

A Father 871

Chapter 871: Xi Xi's True Heart Protects Parents, This World Only Needs One Xi Xi (3)

Li Che only wished for a pure-hearted, carefree, happy-go-lucky Xi Xi.

That will required sorrowful stimulation, required bloodshed to awaken...

How much pain must Xi Xi endure for such a will to manifest?

Li Che did not want Xi Xi to suffer!

Li Che pondered on how to suppress this will.

At the very least, ensure this will does not affect Xi Xi...

As a father, worrying for his daughter.

It is only natural.

...

...

Upon the White Jade Square, Spring Rain fell softly, its gentle rhythm unbroken.

Anomalies unfolded beneath the Heavenly Dome, alarming many; even experts from Great Families seemed baffled as to why such phenomena occurred.

Within the Su Family carriage, the current Family Head, Su Daoling, slowly withdrew his gaze.

"As expected of Lv Taibai's apprenticeship test, even a Divine Child capable of stirring heaven and earth with anomalies has appeared, but who might they be?"

"A temperament able to invoke celestial anomalies... must stem from an extreme type of purity."

"A Heart of Innocence? A Heart of Slaughter? A Heart of Indifference?"

Su Daoling's eyes glimmered.

No matter which kind, it signified that this Divine Child's heart was extraordinarily pure. Such purity, if paired with an ideal cultivation method and plan, could result in rapid advancement beyond comprehension.

"Su Li... could he have a chance?"

Su Daoling exhaled deeply. Amidst all the Divine Children of the Su Family who participated, only Su Li had ascended the White Jade Staircase and remained within the Qiankun Small Cave Heaven, securing himself as one of the fifteen Divine Children.

Yellow Sword Wine's childhood companion, Zhu Qing...

Indeed, Zhu Qing's bloodline was exceptional, capable of capturing Yellow Sword Wine's very soul. From her humble origins in a small noble family, she rose alongside him into the Inner Sect and even appeared on the Outer Sect's List of Extraordinary Persons at the age of eighteen.

Her talent was undeniably commendable. After marrying Su Wuming, ten years passed before she bore Su Li.

However, Zhu Qing's innate gifts were drained dry by Su Wuming, leaving her utterly despondent. Yet Su Wuming did not hesitate to extract her remaining value to its very end.

Su Wuming greatly cherished his son Su Li. Unfortunately, Su Wuming met his end at Yellow Sword Wine's hands.

Perhaps, it is precisely this enmity that presents Su Li with the chance to stand out in this Heart Test?

The Spring Rain quietly rainedanced atop the carriage's roof, creating faint rustling sounds amidst an otherwise undisturbed stillness.

Su Daoling, seated within the carriage and dealing with official matters, struggled with the weight of responsibility. Lacking seasoned experience as Family Head, his handling of affairs was sluggish. Moreover, after the Su Family's massacre, endless accumulated issues demanded his attention.

Suddenly.

Commotion disrupted the silence outside the carriage.

"A Divine Child has awakened, and the first to awaken... signifies elimination!"

Someone shouted.

The sequence in which the Divine Children emerged from their trials revealed their rankings within the Heart Test.

Following the Heart Test, the subsequent trial was the Temple Guardian Test—only three Divine Children could ascend to this stage.

To proceed to the Temple Guardian Test meant drawing ever closer to earning the title of direct disciple under Lv Taibai, an unparalleled figure ranked fifth on the Great God List.

And...

Becoming Lv Taibai's final direct disciple, potentially stepping into the role of Qian Yuan Divine Sect's Young Sect Master—a goal of unparalleled significance!

Su Daoling found his work dull and tasteless at that moment. He set everything down, lifted the curtain, and stepped out of the carriage. His gaze fell upon the light curtain of interwoven sword light spread beneath the White Jade Arch.

Within the radiant screen, seated in circular formation upon the dragon bone-like White Jade Staircase, the fifteen Divine Children began to awaken one by one...

The first to emerge... was Yue Linghu.

Yue Linghu opened his eyes, confused and disoriented, his mind still tangled in the vivid illusion built by Dao Yun Power.

He struggled to distinguish between illusion and reality, the true and the false.

Scanning his surroundings, his heart tightened abruptly.

Even Ao Qingqing... still kept her eyes shut, tears streaming down her face, immersed in immense pain and struggle.

She was still battling within the Heart Test...

This alone proved that Ao Qingqing was more formidable in the Heart Test than Yue Linghu.

"I am really the first to be eliminated?"

Yue Linghu trembled all over, frantic and lost.

At the center, the Grandmaster's Divine Sculpture seemed to come alive, its piercing gaze instantly sweeping over him.

Yue Linghu felt as though the heavens spun and the earth shuddered.

The next moment, his entire being was teleported out of the Qiankun Small Cave Heaven, landing squarely on the damp ground beneath the White Jade Arch.

The cold rainwater soaked his clothes and pants, seeping into his skin.

Countless gazes fell upon him, and Yue Linghu felt chilled to the bone.

In a daze, he descended from the White Jade Staircase, returning to the carriage's vicinity.

Yue Weizheng lifted the curtain but remained rather indifferent.

"Not bad."

"No matter, this was merely a trial for you. I never expected you to truly become Lv Taibai's disciple."

Yue Weizheng's detached words stung Yue Linghu's heart, stirring faint waves of ache.

Was it true, then, that everyone deemed him talentless—even his own father?

Still, Yue Linghu couldn't dwell on his pain for long. Amid the chaos of voices, his eyes caught sight of the second eliminated candidate.

"It's Ning Caihe from Seven Treasures Divine Sect!"

"The third eliminated is here as well... It's the son of the Divine Capital Demon Princess, Tie Shancai..."

...

Yue Linghu's awakening seemed to set off a chain reaction.

One Divine Child after another stirred, gradually opening their eyes amidst trembling figures.

After Tie Shancai, it was Yang Yi, then Zhou Peng.

Once Zhou Peng was likewise expelled from the Qiankun Small Cave Heaven, he stood drenched in the Spring Rain. Taking out a small meat bun, he popped it into his mouth to calm his nerves.

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He turned back to glance at the scene within the Small Cave Heaven.

"Sister Yun E is still holding on... I hope you can persevere. If you make it to the Temple Guardian trial, then you'll have a chance."

Zhou Peng understood better than anyone else the immense pressure Yun E carried, and he wished more than anyone for Yun E's liberation.

His gaze shifted to Xi Xi.

Compared to the faces filled with pain and struggle, Xi Xi, with a smile at the corner of her mouth...

Made Zhou Peng struggle to judge.

"Xi Xi has parents, so many people who love her and favor her... but Yun E doesn't."

"Between Xi Xi and Yun E... I still hope Yun E can make it to the Temple Guardian trial."

Zhou Peng sighed.

As for himself.

He patted his chubby belly. After all, he was the Zhou Family's treasure.

After Zhou Peng was eliminated.

The number of Divine Children remaining within the Qiankun Small Cave Heaven grew smaller and smaller.

The next person to awaken, to everyone's surprise, was actually Gu He from the Heavenly Pill Divine Sect!

Gu He blinked in confusion as he opened his eyes. He swept his gaze around, noticing many still enduring the trials of the Heart Test, and sighed lightly.

He pulled out an elixir and popped it into his mouth. With a crisp crunch, he was sent out of the Qiankun Small Cave Heaven.

What a pity... not a single trace of Dao Yun was felt.

Within the Qiankun Small Cave Heaven, on the white jade staircase encircling the Dragon Ridge, the remaining Divine Children were an unexpected sight to many.

From the Gongshu Family, Gongshu Wentian; from the top spot of the Chu Long List, Lv Qingxuan; from the Yun Family, Yun E; from Qingyun Daoxuan Fu Shen Sect, Xuan Yue; from the Dragon God lineage, Ao Qingqing; from Da Li, Jin Taixui; the Prince from the Divine Capital, Lu Chi; and the daughter of Elder Li from Divine Carving Ridge, Li Nuanxi.

Eight Divine Children!

These eight Divine Children included several who were surprises to many.

Rain poured relentlessly over Daping.

Crack, crack—the roar of thunder erupted among the leaden clouds, making the Qingming season rain feel even colder as it fell.

Everyone's attention was fixed intently on the Qiankun Space, their emotions taut with tension and curiosity.

Primarily because...

Among the eight remaining Divine Children, two belonged to the Alien Race!

Jin Taixui and Ao Qingqing!

One from the Great Witch God lineage of Da Li, and one from the Dragon God lineage...

Truly unexpected.

Yue Linghu, for example, looked at Ao Qingqing with complex emotions. This Little Dragon Girl... had performed so impressively in the Heart Test?

Inside the carriage.

The Princess Consort clenched her five fingers, her long eyelashes trembling. Clearly, even she could not help but feel unsettled and emotionally stirred at this moment, unable to remain calm.

Time passed drop by drop, flowing away unknowingly amid the Qingming season rainwater.

Finally, another Divine Child opened their eyes.

A burst of commotion erupted!

"It's Xuan Yue! Oh dear... those two Alien Race members are still holding on? Xuan Yue from the Xuanfu Divine Sect couldn't endure either... what a pity."

Xuan Yue opened her eyes and was sent out of the Qiankun Small Cave Heaven.

She had performed excellently in the Talent Test, gaining a wisp of Dao Yun power, though it was subsequently stripped away.

Xuan Yue stuck out her tongue playfully, showing little concern.

"Such a shame."

Her eyes sparkled mischievously and shot a glance at Xi Xi on the white jade staircase.

"The youngest disciple of my ancestor! Senior Sister Xi Xi, stay strong! Carry Xuan Yue's hopes forward and keep going!"

Xuan Yue clenched her small fists and cheered enthusiastically.

Although she had endured no small amount of pain in the Heart Test, she quickly turned her thoughts elsewhere, almost forgetting entirely.

After Xuan Yue, another Divine Child awakened, eliciting widespread groans from the crowd at Daping.

This time, it was none other than Lv Qingxuan, first on the Chu Long List.

Lv Qingxuan stood upright as ever, now silent, his five fingers tense and digging faintly into his palms.

His performance in the Talent Test was mediocre, as was his performance in the Heart Test...

As the first of Qian Yuan Divine Sect's Chu Long List, how could he end up so average in every aspect?

Even the Chu Long List leader of Qian Yuan Divine Sect ended up eliminated?

The atmosphere... grew ever tenser!

Could it truly be that two Alien Race members would make it into the Temple Guardian trial?!

The martial world guests from Qianyuan Dao City clenched their sweaty palms.

Even beneath the White Jade Arch, where the many elders were seated in apparent calm, their various expressions began to shift subtly with Lv Qingxuan's elimination.

Great Elder Fang Hanshu continued reading.

But Second Elder Zhao Fangzhou and several other elders' faces had grown visibly solemn after Lv Qingxuan was disqualified.

"Gongshu Wentian, Yun E, Lu Chi, Li Nuanxi... surely they'll suppress Jin Taixui and Ao Qingqing?"

"How are these two Alien Race members persisting so long in the Heart Test?"

"If Alien Race members truly enter the Temple Guardian trial, the danger... will be immense."

"If our Qian Yuan Divine Sect's Young Master position were to be claimed by an Alien Race member, the impact would be far-reaching."

The Qi-Blood roared. Martial Saint Elder Zhao Fangzhou's sinews and bones quivered, as though he could barely stay seated.

"Another Divine Child has awakened!"

"Who is it?"

"It's Lu Chi, the Young Prince from the Divine Capital!"

Zhao Fangzhou tugged at his beard, his eyes narrowing sharply.

Inside the carriage in the Daping, Elder Mo sighed heavily, regret palpable...

Lu Chi had persevered much longer than Elder Mo anticipated.

But regrettably, he could not continue holding out.

And just moments after Lu Chi, before even two or three breaths had passed...

Ao Qingqing collapsed onto the white jade staircase, drenched in sweat, sobbing uncontrollably.

During the Heart Test, she seemingly relived the life of the Dragon Queen Consort...

Suddenly, she understood her aunt's pain, her madness, her harshness toward herself...

Tears flowed endlessly, yet she ultimately still disappointed her aunt.

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She couldn't hold on until the next trial.

Large teardrops, one after another, fell onto the White Jade Staircase.

Perhaps her destiny would be the same as her aunt's?

Suffocation, despair, made it hard for her to breathe, robbing her eyes of their light.

She looked at Xi Xi. Her aunt wanted her to defeat Xi Xi, but... she truly couldn't do it.

Watching Xi Xi face the challenges of the Heart Test, her lips curved into a smile, her face aglow with unabashed joy.

How could she be so happy?

Why?

Ao Qingqing was genuinely envious.

Buzz—

Lu Chi and Ao Qingqing were also sent out of the Qiankun Small Cave Heaven.

Lu Chi's eyes were cold as he stood at the entrance of the Qiankun Small Cave Heaven. In those indifferent eyes, a flicker of light flashed, and a trace of pain surged within.

I still can't let go...

He turned and left, entering the carriage.

"Elder Mo... let's go."

"Return to the Divine Capital."

"In the end, I've disappointed the State Preceptor."

Lu Chi's voice echoed faintly: "It's time for me to face what I must face..."

"Your Highness... you've already done very well."

Elder Mo consoled him.

"I will report your performance truthfully to the State Preceptor..."

"Thank you, Elder Mo."

As his words fell silent.

The charioteer tugged on the reins and, without lingering further, drove the carriage away from the Qianyuan Divine Sect Mountain Gate.

Lv Taibai withdrew his gaze from the departing carriage.

Meanwhile, within the spacious Daping.

Li Qingshan sat on the front of his cart, watching from afar as Lu Chi's carriage shattered through the driving storm and sped into the distance.

From start to finish...

Lu Chi never once turned back to look at the man who had once been his master.

...

...

On the White Jade Staircase.

Only four Divine Children remained.

Gongshu Wentian, Jin Taixui, Li Nuanxi, and Yun E...

Just one more elimination, and the three Divine Children entering the third trial would be decided!

Who would it be?

Who?!

The spring rain roared, growing more torrential.

Even Li Che couldn't help but open his eyes, focusing half his attention on the sword-light-reflected scene at the Qiankun Small Cave Heaven's entrance.

The world was utterly silent.

The downpour became even more intense.

Suddenly.

It was as if the sound of something shattering resounded through the air.

In an instant, Gongshu Wentian, who was meditating cross-legged on the White Jade Staircase, suddenly shuddered, his face revealing an expression of disbelief and terror-filled despair.

In the next moment, his eyes snapped open.

He gasped for air in huge gulps.

He abruptly turned his head toward Xi Xi's direction.

In his mind...

A memory surfaced of the battle he had with Li Nuanxi in the Heart Test illusion realm.

Gongshu Wentian had been about to defeat Li Nuanxi, suppress his Heart Demon, and pass the Heart Test!

But then...

Li Nuanxi suddenly transformed!

Her entire body was covered with bewitching black patterns, as if she had emerged from the corpse-laden Jiuyou blood seas!

In the illusion realm.

Gongshu Wentian felt his legs refusing to obey him. The terrifying rank suppression, as if the very skies had been gouged out and crashed down, forced him to kneel, unable to summon even the courage to resist.

It was simply...

Not a foe on the same level!

With cold arrogance, Xi Xi cast a fleeting glance at him, her eyes akin to one viewing the ephemeral mayflies of the world. That gaze crushed his feeble Dao Heart like a tofu block.

Then, with but a touch of her finger...

She erased him completely.

As Gongshu Wentian woke, it felt as though he'd experienced an apocalyptic nightmare.

Yet, confusion gnawed at his brain.

No...

He had never even seen Li Nuanxi in that form in reality!

Why was he forced to confront such a monster in the Heart Test?!

Does reality always choose to bully the honest?

Li Nuanxi...

Just who... are you?!

Chapter 874: A bet that could break the journey, with Gou accompanying Xi Xi through the Temple Guardian Challenge

Crack—crack—

Above the heavenly dome, spring thunder roared with fury, endlessly weaving and sparking within the layers of dense leaden clouds like a spider web.

The raindrops grew increasingly violent, like raging river waters crashing against jagged rocks, cascading down in a torrential flow.

Under the White Jade Arch, upon the vast open ground.

Columns of rain hammered against the rooftop of the carriage, shattering into bursts of water, transforming into a massive white veil of mist.

Inside the carriage were nobles and dignitaries sent by the great noble families and state cities to deliver divine prodigies. They sat upright and composed, their gazes fixed as they watched the sword aura intertwining images before them.

Farther away, the Jianghu guests who had flocked from all corners to Qianyuan Dao City craned their necks in anticipation.

Among the four divine prodigies, one remained who belonged to the alien race, which made everyone tense with unease.

If the one eliminated turned out to be the alien from the Da Li Royal Court, it would naturally be a cause for celebration—even the Jianghu guests present wouldn't be able to suppress their cheers.

The Da Li Royal Court... and Great Vista were practically sworn enemies.

Though separated by the desolate wastes, in the Tongyou Corridor of the Tongyou Road, countless conflicts erupted repeatedly. You State often turned into a battleground for war, and many Great Vista warriors perished on those sands.

Even though Great Vista and Da Li had established a nearly 60-year-long truce agreement in the Tongyou Corridor, the friction and hatred between the two nations wouldn't fade so easily.

After all, how much blood had the ancestors shed for Great Vista? How could the enmity and grief from that spilled blood simply be forgiven or forgotten?

To be precise, the Qian Yuan Divine Sect likely did not desire to see an alien ascend as the Young Sect Master.

Otherwise, there wouldn't have been this so-called direct disciple assessment under the guise of selecting a Young Sect Master.

After all, Lv Taibai already had a royal descendant from the Da Li Royal Court under his wing, ranked first on the True Inheritor List. If they truly wished for an alien to become Young Sect Master, why make such a grand spectacle?

It could only be said that the emergence of Jin Taixui had caught the Qian Yuan Divine Sect off-guard.

And at the time, Lv Taibai had declared that he would teach without discrimination—he couldn't very well refuse to let Jin Taixui participate in the selection, could he?

If Chi Kuang could join the Qian Yuan Divine Sect as a direct disciple of the Sect Master, why couldn't Jin Taixui?

Many people cast their gazes towards Lv Taibai, speculating that the Taibai Sect Master must have prepared contingency plans.

Surely, an alien would never assume the position of Young Sect Master!

When Gongshu Wentian opened his eyes...

The vast open ground instantly erupted with gasps of astonishment, even causing many formidable figures from the noble families to lose control of their emotions in that moment!

Was it possible... this matter was spiraling completely out of the Sect Master's grasp?

"Hahaha... As expected of the Great Witch God's bloodline!"

"Raised under the influence of the Great Witch God since childhood, their heart forged to its utmost limits—Heart Test... is the specialty of the Young Witches from my clan!"

The two black-cloaked experts from Wushen Mountain stroked their beards and roared with laughter.

The symbols painted on their faces seemed to come to life, glowing with animation.

Their laughter was unbridled, utterly wanton, stirring the icy fury flickering in the gaze of Gongshu Jingjun, seated under the White Jade Arch.

Gongshu Wentian was a descendant of the Gongshu Family—one of the ancient noble families residing in the Divine Capital, deeply rooted with profound heritage. Gongshu Wentian had come with the singular goal of securing a direct disciple position under Lv Taibai.

Unexpectedly, an unexpected complication had arisen.

Yet, Gongshu Jingjun understood Gongshu Wentian's predicament well. Gongshu Wentian's mindset was inherently fragile—despite his exceptional talent, he was nicknamed the "Tofu Dao Heart" for his excessively delicate mental state. Even the slightest setback lodged deeply in his heart, shattering his Dao Heart.

Fortunately, although Gongshu Wentian's Dao Heart was fragile, it would always rebuild itself after breaking. However, even after reconstruction, it remained as delicate as tofu, ready to break again at any given moment.

As was to be expected.

Gongshu Wentian, having been expelled from the Qiankun Small Cave Heaven, watched as the three strands of Dao Yun he obtained during the first trial were stripped away entirely.

Agony swept across Gongshu Wentian's face as he clutched his chest, his Dao Heart shattered to pieces beyond repair.

His Dao Heart... had never been more thoroughly destroyed than it was today!

Rebuilding it this time would likely take at least a month!

Li Nuanxi...

Who exactly was she?

No!

This little girl...

Isn't even human!

...

...

Heart Test, within the Illusion Realm.

Xi Xi gripped the Purple Flame Serpentine Spear tightly, the black flames dancing along its surface slowly receding and dissipating. When at last the pure violet flames began rising and flaring,

A heavy pressure surged into Xi Xi's body.

The overwhelming power of the Purple Flame Serpentine Spear, as a mythical weapon, was far beyond what Xi Xi could wield in her current state. Although she frequently relied on the divine power emitted by the Fire Tip Spear to enhance her Fusion Soldier Body Refining,

Her physical body had only reached the level of a Qi-Blood Furnace in terms of strength.

However, with the loss of the black patterns' power, mastering the Fire Tip Spear now seemed entirely unattainable.

Swoosh—

The Fire Tip Spear transformed into a stream of violet fire, coiling like a serpent around Xi Xi's arm before slipping under her skin, vanishing into her tendons and bones.

Xi Xi immediately felt a rapid weakening of her strength.

Simultaneously, the Prison Lotus Wind Fire Golden Light Wheel beneath her feet began shedding its black sparks, and its Prison Lotus-like silhouette faded into nothingness.

Xi Xi tilted her head slightly, the Golden Light Wheel dove into her tiny feet.

The once-gleeful Xi Xi, who had fought joyfully and slaughtered evildoers all along her path, was now forced to land on the ground, stepping squarely into a pool of blood.

Meanwhile, on the outskirts of Fei Lei City,

A silver brilliance erupted, thick and unyielding, while death qi and corpse qi churned and boiled like a fierce savage corpse. The Silver Gang whipped about like a mad Jiaoshe, ripping through the air, a harbinger of slaughter surging forth as though emerging from the depths of death.

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Li Che, glowing faintly, followed behind Xi Xi, his gaze suddenly sharpened.

Yuan Jingang...

The mastermind behind Fei Lei City's Thousand Infants Banquet, a Seven Yuan Upper-tier Corpse God Envoy from the Corpse God Cult, a Cursed Silver Corpse expert wielding twenty-five strands of Silver Gang Power!

Xi Xi, having lost the empowering forces of the Purple Flame Serpentine Spear and the Prison Lotus Wind Fire Golden Light Wheel, as well as the support of that formidable will...

Had entirely lost the possibility of contending against Yuan Jingang.

Li Che understood that Xi Xi's Heart Test had probably reached its limit here.

To avoid witnessing the heartbreaking scene of Xi Xi being defeated.

Li Che decided to intervene.

Although he wasn't sure if his intervention would allow the victory to be credited to Xi Xi.

Even if it might affect Xi Xi's results, Li Che would still act.

Radiating brilliance from his entire body, the light suddenly flared explosively. As his five fingers clenched, even as a will-bound luminous body, he surged with an endless tide of ferocious Qi-Blood!

"Xi Xi, watch closely."

Li Che said softly. As his five fingers gripped tightly, it seemed as though five streams of air resembling Divine Spears were gathered within his grasp.

Master Realm Divine Seed Martial Arts!

Myriad Transformations Dragon Elephant!

Li Che lightly tapped his toes on the ground, causing Fei Lei City to seemingly tremble violently in that instant. Web-like cracks erupted through the Illusion Realm's space!

A giant golden phantom of a Divine Elephant emerged in resplendent light.

A majestic Divine Dragon coiled around the Divine Elephant's body.

Dragon Elephant Merged Form!

Yuan Jingang at the Cursed Silver Corpse level...

Was instantly obliterated into ashes!

...

...

"Whoa"

On the White Jade Staircase.

Xi Xi's long eyelashes trembled as her face lit up with both amazement and joy!

Daddy is so powerful!

Without even using the Immortal Artisan Gatling, he managed to set off fireworks barehanded!

Simply incredible!

Xi Xi thought about defeating Daddy. Clearly, she still needed to grow stronger!

Xi Xi's eyes sparkled as she stretched lazily. Her short arms and legs crackled with crisp snapping sounds as her tendons and bones roared like popping beans!

"Huh?!"

Xi Xi clenched her tiny fist and swung it at the air, causing a resonating whirring sound to burst forth.

"Xi Xi got stronger again!"

Xi Xi exclaimed joyfully!

Her physical strength seemed to have increased greatly once more—but why?

Could it be the power of those black patterns?

Xi Xi vividly remembered that in the Illusion Realm, a young lady had spoken deep within Xi Xi's mind, after which black floral patterns had appeared all over Xi Xi's body. Furthermore...

The Emperor Xi Xi was just too cool!

Recalling the scenes in the Illusion Realm, Xi Xi couldn't help but smile cheerfully. With Daddy always around, Xi Xi's heart never wavered!

And there was still more fighting to be done. Xi Xi was growing stronger through combat!

Sooner or later, she would surpass Daddy!

Xi Xi clenched her small fist with a surge of determination!

At that moment, her spirits returned, and she glanced off into the distance. There she saw Jin Taixui and Yun E still struggling within the Illusion Realm of the Heart Test.

"Ms. Yun E..."

Xi Xi blinked her bright eyes.

Standing on her White Jade Staircase, Xi Xi dared not move recklessly, afraid to disturb Yun E and disrupt Yun E's Heart Test trial.

As for Jin Taixui, Xi Xi glanced at him but didn't try to disturb him either.

Xi Xi was very polite!

Earlier, she had used the Immortal Blood Fire Bodhi Gatling to bombard Jin Taixui because Jin Taixui had struck first, so Xi Xi had responded decisively with an attack!

"Ms. Yun E, keep it up! You have to defeat that guy!"

Xi Xi clenched her little fist, cheering and encouraging her.

Meanwhile, outside the Illusion Realm.

When Xi Xi awakened, a wave of disappointed murmurs instantly spread through the crowd, even louder than the thunderous sound of Spring Rain crashing down.

Many people at the scene had placed high hopes on Xi Xi. After all, she was the one who had dominated the Talent Test in the first trial, reaching the summit ahead of all others and surpassing Gongshu Wentian's young prodigy!

However, in the second Heart Test trial, Gongshu Wentian had failed, and Xi Xi had only claimed third place.

As for Jin Taixui, the Young Witch from the Da Li Royal Court with the Great Witch God Bloodline, he was still persevering through the Heart Test, and his ranking was at least higher than Xi Xi's.

In reality, after Gongshu Wentian's defeat, the second Heart Test produced three remaining Divine Children who advanced, fully determining the three participants for the third trial, the Temple Guardian Test.

"What a pity..."

Inside the carriage, Zhang Ya sighed.

Nearby, Nurse Momo consoled her, "Xi Xi has performed exceedingly well. She's only five years old; the Heart Test is naturally a disadvantage for her since her emotions are easily affected... Unlike other, more mature children."

Hearing this, Zhang Ya soon felt relieved.

Xi Xi had at least made it to the third trial, the Temple Guardian Test, which meant there was still hope.

Encouraged by the thought, Zhang Ya couldn't suppress her happiness. Xi Xi had already accomplished an impressive feat.

Under the White Jade Arch, many elders saw that Xi Xi was the first among the three participants to awaken.

All of them sighed in unison.

Truly unfortunate.

"Xi Xi has actually already done quite well."

Many elders turned toward Li Che and began congratulating him. It was indeed worthy of celebration, as Xi Xi had successfully entered the third trial.

After all, Xi Xi was still just a five-year-old child.

Li Che's face softened into a gentle smile as he clasped his hands in polite acknowledgment of the congratulations from the elders.

Suddenly.

The crowd collectively turned their heads toward the direction of the Sword Qi Disc, which reflected the scene.

The last two participants awakened in succession.

Jin Taixui awakened first, and roughly three breaths later, Yun E's exquisitely beautiful face showed subtle signs of life. Her eyelashes trembled slightly as her eyes opened, revealing pupils within which a crescent moon flashed briefly, transforming her demeanor into one of icy elegance.

A faint Rank Suppression radiated from her being, enveloping the surroundings, as her aura underwent an earth-shaking metamorphosis.

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Jin Taixui furrowed his brows and looked at Yun E.

"Temple God Reincarnation?"

"No, that's not right... Are you feeding yourself to the god?"

"I see now, my loss wasn't undeserved."

Jin Taixui spoke calmly, the colorful patterns painted on his face trembling slightly.

The second...

The second Heart Test!

Since the age of three, he had been thrown into the Mysterious Temple, where he grew up crawling and scraping, a tempering that honed his soul. In the Heart Test, he showcased a significant advantage.

The Heart Test... created through the Dao Yun Power of the Qian Yuan Divine Sect Ancestor, manifests as an illusion realm. Dao Yun senses the tribulations and pains deeply rooted in one's heart.

No one can entirely overcome their trials and pains—it only comes down to how long one can endure.

Because some pains and tribulations are incredibly enduring, to experience them again may yield an even lesser performance than before.

Jin Taixui gazed at the tiny figure of Xi Xi, who resembled a little bean sprout, a flicker of strangeness flashing in his eyes.

He no longer dared to underestimate Xi Xi. After all, she'd already beaten him before.

This little girl had whipped out a mechanism, bombarded him ruthlessly, and nearly sent him off for good.

"Sister Yun E!"

Xi Xi's small feet moved quickly, patter-pattering as she dashed to Yun E's side.

Yun E's icy-cold gaze softened with a touch of warmth as she looked at Xi Xi.

She ruffled Xi Xi's hair: "Xi Xi is so impressive, lasting until the third round of the Heart Test. It wasn't easy—you must have suffered a lot, didn't you?"

Yun E knew all too well how grueling the Heart Test was.

The inner pains were peeled open again to be relived more intensely—it was worse than a nightmare.

But Xi Xi vigorously shook her head: "Xi Xi didn't suffer at all! Xi Xi had a great time. My dad was always protecting me!"

Yun E chuckled speechlessly.

She gently stroked Xi Xi's head.

"Such a pity... It looks like this time, the direct disciple slot of the Taibai God is mine for certain."

Jin Taixui crossed his arms, his ten-year-old figure already quite lanky, almost fit to be called a young man.

"If Gongshu Wentian or Xuan Yue managed to reach the third round, I might feel some pressure. After all, the Gongshu Family is the lineage of the Chief Supervisor of the Grand Prospect Heavenly Observatory. Gongshu Wentian is actually quite competent."

"Xuan Yue hails from the Xuanfu Divine Sect and is also quite strong..."

"But as for the two of you..."

Jin Taixui had always been wild and uninhibited. He was arrogant because, in the Great Vista, arrogance was imperative to showcase the brilliance of Da Li's prodigies.

"A five-year-old little girl and some trash reliant entirely on Temple God powers to stand here..."

"You pose almost no threat to me."

The disdain in Jin Taixui's words was unabashed.

Jin Taixui turned to Xi Xi: "I admit, little girl, your talent ceiling is quite good. With all sorts of enhancements, you should have Purple Qi Reaching Heaven level potential..."

"But you're merely five years old. How strong can your actual power be? If it weren't for your use of mechanisms, I could crush you as easily as a defeated dog."

So brazen!

Xi Xi immediately furrowed her brows angrily!

"You defeated loser, how dare you look down on Emperor Xi Xi!"

With hands on her hips, Xi Xi puffed out her little stomach and scolded him loudly.

Jin Taixui's face darkened: "Who's your defeated loser? That was a sneak attack! And you used mechanisms to sneak attack me—how dare you call me a defeated loser!"

"Little girl, do you dare to take a gamble with me?!" Jin Taixui squinted, fixing his gaze on Xi Xi with a crooked, malicious grin.

"A gamble?"

Xi Xi instantly recalled the scene of betting against Ji Haihui, the Evil Minister, in the past.

Her head shook like a rattle drum.

"I'm not betting with you people who don't keep your word. Losing and then refusing to settle—the whole thing's pointless," Xi Xi said.

Jin Taixui's brows furrowed: "I am the Young Witch of Wushen Mountain! How could I possibly not keep my word?"

"The last one also said the same. He was the esteemed Young Prince! He promised that if he lost, he'd become Xi Xi's little servant. But then he lost and wouldn't admit it."

Xi Xi sighed and shrugged.

"This place is the Small Cave Heaven of the Qian Yuan Divine Sect Ancestor. If we bet here, Dao Yun will witness. Anyone who reneges—your Divine Tribulation path ends right here!"

Jin Taixui raised his chin, staring at Xi Xi, wildly arrogant.

The ten-year-old youth's brashness and conceit were on full display.

Xi Xi's eyes lit up immediately.

Yun E quickly covered Xi Xi's mouth: "Xi Xi, we're not gambling with him..."

Yun E naturally understood Jin Taixui's strength—it was unquestionably formidable. Even if she carried the Temple God within her, defeating him was not guaranteed.

He came from Wushen Mountain. His methods, known far and wide for their eerie nature, likely included techniques to counter the Temple God.

Xi Xi pried Yun E's hand away, stood on tiptoes, and patted Yun E's shoulder like a seasoned adult.

"Sister Yun E, have no fear! Emperor Xi Xi is here, and I also have my trump cards!"

Xi Xi said seriously.

"What are we betting on, Golden Tabby Cat?"

With her hands on her hips, Xi Xi's little belly bobbed up and down.

"Simple. We'll bet on the third round Temple Guardian Test—who claims first place."

"If you're first, I'll be your charioteer and servant."

"If I'm first, you'll come with me to Wushen Mountain to see the Great Witch God."

Jin Taixui laughed, finally revealing his true ambition.

Xi Xi's talent... absolutely extraordinary!

In a fleeting moment, Jin Taixui had glimpsed Xi Xi's cascading Purple Aura Divinity Pillar—it was unbelievably immense!

Purple Qi Reaching Heaven might not even be this little girl's limit!

A perfect all-rounder...

A little girl like this would surely earn the Great Witch God's favor!

"Simply to visit the Great Witch God at Wushen Mountain?" Xi Xi asked curiously.

"Yes, that's all," Jin Taixui replied.

Chapter 877: A bet that could break the journey, with Gou accompanying Xi Xi through the Temple Guardian Challenge (4)

However, upon meeting the Great Witch God...

You, this little girl, will inevitably become one of Wushen Mountain's people!

"Fine!"

"Emperor Xi Xi has accepted your wager!"

Xi Xi declared.

At the same time.

In the instant their wager was established.

Buzz buzz buzz

The White Jade Staircase suddenly trembled violently, the mist dissipating as the Grandmaster's Divine Sculpture opened its radiant eyes, releasing brilliant white light.

Instantly, a surge of Dao Essence coiled and violently swirled around Xi Xi and Jin Taixui.

It seemed as if an invisible link had formed in the depths of the universe.

"The wager... is sealed!"

"Dao Essence bears witness—if breached, the path shall be severed!"

Jin Taixui's expression suddenly became solemn, his voice heavy.

Yun E's face subtly shifted, unable to resist sighing softly.

Xi Xi, however, firmly nodded: "Uh-huh!"

Jin Taixui chuckled, casting a deep look at the silly little girl, his mood inexplicably brightening.

He had entered the Mysterious Temple at the age of three, braving its dangers and surviving countless life-and-death trials. When it came to Temple Guardian expertise, how could he possibly lose to a five-year-old girl?

Buzz buzz buzz

The white Dao Yun Qi Column drifted forward.

Xuan Yue and Gongshu Wentian failed to secure the top three spots in the second trial, the Heart Test, and thus had their Dao Essence stripped away.

Xi Xi placed third in the Heart Test, earning two feet of Dao Essence, added to the nine feet gained in the first trial. This brought Xi Xi's Dao Essence to a total of eleven feet.

Jin Taixui, on the other side, gained five feet of Dao Essence.

Yun E, who claimed first place in the Heart Test, received twelve feet of Dao Essence.

The Dao Essence rewards for the top three in the Heart Test surpassed the overall rewards given in the Talent Test!

This indirectly highlighted that Lv Taibai's direct disciple selection exam prioritized qualities beyond talent.

Buzz buzz buzz

Their vision blurred as the three contestants were teleported outside Qiankun Small Cave Heaven the next moment.

"Daddy!"

As soon as Xi Xi emerged, her lively eyes darted around, quickly spotting Li Che seated in the Elder's chair.

Recalling the scenes from the illusion realm, Xi Xi immediately lit up and dashed toward Li Che, leaping up and clinging to him like an octopus.

She nestled her head against Li Che's chest, rubbing repeatedly.

"Xi Xi missed Daddy so much!"

Xi Xi said cheerfully.

Li Che gently stroked Xi Xi's hair: "Don't worry, Daddy has always been here and will protect Xi Xi."

Xi Xi lifted her head, gazing at Li Che with wide-eyed curiosity. Could the Daddy in the illusion realm have been genuine?

Not a product of Emperor Xi Xi's belief?

Her eyes sparkled brighter and brighter: "Uh-huh!"

She nodded vigorously.

Xi Xi hurried to complete the unfinished actions she couldn't accomplish in the illusion realm.

"Daddy, let's make a pinky promise!"

Father and daughter, oblivious to others' presence atop the White Jade Arch, linked their pinky fingers.

"Pinky promise, lasting a hundred years, unchanging!"

Xi Xi gleefully swung her head from side to side.

From the sidelines, Yun E watched quietly with envy gleaming in her eyes, as though it might materialize.

Xi Xi tattled on Jin Taixui, recounting the wager she had made with him.

Upon hearing this, Li Che's gaze immediately sharpened...

Truthfully, Li Che had long known about the wager. He had also suspected Jin Taixui's ulterior motives, aiming to lure Xi Xi to Wushen Mountain through the wager?

Da Li's Wushen Mountain...

Was far more powerful than an ordinary Divine Sect, even exceeding the Da Li Royal Court, which was established under Wushen Mountain's surveillance. The Great Witch God's status was so revered that they could designate the Emperor of the Da Li Royal Court.

"Daddy understands."

"Since you've made the wager, Xi Xi must give it her utmost effort to win." Li Che fondly ruffled Xi Xi's hair, his tone becoming as gentle and playful as hers, unable to resist adding sound effects.

Yet, Li Che's gaze shifted to Jin Taixui, where an undeniable chill emerged.

Jin Taixui, escorted away by powerful figures of Wushen Mountain, seemed to sense an icy shiver. Having endured the horrors of the Ten Thousand Ghost Cave beneath Wushen Mountain's Mysterious Temple, he was acutely attuned to the threat of death.

Looking back, he only saw a gentle young man holding the little girl.

"Young Witch, did you really establish a Dao Essence witnessed wager with that little girl?"

An elderly cultivator furrowed his brows as he questioned.

Jin Taixui grinned and nodded: "That girl's talent is indeed excellent; at the very least, it's Purple Qi Reaching Heaven... The Great Witch God will undoubtedly favor her, perhaps even making her Wushen Mountain's Goddess."

"Young Witch, are you unafraid Qian Yuan Divine Sect will refuse?"

"If they refuse... that would mean the little girl repudiates the wager and breaches the Dao Essence witnessed contract. To break it is to sever her path, rendering her no future threat."

Jin Taixui chuckled faintly.

"She's wilder than me..."

"Five years old, but I was much more composed at her age."

Another cultivator, observing the self-assured Young Witch, couldn't help but comment: "Young Witch... Have you considered the possibility of failure?"

"If you fail, will you truly become her charioteer or servant?"

The smile on Jin Taixui's face slowly faded as he turned to the elderly cultivator: "If you can't speak properly, say less."

"I, Jin Taixui, started training in the Strange Que's Ten Thousand Ghost Cave at three years old; how could I possibly lose?"

The elderly Divine Fetus Practitioner's withered face involuntarily twitched: "Young Witch..."

"This is Yuan Dao City, the territory of Qian Yuan Divine Sect..."

"If Lv Taibai decides to intervene..."

Jin Taixui's smile froze entirely.

"Impossible, the Great God wouldn't stoop to such disgraceful tactics!"

Swish swish swish.

Spring Rain poured relentlessly.

Jin Taixui felt the raindrops coldly splatter against his face.

He lifted his gaze toward the "Qiankun" Dao Essence plaque below.

Silver-haired like cascading waterfalls; dressed in white more pristine than snow—Lv Taibai.

Chapter 878: A bet that could break the journey, with Gou accompanying Xi Xi through the Temple Guardian Challenge (5)

Lv Taibai was seen smiling at him.

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During the Qingming festival, time slowly slipped away as the countdown to the arrival of night began.

The spring rain drizzled continuously, nourishing the earth without pause.

The Qianyuan Divine Sect Master, Great God Lv Taibai's direct disciple assessment, and the Young Sect Master selection's third round, Temple Guardian, did not proceed on the Qingming day.

Instead, it was scheduled for three days later.

And it was set to take place in the [Nine-toothed Demon Extermination Heavenly Peng Mysterious Temple], one of the Four Royal Mysterious Temples in Qianyuan Dao City.

The [Miao Dao Xiansheng Three-Eyed True Monarch Strange Temple], one of the Four Royal Mysterious Temples, is within the Qianyuan Divine Sect Mountain Gate, solely suppressed by the Qianyuan Divine Sect.

As for the Tianpeng Mysterious Temple, it is jointly suppressed by the four great thousand-year-old families of Qianyuan Dao City: the Su Family, the Yun Family, the Zhong Family, and the Zhou Family in conjunction with the Temple Office and the Qintian Observatory.

This establishment of Temple Guardian was also agreed upon by the family heads of the great noble families.

As for setting it three days later, it was because arrangements needed to be made in advance within the altar of this mysterious temple.

During these three days, it was also considered a time for the three direct disciple candidates to prepare their trump cards.

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After Qingming, the rain became even more torrential.

The alley became exceedingly muddy, Li Che held an oil-paper umbrella, holding Xi Xi in one arm, and walked slowly through Thunder Alley toward the restaurant.

The torrential rain splashed countless fine overlapping petals of water on the muddy ground of the alley.

Rainwater dripped off the edges of the oil-paper umbrella, weaving into a curtain of rain.

Xi Xi encircled Li Che's neck with her hands, shaking her head joyfully.

She could see Gou again, and eat the delicious dishes cooked by the boss!

The dim light shone from the restaurant.

Li Che arrived in front of the restaurant.

The Big Black Dog, sleeping on the ground amid the sound of rain, twitched its nose, its dog eyes suddenly opened, its head perked up.

As soon as it saw Xi Xi coming down the alley, its dog eyes naturally ignored the intimidating Li Che.

The Big Black Dog happily got up, bouncing on the spot, wagging its tail.

The boss sat on the chair, quickly stubbed out his cigarette roll, and waved to disperse the smoke.

"You're here, Xi Xi, are you hungry? What would you like to eat? The boss will make it right away."

The boss rarely showed a smile.

Xi Xi was not bashful, she began counting the dishes on her fingers meticulously.

"So many dishes, can you finish them?"

Li Che tapped Xi Xi's forehead.

"Just a bowl of noodles will do." Li Che said gently.

A moment later.

Li Che looked at the bowl of noodles in front of him, while Xi Xi had braised pig's trotters, sweet and sour ribs, and other delicacies in front of her, he suddenly fell into contemplation.

Was he being too polite?

After eating and drinking their fill.

Li Che and the boss each grabbed a chair and sat under the eaves of the restaurant, each with a cigarette roll in their mouth.

Watching the curtain of rain and listening to the soothing sound of the rain cleansing body and mind.

The boss, expressionless: "You're saying that the little thing from Wushen Mountain wants to bet with Xi Xi?"

"If Xi Xi loses, she has to go to Wushen Mountain? Otherwise, the bet witnessed by Dao Yun will cut off Xi Xi's path to cultivation?"

Li Che nodded.

"Can you give another tea egg snack to Xi Xi?"

Li Che grinned, revealing the real purpose of bringing Xi Xi this time.

Everyone was preparing their trump cards, and Li Che was no exception.

The boss stubbed out his cigarette: "Indeed... If Xi Xi lost, opening the restaurant on Wushen Mountain would be a bit troublesome."

He was a person who feared trouble.

So, he shook his head: "No need for the tea egg."

"Nor is it that troublesome."

"Gou."

"You accompany Xi Xi for a round of play."

Chapter 879: A Showdown of Foundations - The Princess Consort Wishes to Leave Dao City, But Has the Underworld Released You from the Book of Life and Death?

Let the Big Black Dog accompany Xi Xi on this trip?

Li Che's eyebrows lifted slightly, a glint of brilliance flashing through his eyes.

As for the strength of the Big Black Dog, Li Che wasn't quite sure, lacking a clear sense of its limits. However, there was no doubt—it was incredibly powerful. After all, back when Yellow Sword Wine, who had one foot in the realm of Sword Saint...

Was knocked unconscious and dragged away by the Big Black Dog without anyone noticing.

In Li Che's opinion, the Dog's strength... It had to at least rival that of a Martial Saint, right?

Although Li Che was uncertain about the specific content or the actual process of the Sect Master's direct disciple assessment's third test—the Temple Guardian Test.

Having a little more at one's disposal is never a bad thing.

The first test evaluates talent, the second assesses character, and the third test... It essentially examines someone's trump cards, combat power, and their experience and strategies when confronting the Mysterious Temple.

"Isn't this a bit too much of an advantage?"

Li Che flicked off a bit of ash from his cigarette, remarking.

The shopkeeper cast a sideways glance at Li Che. "Of course it's an advantage... But so what?"

"Are you just going to sit by and let Xi Xi suffer losses?"

"The Temple Guardian Test is meant to test one's foundation. The Dog is Xi Xi's foundation, so what if it's unfair?"

"As long as Xi Xi isn't the one being bullied, it's fine."

The shopkeeper said indifferently.

His words of partiality, his tone filled with indulgence—it made Li Che glance at the shopkeeper, his gaze becoming profoundly intense.

"She is my daughter..."

Li Che said earnestly.

"I know." The shopkeeper flicked his cigarette ash dismissively, unconcerned.

"She's not your daughter." Li Che reiterated in a serious tone.

The sound of rainfall—

Spring Rain fell gently, forming bead-like strands that cascaded constantly off the black tile eaves.

The shopkeeper's lips curled up slightly, forming a faint smirk.

"I know."

Li Che did not press further. Gripping his cigarette between his thumb and index finger, he squinted as he took a deep drag. The paper around the tobacco burned as the tobacco curled under the heat, releasing wisps of smoke.

From both nostrils, Li Che exhaled twin streams of smoke, slowly letting out a deep breath.

The shopkeeper's pampering of Xi Xi exceeded Li Che's expectations. Then there was the Dog—indifferent to everyone else, yet utterly dotting toward Xi Xi.

When it came to Xi Xi, the Dog transformed into a sycophantic lapdog. Li Che had to risk his life just to pat the Dog's head. Yet Xi Xi could touch it whenever she pleased—even ride on its back while playing.

Surely, there had to be a reason for this?

Thinking about the tests Xi Xi faced during the Heart Test and the powerful, terrifying will that awakened from deep within Xi Xi's soul...

Could the shopkeeper and the Dog have something to do with this?

Could it be connected to Xi Xi's past life?!

The moment this thought arose, it surged like a boiling wave, impossible to suppress or quiet down. Li Che felt that this possibility was highly plausible.

But, he didn't voice his speculations. Many times, breaking an unspoken mutual understanding may lead to unforeseen awkwardness.

Since the other party hadn't explicitly revealed anything, Li Che refrained from probing further.

Moreover, the shopkeeper and the Dog truly cared for Xi Xi from the heart. With Li Che's Star Plucking Pupil, he could clearly feel the sincerity of their emotions.

The Big Black Dog, who was currently playing with Xi Xi, perked up upon hearing the shopkeeper's words. Its eyes brightened, and its tail began wagging.

"Don't overdo it. Just make sure Xi Xi passes safely—remember two things: Xi Xi cannot be wronged, and the bet cannot be lost."

The shopkeeper flicked off more ash, speaking firmly.

The Big Black Dog wagged its tail enthusiastically and nodded its head.

Then, it raised its head proudly, as if to declare:

When Lord Dog takes action, everything is under control!

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Li Che returned to the Qian Yuan Divine Sect from the restaurant, holding Xi Xi under an oiled-paper umbrella, strolling leisurely through the cloud-shrouded mountain paths.

In Xi Xi's arms, a fuzzy little black dog head poked out—its jet-black fur shimmering under the light, and its eyes blinking adorably.

It was none other than the scaled-down version of the Big Black Dog. At this moment, it looked just like a little black puppy—endearingly exquisite, chubby, nestled in Xi Xi's embrace and nuzzling incessantly.

Li Che held the umbrella and glanced at the now-cutesy Big Black Dog in Xi Xi's arms. Having caught Li Che's mischievous stare, the Big Black Dog bared its teeth, raising its delicate paw angrily and swiping irritably at thin air.

It was as if issuing a warning to Li Che:

Lord Dog's current form is only temporary!

However, compared to the formidable image of the Big Black Dog, it now fully lacked any semblance of intimidation.

Xi Xi was so overjoyed she seemed ready to burst with happiness, constantly rubbing the puppy's head. She herself swayed her small head back and forth, even humming a little tune, her mood utterly radiant.

When they returned to the courtyard, the tiny butterfly perched on Xi Xi's shoulder stirred, groggily awakening from its long slumber. The newly awakened butterfly made Xi Xi even happier.

With both the Dog and the little butterfly, Xi Xi felt like she was on top of the world.

"Elder Li, the Sect Master's Wife requests Xi Xi's presence. She intends to give Xi Xi some special training and prepare a few cards for her to face the upcoming Temple Guardian Test," Nie Yang said while holding his sword, walking in from outside.

Upon hearing this, Li Che didn't delay. Carrying Xi Xi, who was joyously playing with the butterfly and the puppy, he mounted a carriage and headed toward the Divine Talisman Tower.

The little butterfly, startled by the puppy's antics, clung to Xi Xi's shoulder without daring to move, slowly transforming back into a butterfly tattoo and disappearing.

Xi Xi stuffed the little puppy into the front of her clothes, letting its tiny head peek out.

"Papa, I'm going to find the Sect Master's Wife and Master now!"

"Come pick up Xi Xi and the Dog later, okay?"

Xi Xi waved her hand to bid farewell to Li Che.

Li Che watched her enter the Divine Talisman Tower. Looking up, he saw the delicate figure of the Sect Master's Wife standing on the high railing of the tower, hands behind her back.

Chapter 880: A Showdown of Foundations - The Princess Consort Wishes to Leave Dao City, Has the Underworld Released You from the Book of Life and Death? (2)

The Sect Master's Wife, with exquisite makeup, nodded slightly toward Li Che.

Evidently, everyone attached great importance to this final trial at Temple Guardian Pass.

It was rumored that the Yun Family was also providing special training for Yun E, and the Yun Family Patriarch, an ancient Divine Embryo Ancestor, had awakened from his secluded slumber to prepare a hidden card specifically for Yun E.

Furthermore, the Yun Family Patriarch had invited Divine Embryo Ancestors from the Zhou Family and Zhong Family to join forces, pooling the heritage of the three great families to support Yun E in striving for the position of Sect Master's Direct Disciple.

Meanwhile, from the Da Li Royal Court's Wushen Mountain, Jin Taixui had arrived with two formidable experts and taken residence in a guesthouse in Qianyuan Dao City. They shut the doors of the guesthouse and courtyard, isolating themselves from all prying eyes, leaving everyone uncertain about the hidden cards Jin Taixui had prepared.

Qianyuan Dao City was completely ablaze with excitement. The Qiankun Gambling House had even created new betting lines for the final outcome of the Temple Guardian Pass trial among the three contestants.

"The trial at Temple Guardian Pass, Sect Master Taibai deliberately granted a three-day buffer period, which is essentially time for everyone to prepare their hidden cards. Temple Guardian... as the name implies, may require a battle within the strange temple's Strange Que."

"The testing temple is set within the Nine-Foot Slaying Evil Subduing Demon Tianpeng Mysterious Temple, one of the Four Royal Mysterious Temples. Clearly... this is not about sending those three kids to destroy the temple. Attacking a Four Royal Mysterious Temple, even a Divine Fetus Great God would find it far from easy."

On the Qintian Observatory Treasure Building.

Supervisor Hong Shifu sat in a chair, with a chessboard laid before him, playing a game of strategy against the Governor of the Temple Control Bureau, Feng Zhiqi.

Although Feng Zhiqi was merely a Martial Artist, his chess skills were surprisingly good.

"Normally, there's no need for a three-day delay; it feels as though Sect Master Taibai is targeting the visitors from Wushen Mountain."

Feng Zhiqi placed a chess piece, speaking in a deep voice.

Hong Shifu stared intensely at the chessboard, with bloodshot eyes almost visible. His hands gripped a corner of the chessboard, hesitating between flipping the board or not.

Hong Shifu, having dominated the Qianyuan chess scene for years, found it humiliating to be defeated by a coarse Martial Artist like Feng Zhiqi.

"The target isn't Jin Taixui himself but the Great Witch God behind him."

Hong Shifu ultimately refrained from flipping the board, closing his eyes in dismay. The situation was beyond salvaging.

This Feng Zhiqi—his chess skills were terrifyingly exceptional.

"Wushen Mountain, as the foremost divine mountain of the Da Li Royal Court, is the true ruler behind Da Li. Its existence dates far further back than Great Vista, even surpassing the oldest Divine Sect now within Great Vista's borders..."

"During the prime of Equal Heaven Temple, Wushen Mountain was already remarkable, standing tall within the snowy peaks of the Great Desert..."

Hong Shifu narrowed his eyes.

"The heritage of Wushen Mountain is unfathomable, and especially that Great Witch God... absolutely frightening."

"In terms of divination and strategic calculation, it's no weaker than Divine Capital's Great Supervising Minister."

"The Great Witch God has sent Jin Taixui to participate in this Qianyuan Divine Sect's Sect Master Direct Disciple trial. It's certain that Jin Taixui has been provided with an extremely profound heritage..."

"Sect Master Taibai... is merely allowing the two little girls time to enhance their own heritage."

Hong Shifu remarked.

Feng Zhiqi furrowed his brows, his robust physique cloaked in substantial qi-blood mist that seemed to become tangible.

"If Jin Taixui truly becomes Lv Taibai's Direct Disciple and the Young Sect Master of Qianyuan Divine Sect... it will indeed create significant headaches for Great Vista, destabilizing its already precarious internal situation with irreparable fractures."

Feng Zhiqi drew a deep breath: "So, during these three days, it's a game of strategy and confrontation?"

"A contest between Sect Master Taibai and the Great Witch God?"

Hong Shifu brushed his five fingers across the chessboard, scattering the pieces.

Leaning back on his chair, he let out a faint smile.

"You could say that."

"If Jin Taixui dares to utilize the power of the Great Witch God..."

"Lv Taibai surely won't stand idly by."

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Qianyuan Dao City.

Thunder Alley.

Inside the courtyard of an independent workshop.

The night was oppressive, with leaden clouds churning across the sky, blocking the moonlight. The rain had stopped, but the moonlight and starlight remained obscured by the cloud layers.

Within the courtyard.

"Hoo—"

"Haa—"

In the yard, the rolling sound of muffled thunder resonated, matching the turbulent black clouds swirling through the nocturnal skies.

It was the sound of Li Che's blood, akin to mercury, surging through his veins, roaring explosively like thunder.

Li Che sat cross-legged in the center of the courtyard, his breathing steady and deep, with his pores expanding and contracting, exhaling wisps of mist that linger endlessly.

His Thunder Magnetic Dao Body ignited, though only at Level 2, with arcs of lightning continuously bounding across his physique, distorting the surrounding field.

With a grasp of his five fingers, a talisman floated out from the room and shot forward. It was a Mystic Thunder Talisman, which ignited into a blaze with interwoven thunderbolts resembling a Thunder Jiao Python, hurtling toward Li Che's physical body under the control of his Divine Sense!

The ground trembled lightly, with the scent of singed flesh beginning to waft.

However, as the lightning shroud around Li Che dissipated, he emerged unscathed, with arcs of electricity still captured and surging around his body.

By harnessing the power of the Mystic Thunder Talisman, he tempered his body and refined his Thunder Magnetic Dao Body.

[Dao Fruit: Thunder Magnetic Dao Body (lv2, 20%)]

The newfound path to advancement allowed the maturity of his Thunder Magnetic Dao Body Dao Fruit to increase rapidly.

Perhaps, once his Thunder Magnetic Dao Body broke through to Level 3, he could successfully create the "Immortal Super Electromagnetic Cannon."

With a focused mind.

[Dao Fruit: Chess Saint (lv4, 90%)]

While Xi Xi participated in Sect Master Taibai's Direct Disciple trial, Li Che connected with her through the Flying Thunder Chess Pieces.

And as Xi Xi entered Qiankun Small Cave Heaven, Li Che had to sustain their connection, requiring him to further stimulate the Chess Saint Dao Fruit.

Thus, his Chess Saint Dao Fruit's maturity level experienced some growth as well.