

# The Great Ming in the Box

Li Daoxuan took out his phone with his right hand and snapped a few macro photos of the little people in the box with clicks, capturing this deadlocked moment.

Simultaneously, with his left hand ready to help “his little people” at any moment, he opened the top lid of the scenic box and held a hand suspended above the box; as long as “his little people” faced mortal danger, he planned to extend his left hand inside and eliminate these five “foreign official little people.”

Just like eliminating those mountain bandits.

...

Gao Yiye was extremely panicked, trembling with intense fear.

She saw the Great deity vaguely appear in the sky—of course, that wasn’t the absolute worst part; what was truly terrifying was that the Great deity had raised his hand.

She knew exactly what it meant when the Great deity raised his hand!

Just yesterday, she had witnessed firsthand how the Great deity crushed every single mountain bandit into a meat pie with effortless slaps; that horrifying yet satisfying scene was still swirling in her mind.

Gao Yiye pulled a fierce expression and shouted loudly at the officials: “Don’t you dare cause trouble! You must not touch this divine rice, or you will die.”

Li Daoxuan: “Huh?”

Gao Yiye shouted: “Leave here quickly!”

Her shout used up all her strength, and naturally, everyone near her heard it clearly.

The villagers were all stunned.

The five officials were equally stunned, then immediately looked around, each privately wondering: What did she mean? This villager is yelling nonsense about us dying? How would we die?

Was there anything nearby that could kill us five?

I didn't see anything; besides a group of low-bred commoners, there was nothing else nearby.

They remembered what the Village Chief had just said: "This divine rice was bestowed upon us by the Great deity for survival. If you dare touch it, the Great deity will take your lives."

"Hmph!" The leading official couldn't help twisting his mouth and retorted: "What tricks are you playing?"

Another official added: "That scared the life out of me—for real, I thought something might kill me, but it turns out it's just a few low-bred folk acting out a play, as if I was scared easily?"

An official yelled at Gao Yiye: "You vile woman, what kind of superstitious nonsense are you shouting? Threatening officials is like defying the court—do you have a death wish?"

Gao Yiye replied: "I'm not scaring you; I'm saving you. Leave now! The Great deity has lifted his hand; you've angered him, and if you continue like this, he'll flatten each of you with a slap, crushing you all into meat pies."

The five officials: "..."

Hearing this gave them chills, yet it truly seemed incredible.

The leading official pursed his lips and signaled to his subordinate with a glance: “Arrest that woman who spreads falsehoods and bring her to the county office for interrogation—she might be a cult practitioner of the White Lotus cult.”

That official raised his iron ruler and slowly walked towards Gao Yiye.

Gao Yiye glanced at the official approaching her, then looked up: the clouds parted as the Great deity’s hand moved rapidly downward, soon hovering right above the official’s head; clearly, the Great deity was protecting her—if this official struck at her, the Great deity would press his palm down, crushing him into a meat pie.

But officials were nothing like mountain bandits!

Killing mountain bandits was simple deal—just carry them out of the village and bury them, with no aftermath.

If an official died in Gaojia Village, it would cause serious trouble: the authorities would believe the villagers had killed them, branding the entire village as “rebels.” As a child, she had seen how Uncle Gao Yingxiang struck an official; soon after, countless officials flooded the village. Outnumbered, Uncle Gao was forced to flee far away and had never dared return since.

Gao Yiye continued loudly: “Please, I beg you, spare us—and you can save your own lives as well.”

Li Daoxuan heard the girl’s plea.

She was screaming at the top of her lungs, just to protect these five officials?

Oh, no! She was protecting herself and the villagers.

Li Daoxuan understood immediately. Behind these five petty officials were many more like them—their position represented the power backing them. Though the young girl knew the village was protected by an “immortal,” she had no idea how long this protection would last. What if the immortal took a fancy to them for a few days but never appeared again? The entire village would be doomed.

He realized there must be much more to explore in this scenic box world.

This time, he decided to go along with the girl’s wish.

Li Daoxuan withdrew his hand, which he had intended to smash the official. He only extended two fingers, lightly plucking the man off the ground as if picking a small wildflower.

“Ahhhhhhh!”

The official let out a shrill scream like that of a slaughtering pig.

He had been walking step by step toward Gao Yiye, ready to arrest this girl who was confusing people with her sorcery when suddenly, an immense force clamped onto his shoulders. The tremendous pressure squeezed inward, creaking every bone in his body as if they were about to shatter.

He looked to the left and right, trying to identify what was grabbing him, but saw nothing—only feeling this invisible, giant force.

Then both his feet left the ground, suspending him in mid-air.

The unseen force lifted him up, dangling him in the air at a height of roughly ten feet.

The other four officials all raised their heads, watching their comrade struggle violently in mid-air with bewildered expressions on their faces.

Seeing this, the villagers knelt down together: “The Great Deity has arrived!”

The official hanging in mid-air was terrified. Tears and snot streamed down his face, and wetness soaked through his trousers. With limbs flailing wildly, he screamed hoarsely, “Great Deity, have mercy! Great Deity, spare my life... I meant no offence... I was wrong... Please spare my life...”

The other four officials exchanged stunned looks, momentarily unsure of what to do.

Just then, Li Daoxuan puffed his cheeks and blew lightly toward the four officials, letting out a sudden “whoosh.”

“Bang!”

A fierce gale erupted!

A powerful wind blew directly at the four men, sweeping no one else but them.

The blast swept all four officials off their feet. They landed heavily about ten to thirteen feet away, plop plop, their butts nearly splitting into four pieces.

Finally realizing what they should do, all four quickly scrambled up and knelt in prostration, pressing their foreheads to the yellow sand.

Li Daoxuan declared: “Tell them to get out! Warn them not to breathe a word of what happened just now.”

Gao Yiye cried loudly: “The Great Deity orders you to get out! And He admonishes you: not one word about what happened today must ever leave your mouths.”

The four officials hurriedly kowtowed: “We humbly obey the Great Deity’s command.”

They got to their feet and fled at top speed.

The suspended official wept bitterly: “Sir, I also wish to get out! Great Deity, spare my life! Please... let me leave too! I won’t speak half a word about what happened here...”

Li Daoxuan loosened his hand, and the official dropped straight down from ten feet high onto the ground. A solid thud sounded as he landed. Though hurt, he gritted his teeth, forced himself onto his feet, and hobbled away trying to catch up with his colleagues.

Li Daoxuan's eyes remained fixed on the five officials; he wanted to see exactly how they would "exit the scenic box." The five men scrambled clumsily out of the village onto the yellow sand beyond. Soon, they reached the edge of the scenic box.

A glass wall stood there.

The men seemed oblivious to it. They continued straight forward, right into the glass... but instead of passing out of the scenic box, they vanished completely on the spot as if the glass were a portal to a different dimension.

"They walked out? Vanished?" Witnessing firsthand how these "outsider figures" entered and exited the scenic box, Li Daoxuan couldn't help but sink into deep thought...

#### Chapter 9: The World of Tiny Kingdom

He needed to reevaluate his scenic box. Perhaps it wasn't just for raising these forty-two tiny people, but... was it connected to another world of the Tiny Kingdom?

No, perhaps "connected" was inappropriate; "looking down upon" was more fitting.

He had thought he was raising a small box of tiny people, so he just cared for them casually, as if keeping a box of small hamsters. He didn't delve into what these tiny people really were, but if he was "looking down upon" another world of Tiny Kingdom, many things were worth investigating.

Li Daoxuan turned his perspective back to the villagers.

At this moment, the official had already fled. The villagers were gathered together, cheering and bowing towards the sky.

As “the only one who could speak with the Great deity”, the girl figure was surrounded by the villagers, who all chattered at her about something.

Then the girl figure raised her head and shouted towards the sky, “Great deity, the villagers thank you for your help. Everyone also wants to ask you: are these divine rice bestowed solely upon me, or may all the villagers enjoy them?”

Li Daoxuan’s gaze fixed on the girl figure.

This girl figure could communicate with him; she could hear his speech. Through her, he could learn about the Tiny Kingdom world. It seemed time to exchange a few words with her.

The girl figure was overjoyed and said, “Villagers, the Great deity says this divine rice is bestowed upon all of us; everyone can share it.”

The villagers immediately cheered.

“Great deity, protect us.”

“Hail! Hail!”

“Um, Yiye, is the Great deity a Buddhist or a Daoist god? Should we say ‘Amitabha’ or ‘Wu Liang Shou Fu’?”

The girl figure was baffled too. Although she could vaguely see the divine lord’s face floating in the clouds, she couldn’t discern whether he wore a Daoist robe or a monk robe. She truly didn’t know whether to say “Amitabha” or “Wu Liang Shou Fu” when praying; it was quite awkward.

If she uttered the wrong prayer phrase and angered the Great deity, she wouldn’t even know how to write the character for “death.”

However... they all seemed illiterate; no one knew how to write “death” in the first place.

The villagers froze; their prayers ceased.

Li Daoxuan shook his head, finding it both amusing and frustrating. These tiny people were quite interesting; they pondered whether he was a Buddhist or Daoist

deity. Their culture in this Tiny Kingdom world seemed directly inherited from ours.

With a trace of amusement, he said, “Don’t mind Daoism or Buddhism; I am neither.”

The girl figure froze; this fell into a blind spot in her knowledge. Was such a deity even possible?

Li Daoxuan said, “Don’t worry about such trivial matters. Tell everyone to be quiet; I need to ask questions.”

The girl figure quickly called out loudly, “Everyone, quiet down! The Great deity has a few more questions to ask us.”

At her shout, all fell silent instantly.

Li Daoxuan said, “On which planet do you live? Or continent? Or dimension?”

The girl figure didn’t understand. She repeated the sentence word for word to the villagers.

Yet not a single tiny person present grasped it. Even among them, the Village Chief figure—who knew the most and had seen the widest world—wore a blank expression. What was a planet? What was a continent? What was a dimension?

From their faces, it was clear they had no concept of those terms.

Li Daoxuan understood. Though culturally inherited, their knowledge was centuries stale. “In which country do you live? What is the current era name?”

The tiny people had a shred of national concept; they knew they were in a country with a court and army. But what the country was called or what era it was, they all knew nothing and uniformly shook their heads.

Li Daoxuan frowned, “These guys couldn’t even tell me what country they were from or what era it was, that’s really illiterate beyond belief!”

But after thinking it over carefully, he understood!

Ancient farmers couldn’t read a word; they never left their villages, and the farthest they ventured from home was probably to the county town. If their birthplace was a bit too remote, with rarely any merchants passing by, villagers

would be just like this group before him, knowing nothing, completely blind to the outside world.

Unaware of time passing in the mountains, they were helpless about the world's rapid changes outside.

Li Daoxuan sighed deeply, "Forget it! I won't get anything from you."

The villagers looked at each other helplessly.

Gao Yiye murmured in a low voice to the villagers around her, "The Great Deity seems very disappointed."

The Village Chief responded, "Huh? When we couldn't answer the Great One's questions, he naturally got disappointed."

Gao Yiye asked, "What should we do about this?"

The Village Chief thought seriously, "You tell the Great Deity to please give us a little time. Let us figure out a way and find a learned person to come here."

Gao Yiye said, "A learned person? There isn't a single educated man in this whole village."

The Village Chief continued, "Not in Gaojia Village, but in the county town there is. Let me think... I've met... the most learned person... that would naturally be the County Magistrate."

Gao Yiye shook her head awkwardly, "How could we ever invite the County Magistrate?"

The Village Chief replied, "Then we'll invite the County Magistrate's advisor, Thirty-Two."

Gao Yiye shook her head, "We can't invite him either."

The Village Chief chuckled, "Although the advisor is also an important man, he isn't surrounded by officials every day like the County Magistrate, so inviting him would be much easier."

Gao Yiye said, "???"

The Village Chief turned to look at a young man beside him, "Chuwu!" Gao Chuwu stepped forward, beaming foolishly.

The Village Chief instructed, “Early in the morning tomorrow, you will take a few young men from the village, eat more giant rice to fill your stomach and build strength.”

“Head to the county town and invite Advisor Thirty-Two to come to Gaojia Village.”

“If he is willing to come, invite him properly; if he is not willing, knock him out with a stick and carry him back.”

“Remember, our lives were given by the Great Deity; whatever the Great Deity wants, we must offer it to him, and we cannot let him be disappointed in us.”

Gao Chuwu grinned broadly, “Alright, alright! The Great Deity gave me giant eggs and giant rice; I must obey him. But I’ve never been to the county town, so how do I get there?”

The Village Chief said, “I’ll show you how...”

Li Daoxuan was still watching outside the box, seeing these villagers seriously discussing how to “invite” a learned advisor to answer his questions, and couldn’t help but feel amused; it sounded quite fun.

It seemed this Tiny Kingdom wasn’t small; with villages, county towns, officials, a county magistrate, and advisors, there must be an enormous country beyond.

He hoped they would “invite” the advisor from the county town back as soon as possible.

## **Chapter 10: When Hungry, There Is Only One Worry**

After the arrangements were made, the Village Chief waved his large hand: “Distribute the rice. Everyone, have a full meal.”

Forty-two villagers lined up to receive rice at Gao Yiye’s doorstep.

The giant rice, each grain as big as a millstone, was given ten grains per person—enough for a family to eat for several days. Moving those grains home was difficult; they had to place them on the ground and roll them by pushing with their hands to save effort. It took ten trips just to get all ten grains home.

After the other forty-one people received their share, Gao Yiye still had a large pile left in her home, easily dozens of grains, but no one dared say she took too much. To these uneducated and superstitious villagers, Gao Yiye now held a status equivalent to the Saint Lady in other religions.

A Saint Lady was, of course, sacred and inviolable!

Each household began boiling water to cook rice.

One grain of giant rice was too large to cook whole at once, so they had to use a chisel to break it into pieces. Just cooking a dozen or so fragments was enough to fill a whole family. But eating pure giant rice until full felt too extravagant, so they cooked only half the amount and mixed it with wild vegetables, tree bark, and grass roots. This way, rice meant for one meal could stretch to two.

Li Daoxuan used a magnifying glass to peer through the window at the chaotic equipment boiling in their pot and could not help shaking his head. “I already gave them food—what kind of mess are they cooking? How can they stay healthy eating this? They’re too frugal!”

Should he add something extra for them?

He was about to put a chunk of pork into the scenic box, but on second thought, he reconsidered. “No, if I give rich food to these chronically starved villagers too suddenly, their guts might not handle it, leading to diarrhea. With weakened bodies, that could easily kill them.”

He gave up and decided to take it slow, gradually adjusting their diet.

The food Li Daoxuan looked down on was already a rare delicacy to the villagers of Gaojia Village. Happily, they cooked their evening meal, no longer hiding from neighbors while eating. Since every family was eating the same, they simply set up tables outside their doors and ate together.

Previously, secretly hiding to eat had strained the villagers’ bonds. Now, with the pre-drought atmosphere returning, the village liveliness improved.

“It’s been so long since we ate such good rice,” the Village Chief said as he shoveled rice by his doorway. “This divine rice is so fragrant—much more than what we grew ourselves. Truly a gift from the Great deity!”

Gao Chuwu held a large bowl, wolfing down rice with all his might. Young and big-bodied, he ate more than others. While entire families might eat over a dozen rice fragments, he alone polished off so many, gobbling like he hadn’t eaten for lifetimes. It was truly frightening, almost like he might choke to death.

Gao Yiye sat alone on the threshold, eating slowly and savoring each bite—a bite of rice took half a day to finish. Tears streamed down her face as she ate: “Mother, it’s a pity you can’t enjoy this.”

Li Daoxuan also had dinner: he ordered takeout today—braised beef set meal. Including delivery fee, it cost 29 yuan. A full bowl of rice topped with braised beef and braised radish came with pickles, and the shop owner even threw in a small 300-milliliter bottle of cola.

His dinner was an all-round crushing dominance compared to what the villagers ate.

Taking a bite of beef, he glanced at the figures in the scenic box. For some reason, the braised beef set meal, usually awful-tasting, seemed much nicer today.

After finishing their meals, the sky gradually darkened, and the villagers retreated to their small huts to rest.

The entire scenic box turned back into a “non-still scene,” with nothing interesting to observe.

As for what boring netizens said about “peeping at the girl figure bathing,” that was utter nonsense. The scenic box clearly showed a drought—river flows halted,

plants dried to dust, and well water barely sufficed for drinking—not even enough to irrigate fields. Where was the water for bathing?

All the figures in the village skipped bathing and even went to bed without changing clothes.

Li Daoxuan pulled his attention away from the scenic box and stretched big. That damned scenic box—staring and staring, he could easily lose an entire day to it.

He opened his phone, pulled up the photo he'd taken earlier (readers who forgot can see Chapter 8), then went to his regular military history forum to post anonymously: "Take a look at this photo. The village is called Gaojia Village. The girl is Gao Yiye, the young man is Gao Chuwu, and there are five officials. From this, what do you think?"

Reply 1: "The officials' attire looks like that of Ming Dynasty yamen runners."

Reply 2: "Names like Gao Yiye and Gao Chuwu also resemble Ming Dynasty naming styles."

Reply 3: "Exactly, I spotted it too—it's likely Ming Dynasty. Pity we can't tell which year specifically."

Reply 4: “This scenic box is fantastic—the figures are so lifelike, vividly recreating Ming Dynasty officials oppressing common folk. Where did you buy it? I want one.”

Reply 5: “That figure called Gao Yiye is quite pretty. Want to spy on her bathing.”

Li Daoxuan: “Idiots. Why always bring up peeping baths?”

No point reasoning with such foolish people—Li Daoxuan closed the forum. Still, those replies gave him a rough idea.

Ming Dynasty?

Could his box be overlooking the Ming Dynasty?

How was that possible?

Forget it—time to sleep.

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July 13, 2023 AD, summer, Shuangqing City.

By seven in the morning, the temperature had climbed to 33 degrees Celsius.

If it got this hot at noon, wouldn't the sun be murderous?

Li Daoxuan groggily crawled out of bed, his first glance at the scenic box by his bedside.

The box started at the doorway, then moved to the living room. Before bed last night, he placed it beside the bed, next to the computer—all to see it first thing.

Nothing seemed amiss inside; the villagers were already up.

Gao Chuwu and a few young villagers were eating a filling breakfast because they were heading to the county town to “invite” the advisor today, so a full meal was needed for working. The Village Chief stood by instructing them word by word.

As for other villagers, they were hauling bamboo baskets to forage wild vegetables.

Li Daoxuan could not help but chuckle wryly: these villagers did nothing but hunt wild vegetables, tree bark, and grass roots—never showing a hint of change?

Well, he understood—they struggled just to survive, with no energy for anything else.

Time for today's feeding. If he fed them daily, their survival anxiety would ease, freeing minds for other thoughts.

Li Daoxuan opened the fridge, tore off one leaf from yesterday's big cabbage, nearly 40 centimeters long by 10 wide. Back at the scenic box, he gently set that leaf before Gao Yiye.

Just then, Gao Yiye held a bamboo basket ready to leave the village for foraging when suddenly, a giant hand from the sky placed an enormous cabbage leaf before her.

Gao Yiye looked it over: this cabbage leaf appeared thirty zhang long and ten zhang wide...