

## **A Father 861**

Chapter 861: Tea Eggs from the Underworld? The Toughest Heart Test for Xi Xi (2)

Xi Xi scratched her head, feeling a pang of regret.

However, she turned and walked to the summit of the White Jade Staircase.

Hands on her hips, she puffed out her little belly.

At this moment, Xi Xi couldn't help but want to throw her head back and laugh.

Looking down at the many Divine Children beneath her, Xi Xi only felt an immense surge of heroism, towering over all Divine Children!

In this instant, Xi Xi finally felt like she truly had the makings of Emperor Xi Xi!

Buzz—

His eyes dimmed as Gongshu Wentian, surpassed by the five-year-old Xi Xi and witnessing her cascading Purple Aura Divinity Column, found his heart... in turmoil.

On the verge of breaking and yet unbroken, he hovered, struggling.

His trembling figure stood on the White Jade Staircase, teetering unsteadily.

After wavering for a moment, he was shrouded by the radiance of Dao Yun, and his three-foot Dao Yun Qi Column offered him a sense of solace and hope.

"It's not over yet... There are still two trials left in the Direct Disciple assessment: the Heart Test and the Temple Guardian Test! The first test, the Talent Test, I only suffered a narrow defeat!"

Gongshu Wentian's Dao Heart, teetering on the edge of shattering, suddenly pieced itself back together.

He had not lost yet.

A Dao Heart must not shatter prematurely!

The third-place contestant was Xuan Yue. Bounding and skipping happily, she accepted her one-foot Dao Yun reward without complaint.

She gazed up at Xi Xi, standing at the summit, shining like a blazing sun enveloped in the nine-foot Dao Yun Qi Column. Her eyes sparkled, as if brimming with stars and oceans of admiration for her idol.

"Wow—"

No wonder Little Senior Sister, whom Grandmother had personally accepted as a disciple, was truly incredible!

Above the White Jade Staircase.

Jin Taixui, who had been blasted back thousands of steps, whipped his wild purple hair around in a frenzy. His eyes were full of rage.

Grinding his teeth, his reddened eyes blazed.

Besides the fury roiling within him, part of it was due to Xi Xi receiving the nine-foot Dao Yun reward.

"That girl... that girl!"

"That reward should've been mine!"

Jin Taixui stood on the White Jade Staircase, letting out a guttural roar as his anger surged.

He had been catching up to Xuan Yue, about to surpass her and secure second place, guaranteeing himself a reward of Dao Yun Power!

But now...

It was gone!

The little brat had dared to bring out such a terrifying mechanism, taking him completely off guard!

Blasting him back down thousands of steps, leaving him utterly humiliated!

"Why did I even provoke her?"

Jin Taixui's heart was suddenly struck by this thought, tinged with a trace of regret!

Clenching the Purple Gold Bell tightly in his five fingers, its jingling sound seemed to mirror his restless mood, ringing incessantly.

"The Heart Test and the Temple Guardian Test..."

"This little girl is only five years old; her heart surely hasn't undergone professional tempering!"

"As for the Temple Guardian Test, even less so—what combat experience can a five-year-old girl possibly have?"

"I still have a chance..."

"As long as I win first place in the next two trials... I still have a chance to surpass this little girl!"

Jin Taixui took a deep breath, then slowly exhaled, forcing his turbulent emotions to calm.

After all, the bloodline of the Great Witch God flowed through his veins...

That little girl...

With such an ordinary background, how could she possibly compare to him?

...

...

Crack—crack—

A torrential downpour brewed within the vast slate-gray clouds high above, then suddenly erupted like a storm of a thousand arrows piercing through the heavens.

Spring thunder rumbled endlessly, interlaced with flashes of lightning, forming a brilliant azure web that wove itself across the cosmic dome.

Before the White Jade Arch.

A profound silence reigned.

After a long stillness, a sudden cheer erupted.

It came from the area where Li Qingshan and the others were gathered.

Gong Yuanliang, Gong Yang Xiu, Hai Chao Sheng, Huang Si Xiang, and other Spirit Children who had followed Emperor Xi Xi from the Golden Light Prefecture to Qianyuan Taoist City were ecstatic, their faces flushed red as they cheered loudly in unison!

As Emperor Xi Xi's trusted aides, seeing her dominate and suppress all opposition, how could they not share in her triumph?

When the sword qi vision cast by the Taibai Sect Master first emerged...

Not seeing Xi Xi in that moment, Emperor Xi Xi's trusted aides were so nervous they felt as though the sky might collapse.

But now, as Xi Xi ascended to the Absolute Peak, even waking the Grandmaster's Divine Sculpture, which descended a nine-foot Dao Yun Qi Column in reward...

One by one, they finally let out a collective sigh of relief.

And began cheering and rejoicing!

Beyond the cheering children, amidst the torrential rain, even many Jianghu Guests who had come simply for the spectacle could not help but join in the applause.

After all, the tension between Da Jing and Da Li was no recent matter.

To see the Divine Children participating in the direct disciple assessment of the Da Jing Divine Sect Master being utterly overwhelmed by a Divine Child from Da Li—it was nothing short of a massive slap to Da Jing's pride.

The Jianghu Guests instinctively elevated this contest to one of national honor.

With each Divine Child surpassed, the Jianghu Guests sank into a chilling silence. Their hearts were heavy with a bitter, oppressed frustration that even the torrential spring rains could not wash away.

Members of the major noble families in Qianyuan Taoist City likewise furrowed their brows, their hearts weighed down.

Sitting inside a carriage, the Young Taoist Master Yue Weizheng frowned deeply, his brows forming the shape of the character "川." As a court official of the Da Jing Dynasty...

How could he endure watching a Divine Child from Da Li trample the Divine Children of Da Jing with such arrogance and disdain?

Even the many elders of the Qian Yuan Divine Sect, upon witnessing the happenings within the Small Cave Heaven, couldn't help but feel a stab of anxiety.

Thankfully...

Emperor Xi Xi had emerged out of nowhere!

"Emperor Xi Xi? Elder Li, your daughter... truly has the bearing of a Great Emperor."

Second Elder Zhao Fangzhou, seated in a Taishi Chair, watched Xi Xi receive the Dao Yun Qi Column bestowed by the Grandmaster and couldn't help but let a relaxed expression spread across his face, cracking a lighthearted joke.

Chapter 862: Tea Eggs from the Underworld? The Toughest Heart Test for Xi Xi (3)

Li Che's black robe fluttered as he smiled warmly, "What Great Emperor... just a little girl playing around."

At the Elder's seating, the many elders loosened their moods, and the atmosphere significantly relaxed.

"For Xi Xi's talent to catch the Grandmaster's eye, it should be quite challenging... It seems the Sect Master's wife must have prepared a contingency for Xi Xi,"

Said Fourth Elder Ji Heshan.

Even he couldn't help but be surprised; he hadn't expected Xi Xi to reach such heights.

Earlier, he even thought of taking Xi Xi as a disciple under his entry-level tutelage.

However, frankly speaking, he didn't have a high regard for Xi Xi's talent; mainly, it stemmed from the extremely ordinary background of her parents Li Che and Zhang Ya.

Li Che and Zhang Ya were mere civilians from the small city of Fei Lei City, and their cultivation talent wasn't remarkable.

After all, Li Che's exhibited cultivation realm was indeed not particularly strong, and as for Zhang Ya... it's best not to even mention her.

Even though Xi Xi received the Temple God's inheritance in the Golden Light Prefecture, in terms of talent... it would still be difficult to surpass Gongshu Wentian, Xuan Yue, Jin Taixui, and other Divine Children from the strongest forces in the world.

Among them, Gongshu Wentian, Xuan Yue, and Jin Taixui each possessed Purple Divine Pillars at a level likely to reach the talent of Ten Thousand Purple Qi.

They might even be infinitely close to the heights of Purple Qi Reaching Heaven!

With such talent, if Xi Xi wanted to win... she would have to rely on external aids to compensate.

Thus, everyone believed the Sect Master's wife must have obtained information from the Sect Master ahead of time and prepared something extraordinary.

Only then could Xi Xi soar in the Qiankun Small Cave Heaven!

Suppress Jin Taixui.

Reverse the cosmos!

"The Dao Yun rewards... Although these Dao Yun Qi Columns should merely be derived from the Earth Kun Dao Yun within the Grandmaster's remnants, and have not truly belonged to these children yet, even as temporary blessings from the Grandmaster, the impact and enhancement they bring to these children are significant."

"The Dao Yun can imperceptibly cleanse and refine their Divine Foundation and Primordial Spirit..."

"At the very least, during this direct-disciple assessment period, obtaining the Dao Yun's blessings to purify the Divine Foundation will render their roots more resilient and forge the groundwork for a Divine Fetus!"

An elder from Divine Carving Ridge remarked.

Dao Yun...

Such a thing could only be touched upon by those in the Divine Tribulation Realm, the essence condensed by a strong cultivator after enduring calamity after calamity during the Three Calamities and Nine Tribulations.

"Ordinarily, only the top three of the True Inheritor List, the top three of the List of Extraordinary Persons, and the top three of the Chu Long List have the opportunity to comprehend the Qiankun Dao Yun."

"As for this kind of direct bestowal of Dao Yun buff blessings... or receiving the Dao Yun's purification, it is exceedingly rare,"

"After all, each refinement depletes the Dao Yun; the Dao Yun's infusion equates to consuming the Sect's foundation, so it is naturally something one encounters only by chance."

"The Sect Master truly values this direct-disciple assessment."

"Such treatment is indeed fit for the Young Sect Master."

...

The elders conversed with one another, and their words carried a certain sense of gravity, further helping Li Che grasp the significance of this direct-disciple assessment.

No wonder, when Jin Taixui steadily surpassed and pressured Divine Children one after another in rapid fashion, nearly catching up to Xuan Yue and Gongshu Wentian, the elders' expressions became so grim.

If Jin Taixui were truly to trample the many Divine Children of the Great Vista and ascend to first place...

The repercussions would indeed be substantial.

Li Che sat in his chair, black robe billowing, his gaze lifted and fell upon the image of Sword Qi intertwining.

There he spotted Xi Xi seated cross-legged atop the absolute peak.

Below sat Gongshu Wentian, Xuan Yue, Yun E, Gu He, Lv Qingxuan, and other Divine Children.

The diminutive figure atop the White Jade Staircase's summit imparted an awe-inspiring aura, as though suppressing all before her.

Through the Thunder Chess Piece, Li Che could distinctly sense the Dao Yun Qi Column flowing from the Grandmaster's Divine Sculpture, washing over Xi Xi's Inner Scene of the Energy Center, purifying her [Eight-Armed Three-Faced Hell Lotus Undamaged] Three Pure Ones Divine Foundation.

Vaguely, the divine foundation marked with the Eight-Armed Three-Faced Hell Lotus Undamaged Godly Pattern grew increasingly distinct, seemingly radiating a faint glow.

The refinement cleansed impurities within her Divinity, steadily enhancing the quality and rank of Xi Xi's inert divinity.

This process even deepened Xi Xi's understanding of the Divine Dharma associated with this cultivation method.

Within the Qiankun Small Cave Heaven, countless and boundless divinity began to intertwine and converge endlessly.

Surrounding Xi Xi, they circled the Dao Yun Qi Column and seemed to morph into a whirling vortex.

Of course.

At this moment, it was not only Xi Xi; numerous Divine Children seated upon the White Jade Staircase were also siphoning the divine energy within the Qiankun Small Cave Heaven to cultivate rapidly.

In fact, the entire Qiankun Small Cave Heaven was akin to a giant Divine Crystal, one of extraordinarily high quality, imbued with the Dao Yun's power due to its transformation from the Grandmaster's demise.

Dao Yun... to these young ones, it was undeniably enigmatic.

But they did not need to understand the intricate nature of Dao Yun; they only needed to know that Dao Yun could refine their Divine Foundations and enhance their talents—that was sufficient.

Cultivating within the Small Cave Heaven expedited everyone's progress.

Thus, at this moment, they all were wholly immersed in seizing every second to cultivate.

Preparing for the third trial: Temple Guardian.

Temple Guardian, as the name suggests... tests actual combat abilities.

Hence, whoever could gain an additional layer of strength within the Qiankun Small Cave Heaven naturally had an extra edge.

...

...

The rain gently continued dripping; its torrential might gradually faded, restoring a delicate scenery resembling slanted strands of cow hair.

Beneath the White Jade Arch.

Drops of crystal-clear water pooled below the arch, resembling hanging stalactites.

Li Che exhaled deeply.

Relieving some tension in his chest.

In the first trial, Xi Xi, through his painstaking efforts of pulling strings, coupled with the boss's divine Tea Egg blessing... finally succeeded against the odds, ascending to first place, and obtained the Grandmaster's recognition with the reward of the Nine Feet Dao Yun Qi Column.

Chapter 863: Tea Eggs from the Underworld? The Toughest Heart Test for Xi Xi (4)

Li Che was utterly worn out from worrying about his daughter.

In truth...

If it weren't for the Thunder Chess Piece guiding the power of numerous Dao Fruits, with Xi Xi's innate talent alone, she would barely stand a chance of making it into the top three.

Though Li Che kept refining Xi Xi's physical body and enhancing her talent using the Pure Heart Divinity,

The process was ultimately slow, requiring the accumulation of time to gradually reveal its effects.

Thus, speaking purely of talent, Xi Xi may have reached the level of thousand-foot Purple Qi, but compared to talents such as Gongshu Wentian, Jin Taixui, and Xuan Yue with ten thousand feet of Purple Qi—approaching the sublimity of Purple Qi Reaching Heaven—she still fell short...

However, what the Grandmaster valued was the upper limit of talent...

Li Che decided he wouldn't hold back then; he would go all out.

To not make use of resources would be no different than being a salted fish.

The powers of the Dao Fruits—[Dragon Elephant Vajra], [Immortal Artisan], [Pure Heart], [Fairy in the Painting]—were all channeled by Li Che, using the Thunder Chess Piece as a bridge, into Xi Xi's body.

Moreover, with the small treats from the boss, along with Xi Xi's innate possession of Mythical Weapons, her talent underwent comprehensive enhancement.

She reached the level of a perfect hexagonal warrior!

According to the rules outlined by the Grandmaster, the subsequent Heart Test and Temple Guardian Test would distribute Dao Yun Qi Column rewards based on performance.

Only the top three could obtain the Dao Yun Qi Columns. From the fourth place onward... there would be no reward.

The challenge was indeed daunting. Although Xi Xi attained first place in the initial test, the Heart Test and Temple Guardian Test still awaited her.

"The Heart Test..."

Li Che murmured softly, furrowing his brow with a faint trace of worry.

The Heart Test...

For Xi Xi, it was the greatest trial.

As for the final Temple Guardian Test, Li Che had no worries at all; with Xi Xi fully equipped with Divine Equipment, it was practically her home field.

But the Heart Test was truly the most challenging for Xi Xi.

It remained unclear what the Heart Test would assess.

Li Che couldn't help but look up toward Lv Taibai seated in the Sect Master's position.

Lv Taibai's silver hair fluttered as his fingers gently tapped on the armrest of his chair.

He seemed to have sensed Li Che's gaze and turned his eyes toward him. In his pupils, endless sharp sword light seemed to swirl and shift.

Extremely dazzling.

Lv Taibai smiled warmly and nodded slightly.

Li Che paused for a moment, then returned the nod as well.

Lv Taibai stood up, and in an instant, all eyes were drawn to him.

Standing with hands folded behind him, his white robes and silver hair dancing in the wind, Lv Taibai exhaled as if releasing a sword.

Sword light swirled, echoing throughout the Qiankun Small Cave Heaven.

"One hour from now, the Heart Test will commence."

The Divine Children seated along the White Jade Staircase abruptly opened their eyes.

Their gazes showed unmistakable intrigue.

At the same time...

Radiance swirled. Within the Qiankun Small Cave Heaven, those Divine Children seated below the tenth step of the White Jade Staircase found themselves surrounded by flashing streams of light and swirling sword Qi, and before they knew it, they were removed from the Small Cave Heaven.

They reappeared in the vast White Jade Square.

In that instant, their hearts were overwhelmed with mixed emotions, utter dejection.

They knew that in the first test, they had been eliminated. In the subsequent tests, they wouldn't even qualify to participate.

One by one, they returned to the Da Ping Area, dispirited and forlorn.

These individuals, who prided themselves as Divine Children, with unparalleled talent, the shining stars of noble families across state cities, found themselves utterly overshadowed in this competition.

Here, they truly witnessed what it meant to say there's always someone stronger, beyond the heavens.

...

...

Qianyuan Dao City.

The octagonal tiered eaves and dripping corners of the Qintian Observatory Treasure Building.

Spring rain drizzled and converged along the black-tiled eaves, forming rain strands resembling silk threads.

Supervisor Hong Shifu looked at the gradually clearing skies, with the rain abating, and chuckled softly.

Inside the building, Daoist Master Yue Huanglong, seated across the chessboard, squinted slightly, genuinely showing a trace of surprise at the results of the first talent test.

The emergence of Jin Taixui, possessing the Great Witch God Bloodline of Da Li, surprised him.

Yue Linghu nearly ranking last also surprised him.

Li Nuanxi unexpectedly surging ahead to surpass Jin Taixui and taking first place, securing the nine-foot Dao Yun Qi Column—the biggest surprise of all.

"It seems... Xuan Qisha has given quite a lot of treasures to her Divine Talisman disciple."

Yue Huanglong squinted his eyes, and the smile on his face faded significantly.

Hong Shifu glanced at Yue Huanglong and shook his head. "No. Quite the opposite. Xuan Qisha hasn't given this little girl any treasures. Lv Taibai wouldn't permit it... After all, Xuan Qisha specializes in offensive Killing God Talismans. As for talismans that enhance talent, what effective ones could he even offer?"

A goofy smile spread across Yue Huanglong's round face. "Could it be... this little girl truly relied on nothing but her utterly unremarkable bloodline talent to surpass Gongshu Wentian, Xuan Yue, and Jin Taixui, the geniuses with ten thousand feet of Purple Qi Divinity?"

Hong Shifu shook his head.

"I don't believe it."

"But... I have no proof."

"Without proof, we have no choice but to believe..."

"Tell me... What sort of miraculous resource would make your grandson Yue Linghu's talent surpass Xuan Yue, Gongshu Wentian, and Jin Taixui?"

The smile on Yue Huanglong's fleshy face instantly vanished.

Could you not ask such heart-wrenching questions?

"Did you notice that tea egg?"

Hong Shifu laid his hands atop the railing, speaking softly.

"I suspect that hidden within Dao City is an unregistered Divine Fetus Great God yet to be listed by the Great Supervising Minister."

"Lv Taibai is searching for him, I am searching for him, and the Pavilion Master of the Hunting God Pavilion is searching for him..."

"But none of us have been able to locate him."

"As elusive as the underworld, perhaps... this person is the founder of the underworld itself and its greatest hidden strength."

The sheer absurdity on Yue Huanglong's jiggling face turned into a mix of incredulity and humor. "You're saying... that Divine Fetus Great God boiled a tea egg, and that was enough to make this little girl's talent surpass Gongshu Wentian, Xuan Yue, and Jin Taixui—the geniuses carrying the bloodlines of great gods?"

Hong Shifu gazed at him impassively. "You practice the Martial Path, so it's no surprise you're impervious to this perception. Heavenly Person Sensing may be fine, but it's nothing compared to the Heaven and Earth Soul of a Divine Fetus..."

Gradually, Yue Huanglong stopped laughing.

The fat quivered on his face as his eyes narrowed, quietly murmuring.

"A tea egg..."

...

...

What would the Heart Test assess?

What could a five-year-old child be tested on for inner character?

"The Heart Test... creates illusion realms using Divinity to construct scenarios that examine the choices one would make in varying situations."

The Great Elder of Divine Carving Ridge, Tang Xiejia, seemed to notice Li Che's growing anxiety and explained deliberately.

"In truth, although it's called a test of inner character, it would be more appropriate to call it a test of essence."

"The essence of one's being. What defines them most profoundly."

"The essence may differ vastly for each individual—it could be pursuit of the Dao, devotion to protection, or a propensity for killing..."

"As for the particular method of assessment, that remains unknown. Every test differs, and no one can predict what trial the Sect Master has devised this time."

Tang Xiejia shared.

Li Che nodded, cupping his hands in gratitude for the explanation.

Seated once again, Li Che no longer seemed as preoccupied with worry.

After all, worrying would serve no purpose here—the Heart Test was something he couldn't possibly assist Xi Xi with.

If...

The first talent test had unrestricted rules and methods.

Then for the Heart Test, every external aid would be categorically forbidden.

This test would indeed be disadvantageous for Xi Xi.

A five-year-old child, at a playful age, with an yet unformed inner character—how difficult would it be to hold firm to her essence?

Even if Xi Xi didn't secure a prominent ranking in this test, Li Che wouldn't be bothered.

He could make up for the lost Dao Yun rewards in the third Temple Guardian Test.

Dong!!!

The ancient Divine Bell sounded, and its immense, invisible reverberations echoed forth from deep within Dao City's winding mountains.

The waves of sound rippled outward.

Beneath the White Jade Arch.

Jiao Shaoqiu's simple long robe swelled in the wind, his wide sleeves billowing.

"The hour has come."

"The Heart Test begins!"

"Sect Master, please present the challenge."

Chapter 864: The Soul Awakened in the Ninth Abyss, Xi Xi Don't Be Afraid, Daddy Is Always Here

DongDong

The sound waves of two consecutive chimes reverberated gracefully, shattering the spring rain into fragments.

The circular ripples spreading out from the sound waves seemed to wrinkle the very air itself.

"Commence the second trial: Heart Test!"

Jiao Shaoqiu, the host elder personally appointed by the Sect Master for this examination, stepped forward.

His ancient, unadorned robe fluttered in the spring breeze as he spoke with an exceptionally solemn expression.

Ka-cha, ka-cha!

Above the heavenly dome, within the originally descending clouds, muffled spring thunder abruptly rumbled again.

However, the rain was not heavy anymore—it was no longer torrential.

Underneath the White Jade Qiankun Arch.

Lv Taibai sat calmly in his chair, his eyes shimmering as if flowing with light. His snowy robe billowed as he flicked a finger, and a streaking Sword Gang shot heavenward.

The sword light exploded in midair, splitting into ten, each one darting like lively Sword Qi Jiao Dragons rapidly into the Qiankun Small Cave Heaven.

In an instant

The Qiankun Small Cave Heaven became a seething cauldron of boundless electric currents colliding and weaving in chaos!

Sword light surged forth, transforming into lightning, ready to summon clouds and rain!

In the swirling mist and clouds, an azure dragon extended its head, its whiskers flying with movement, revealing the majestic Dragon Head.

And within the Qiankun Small Cave Heaven...

The towering White Jade Heavenly Ladder, spanning a thousand steps upward into the clouds, seemed to awaken like a dragon's spine, twisting and quaking.

It then astonishingly transformed into a bone dragon, uncoiling from the depths of the Netherworld to ascend skyward, recapturing the soaring majesty of its past life flying and traversing the heavens.

In the skies above, it curled into an orbit, with its Dragon Head biting its Dragon Tail, forming a grand ring floating in midair.

At the very center of the dragon bone ring hovered the Divine Sculpture of the Grandmaster, suspended elegantly, having leapt from its original pinnacle.

The ten Divine Children, seated cross-legged on the White Jade Staircase.

Sitting in a ring-like formation on the ground, they could even face each other directly.

Xi Xi was also seated on the ground. Her long eyelashes fluttered as she slowly opened her eyes. This hour had been unbelievably comfortable for her.

The nine-foot Dao Yun cascaded over her body, illuminating her Inner Scene of the Mud Pill and continually refining her undying Prison Lotus Divine Foundation. The Divine Foundation, resembling a prison lotus, grew ever brighter in radiance.

The divinity within the Small Cave Heaven was madly siphoned by her, relentlessly enhancing and empowering her Divine Foundation's strength.

Bathed in the nine-foot Dao Yun Qi Column, Xi Xi felt her comprehension soar dramatically. Even the intricate obstacles within the Eight-Armed Three-Faced Hell Lotus Undamaged Divine Base Method became clear to her understanding.

It was an elevation at the level of innate talent!

With the Dao Yun bestowed upon her, it was as if divine assistance laid bare the essence of heaven and earth, unraveling its mysteries and revealing clarity.

She had reached the Post-Divine Foundation Realm!

Xi Xi was delighted, sensing her cultivation progressing at an impressive pace.

Typically, cultivating a Divine Base Skill such as the Three Purities Divinity Method's Eight-Armed Three-Faced Hell Lotus Undamaged would be a slow process.

Yet within a year, Xi Xi had managed to cultivate this divine method to the Post-Divine Foundation Realm.

This was largely thanks to the added momentum and aid from this cleansing Dao Yun energy!

Xi Xi beamed with joy, utterly ecstatic!

She ate a tea egg, and her cultivation broke through again!

Emperor Xi Xi had grown stronger once more

Seated cross-legged, Xi Xi grabbed her feet with both hands, rocking herself back and forth on the White Jade Staircase like a roly-poly toy.

Oh, she wouldn't tip over! Oh no, she absolutely wouldn't fall!

Xi Xi was overwhelmed with happiness.

As for the so-called Heart Test, Xi Xi didn't take it seriously at all; rather...

She hadn't even grasped the severity of the matter.

Beside Xi Xi, not far away, sat Little Dragon Maiden Ao Qingqing in a cross-legged posture. Ao Qingqing glanced warily at Xi Xi.

She couldn't believe Xi Xi had utterly dominated the first talent trial, claiming the top spot outright.

This little girl... what an oddball!

Her aunt had instructed her to do everything possible to defeat Li Nuanxi.

Ao Qingqing wondered if her aunt had underestimated the extraordinary talent of this Little Dragon Maiden.

But as for the Heart Test...

Ao Qingqing gathered her courage for a moment but then deflated completely.

Her own mental strength probably wouldn't surpass Li Nuanxi by much...

Ao Qingqing had been pampered from birth as royalty within the Dragon God Clan, living a life of comfort and luxury in the Dragon Palace, never needing to worry about anything.

Her father and mother handled all matters for her with care.

Thus, Ao Qingqing acknowledged that her inner fortitude might not be any stronger than five-year-old Li Nuanxi's—both were young, and both struggled to control their moods and impulses.

Not far from Ao Qingqing sat Jin Taixui, the descendant of the Great Witch God Bloodline from the Da Li Royal Court.

His head full of violet hair danced wildly in the fierce wind as Jin Taixui's eyes glimmered darkly at Xi Xi. This little girl had surprised him.

He had assumed she possessed only ordinary talent, struggling even to climb ten steps of the White Jade Staircase—a typical Divine Child from Qianyuan Taoist City. Yet shockingly, she revealed an upper limit so fearsome, dragging it straight to Perfection, ascending to the Absolute Peak of the White Jade Staircase, even catching the eye of the Qian Yuan Divine Sect's Grandmaster!

The Grandmaster opened his eyes in wonder, while Jin Taixui realized he had misjudged her entirely.

And then there's this little girl's explosive temperament—quick to anger and fiercely vengeful. Jin Taixui had merely intended to sweep Xi Xi off the White Jade Staircase with a deft strike from the flames of the Purple Gold Bell.

As casually as one might clear away debris.

But who could have predicted that this little girl... would retaliate with an onslaught of fierce attacks in response!

Chapter 865: The Previous Life Soul Awakened in the Ninth Abyss, Xi Xi Don't Be Afraid, Daddy Is Always Here (2)

The six rotating metal tubes spewing terrifying explosive mechanisms left Jin Taixui with a lingering sense of fear.

In the Great Vista, both the Gongshu Family and the Tang Family excelled in mechanical techniques. Jin Taixui was, of course, no stranger to these methods.

After all, those supreme mechanical beasts stationed on Tongyou Road by the Da Jing Dynasty were extraordinarily fearsome tools of destruction, practically invincible in warfare.

Jin Taixui dared not underestimate them, but besides mechanical beasts, did the Great Vista also possess such a terrifying standalone mechanism?

Jin Taixui's gaze grew deep as he focused on Xi Xi. The second trial, the Heart Test... He had a significant advantage over this five-year-old girl. His lineage of the Great Witch God inherently carried practices for tempering one's heart; he had been trained in this since childhood.

Therefore, Jin Taixui was confident that he could secure first place in the Heart Test!

One by one, the divine children sat cross-legged, their gazes flickering with varying emotions.

They formed a circle, reminiscent of young children playing games like "passing the handkerchief."

Gongshu Wentian, Gu He, Xuan Yue, Lv Qingxuan, Ning Caihe, Yang Yi, Yun E, Zhou Peng, Tie Shancai, Lu Chi, Yue Linghu, Su Li, Ao Qingqing...

Together with Xi Xi and Jin Taixui.

A total of fifteen divine children.

In the next moment.

Amid the resonant chime of bell tolls, the sword qi suspended in midair rippled and exploded, echoing as if an ancient bell had been struck.

It felt as though the Mysterious Fog of Strange Que billowed forth.

The Grandmaster's Divine Sculpture floating above the circle released a surging cloud from its pedestal below, resembling smoke signals and rolling mist.

The churning clouds swept forth, like voracious beasts craving prey, instantly engulfing every divine child seated on the White Jade Staircase.

...

...

Below the White Jade Arch.

Spring Thunder boomed behind the clouds, jagged electric snakes interweaving like webs, sporadically flashing across the vast sky.

Li Che's body trembled slightly as his Lei-Ci Dao Body faintly resonated with the Heavenly Thunder.

But he suppressed the Lei-Ci Dao Body's agitation, furrowing his brows, and directed his gaze toward the sword qi formed into a circular disk, focusing on the images reflected within.

Within the images...

Clouds and fog swirled, ethereal and boundless.

Having passed the first talent test filtering round, the remaining fifteen divine children sat cross-legged in a circular formation on the White Jade Staircase, which resembled a coiled Dragon Ridge.

Each had their eyes closed, immersed in slumber.

The expressions on each child's face occasionally twitched: some displayed agony, some twisted their faces together, and some were in tears...

Li Che ignored the others, his gaze fixed solely on Xi Xi.

Xi Xi sat cross-legged on the ground, her face showing an expression of confusion and vacancy, unsure...

Of what she was encountering in the Heart Test.

The Heart Test presented challenges akin to dream-like trials. Even with the Thunder Chess Piece Li Che had left on Xi Xi, he could not intrude into her dream.

Everything...

Would depend solely on Xi Xi herself.

This was precisely why Li Che understood that in the second trial, the Heart Test, he would be unable to assist Xi Xi.

Li Che's fingers gently tapped the armrest of his chair.

He couldn't help but feel slightly nervous.

...

...

Xi Xi opened her eyes, rubbed them, her expression filled with confusion and bewilderment.

She looked at the broken beams above her...

The hazy memories of her life before the age of three reminded Xi Xi that there was once a period where she would wake up every day to see these broken beams.

Her stomach was a little hungry, and as Xi Xi opened her mouth, the sound that came out was a series of infantile cries, "Waaa, waaa."

Startled by her own voice.

It was the sound of a baby crying. Xi Xi panicked; though only five, she was precocious. Given her extraordinary talent, she was unlike ordinary five-year-old children.

Still, the five-year-old Xi Xi realized she was undergoing Qian Yuan Divine Sect Master's direct disciple trial's second test.

Yet Xi Xi couldn't hide her inexplicable fear. After all, she was still a child. As fear and panic set in, she began calling out for her father and mother.

However, the cries became that of a newborn's wails.

The crying startled the figure beside her, who picked her up and pressed something warm to her mouth. Xi Xi paused before greedily suckling and swallowing the warm flow that filled her stomach and soothed her uneasiness.

It was her mother's scent.

Xi Xi quickly accepted the reality that she had been transported back to her early childhood.

Days passed in boredom as Xi Xi lay swaddled in her makeshift cradle, eating and sleeping, playing with her chubby little hands when bored.

Her tiny feet kicked about, occasionally calling out for her mother, or tugging at her mother's hair with her little hands.

The dilapidated door opened, and the wind and snow howled as it swept inside, carrying swirling flakes that drastically lowered the warmth brought by the burning furnace within.

Xi Xi noticed herself being lifted again; the pungent scent of burning wood filled her nostrils as she finally saw her "father!"

Compared to her father in reality, this version seemed much older, with an unkempt beard, messy hair, and eyes marked by fatigue.

Still, her father's gaze at Xi Xi remained filled with familiar doting affection.

"This is my girl!"

"Xi Xi, give Daddy a smile!"

Xi Xi giggled brightly.

"Darling, this is the money I earned over this period helping several masters with transporting wood carvings. Keep it safe, and don't hold back if there's something you need to spend it on."

Chapter 866: The Soul from the Past Life Awakening in the Ninth Abyss, Xi Xi Don't Be Afraid, Daddy is Always Here (3)

Inside the house.

Father, while eating a steaming bowl of noodles made by Mother, carefully handed his wages to her.

Xi Xi lay in her swaddling clothes, blinking her eyes as she watched. All of this was something she had never seen before.

However, it seemed a little different from the images in Xi Xi's memory.

The time spent lying in swaddling clothes always passed quickly.

Unbeknownst to Xi Xi, she was already nearing her first birthday. She could now walk on her own, and she was quite nimble.

The neighbors all called Xi Xi a Spirit Child.

Xi Xi wasn't just a Spirit Child; she was a mighty Divine Child!

Still, Xi Xi felt strange, because she hadn't seen Grandpa Chen or the Uncle Xu she remembered...

Had they both disappeared?

On Xi Xi's first birthday, didn't they come to attend her birthday banquet?

It was as though memories buried deep in her mind were awakening. Xi Xi began to recall many things and sensed that something wasn't quite right.

One day, Father rushed home in a panic, his body still covered in wood shavings. His head was scattered with snowflakes, large as a hand, and his cheeks were frozen blue. As soon as he entered the house, he frantically started searching for Xi Xi.

"Wife, where's Xi Xi?"

Father called out, with a deep and unshakable terror in his eyes.

Mother came out of the kitchen holding Xi Xi in her arms, her eyes filled with confusion. "Husband, what's wrong?"

Father ran over in desperation, taking Xi Xi into his arms. Xi Xi could feel his nervousness and fear, and instinctively reached out to pat his back.

"Don't be scared, Father. Xi Xi is here."

Xi Xi mimicked the words Father would always say to comfort her, and she burst into cheerful laughter. "Hee hee hee!"

"As long as Xi Xi is here, it's alright... it's alright..."

"The Spirit Infant Sect is catching children in the city... Our Xi Xi was delivered by Grandma Lei. The children delivered by Grandma Lei are always taken away when they turn one..."

Father explained this to Mother, and Xi Xi listened secretly and understood.

"The Spirit Infant Sect... Mother mentioned that Master Niu Niu had wiped out this evil sect..."

Xi Xi mused to herself.

"Wife, once we save enough money... we'll move, leave Fei Lei City. This city... we can't stay here."

Father's voice was heavy with weariness.

In the days that followed, the birthday banquet Xi Xi had imagined never took place. Her movement was restricted; she wasn't even allowed into the courtyard anymore. Day by day, she was confined to her room.

Xi Xi leaned against the window, bored out of her mind. She wanted to go out and play; she wanted to eat delicious food...

This test was so dull, so boring!

It was all fake—Xi Xi's father... he was clearly so powerful, a Qian Yuan Divine Sect Elder!

Xi Xi also had Master Niu Niu and so many, many other friends...

But in this test, why were none of them here?

Xi Xi rested her small hand against her chin, gazing at the clouds drifting in the sky. She felt that the life of a little kid was truly boring.

Night fell, and snowflakes danced in the wind.

Inside the house, the charcoal stove was lit, warming the entire room.

Xi Xi lay on the bed, nestled in Mother's embrace. Mother's hands had become rougher than she remembered; these days, she often took on laundry work, washing coarse fabric clothes in freezing water during the bitter winter. Her hands were covered in chilblains.

Xi Xi didn't like this kind of life.

Xi Xi pouted. She wanted to go back!

She knew this was all fake, all an illusion, just the second test of the Heart Test in the Qianyuan Divine Sect Master's direct disciple assessment.

It was only an illusion.

Yet, even though Xi Xi knew it was fake, she couldn't prove it was fake...

So, Xi Xi felt a little pain and unhappiness.

Father and Mother, exhausted from the day, had fallen asleep, snoring softly.

Xi Xi couldn't sleep. She climbed out of bed and sat upright, listening to the howling wind and snowstorm outside the house.

With wide eyes, Xi Xi stared at the paper-covered window.

There...

A hunched black shadow stood there.

The paper window was poked through, revealing a pitch-black eyeball.

The eyeball scanned the room before its gaze landed on Xi Xi, sitting up on the bed.

"Heh heh..."

"Good child, Grandma's here..."

...

...

In the lavish palace, blood flowed in pools.

Lu Chi's eyes were icy cold. His body was drenched in blood, and in his hand, he tightly gripped a sword. With stubborn defiance, he raised his head, staring at the imposing man seated on the dragon throne adorned with coiled and roaring Golden Dragons.

The man who held the greatest power in the Da Jing Dynasty.

Beside this man stood Lu Chi's mother, who had rebuked him constantly for as long as his memory served.

Her gaze was just as icy, her expression no less ruthless.

At this moment, Lu Chi's own chilling gaze mirrored theirs.

Yet, from their eyes, Lu Chi caught a trace of appreciation—as if only in this moment of merciless coldness was he the child they wanted.

Clenching his teeth, Lu Chi faced them and began cutting into his own flesh. Although he knew this was an illusion, the searing pain rocked his very mind, making it hard to distinguish between illusion and reality.

Perhaps this moment was reality?

In the real world, he was in Fei Lei City, sitting in the small courtyard, riding a Twist Car, cheerfully racing against Xi Xi... Was that the illusion?

Was happiness the illusion?!

Lu Chi gritted his teeth. He had thought he could no longer shed tears, but as he stripped flesh from bone, it felt as if his heart was dying completely, and his tears poured uncontrollably.

Seated on the magnificent golden throne, the man radiating authority looked on at this display with admiration, gently clapping his hands.

Chapter 867: The Soul from the Past Life Awakening in the Ninth Abyss, Xi Xi Don't Be Afraid, Daddy is Always Here (4)

The imperial consort showed no trace of heartache, her eyes filled with relief.

The expressions of the two were reflected in the blood-soaked eyes of Lu Chi.

Lu Chi could no longer distinguish whether it was tears or blood trickling down his face.

Probably blood. [novel.com](http://novel.com)

Otherwise—

Why was he smiling?

...

...

"Yun E, my child..."

"If I leave like this, in this vast and dangerous world... how will you ever protect yourself?"

Lying on the sickbed, the mother tenderly stroked the delicate face of young Yun E. Yun E's eyes revealed a dazed expression.

Struggling, the mother crawled off the sickbed, gripping Yun E's hand, coughing up blood into a white handkerchief as she guided Yun E past the Yun Family's towering, sunlight-blocking walls.

For the first time, Yun E saw the outside world and arrived at a mysterious temple.

The Desire and Fear of the Jade Tower and Cold Immortal's Mysterious Temple.

Inside the temple, it seemed as though a gaze fell upon her.

...

...

Under the White Jade Arch,

Li Che's slender fingers tapping lightly on the armrest of his chair suddenly froze.

Crack-crack—

Spring thunder exploded, the terrifying sound resonated like the wrathful roar of heaven itself.

Li Che slowly raised his head.

He wasn't alone in doing so; under the White Jade Arch, many elders raised their heads as well, their eyes reflecting traces of astonishment.

"A celestial anomaly?"

"A heart trial... It caused a celestial anomaly?"

The Inner Sect Great Elder Fang Hanshu closed the book in his hands and, looking at the spring thunder webbing across the sky, spoke softly.

"Either an innocent soul or a harbinger of death..."

"Which could it be?"

Li Che withdrew his gaze, refocusing on the screen projected by the Sword Energy Disc.

On the screen, the fog-shrouded figures of children trembled and twisted in various ways.

They seemed to endure significant pain.

"This heart trial is based on the Dao Yun power of the Grandmaster, simulated within an illusion realm. It's real enough to deceive even a typical Divine Fetus,"

"What these children must do is persist—persist until the illusion realm created by Dao Yun power ends. Only then will they pass the heart trial."

Sitting on his chair, Lv Taibai spoke softly.

It sounded as if he was explaining to Li Che.

"Sect Master, what kinds of illusions are the children experiencing?" Li Che couldn't help but ask.

"No one knows; it depends on each individual's heart or secrets buried deep within their soul."

"Each will differ."

Lv Taibai glanced at Li Che, his silver hair swaying in the spring breeze as he spoke gently.

"To test the hearts of children, with trials of this magnitude..."

Li Che forced a bitter smile.

Lv Taibai offered a warm smile: "Some are born innocent; others are born as killers..."

"I merely wish to understand what kind of heart my disciple possesses."

"So I can teach them accordingly."

Li Che understood and asked no further, sitting quietly as his gaze fell slightly downward.

He saw Xi Xi trembling as she sat on a White Jade Staircase within the Small Cave Heaven. Her tiny face seemed to reflect anguish.

His fingers tapped on the chair.

In the next moment, his consciousness appeared within the Heaven and Earth chessboard.

Five fingers outstretched.

The Immaculate Heart Taoist Fruit pulsed in his chest.

"Xi Xi, don't be too hard on yourself. All I wish for is that you live a happy, joyful, and peaceful life."

"Any hardship, I will shield you from. You don't need to worry."

Li Che's eyes shimmered with tenderness.

"So, don't let yourself suffer too much."

"I'll handle everything for you."

"Father is always here."

Li Che murmured softly.

His raised fingers suddenly clenched into a fist.

A Thunder Chess Piece materialized in his hand, which he grasped firmly.

However, there was no instant teleportation. Li Che simply held the chess piece tightly.

It seemed as though he wanted to transmit the warmth of his palm and his faint murmurs through the Thunder Chess Piece.

With it, he conveyed all his fatherly love to his daughter.

Letting her feel that behind her, there stood a steadfast and protective pillar—a harbor where she could always find solace.

...

...

Plop-plop—

One after another, rain droplets as big as beans fell, tumbling from the leaden clouds in the sky.

They splattered onto the ground, shattering into fragments.

The Big Black Dog woke up from its slumber, its dog eyes revealing shock as it gazed at the heavens.

The lazy shopkeeper sitting in his chair stood up—nobody knew when exactly he had done so.

He, too, looked up at the sky's anomaly, his eyes shimmering with complex emotions.

"She's coming back."

"Woof—"

The Big Black Dog barked. It shook the water droplets off its body, sighed, and lay back down.

The shopkeeper stood straight, took out a roll of cigarette paper, and from a worn tobacco pouch, seized some tobacco leaves.

Rolling them up, he struck a match with a sharp hiss, igniting the cigarette.

Hsss-hsss-hsss—

The cigarette paper burned, curling the tobacco, releasing dense smoke.

Twin streams of smoke dragoned out of his nostrils.

Clamping the cigarette between his fingers, the shopkeeper sat back in his chair.

He flicked away the ash and crossed one leg over the other.

...

...

BANG—!!!

The window was suddenly torn open!

One shadow after another surged into the house, breaking its warmth instantly.

Fierce Qi-Blood swept through the room, carried by icy wind and snow.

Xi Xi's eyes squeezed shut, her hairs standing on edge.

Her slumbering parents awoke instantly.

"Ah—!"

Her father roared furiously, grabbing the kitchen knife by the bed and swinging it frantically.

"Get out!"

"You Spirit Infant Sect thieves! Get out!"

Her father roared.

Zhang Ya's face was pale with terror as she held Xi Xi tightly in her arms. Her body trembled uncontrollably, for she could do nothing more than cling to her child.

Chapter 868: The Soul from the Past Life Awakening in the Ninth Abyss, Xi Xi Don't Be Afraid, Daddy is Always Here (5)

Xi Xi stared blankly, watching her father wield a kitchen knife, fighting fiercely against those thugs, but he was knocked down in an instant.

He was even pierced by a long blade, blood spraying across the room.

Xi Xi froze in place as her mother desperately shielded her, but the thugs forcefully dragged Xi Xi away, impatiently slashing at her mother with a swing of their knife.

Blood splattered like a fountain, splashing onto Xi Xi's face.

Xi Xi's entire body quivered violently, a surge of uncontrollable rage and sorrow bursting forth from her chest in an instant.

Between her brows, the Prison Lotus Divine Pattern emerged.

Blazing black flames erupted around Xi Xi.

The thug who gripped her with the blood-stained long blade suddenly felt his hand scorching, and then Xi Xi slapped him hard, sending his head flying sideways.

Xi Xi floated in the air, her eyes trembling and boiling as if harboring a pool of ink-black water.

"You... dared to harm my father and mother?!"

"How could you dare?!"

"Xi Xi's beloved father and mother... how could you dare?!"

Xi Xi's infantile frame, barely a year old, hovered in the air, tears streaming endlessly down her face, only to be twisted and evaporated by the searing black flames.

"Kill them all, kill everyone..."

A faint, icy voice echoed through Xi Xi's mind.

Completely void of emotion, unbearably cold.

It was as if a soul from a past life had awakened from the depths of Jiuyou, descending with a trace of supreme will.

The Prison Lotus Flames blazed furiously, yet they couldn't suppress the burgeoning power about to erupt.

Gurgle, gurgle—

At some unknown moment, beneath Xi Xi's feet, a pitch-black pool like ink appeared, its waters churning and rolling.

Streams of liquid twisted upward from the pool, forming eerie patterns that curled onto Xi Xi's face.

The Prison Lotus Divine Pattern between her brows pulsed ceaselessly...

And then, with a faint "sizzle" sound... as if extinguished, it dimmed entirely and turned cold and desolate.

The flames lost all traces of heat.

Xi Xi crossed her arms over her chest, casting a cold gaze across the room filled with corpses.

Upon seeing the lifeless bodies of her father and mother, she closed her eyes.

When she reopened them, they were as frigid as an eternal glacier.

With her arms still crossed, the pool beneath her feet writhed and carried her out of the house, drifting through the air.

Clang—

The charcoal brazier toppled onto the ground, sparks scattered outward and engulfed the dilapidated house in flames, which surged rapidly amidst the endless falling snow, blazing fiercely.

Amidst the burning inferno.

Xi Xi, arms still crossed, stood like a proud and cold sovereign.

She floated outward.

Grandma Lei fled in terror, trudging through the snow.

Xi Xi shot her a glance, flicked her fingers, and a Fire Tip Spear entwined with black flames streaked out, instantly piercing Grandma Lei...

Xi Xi took a step forward, and in the next moment appeared at a certain spot within the city.

The Fire Tip Spear, coiled with black flames like a venomous snake, lashed out, and with a sharp piercing sound, took another life.

Blood, endless streams of blood, poured forth.

Xi Xi lifted her tender yet cold face.

She carved a bloody path toward the City Lord's Mansion.

When all was slain.

Xi Xi sprawled her legs wide, sitting amidst the mountain of corpses and sea of blood in the City Lord's Mansion, her lips quivering.

"Xi Xi, no longer has father or mother..."

Her icy, frigid eyes held nothing but infinite darkness.

The eerie, twisting patterns covering her body writhed and expanded bit by bit, threatening to engulf her tiny frame entirely.

Suddenly.

From the abyss of darkness, a streak of white light slowly radiated forth.

A white chess piece floated and glided out of Xi Xi's body.

Buzz, buzz, buzz—

It seemed as though countless starlight particles scattered tenderly like dust.

Xi Xi stared blankly.

The darkness in her pupils reflected a glimmer of light.

"If you must kill, father will kill with you."

"Don't let yourself suffer too much."

"Father has always been here."

The white chess piece hummed softly...

A gentle voice, like a breeze, drifted in.

Gradually...

The white chess piece transformed into a familiar figure.

Xi Xi sat amidst the mountain of corpses and sea of blood, tilting her head upward in a daze.

Li Che's radiant figure bathed in glowing white light knelt down, smiling warmly.

He extended his hand.

Gently ruffled Xi Xi's hair.

Chapter 869: Xi Xi's True Heart Protects Parents, This World Only Needs One Xi Xi

Rumbling, rumbling...

The skies opened, and icy rain poured down, washing away the thick scent of blood.

A pale figure shimmered brightly, like stardust cascading from the night sky.

Li Che emitted a gentle radiance, his eyes filled with tender care as he extended his hand, lightly placing it on Xi Xi's little head.

Within the illusion realm shaped by Dao Yun, Xi Xi's form was only that of a one-year-old—small, delicate, and exquisite.

In Li Che's memory, the vision of Xi Xi being this small was already distant, a fragment buried in time.

But this time, through the will conveyed by the Flying Thunder Chess Piece, Li Che found himself seeing Xi Xi as a child once again.

Sitting cross-legged on the ground, Xi Xi lifted her head as though reaching toward the light.

Her pupils, black as ink, were like an unfathomably deep pool, as if they could pull one's very soul into their depths.

Li Che gazed calmly at her, meeting her intense stare.

Xi Xi's eyes began to ripple.

"Daddy..."

Xi Xi murmured softly, her lips quivering, her face full of grievance.

Li Che gently stroked her head.

"Daddy is always here."

Li Che's heart ached for her.

To Xi Xi, the Heart Test was truly significant; for a five-year-old child, what kind of resilience could she possess?

"If you're tired, if you don't want to endure this anymore, then give up... Daddy can always protect you. As long as I'm here, you needn't worry about anything."

Li Che lovingly and tenderly rubbed Xi Xi's little head.

The dark murkiness in Xi Xi's pupils began to recede, as if the awakening power within her was being suppressed by her own will.

Below her, the boiling black pool gradually ceased its turbulence, and the eerie black markings spreading across Xi Xi's body started to writhe, slowly retreating.

Xi Xi's gaze regained clarity, her eyes brightened, and she climbed to her feet, spreading her arms wide as she hurled herself into Li Che's embrace.

"Daddy... Xi Xi thought she'd never see Daddy and Mommy again."

"Even though Xi Xi knows it was all an illusion, Xi Xi was still so angry, still so hurt..."

"Xi Xi wants to grow stronger, so she can protect Daddy and Mommy! If anyone tries to kill Daddy or Mommy, Xi Xi will kill them!"

Xi Xi tilted her head upward, her tiny face full of resolute determination.

Perhaps, at this moment, Xi Xi finally understood what she truly wanted to protect.

Her heart held an untainted purpose: she didn't want to leave Daddy and Mommy; she didn't want them to get hurt. This was five-year-old Xi Xi's deepest obsession, her thoughts, her desires!

"Xi Xi will pass the test! Xi Xi will become big and strong!"

"When Xi Xi grows strong, strong enough to evolve, Xi Xi will protect Daddy from being killed!"

Xi Xi declared earnestly.

The glowing Li Che couldn't help but smile.

He stroked Xi Xi's head again.

"Then Daddy will keep watching you."

"Let's see just how strong my little Xi Xi can become!"

The long-disheartened expression on Xi Xi's face finally transformed into a radiant smile, like sunlight breaking through clouds, dispelling endless darkness, and bringing the warmth of spring back to the earth.

Fei Lei City, City Lord's Mansion.

The relentless rain pounded on the eaves, echoing loudly as crimson blossoms bloomed fiercely in the storm.

Xi Xi stood up, clenched her five small fingers, and from her left arm, countless streams of black flames surged forth, rolling rapidly through the air. The scorching heat instantly vaporized the rain as it fell!

Xi Xi took a step forward, and sparks began to leap from her body—black sparks.

The patterns that had spread from Jiuyou and begun to fade still imbued Xi Xi with lingering waves of power.

Xi Xi felt the surge of strength, as though sensing an immense, hidden presence buried deep within her.

"Hmph! Xi Xi is Xi Xi, and this world only needs one Xi Xi!"

"Xi Xi... is Daddy and Mommy's most beloved little one!"

BANG—!

Xi Xi gripped the jet-black flames with one hand, and like the mutated Purple Flame Serpentine Spear combined with the Fire Tip Spear, a Prison Lotus Wind Fire Golden Light Wheel spun and spiraled fiercely.

It carried Xi Xi's small body as she transformed into a streak of black lightning, shooting out from the City Lord's Mansion.

Around the mansion, figure after figure emerged, shrouded in thick Death Qi and Corpse Qi, along with the cackling form of a child—the Spirit Infant Master!

Crack, crack—

The entire Fei Lei City began its sacrificial ceremony, the ground splintering apart and the bricks of the City Lord's Mansion crumbling.

A scene Li Che had experienced once before now unfolded again!

The Three-eyed Spirit Baby's Mysterious Temple erupted from beneath the mansion, a swirling maelstrom of divinity flailing wildly like thrashing tentacles.

Surrounding them, the Spirit Infant Sect's Spirit Infant Master, in the body of a child, donned adult robes and floated in the air, making rustling sounds.

Xi Xi sped out from the City Lord's Mansion.

And there she faced them head-on!

"Kill!"

Xi Xi gripped her long spear at an angle, standing on a single Prison Lotus Wind Fire Light Wheel, hovering in mid-air. She tilted her chin up, puffed out her tiny belly, and looked down arrogantly at the Spirit Infant Sect's wicked figures below.

Her spear shook, and rainstorm erupted in chaos!

Xi Xi immediately transformed into a streak of light, slicing toward the group.

Li Che's luminous form silently followed behind.

Xi Xi was killing.

He was watching Xi Xi kill.

If Xi Xi wanted to kill, Daddy would accompany her in killing.

...

...

Within Qiankun Small Cave Heaven.

The misty air began to churn and roll endlessly.

Standing at the center of the circular White Jade Staircase, the Divine Sect Ancestor's Divine Sculpture trembled faintly.

Its eyelids twitched slightly, and in the next moment, the eyes of the sculpture suddenly opened once more.

The radiance emanating from the sculpture seemed dimmer, as though some colossal force had siphoned away half its brilliance.

Chapter 870: Xi Xi's True Heart Protects Parents, This World Only Needs One Xi Xi (2)

Pain, a muddled sense of confusion, surged through the carved visage of the Grandmaster's Divine Sculpture.

Among these children...

There's even a Swallowing Gold Beast!

Unbearable!

The Dao Yun it just siphoned from its eggshell—is it so quickly returned?

Indeed, in this world, there's no such thing as a free lunch!

He even suspected...

The eggshell of that tea egg was just part of someone's calculated trap...

However, the Grandmaster's Divine Sculpture's gaze shot out one stream of light after another, scanning the children sitting cross-legged on the White Jade Staircase, each with faces different in expression.

Some were in pain, some in mania, some in anger, some dead in spirit, and some wailing...

The Seven Emotions and Six Desires, growing wildly in their hearts.

The Heart Test challenges one's inherent will, and for these children, it is of utmost importance.

This steadying of their inner disposition will benefit them greatly when they forge their Divine Fetus and shape their Heaven and Earth Soul in the future.

Even in the Divine Tribulation Realm, when they face the terrifying Heart Demon Tribulation, it will provide them with some resistance.

This trial marked the three evaluations meant to select Lv Taibai's direct disciple, someone Lv Taibai intended to cultivate as the Young Sect Master, hence the tests were exceedingly stringent, especially the Heart Test...

Lv Taibai needed to ascertain the disciple's disposition to lay the foundation for his training plan.

Boom!!!

The smoke surrounding the White Jade Staircase began to disperse gradually.

Clearly, the Heart Test was slowly approaching its conclusion.

Beneath the White Jade Arch.

Spring rain fell incessantly.

Silver hair danced wildly in the muffled roar of spring thunder. Lv Taibai slowly withdrew his gaze and looked toward the heavens. Within his pupils, radiant sword light seemed to flicker continuously.

"Celestial anomaly..."

"This doesn't seem to be an ordinary Heart Test trial."

"Perhaps this time... I might take on an extraordinary disciple."

Lv Taibai leaned back onto his chair, his lips curling up into a faint smile.

That works...

The Qian Yuan Divine Sect truly needs a disciple capable of carrying the sect's prestige.

But just who will it be?

Lv Taibai's gaze penetrated the Qiankun Small Cave Heaven, landing one by one on the children. Each held an expression unique to their own story.

Though they were still young, they seemed to harbor deeply unusual tales.

Suddenly.

Lv Taibai's attention settled on Xi Xi.

He was momentarily dazed.

Because Xi Xi, whose face had previously been contorted in pain, now had her brows relaxed, her lips raised into a bright and joyous curve.

It was as though...

In the Heart Test, she had encountered something that brought her immense happiness.

Amidst a group of children who were dazed by pain and struggle.

Xi Xi's radiant smile was exceptionally conspicuous.

After his daze, Lv Taibai too couldn't help but smile faintly.

"Is it you?"

"Little girl..."

Lv Taibai couldn't help but feel a trace of anticipation for this potential new disciple.

If it truly is Xi Xi...

He could already imagine the exuberant delight on his wife's face.

Thinking of his wife, Lv Taibai's gaze lowered slightly, silver hair cascading from the side of his face, veiling the subtle arc of his lips.

...

...

Li Che leaned back against the Taishi Chair, the hem of his Mo Shan robes fluttered lightly in the spring breeze.

His jet-black, thick hair fluttered, a few strands clinging to his cheek.

His eyes glimmered with a profound light, deep within his gaze, it seemed as though the Heaven and Earth chessboard was reflected, intertwining. Half his consciousness had entered the Heaven and Earth chessboard, while the other half remained rooted in reality.

The Mud Pill in his brow quaked subtly, as if time itself had reversed, replaying images within the chessboard of Heaven and Earth.

Li Che, through the Thunder Chess Piece, traced back Xi Xi's experiences in the Illusion Realm, replaying everything clearly, his gaze gradually sharpening.

It seemed like another lifetime—had Li Che not awakened his Dao Fruit because of Xi Xi's birth, perhaps everything encountered in the Illusion Realm would have been the eventual result and fate of Li Che's family.

The power of Dao Yun speculated on a hypothetical life—as though it had revisited the calamities Xi Xi might face in life. Within that disaster, Li Che and Zhang Ya had already perished.

Because of grief, because of anger, it seemed as though another will buried deep in Xi Xi's soul had awakened—a will that was reincarnated or from a previous life. Li Che interpreted it as her previous soul awakening.

"Xi Xi's past life?"

Li Che's fingers tapped lightly on the armrest of his chair, his brows furrowing slightly.

This was... somewhat unexpected to him.

Through sheer coincidence, this Heart Test awakened a fragment of Xi Xi's past life's soul?

Because of the extreme anger that arose, it awakened that dormant will buried in her soul—like unleashing a monster from deep within.

If Li Che were to remain idle, allowing that will to control Xi Xi's body recklessly, over time, Xi Xi's original will could gradually be suppressed, undergoing a transformation.

His five fingers clenched suddenly, leaving imprints deep on the armrest, almost pulverizing it.

"The will buried deep in Xi Xi's soul?"

"In that case... Is Xi Xi still my Xi Xi? Is she still my most obedient, most cherished daughter?"

Li Che's gaze slightly lowered.

It seemed he must help Xi Xi suppress the revival of that will. That will, though incredibly powerful—akin to an emerging force awakened from Jiuyou—was profoundly terrifying, exuding a pressure comparable to mountains crumbling. That level of suppression, within the realm of Temple Gods, might place it among their highest ranks.

Thus, Li Che couldn't help but feel pressured...

But pressure was all it was—no matter how much it bore down, Li Che had to ensure that Xi Xi suppressed this will. Even if what lay hidden in Xi Xi's soul could be considered a second Xi Xi...

