors knelt in reverence, beseeching God for something.

At the center of the altar, a black-haired girl sat cross-legged. She bore the same appearance as Barbara, an identical face with no discernible difference. If there was any distinction, it was the girl's profoundly indifferent expression akin to an immortal iceberg.

That's me...

Barbara recognized the black-haired girl seated cross-legged, a replica of herself, down to the last detail. However, the girl exuded an ancient and formidable aura, her expression devoid of any emotion.

"Holy Maiden..."

Are they addressing me?

Barbara felt her vision blur, and the next instant, she found herself cross-legged on the altar, assuming the identity of the black-haired girl.

Moreover, the reverential calls of the barbarian ancestors surrounded her. The title was ancient, and today's barbarian tribes have long lost the concept of saints. Evidently, the tribe she belonged to was exceptionally ancient and potent, with the strength of the barbarian ancestors surpassing that of the current ninth-level cultivators.

How is the preparation?

Barbara heard her voice though she had not spoken. It was the indifferent black-haired girl on the altar who inquired.

At this moment, Barbara felt like an observer, witnessing her past self. Was this the hidden memory that her grandfather had revealed before his demise?

Who had she been before?

Barbara felt bewildered, experiencing a sharp ache between her brows as an onslaught of memories inundated her.

“Reporting to the Holy Maiden, preparations are complete. All sacrificial rites are ready, awaiting the arrival of Lord Barbarian God.”

“This time, our Barbarian tribe shall undoubtedly receive the blessings of Lord Barbarian and become the mightiest tribe on the Barbarian Continent.”

The priests responded fervently.

“The ninth generation of barbarians...”

The black-haired girl listened to the priest’s report, her gaze remaining indifferent, almost as if she were murmuring.

So, this had been a sacrifice to the barbarian gods, beseeching their divine blessings? If it was the ninth generation of barbarian gods, didn’t that trace back tens of millions of years?

At that time, the barbarians had reigned as the most formidable power in this world. Sects and orthodoxies had largely been subservient to them, and the wanton slaughter of barbarian tribes, as seen today, had been unthinkable.

Doubt crept into Barbara’s heart, and inexplicably, she sensed a hidden malevolence within the black-haired girl.

Boom!!!

The entire barbarian tribe was alive with activity, singing, dancing, offering various foods, and prostrating themselves beneath the altar, entreating the arrival of the brutal God.

Finally, a transformation unfolded in the heavens and earth. Light and shadow converged, giving rise to a majestic figure descending from the skies. Vague yet towering, it resembled an ancient god.

The barbarians erupted in ecstatic cries, their fervor reaching its zenith as they knelt before this figure. Yet, at this very moment, the black-haired girl sprang up from the altar, her gaze icy, and a burst of black light radiated from her like an ebony sun, engulfing the magnificent god-like figure.

The entire tribe stood in shock and confusion. They couldn't comprehend why their revered saint had suddenly turned against the barbarian God.

"You are unworthy of being the god of a barbarian tribe..." the black-haired girl declared indifferently. Her intent to slay the God left Barbara stunned as well, bewildered by her actions.

As the tribe's saint, she had intended to kill the very God they worshiped, a shocking betrayal that confounded all.

"People who blaspheme shall perish," the God in the void responded with indifference, lowering his eyes and extending his massive hand, poised to eliminate the heretical black-haired girl.

Yet, Barbara didn't witness the ensuing events. Instead, she felt a sharp pain between her brows as though something had been torn away and extracted from her consciousness.

That's my lost memory...

Pain etched across Barbara's face as she suddenly perceived a figure by her side, her very grandfather whom she had killed moments ago.

Had he existed in that era as well? Had he lived to this day?

Barbara was unaware of these details but continued to experience a growing tingling sensation between her brows. The memories that had been taken away began to return.

It hurts...

Barbara exclaimed, comprehending a multitude of things all at once.

Her grandfather had taken the missing fragment of her memory. Each time she perished, the memories from her previous life would be erased and fade away, akin to undergoing an authentic reincarnation.

Ninth reincarnation...

As a result, the ninth generation lived within a deception.

Gu Changge had been observing her, a peculiar expression on his face, yet he chose not to disturb her.

Chapter 853: The white-haired witch who attacks the heavens, you can call me the Demon Lord

Barbara appeared lost in her thoughts, holding her forehead as her face showed a mix of pain, struggle, and then calm. It was like a hidden, fierce current was flowing beneath a peaceful ocean surface. She was processing a flood of old memories that had suddenly filled her mind. This required time to accept and understand.

Gu Changge respectfully didn't interrupt her, allowing her to sort through these memories alone. This reflective moment didn't last long; soon, Barbara opened her eyes, her once naive face now showing maturity.

Senior...

She turned towards Gu Changge and softly murmured.

"Do you understand now?" Gu Changge asked.

Barbara nodded, then hesitated, saying, "I've sorted out some memories, but much remains unclear."

From what she recalled, she was the descendant of the original barbarians. These ancient barbarians had angered the ancient gods and were destroyed for some reason. To stop their return, the gods scattered their remains across the world.

Later, barbarian gods gained their power from these remains. Her grandfather, who raised her, was a servant of her father.

But why did he raise her? To watch over her, to make sure she followed a specific path?

Barbara needed clarification on these questions. Even her grandfather didn't know why he did this; he was following embedded commands.

Maybe this is all part of a plan by a higher god, watching from afar,”

He not only killed my father but also made me go through reincarnation, turning me into a demon, probably to avenge my father.

Barbara's face showed determination. She realized how, in each life, whenever she started remembering her past, her grandfather would step in, erase her memories, and ensure she stayed on the planned path. But unexpected things always happen.

Barbara's expression became firm as she considered various possibilities.

In each life, whenever Barbara tried to recall her past, her grandfather would appear to fix the confusion, erase her memories, and ensure she followed a predetermined path.

However, each life brought unexpected events, like the recent revelation she experienced.

She was once the saint of her tribe, but she discovered that the ninth generation of these gods consumed the previous barbarian gods. Once revered by the barbarians, the gods were not as noble as believed. They were villains who deceitfully acquired their power.

This discovery led her to confront the ninth generation of barbarian gods during a sacrificial ceremony to reveal their true nature to her people.

Barbara realized the decline of the barbarians was due to the true barbarian gods having long vanished, perhaps even consumed by their successors as sustenance.

Barbara pondered this tragic truth, understanding why those who sought the barbarian gods never returned.

It explained the fate of her adoptive father, who would also meet a grim end four years later. Her grandfather, aware of all this, killed her adoptive father to hide the truth and prevent her from recalling her past.

With this realization, Barbara's eyes reflected newfound clarity. As she reclaimed the memories her grandfather took, she felt internal barriers break away, unleashing ancient energies and knowledge within her. This power, tied to her heritage and cultivation, surged throughout her being, majestic and immense.

God? My real father?

Gu Changge observed silently, not interrupting Barbara's contemplation. Her expression shifted as she voiced her thoughts, hinting that the truth she believed might be harsher than she imagined.

Gu Changge chose not to reveal the full extent of the harsh truth to Barbara. He believed that without experiencing such harshness firsthand, Barbara couldn't truly evolve.

She was still entirely innocent in his eyes, a sharp contrast to the formidable, white-haired witch he had seen in his visions, a figure capable of challenging the heavens and startling timeless entities.

The journey to awakening the demon within her was beginning.

Senior...

Regaining her composure, Barbara looked at Gu Changge, unsure of what to say next.

"What do you plan to do now?" Gu Changge asked, smiling slightly.

"I seek revenge. I want to confront the gods, avenge the ninth generation, and my father's death," Barbara replied, her eyes alight with determination.

Gu Changge nodded, observing her intently.

"Even without my help, you possess the strength now. You can take on the ninth-level powers of this world."

Barbara felt an overwhelming force within her, capable of challenging the mightiest in the world, including immortal forces equal to the Barbarian God Sect.

This strength partly stemmed from her legacy and partly from Gu Changge's mysterious technique, which had consumed numerous elders of the Barbarian God Sect. She saw this technique as her key to vengeance.

"Senior, are you leaving?" Barbara asked, sensing a farewell in his words.

Gu Changge was more than a mentor to her; he was a beacon in her life. Without him, she felt she would be lost in deception and unprepared for the harsh reality.

Gu Changge laughed, a warm, comforting sound.

Barbara was captivated by this new side of him, her cheeks flushing as she remembered a dream about him. She was at an age where feelings of affection first blossomed, and she did not want to part from Gu Changge despite their brief acquaintance.

"In life, we meet in so many places, why feel sad about parting?" Gu Changge said gently, touching her head.

"Senior, I still don't know your name," Barbara said, looking down, her hands fidgeting beneath her sleeves.

Gu Changge smiled, looking into her eyes, and said, "You can call me the Demon Lord."

Demon Lord...

Barbara etched this name in her heart, ready to face the challenges ahead.

Chapter 854: I haven't had time to call you Master, the Dao-building expert of Yanyang Realm

Gu Changge chose not to leave immediately. In the following days, Barbara returned to her tribe to reunite with her adoptive father and the others. Gu Changge remained unseen, observing everything from a distance.

Barbara shared many secrets about the barbarian god with her adoptive father and the tribe.

Gu Changge wasn't concerned with how they would handle this information. Meanwhile, the Barbarian God Sect had been destroyed in a single day, leaving the surrounding areas in ruins and causing a stir in the world.

Many groups investigated, but Gu Changge had already taken steps to conceal Barbara's involvement.

Barbara wasn't worried about being detected by other powers in the world. Given her current strength, she had little to fear from other forces.

The nights were serene, the moonlight flowing over the tribe like water. Gu Changge stood on a distant mountain, dressed in spotless white, silently watching the lively scene below.

Barbarians sang and danced around a bright bonfire, their joy palpable. The cold wind made his clothes flutter, making him appear like an ethereal being ready to ascend under the moonlight.

I hope you don't disappoint me.

Gu Changge mused, his gaze resting on Barbara in the distance. She was smiling brightly and enjoying food and drink with her people. Her demeanor was relaxed and free. Having confronted the so-called truth, she seemed less restless and more at ease.

Gu Changge chose not to intervene.

Barbara still needed time to grow and be tempered. Revealing all the truths to her would defeat the purpose of his efforts.

Over these days, he had taught her various divine powers, forbidden techniques, and secret arts of his own creation. Before his eventual departure, he fulfilled his role as a guide, although he never formally acknowledged himself as her master. However, Barbara regarded him as a true mentor in her heart.

I look forward to our next meeting, Barbara.

Gu Changge thought to himself, but he chose not to say farewell. Farewells and formalities were of little significance to him, and he felt no need for a parting word. In the next instant, he vanished as if he had never been there, leaving no trace or impact on the world. It was as though he had never existed in this world.

At that moment, Barbara, who was joyfully dining with her tribesmen, felt a sudden, inexplicable pang in her heart.

Overwhelmed by an unknown emotion, she stood up abruptly, leaving her clan members in surprise and confusion. Driven by an inexplicable urge, she rushed towards the back mountain.

Senior...

She called out into the moonlit silence, her voice filled with anxiety, as if she had lost something invaluable. But her calls were met only with echoes, no response forthcoming.

Why...

Barbara murmured to herself. She had expected Gu Changge to stay a bit longer, at least for a few more days, and to bid her farewell in a more traditional manner. His silent departure, without a single word or gesture of goodbye, left her feeling empty and lost.

Leaning against an ancient tree, her strength seemed to drain away. She had planned to begin her journey of revenge after settling tribal matters, hoping to make Gu Changge proud. She had even formulated her next steps, but now she would never get the chance to share them with him, nor receive his acknowledgement.

I... I haven't had the chance to call you Master...

She whispered, holding onto a moon-white coat that belonged to him. Burying her face in it, she sought some connection to Gu Changge, some lingering presence of her mentor. Her mood was somber, and her usually bright and clear eyes now appeared dimmed by sadness.

For Barbara, Gu Changge was more than just a mentor. Over the days they spent together, she realized that he wasn't as indifferent as she first thought.

He patiently taught her, even taking the time to explain simple truths. She tried to get closer to him, even preparing barbecues, which he initially seemed to dislike but eventually accepted. To Barbara, this was a sign of their growing bond.

However, just as unexpectedly as he had arrived in her world, Gu Changge left without a trace. Despite her sadness, Barbara believed that they would meet again, and she would be able to call him 'Master' in person.

Shaking off her gloom, Barbara realized she had a long journey ahead. She was determined to find the god responsible for her plight, defeat him, and make her name known across the universe.

After paying her respects to the silent forest, she left resolutely.

Meanwhile, in a distant part of the universe, where life-bearing stars and ancient star beasts roamed, a middle-aged man in simple silk attire was attending to matters in a grand palace.

The palace, inscribed with the ancient characters "Zhou Mie," was a sight to behold.

Interrupting his work, a report came about a broken token found in the Hall of Destiny. The middle-aged man, the patriarch, inquired about the token's owner. Learning it belonged to someone associated with Barbara, his interest peaked.

He mused that if Barbara could pass the final trial, she might take over his Zhou Mie Mansion. With time, he contemplated, she could even become a Dao-building expert in the Yanyang Realm.

Chapter 855: Birth of a transcendence-level True Immortal, also the right name

In a universe filled with countless stunning realms, the Yanyang realm stood out as one of the most magnificent and powerful, highly regarded among its peers. It was renowned for nurturing a supreme, everlasting being, a true immortal of transcendence-level.

Since ancient times, numerous realms had withered and fallen victim to endless disasters, lost in the relentless flow of time, transforming into remnants of their former glory, their existence long forgotten.

However, some realms survived these tumultuous times, preserving their legacies and remaining vibrant against the ravages of time and nature. Amidst these enduring worlds, the Yanyang realm was celebrated as a timeless and immortal realm, commanding immense respect across the vast universe.

Even the most formidable entities capable of traversing the boundless expanse would show reverence and dare not provoke the Yanyang Realm's name. Within this realm, the Zhou Mie Mansion held a position of unmatched dominance.

Equally renowned were Jiesheng Temple, Wangsheng Cave, Wunian Mountain, and others, tracing their roots to the very inception of the real world's evolution.

Within the inheritances of these immortal forces, one might even find the most ancient and ancient entities, who had lain dormant for immortality, employing various means to evade the toll of time and destiny's grasp.

Whether it was the Five Declines or the subsequent Nine Declines, or even longer epochs, the true extent of their existence remained an enigma.

"Miss Barbara required a total of nine lifetimes to overcome these trials. Amongst the descendants of our Patriarch, her progress could be considered relatively modest."

"The other young masters and ladies had already started to scheme against one another in their previous lives, laying out plans for generations to come. Only Miss Barbara perished in her ninth life. In terms of natural talent, she could be deemed as below par."

"The old servant speculates that her swift breakthrough in this life might be attributed to a stroke of luck or some unique opportunity."

The aged gatekeeper at the hall's entrance replied, sharing these thoughts one by one, expressing his uncertainties.

"That is indeed a possibility."

Hearing this, the middle-aged man nodded in agreement, though his expressions remained icy.

He continued, “But whether it’s luck or opportunity, it all adds to her strength. If she can successfully overcome the final trial, who’s to say she won’t inherit the Zhou Mie Mansion in the future?”

Confronted with the middle-aged man’s resolute and unyielding statement, the elderly attendant outside the hall offered a wry smile.

His concern did not revolve around whether Miss Barbara could pass the final test; it was the idea that she could secure the future successorship of the Zhou Mie Mansion that troubled him.

Realistically speaking, this was an unattainable goal. The competition for this position was incredibly fierce, with numerous contenders backed by substantial resources and family influence. In contrast, Miss Barbara stood alone, with no knowledge of her biological mother—an enigma that no one dared to probe.

When the Patriarch had brought her back, he merely stated that she was his illegitimate daughter from the outside world, revealing nothing about her true parentage. In this cutthroat contest for the Zhou Mie Mansion’s future leadership, it seemed that Miss Barbara had no chance.

The impending calamity approaches once more, and I sense that the other real worlds are on the verge of action. The Shangyin real world will undoubtedly seize this opportunity to establish itself as the sole dominant realm...

Within the hall, the middle-aged man paid little heed to the concerns of the aging servant outside. His eyes held the depth of the vast starry sky as he muttered about another pressing matter.

The forthcoming calamity would not only engulf the vast heavens but also spare no corner of the boundless expanse. Even the most formidable individuals concealed within it would face reckoning.

Ancient and mighty realms like the Yanyang Realm should not underestimate the gravity of this impending catastrophe. What they did not realize was that this calamity was orchestrated by the ethnic group on the far side of the original world.

In the presence of legendary anomalies, it might culminate in a world-wide purge, resurrecting horrific beings from the depths of the original world—an appalling nightmare that every real world dreaded.

At that very moment, in the world of mountains and seas, the realm of origin, in the higher echelons of existence, the unfolding events continued to shape the course of destiny.

Gu Changge's presence manifested in the depths of the Divine Kingdom. Despite spending a significant amount of time in Barbara's small world, in the upper realm, only a few hours had elapsed. The disparity in the worlds' levels resulted in a stark difference in the passage of time.

"It seems that I don't need to oversee the Divine Kingdom myself," Gu Changge mused. With Mingkong, Chu Chu, and Yin Mei in charge, there's no need for concern.

His spiritual awareness extended to every corner, where the echoes of offerings, chants, and prayers reverberated from all directions. The power of faith converged like a boundless sea of incense smoke, granting him clearer insight into various scenes across heaven and earth.

Temples and halls, adorned with his statues, dotted the landscape, the incense burning in endless devotion. Furthermore, the Divine Kingdom's presence had restored order to the upper realm, imposing rules that prevented various forces from acting recklessly as they once did. Even remote universal forces had to pay tributes and obey commands.

The List of Immortals had sparked hope for countless cultivators who had previously despaired of attaining immortality, indirectly contributing to the Divine Kingdom's stability.

Gu Changge contemplated announcing the Immortal Passage when he was ready to fully connect with the Immortal Realm, as he held both the List of Immortals and control over the Immortal Passage.

However, this would primarily benefit the upper realm, as the imminent collision and merger of the two worlds would inevitably bolster the realm's high-end combat capabilities. Ordinary immortals would become less scarce in this newly merged reality.

While the upper realm remained stable and peaceful, the immortal realms, foreign lands, and other real worlds faced increasing troubles.

Gu Changge believed it essential to locate Gu Qingyi, as she was the true spirit of the world of mountains and seas and had established the Immortal Palace. Her presence would provide legitimacy to the Divine Kingdom's existence.

Before addressing other matters, Gu Changge had a different task in mind. The Temple of Destiny resided on the eastern bank of the Divine Kingdom, nestled close to the vast sea of stars. Floating islands surrounded the area, enshrouded in mist, casting a cool, perpetual hue devoid of any radiance.

At the heart of this divine location stood the grand and solemn Temple of Destiny, exuding an ancient aura.

Inside, an exceptionally beautiful and captivating woman, adorned in the moon-white robes of an officiant, sat in a cross-legged position. The hall was barren, devoid of anyone, not even a servant.

Her blue hair cascaded like a waterfall, and her countenance remained placid and unwavering, radiating an aura untouched by worldly distractions. She bore the likeness of an immortal from the Ninth Heaven.

Empress Ruoyin, as she was known, held the esteemed position of High Priest within the Divine Kingdom and was also the guardian of this sacred place. Gu Changge's figure materialized outside the Temple of Destiny, and he proceeded to enter.

Chapter 856: I still hope that His Majesty will come here more often; the end of the trek

Xiao Ruoyin was immersed in contemplating destiny, a soft and immortal radiance enveloping her form like a pristine moon god, exuding a cold yet enchanting aura with a crystal-like luster gracing her skin.

Taken aback by Gu Changge's unexpected visit, she hastily rose and offered a respectful salute.

"Concubine greets Your Majesty."

"You needn't be so formal," Gu Changge replied with a natural air, gesturing dismissively.

His gaze swept the vast, desolate hall devoid of warmth or life. Even during his approach from a distance, he had expected to see at least a servant or two.

He asked, "Are you the only one in the Temple of Destiny now?"

Xiao Ruoyin responded without much concern, “Reporting to Your Majesty, one concubine is sufficient within the Temple of Destiny.”

She had grown accustomed to solitude and coldness. Even during her tenure in the Immortal Palace, she had often been the sole inhabitant of the Temple of Destiny, with livelier gatherings reserved for grand ceremonies.

Gu Changge smiled faintly as he stood before her, remarking, “Although solitude has its charm, it lacks a certain vitality. If you have the time, consider spending more time with Mingkong and the others, discussing matters related to the Temple of Destiny or anything else. It’s better than remaining alone.”

After all, Xiao Ruoyin was one of his companions. While their past interactions had been fraught with schemes and calculations, those days were behind them.

Gu Changge saw no reason to harbor grudges or create distance between them over past grievances.

“I understand,” Xiao Ruoyin replied, her beautiful gaze locked onto Gu Changge’s face before she lowered her eyes.

She continued, “However, if Your Majesty could find the time, I would still appreciate Your Majesty’s presence here more often.”

Gu Changge had yet to anticipate such a request from her.

In the past, if Xiao Ruoyin had held the title of High Priest of Destiny in the Immortal Palace, she would never have dared to make such a request. However, the current Xiao Ruoyin differed from her past self, and Gu Changge didn’t deny her request.

“It’s true that I’ve come for the Fateful Immortal Boat,” Gu Changge confirmed.

“A few hours ago, the red-clothed female devil and Tao Yao from Peach Village borrowed the Fateful Immortal Boat. I realized I couldn’t match them, so I made the decision to lend them the immortal boat.”

Xiao Ruoyin was wise enough to understand that Gu Changge hadn't come to visit her. She had correctly assumed that Tao Yao, the red-clothed female devil, had some inexplicable connection with Gu Changge.

Gu Changge nodded, not blaming her for her actions. "I'm aware of their intentions. They plan to use the Fateful Immortal Boat to navigate the river of time and travel back to ancient eras in search of some truths." He shook his head slightly.

Xiao Ruoyin had also guessed this as the likely reason for their actions. After all, Gu Changge's true identity was rooted in an era even more distant than the Forbidden Era.

Furthermore, the red-clothed female devil, Chan Hongyi, was his disciple.

However, the current situation indicated an unbridgeable rift between the red-clothed female devil and Gu Changge, with their swords pointed at each other.

On the day of Gu Changge and Yue Mingkong's wedding, the red-clothed female devil personally sent an immortal corpse to expose Gu Changge's true identity, sending shockwaves throughout the upper realm.

Even Xiao Ruoyin had yet to learn why Gu Changge had taken action to destroy the Immortal Palace and bury that taboo era. Before that, she had believed that the Demon Lord and the Great Palace Master of the Immortal Palace had an exceptionally close relationship.

Gu Changge cut to the chase, asking, "Do you have a connection to the Fateful Immortal Boat?"

Xiao Ruoyin replied, "I can sense the existence of the Fateful Immortal Boat, but it will take some time to prepare..."

Gu Changge understood that he could afford to wait a bit, so he immediately urged Xiao Ruoyin to begin determining the current time coordinates of the Fateful Immortal Boat.

The Forbidden Era had long been shattered and lost within the vast river of time, concealed beneath an endless shroud of mist. In this realm, indescribable creatures lurked, preying on those who inadvertently ventured into the river of time, consuming them as sustenance.

Chan Hongyi and Tao Yao's quest to return to the Forbidden Era was unlikely to succeed; at most, they might encounter fragments of broken time.

Time was the most terrible and enigmatic force in the world, challenging even those who had achieved immortality.

Despite Gu Changge's current strength, he could traverse the river of time, but altering and reversing events came at a significant cost, potentially triggering profound upheavals in the upper realm. It might even attract the attention of supreme beings, disrupting their subsequent plans.

The ancient sacrificial rites blazed inside the temple, casting a solemn expression across Xiao Ruoyin's beautiful face as she attempted to pinpoint the Fateful Immortal Boat's location while communicating with it in the shadows.

Seated in a cross-legged posture, her moon-white robe stirred without any discernible breeze, and a radiant glow enveloped her, concealing a multitude of ancient runes within the void.

Before her, a misty brilliance began to manifest, resembling a tranquil water surface that suddenly sent forth ripples. Dao runes soared, and the laws of time merged as the immortal spirit took shape.

Time nodes...

Gu Changge muttered, his deep-set eyes revealing myriad scenes: colossal stars descending, universes collapsing, each sight fraught with tremendous terror.

Behind him, vast and mysterious fluctuations emerged, giving birth to an endless river of time, resonating with a cascading, tinkling sound.

Within this river of time, fragments floated by, and boundless chaotic energy hung in the air as if descending from the world's edge. It was vast and shrouded in the mysteries of the universe.

This river was faint, its contours unclear, merely a minor tributary in the grand river of time. Yet, for Gu Changge's current purpose, it was sufficient to pinpoint a node along the river.

With the Fateful Immortal Boat in his possession, Gu Changge didn't need to expose his physical form to traverse the river of time and endure the terrible backlash.

Soon, a blue, enigmatic inscription appeared in the palm of his hand, radiating an aura of time and space, casting a faint, mysterious glow.

“This is a Space-time Monument. Once we’ve identified a space node, I can use it to navigate, ensuring we won’t become lost within the river of time.”

Gu Changge explained in a hushed tone. His eyes remained fixed on the river of time.

Gradually, he ascertained the positions of various nodes, perceiving the immense aura emanating from those points. This process required careful consideration; an erroneous node selection could result in wasted time.

Previously, Gu Changge had borrowed the Space-time Monument to devise a plan for attacking the upper realm. Now, he employed the monument as a spatial-temporal coordinate system to determine the end of his journey.

The concubine has sensed the location of the Fateful Immortal Boat...

Xiao Ruoyin’s eyes opened, her senses attuned to a meaningful connection from somewhere. She swiftly identified a minor node within the river of time and sensed that the Fateful Immortal Boat was present at that precise moment.

Chapter 857: The past, future, and present are all shrouded, buried in the dark ages

When Gu Changge heard the words, he acted immediately. Transforming the Time-Space Monument into a beam of light, he hurled it forward.

The once-continuous river before him was now fractured, with a massive disruption making it impossible to see beyond. All around, the endless river surged with mighty, awe-inspiring waves.

“This must be the place,” Gu Changge concluded. He had already marked the location using the Time-Space Monument before the energy vanished.

Buzz!

Gu Changge stepped ahead, transforming into a ray of light and racing towards the river of time. His immense energy shot into the sky and vanished like a shooting star.

The grand illusion of the time river faded away as if it had never been there.

In today's Upper Realm, your majesty's power will only grow more mysterious with such free travels.

Xiao Ruoyin mused, watching Gu Changge disappear. She spoke with a mix of emotions.

Gu Changge's ambitions had remained unchanged over time. Since the Forbidden Era, he roamed as a demon lord, struck down the original world as a heaven-slayer, and now, as an immortal, he reigned supreme in the heavens.

His plans were unfolding smoothly, step by step.

The reshaping of the Mountain and Sea World will surely draw the other Realms' attention...

There's plenty of time before the world's calamity strikes to elevate this body to the next level.

The other two ancient ancestors must be plotting, just like me.

The original world, positioned high above, was the birthplace of all universes and realms in the heavens. As long as its source remained, the celestial world could be destroyed and reborn endlessly without consequence.

The three true ancestors were the foundation of everything in the original world. Immortal and beyond comprehension, they existed at a level unimaginable to all beings.

In the time river, blue waves rippled peacefully, covering every corner of the sky like a vast net. This immortal place was shrouded in chaotic mist under a bright moon that hung at the horizon.

Each wave here symbolized an era, its rise and fall, decay and renewal, destruction and rebirth.

Gu Changge walked through this river, enshrouded in mist, his true face hidden. His past, present, and future were veiled in this thick fog, untouched by cause and effect in the river of time. This was a power beyond description.

From this point in the time river, one could see deep and dark abysses filled with chaos, where the order was shattered and the Dao-building expert cut like a knife. Terrifying energies intertwined, threatening to destroy souls and spirits.

Crossing this dark chasm led to the taboo era, where the Time-Space Monument's coordinates pointed to a universe of vast chaos, laytime and space buried before time itself.

Even beings beyond the Immortal King could not find a foothold here, as the cosmos had erased all traces. Like a drop in the ocean, indistinguishable and impossible to navigate.

Gigantic waves crashed into the dark sky, where an ancient, weathered bronze boat sailed through the darkness. This place was more than just a river of time; it was an endless black sea devoid of light and enveloped in fog.

Aboard the boat, Chan Hongyi and Tao Yao struggled against the chaotic aura, feeling deeply exhausted. Every part of them, from mind to mana, was weary.

Their journey against time's flow back to the past defied nature. Protected by the Fateful Immortal Boat, they felt like they'd traveled for thousands of years in this dark sea, losing touch with the river of time.

The passage of actual years remained a mystery. Day after day, Tao Yao and Chan Hongyi searched endlessly, trapped in an unceasing loop.

"Perhaps we are destined to be lost in these ancient, dark years, never finding our way."

Tao Yao said with a light smile. Even in these circumstances, her beauty was striking, adding a touch of elegance to her somber surroundings.

She felt as though she had aged thousands of years, her once vibrant aura now dimmed, covered by a faint glow, no longer as lively and captivating. This was the true terror of exile, the unrelenting weariness from endless searching and losing one's way. It had the power to erode even the strongest of spirits.

“What does it matter if we’re buried here?” countered Chan Hongyi, her voice soft yet determined.

I’ve come too far to give up now. Even if I end up trapped, my body and spirit destroyed, I’ll still seek those coordinates.

But her resistance seemed as insignificant as a grain of millet in the sea amidst the fragments of broken ancient universes and eras swirling around them. It was a boundless, timeless space, so vast that identifying the age was impossible.

Then, suddenly...

Click!

A startling clap of thunder struck, accompanied by a blinding light. The dark fog that enveloped the distance began to churn violently, with dark rays piercing as if tearing it apart.

The already tumultuous sea became even more chaotic, with towering waves reaching skyward, threatening to engulf everything in their path. Against such a formidable scene, any living creature would appear as insignificant as an ant.

The Fateful Immortal Boat trembled violently, seemingly unable to withstand the sudden surge of chaotic energy, on the verge of being capsized by the massive waves.

Why has the river of time become so turbulent? Could it be that our crossing has been detected by an entity at time’s far end, prompting them to restore order... perhaps even to bury and exile us here?

Tao Yao, dressed in pristine white, speculated with a frown. She extended her long sleeves, attempting to calm the turbulent energies.

However, her effort seemed to break the last vestige of tranquility. The area erupted in chaos; fragments flew, waves engulfed everything, and the ancient bronze boat capsized.

Vast swathes of the universe were punctured by black, terrifying lightning. The time river surged wildly, and the fabric of time itself seemed to tear apart.

Tao Yao couldn't maintain her stance; her dress quickly scorched black as she was struck by dense, formidable lightning, causing her to cough up blood.

Perhaps we have been noticed.

Chan Hongyi murmured, observing the dark, shattered seascape. Among the chaos, fragments of ancient eras flew about, each representing a different past period, etched by time.

After a moment of silence, Tao Yao declared, "Regardless of the cause, it's time to make a decision. I've come too far to turn back now."

Chan Hongyi's resolve was firm. She stepped off the Fateful Immortal Boat, braving the onslaught of real thunder, which enveloped her like a dark sea. She sought the fragments of shattered eras, hoping to sense a familiar presence among them.

"It looks like we can only hope for the best."

Tao Yao remarked, following Chan Hongyi. Her figure quickly disappeared into the tumultuous and chaotic black maelstrom, soon engulfed utterly.

Chapter 858: A god is standing three feet above the head, Hongyi in childhood

I've heard there's an unmatched demon on top of that mountain ahead. Even the true immortals from the Immortal Palace take a long way around when they pass here.

But brother.

The Jade Moon Flower our Master wants us to find is said to be in the Absolute Demon Abyss behind that mountain. If we don't cross the mountain, how will we get the flower?

Surrounded by a dense mist, they stood in an ancient, picturesque bamboo forest. Each bamboo stalk was as thick as a bowl, densely packed, and a rich emerald green. The forest rustled softly with every breeze.

Young cultivators gathered in a pavilion deep within the bamboo forest, gazing at the towering mountains in the distance. They wore uniform robes adorned with Excalibur patterns on the cuffs, radiating a delicate and flowing light.

The speaker, a handsome man in Dao-building expert robes with sharp, sword-like brows and bright eyes, carried a Dao sword resembling a young immortal sword on his back.

Listening to his junior sister, his eyes flashed with the gleam of his sword. He stared intently at the distant mountain.

“We could detour through the Netherlands on the other side, but beware of the dirty river there. It’s always shrouded in miasma and mist, and home to many large monsters...”

“Be cautious. If you’re attacked by demons there, I might not be able to protect everyone.”

He continued, “However, I’ve heard the monsters in the Netherlands have been quiet lately. Usually, many of our fellow disciples would be here to hunt demons and assist the nearby villages and cities.”

The bamboo forest, vast and fragrant with a refreshing breeze, spanned a large area. These were inner disciples of the Divine Sword Sect, each with exceptional talent.

The young leader, a prominent true disciple, was under the tutelage of a master expected to attain immortality in his lifetime.

The young junior sister who had just spoken appeared to be around sixteen or seventeen. She had bright eyes and a fair complexion that glowed with youthful lustre. Her smile revealed two charming dimples at the corners of her mouth.

With a cheerful grin, she suggested, “Brother, let’s take the detour through the Netherlands. I’d much rather face a big monster than cross that mountain. I heard the demon there has nine heads, eighteen arms, three eyes on each head, and devours many young women daily...”

“Even the ancient great demons are terrified of this peerless devil,” she added, her eyes wide with fear and fascination.

As she spoke about the demon, the other disciples of the Divine Sword Sect joined in, eagerly sharing the rumors they'd heard.

"Yes, I've also heard that even the immortals from the Immortal Palace are wary of entering that area," one disciple added.

"The Netherlands borders the dark sea, a vast ancient battlefield filled with the remnants of countless fallen warriors. It's said that the presence of this mountain keeps the dark sea at bay," another disciple chimed in.

The group of juniors chatted animatedly about these tales. The leading young man, trying to hide a smile, admonished them gently.

"You should know better than to speak so openly about such things. We're close to that mountain. Aren't you afraid of attracting the attention of that peerless demon?"

Some of the disciples grew pale at his words and fell silent, their earlier bravado fading.

The young leader shook his head, half in exasperation, half in fondness.

And you think you're ready to venture out alone for training? You'd be no match for any monster at this rate.

Straightening his face, he respectfully clasped his fists towards the mountain and said, "We meant no disrespect, senior. We'll be on our way now."

Seeing their senior brother's serious demeanour, the other disciples grew even more apprehensive, recalling the terrifying rumours.

"Let's go," he said, turning to lead the way. Internally, he laughed, satisfied that his ploy to instil caution in the younger disciples had worked. It was a reminder for them to always be vigilant during their travels.

Unexpectedly, their playful scare tactics had truly alarmed the group. But before they could leave the bamboo forest, a crisp, melodious voice sounded like pearls falling onto a jade plate.

A girl in red appeared, her features delicate and striking. Her eyebrows were like fine emerald, her nose as smooth as jade, and her lips naturally rosy.

She wasn't ancient, but it was clear that she would grow into a woman of breathtaking beauty. She exuded an air of sarcasm, standing with her sword on a bamboo tree, her gaze coolly appraising the group of young cultivators.

Song Ming, the leader of the group, was taken aback. He hadn't expected to encounter another cultivator here. He observed the girl in red, his surprise evident, but his good manners prevailed. He smiled and greeted her politely, "Song Ming of the Divine Sword Sect greets the girl."

The other cultivators looked at the girl in red with curiosity, surprised to meet another practitioner in such a place. They avoided this area because of their quest to collect the Jade Moon Immortal Flower.

The girl in red, however, seemed uninterested in conversation. She regarded Song Ming with a hint of dissatisfaction, likely displeased with his earlier comments.

Realizing she must have overheard his attempt to frighten the juniors, Song Ming tried to lighten the mood.

I apologize if my words were inappropriate. May I ask what brings you here?

The girl in red frowned, seemingly unimpressed by his lack of sincerity. Without further words, she turned to leave.

She had descended the mountain on her master's orders to hunt large monsters in the Netherworld and hone her sword skills. But hearing this group of young cultivators speak disrespectfully about her master had irked her.

She had hoped to teach them a lesson for their irreverence but decided against it. Her respect for her master was profound, and she had expected Song Ming to show some fear or remorse, but his casual attitude only increased her dissatisfaction. She walked away, holding back her urge to correct them.

Chapter 859: The Master I love and hate the most, why save me?

When you lift your head three feet, there are beings akin to gods, but that's just a tale from the past. Why does the girl take it so seriously?

Could it be that you've truly ventured to the mountain ahead and witnessed that unparalleled devil?

Observing the departure of the red-clad girl, Song Ming couldn't help but smile as he noticed her heading the same way. He followed with a group of younger siblings.

However, the girl in red remained silent, appearing indifferent. It seemed she had reached her limit after uttering those few words moments ago.

The girl is also headed to the Netherworld; coincidentally, we are on the same path.

The Netherworld is overrun by demons, posing numerous risks. Going alone might lead to trouble, and having a group ensures safety. We have many people here, all heading the same way. There will be plenty to watch over us...

Girl...

...

The bamboo forest rustled, and thick fog surged, creating a paradise-like atmosphere.

Each bamboo displayed purple lines, and some million-year-old bamboo served as excellent material for crafting flying swords.

Sea of Clouds and Purple Bamboo Forest...

A soft murmur echoed in the expansive bamboo forest.

Chan Hongyi stood in the void, her eyes reflecting complexity like an outsider witnessing these events.

Especially in this familiar bamboo forest, many places bore the marks of her sword practice. The bamboo pavilion where a group discussed her master earlier had been built by her hands.

Yet now, she could only observe the past as an eyewitness.

Watching the red-clad girl depart, observing Song Ming and his juniors chasing after her, the river of time became chaotic in the abyss shrouded in endless dark fog.

She resembled a small boat torn asunder, waves threatening to overturn it at any moment, to submerge it forever.

Even the Immortal King was susceptible to physical and spiritual destruction in such a daunting situation.

Now, her cultivation base had yet to recover to its peak fully, and while she surpassed the Immortal King in certain aspects, she hadn't quite reached that level.

In that critical moment, Chan Hongyi believed her demise was imminent. The thunderous seas overwhelmed her spirit and soul, shattering the imprint, and her being was instantly obliterated, indeed vanishing from this world.

Strangely, she didn't feel despair.

On the contrary, an unexpected tranquility enveloped her heart, mixed with a hint of regret. Perishing on the path of seeking truth seemed a fitting choice.

However, Chan Hongyi didn't anticipate that, as she quietly awaited her death, the entire tumultuous river of chaos suddenly calmed. Even the real thunder descending from the sky vanished.

Immersed in the seabed, her body found support from an invisible force reminiscent of warm arms. A childhood memory surged, and she murmured, thinking it might be a pre-death flashback. Attempting to open her eyes, she encountered darkness, unable to see clearly.

"Master, is that you?" she whispered.

No answer came. When she opened her eyes again, she found herself in the vast bamboo forest.

She had returned to ancient times, the era she longed to revisit, an incredible feat.

Chan Hongyi's emotions were intricate. She initially dismissed it as a death-induced dream but realized she had genuinely emerged from the underwater abyss. It wasn't a dream or hallucination.

Why did you save me again, and why bring me back to this era?

She pondered softly in the void.

My favorite and also my most hated Master.

Gu Changge's motives eluded her. The long river of time stirred, plunging into chaos once more. This was the other end of the timeline, disturbed by a potent aura. Gu Changge must have entered this temporal river, affecting her and Tao Yao.

But then, why intervene to save her?

"Master, I've just realized that I never truly understood you."

Chan Hongyi confessed, grappling with a complexity of emotions. Sealed in the Demon Burying Abyss, she counted days in silence, marking the passing of time with the disappearance of light beyond the abyss. Again and again.

She counted unnumbered years, spanning the taboo era and several inter-epochs, striving to break free. In the midst of it, she teetered on the brink of madness, consumed by hostility, transformed into a true devil with a sole desire to defy the heavens.

Upon escaping the Demon Burying Abyss, she bathed the upper realm in blood, relentlessly advancing towards Gu Changge.

Love turned to hatred, and Chan Hongyi felt this characterization was apt. However, her temperament stabilized as her cultivation base recovered, allowing her to rein in the hostility.

Though still possessed, she no longer succumbed to a mind consumed by the single-minded urge to kill.

What truth am I seeking...

Chan Hongyi's form vanished, trailing behind the red-clad girl like a spectator. She witnessed the girl's journey to the Netherworld and her warnings to the disciples of the Divine Sword Sect not to follow. She observed the interaction with Song Ming, aiming to bring him closer to the red-clad girl.

The red-clothed girl remained cold, ignoring Song Ming and harboring the constant desire to draw her long sword and end him.

Chan Hongyi glimpsed her former self, a touch of tenderness appearing on her face. She had found Song Ming annoying back then but understood he harbored genuine feelings for her despite their brief encounter.

Chan Hongyi didn't reflect on this then, dismissing him as annoying but not malicious. He even cared for some monsters in the Netherworld on her behalf.

When she disclosed this to her master, it displeased him, leading to minimal contact with the sect's disciples. An ancestor from Song Ming's sect arrived, and Song Ming knelt at the mountain's foot the next day.

Initially considering these memories as hazy, Chan Hongyi realized she had chosen to forget them.

Returning to this era made them vivid once more. As she moved through the timeline, her figure advanced through a fragment of time and space compared to the vast river of time. Yet, for the people in this timeline, it meant thousands or even tens of thousands of years.

Chapter 860: Chasing the past truth, Chan Hongyi's heart trembles

This was a fragment of time buried in the ancient era. The surrounding fields were shrouded in darkness, submerged in the long river of time—a place found only by luck.

Chan Hongyi needed to be more specific about her safe return to her present world. For her, traveling upstream along the long river of time to discover the truth was paramount.

Despite her determination, there was no guarantee she wouldn't be swayed by the past, immersed in its beauty, and lose sight of her original purpose.

She refrained from returning to the mountain, fearing the allure of the past's enchanting fragments. Her resolve was firm, but susceptibility to the past loomed.

Time passed, slowed, then reversed. Chan Hongyi walked amidst blurred time scenes, an observer experiencing these moments firsthand. Eventually, she found herself back at the familiar mountain.

At the mountain's foot, a timid little girl in red clutched the sleeve of an indistinct figure. Many bandits knelt in fear before the little girl, begging for mercy.

"They destroyed your village and burned your home. Don't you want revenge?" Like a divine power, a gentle voice calmed the restless angry little girl.

"Yes," she replied, her voice crisp and determined.

"Then take revenge now. They're all in front of you; you can deal with them as you wish." The man's voice remained gentle as if the world's disturbances couldn't touch him.

Chan Hongyi observed from a distance as the little girl in red, wielding a simple knife, systematically dispatched the bandits in front of her. Unfazed by the blood on her face and body, her clear eyes harbored an intense hatred for revenge.

In her heart, those bandits had slaughtered her previous village, including her parents and many innocent villagers. From that day on, she relied on her master for life, regarding him as the closest person in the world.

However, she never fathomed that the cruel truth would later be revealed. The very bandits who massacred her village were orchestrated by her revered master. In other words, the person she respected and admired the most became her greatest enemy.

When this revelation struck, her heart felt like a knife. She couldn't believe it and refused to accept it. It wasn't until she tearfully confronted her master and received a calm affirmation that the shocking truth unfolded before her.

It turned out that the master's indifference was ingrained in his very nature, and he remained oblivious to her heart-wrenching pain during that time.

Chan Hongyi realized that the world she thought had crumbled, and the master she believed she knew well had never revealed his true face.

Witnessing this scene again, Chan Hongyi couldn't conceal the sadness in her heart; it was difficult for her to bear.

Is the so-called truth still important?

She pondered, questioning herself.

She encountered many people throughout her journey but still needed to receive the answers she sought.

Returning to the foot of the mountain, she once again confronted a past she wished to forget, seemingly on the verge of reopening a scarred wound. Standing at a distance, she ultimately chose to walk away.

Unsure of what truth she sought and whether it truly existed, she questioned, "Or is it just something I believe and feel exists but, in reality, doesn't?"

Chan Hongyi resembled a lonely wandering soul, traversing through ancient times, unseen by anyone. She felt akin to the helpless little girl in red.

Later, she reached the Netherworlds and encountered Tao Yao, then just a little demon being bullied by older demons. Chan Hongyi observed Tao Yao's transformation from a gentle and timid individual to her altered appearance.

Even if it's me...

Chan Hongyi murmured, spanning several years, finding herself in a familiar small village. The village appeared peaceful, surrounded by mountains, rivers, rice paddies, and tranquility.

Villagers worked from sunrise to sunset. Some faces, initially blurred, became clear—unrecognizable names but oddly familiar. Back then, she lived carefree, unaware of cultivation, merely learning from her parents about immortals who could soar into the sky and escape the earthly realm in this world.

But all of this was shattered one night when bandits attacked the village, drenching it in blood, and a raging fire consumed everything.

Desiring to understand why her master orchestrated this tragedy, Chan Hongyi sought an explanation. She felt she could accept it even if it was suitable or inappropriate.

However, no straightforward answer or lie was forthcoming. Chan Hongyi sighed, observing the events quietly as time rewound to the year of her birth.

Chan Hongyi's eyes narrowed at that moment, and the calmness disappeared. She fixedly stared at the night sky as a red light flashed, bright as a shooting star, heading directly to the village of her birth.

Is this red light on me?

In that red light, she sensed a familiar aura—her own. The red light descended with a baby's cry, marking her birth.

Why don't I have any memories before?

Chan Hongyi frowned, scrutinizing her mind but finding no recollection of this event. She had never heard her parents speak of her birth or the remarkable red light that accompanied it.

This astonishing red light illuminated half the village, inciting barking dogs and drawing villagers' attention. The unexpected vision led some to believe the newborn would bring disaster: villagers, even her parents, considered burning her alive.

Red light from the sky, an ominous omen...

Chan Hongyi witnessed this scene for the first time, her eyes reflecting surprise and shock. It contradicted her memory of her honest, hard working parents. How could they harbor resentment and anger toward their newborn daughter?

The once kind and peaceful villagers now showed cruelty, attacking an innocent baby because of a celestial phenomenon during her birth.

This is completely different from my memory of the village and its people.

Chan Hongyi questioned her memory and the events she saw. She realized the issue lay not with her memory or the present scene but with the village where she grew up.

Soon, she discerned the crux of the matter—her memory was intact, and what she witnessed aligned with reality. The problem lay with the village where she had lived since childhood.

Are these really my real parents and the villagers I once knew?

The corner of Chan Hongyi's mouth curled up in a mocking arc, uncertain whether the target of her mockery was herself or these people.

Flames soared, casting flickering, distorted, angry, and hideous shadows on everyone's faces. Lit torches were raised individually, illuminating a newborn baby girl who cried there, yet no one stepped forward to care for her. Even her biological parents insisted on burning her alive.

In this era, a baby girl born with an unknown lineage symbolized the unknown and brought misfortune, becoming a heavy burden.

Chan Hongyi's mother wore a resentful expression, seemingly scolding her for not being a boy. Her father displayed extreme anger and indifference, throwing stones at the baby girl without showing emotion.

Observing this scene from her past, Chan Hongyi should have felt anger, yet her mood remained remarkably calm and undisturbed as if viewing everything from an outsider's perspective. Perhaps, in her current state, there was even a hint of relief—this could be the truth she sought.

“What a bunch of fools,” a man’s emotionless voice echoed in the village, where dogs barked incessantly and the sounds of burning persisted.

Master... Mas... Mast...

Chan Hongyi’s voice trembled slightly, marking the first time she uttered these words upon returning to the past.

A blurry figure in thick fog suddenly materialized in the village. Squatting down, the constitution created an invisible ripple that turned the thrown stones into powder.

Picking up the crying baby girl, the infant surprisingly quieted, and the crying gradually ceased.

The villagers, gripped by fear, attempted to flee but found their feet immobilized as if laden with lead. Their eyes expressed terror as they timidly shouted, feeling the presence of a perceived monster.

Poor little fellow, if I hadn’t happened to be passing by, you would have been burned and stoned tonight.

The gentle voice expressed unspeakable emotions. Though his face remained unclear,

Chan Hongyi recognized him as her master. Until now, she hadn’t known about this pivotal night, and her biological parents had intended to burn her alive from the moment she was born.

Master...

Chan Hongyi stared at him in astonishment, her heart trembling with mixed emotions.

“It’s a pity that I don’t know how to take care of children; otherwise, I could bring you back to the mountain. You were born with blood coagulation in your eyebrows. You should have been an unusual guy in your previous life,” he continued, a clear light falling on the baby girl, healing the stone-inflicted wounds rapidly.

The villagers, frozen in horror, watched this unfold.

“Stupidity is never an excuse. Tiger venom is not a predator, let alone a human being,” Gu Changge calmly stated, seemingly poised to erase these lives with a wave but refrained.

Unexpectedly, another figure appeared—someone Chan Hongyi didn’t anticipate.

Cloaked in green, her features remained blurry, but her beauty was undeniable. The blue silk resembled daisies; her eyes were quiet and clear like warm jade and a flawless moon.

The Grand Mistress of Immortal Palace...

Chan Hongyi recognized her as Qing Yi, someone Gu Changge referred to as a good friend, despite Chan Hongyi suspecting a romantic relationship.

Tiger poison doesn’t eat its offspring, but people don’t necessarily...

The Grand Palace Mistress seemed to agree, turning her attention to the baby girl. In a melodious voice, she suggested returning the child to the immortal palace, praising her excellent roots and limitless future.

Immortal Palace can only teach people, but not necessarily lead them.

Gu Changge shook his head, advocating for the baby girl to experience a safe and worry-free childhood in the present environment.