

Little Girl 211

Chapter 211: Mommy, You're Back~

The tallest ancient pine tree was tall and grand, with a canopy like a mushroom cloud, shading the sun and obscuring the daylight, even hiding the morning light.

Peering through the gaps in the trees, one could vaguely make out something resembling a hanging nest at the top of the canopy.

Upon seeing this, Heir Yang and the others could hardly conceal their delight.

The morning light had just appeared, and there was no movement in the tree, indicating that the Xuan Bird was either not there or still resting.

With a wave of his hand, the guards under Heir Yang quickly surrounded the ancient tree.

"Princely Heir, the tree is too high, our arrows can't reach it."

The guards said with difficulty.

Their arrows were just ordinary strong crossbows with a range of only twenty to thirty yards, and the ancient tree was a good fifty to sixty yards high, so they couldn't hit the bird's nest, let alone disturb the Xuan Bird inside.

"A bunch of idiots, if you can't shoot the arrows up there, can't you climb up? Whether by hook or by crook, drive the Xuan Bird out so I can capture it alive."

Heir Yang cursed loudly, immediately urging several hunters to climb the tree.

Though the hunters were reluctant, they didn't dare disobey Heir Yang and had to elect one among them to climb up.

A hunter started to ascend along the trunk of the tree.

After climbing more than ten yards, suddenly, the tree trembled, and the hunter panicked, his hand slipped, and he fell from the tree, breaking his leg and crying out in pain.

"The tree, the tree moves."

The hunter pointed at the tree and exclaimed.

"Do you think I am as foolish as her, to think a tree can move? It's just a tree; how can it move?"

Heir Yang kicked the hunter and commanded another to ascend.

But the next hunter, having climbed to about the same height, rolled down as well.

Heir Yang, not superstitious, ordered two or three more experienced hunters to try, but none of them could climb the tree. Just like the first hunter, they said the tree moved, and they couldn't climb up at all.

"A bunch of useless cowards, thrown out to feed the mountain beasts. It seems I must do it myself."

Heir Yang said impatiently.

Ready to take matters into his own hands, he began to climb using both hands and feet.

"Princely Heir, hold on. You are a body worth a thousand pieces of gold; should anything happen to you, it would be difficult for us to explain to the Prince. Let her go up."

It was the female warrior who earlier had tricked Xin Lin who was speaking, glancing at Xin Lin.

The child had just escaped from the bird's nest the night before.

"Her? Is she capable?"

Heir Yang said doubtfully.

"Child, you climb up, lure the Xuan Bird down, and if you succeed, I'll give you endless sweets."

The Female Warrior spoke with a pleasant face.

On hearing this, the little girl nodded eagerly.

Without further ado, she began climbing the tree.

"Looking at her silly appearance, she climbs quite adeptly. Low-grade people really are low-grade."

Heir Yang, seeing Xin Lin climbing faster than the average hunter, scornfully said.

Little did he know that before long, he was going to have a narrow escape from death because of this low-grade person.

Xin Lin climbed halfway up, with Fu Xi's Energy gathering in her eyes, casting a glance towards the direction of the nest.

Sure enough, as expected, there was no sign of the Xuan Bird.

Heir Yang and the others might be foolish, but Xin Lin certainly was not.

Xuan Birds are Level 5 Dark Beasts, and the Ancient Forest was their territory. There was no reason for the creature to be oblivious to the intrusion of more than a dozen people on its turf.

Tsk, the timing really couldn't be worse; Aunt Bird happened to be absent.

Not sure whether to call it lucky or unlucky, originally wishing to teach those guys below a lesson with the Xuan Bird... But well, the Sealing Spirit Talisman is still there.

Xin Lin saw her Sealing Spirit Talisman, lying intact in the nest.

Inside the nest, the Overlord Egg was also lying there good and well. Ever since it had been brought back, the Overlord Egg hadn't shown much vigor, appearing listlessly ill.

(Those annoying ants have come again)

The Overlord Egg was about to give itself a shake when it suddenly jolted.

(Mommy, it's Mommy's scent!)

Chapter 212: The Battle for the Eggman

(Mommy, you're coming back for me)

When Overlord Egg sensed Xin Lin's presence, it was so elated, knowing that Mommy would never abandon it.

Many hunters had previously tumbled down the tree, needless to say, all because of this fussy Overlord Egg's trickery.

Though it was young, its territorial awareness was no less than that of a Xuan Bird.

Except for Mommy, it was resolute in not letting anyone else climb the tree.

It wiggled its round and portly egg body and nestled the Sealing Spirit Talisman beneath itself.

That was something that had fallen from Mommy, it must keep it safe, and never let it fall into the hands of others.

Overlord Egg was excited beyond measure, waiting for Mommy to come and fetch it.

Down at the base of the tree, Heir Yang and the others saw Xin Lin about to climb up, and they were quite jubilant.

"Just as we thought, those hunters were just making excuses. A fool really climbed up. Get ready. As soon as the Xuan Bird appears, shoot the arrows immediately."

Heir Yang couldn't wait to test his "200,000 taels" Sealing Spirit Talisman.

"But, Princely Heir, that child?"

The guards exchanged glances, knowing that arrows couldn't choose their targets, and that the child would surely die.

"If a fool dies, he dies. At worst, we give his family several taels as condolence money," Heir Yang said impatiently.

To the nobility like him, the lives of commoners were worth less than dust.

The guards had no choice but to aim their bows at the canopy, waiting for the Xuan Bird to appear.

Xin Lin climbed up to the canopy and was greeted by a bright scene, with the sun rising from the east atop the trees.

She had been in Qin Mountain for a whole night, and tomorrow was the Zixiao Palace Exam.

"Sealing Spirit Talisman!"

Xin Lin's eyes lit up when she saw the old and worn Sealing Spirit Talisman beneath Overlord Egg's bottom. She strode forward, about to retrieve the talisman.

She gave a tug, but the Grey Egg was pressing down firmly on the talisman.

"Hey, can you move a little?"

Xin Lin pushed at the Overlord Egg, which despite its small size, was quite heavy.

(Mommy~)

Overlord Egg, excited, bumped into Xin Lin.

Xin Lin reacted quickly and jumped to avoid it.

"Look here, Overlord Egg, even as an egg, you have to have some principles. You framed me yesterday, and I let that slide. Surely you wouldn't want to take my Sealing Spirit Talisman as well, right?"

(Mommy~ want a hug)

Overlord Egg lunged again.

Xin Lin ran in fright, as this Overlord Egg had managed to demolish six to seven Xuan Bird Eggs in one go; it was a super hooligan, not to be trifled with.

One person, one egg; one hiding and the other seeking, they chased each other around the birds' nest, much to their delight.

And at this time, where was Aunt Bird?

Aunt Bird, having lost six to seven eggs last night, was in utter despair.

Although one egg remained, after being taken back to the nest, it became sickly and wasn't likely to live much longer.

Aunt Bird put all the blame on Xin Lin's head, and, in a fit of rage, she was now gathering the birds from the peaks of Qin Mountain, deliberating on how to capture her.

A group of birds of different shapes and sizes perched together.

With a series of cries, Aunt Bird described Xin Lin's appearance.

Then a Black-headed Weng flew over, making its cooing noises.

What it meant was that a suspected child, leading a group of people, was heading towards the Ancient Forest.

Upon hearing this, the Xuan Bird's iridescent feathers stood on end, and with a loud cry, hundreds of birds gathered together, like a swiftly moving cloud, headed towards the Ancient Forest.

As the sun climbed higher and higher, Xin Lin was almost run ragged by the Overlord Egg.

"Stop! Overlord Egg, let's rest."

Xin Lin was panting heavily, a calculating glint flashing in her dark eyes.

Chapter 213: Sealing Spirit Talisman, Broken!

(Mommy~ Please take me away)

The Overlord Egg waddled up to her, it wanted to rub against Xin Lin to absorb some of Fu Xi's Energy from her.

Unexpectedly, just as it got close, Xin Lin seized the moment and grabbed the Sealing Spirit Talisman.

With a tug from Xin Lin, there was a ripping sound, and the already tattered Sealing Spirit Talisman was torn in half.

Xin Lin screamed in misery.

Her Sealing Spirit Talisman, 10 Heaven-defying Value points!

"You damned egg, sliced to pieces a thousand times over, give me back my talisman!"

Xin Lin looked at the half-talisman in her hand while the Overlord Egg was dumbstruck, staring at the other half under its butt.

Suddenly, the Spirit Light on the Sealing Spirit Talisman flashed, and in an instant, the Overlord Egg was gone.

Xin Lin was stunned, and when she looked at her hand again, the Sealing Spirit Talisman had disappeared.

"Congratulations to the life master for successfully sealing a spirit once, obtaining a Spirit Egg, and gaining +10 Heaven-defying Value."

She hadn't even recited the spell, and the Sealing Spirit Talisman had activated, even sealing that Overlord Egg.

"Life Book, are you kidding me? I haven't recited the spell, how did the Sealing Spirit Talisman activate?"

Xin Lin was furious.

They had agreed that it would only seal Spiritual Beasts of third-level and above; what was the deal with sealing an egg?

She had been planning to turn her fortunes around with that talisman; now, what was she supposed to do, make a splash during the Zixiao Palace Exam with just an egg?

"The Life Book states that this type of Sealing Spirit Talisman does not require a spell to be recited and can be used upon tearing."

The dry voice of the Life Book came through.

Xin Lin wanted to explode with anger, but at that moment, she felt a tingling sensation on her scalp, a very bad premonition.

The sky suddenly turned gloomy.

Xin Lin looked up instinctively.

Above her, a massive, dark "cloud" was looming over her head.

Aunt Bird was looking down at her, eyes ablaze with fury.

Its egg!

Its very last egg was gone!

The most infuriating bit was that the accursed "Cao Duozhi" had appeared in its nest again!

The Xuan Bird deeply regretted in its life for bringing such a "Cao Duozhi" back to its nest.

"Hey, Aunt Bird, we meet again. Don't look at me with those eyes, I'm a victim too."

Xin Lin said weakly.

Aunt Bird's anger had reached its limit.

Flapping its wings, a pale green glow emitted from its colorful feathers.

This glow instantly turned into a small hurricane, which appeared out of nowhere and headed straight for Xin Lin.

Wind attribute Spirit Art – Hurricane Technique!

The power of the hurricane was astonishing, in an instant, it engulfed the treetop, tearing the nest in half.

The nest tilted, and Xin Lin's tiny figure was flung out by the hurricane, clinging to the nest, teetering on the verge of falling at any moment.

"Princely Heir, look quickly, the Xuan Bird has emerged!"

The commotion in the tree startled Heir Yang and the others below.

Ever since Xin Lin had climbed the tree, there hadn't been any movement, and Heir Yang was getting impatient. Just as he was about to climb the tree himself, an unexpected change occurred.

"Loose the arrows."

Not only did Heir Yang see the Xuan Bird, but he also saw a huge number of other birds—hundreds of them, densely packed.

Seeing so many birds also startled Heir Yang, and he immediately ordered a volley of arrows to be fired randomly.

"Oh no!"

Xin Lin wailed inside her heart.

She looked up to see hundreds of menacing birds overhead.

Looking down, she saw dozens of arrows whizzing towards her.

"Your ability to cause disasters is really getting bigger and bigger."

A cold voice came from within Xin Lin's embrace.

Hearing that voice, Xin Lin almost cried tears of joy.

Gui Hu~ you've finally come back.

Chapter 214: The Guy Who Refused to Save Her

The rascal corpse, who had disappeared for a full night, had finally returned.

Xin Lin, whose morale had hit rock-bottom, saw hope once again.

"In times of crisis on the jianghu, if you don't help now, I'm as good as dead."

Xin Lin said hurriedly.

"It's already dawn."

Who would have thought that Gui Hu's next sentence would plunge Xin Lin's spirits into the abyss once more.

After being confined within the Sealing Spirit Talisman, he was unable to use Ghost Power during the day.

"You wouldn't leave me to die, would you? If it weren't for you, why would I have come to Qin Mountain, to encounter that bloody monster?"

Xin Lin clenched his teeth in anger.

That egg was simply the root of all evil.

As for Gui Hu, that was the evil of evils.

"If you don't jump now, you'll be slapped into a meat patty by the Xuan Bird."

Gui Hu's tone was still indifferent.

Damn you, Gui Hu. Such a height, to jump or not to jump, it's barely the difference between being crippled or dead.

Taking a gamble, there is still a slight chance for survival. Xin Lin grit his teeth, let go, and like a kite with its string cut, plummeted sharply from the sky. In the moment she fell, the Xuan Bird dived swiftly, its wings slamming onto the nest, shattering half of it instantly into fragments.

As Xin Lin's body rapidly fell, she suddenly arched in mid-air, like a tightly strung bow, her tiny body snapped back, miraculously finding leverage in the void.

Like an arrow, she flew from one tree to a large pine nearby.

Her arm grabbed accurately onto a branch, and with a slick slide, she rolled off the tree to the ground. Apart from a few superficial skin injuries, she perfectly evaded the attack of arrows and birds.

Inside the Sealing Spirit Talisman, Gui Hu couldn't help but raise an eyebrow.

Xin Lin's agility was truly astonishing.

The entire motion was as fluid as drifting clouds and flowing water; any slight mistake and she would have become a target for arrows.

Even Xin Lin herself secretly broke out in a cold sweat for her own close shave.

She only managed this because she had the body of a loli, coupled with the transformation from Bone Marrow Cleansing Powder, otherwise she would have died many times over just now.

The Ancient Forest had descended into complete chaos.

Birds in the sky followed the Xuan Bird's command, launching one fierce attack after another onto the ground.

Heir Yang and the others, in pursuit of the Xuan Bird, shot arrows frantically.

By comparison, no one was paying any attention to Xin Lin's actions.

The Sealing Spirit Talisman was lost, but luckily the Wind Breath Grass was already in hand. Logically, Xin Lin should quit while ahead.

However, Xin Lin clearly wasn't planning to do so.

"Capture the Xuan Bird!"

A volley of arrows shot out, the Xuan Bird with a flap of its wings, deflected the arrows effortlessly.

At this level, the arrows were nothing more than a minor annoyance to the Xuan Bird.

It swept its gaze around, seeking the whereabouts of that "Cao Duozhi," but she was nowhere to be found.

Heir Yang's archers didn't cause much damage to the Xuan Bird, but it was a different story for the other birds, many of which were dead or injured, littering the ground with carcasses.

"Set up the formation, capture it for me."

Beside him, the sound of armor shattering could be heard.

Heir Yang knew that ordinary arrows couldn't injure the Xuan Bird. At his command, the archers discarded their bows and arrows. True Qi inside their bodies condensed, burst forth, breaking through their armor, and transformed into strands of Qi ropes.

These strands of True Qi crisscrossed, forming a huge net that ensnared the Xuan Bird in it.

"Haha, damn brute, let's see where you can escape to this time."

Heir Yang walked forward proudly, holding the Sealing Spirit Talisman in his hand.

A raging inferno rose in the eyes of the Xuan Bird.

"Tsk, this Heir Yang is really going to become a 'persimmon' this time."

From the shadows, Xin Lin witnessed this scene, and could barely stand to watch.

Chapter 215: The Pitiful Princely Heir

Seeing the Xuan Bird surrounded by guards, the True Qi transformed into ropes, trussing its wings and claws.

These guards of the Prince Manor are at least third and fourth rank Xuanwu Practitioners; over a dozen of them gathered together are not to be underestimated.

Heir Yang wore a proud and complacent expression as he stepped forward, shaking the Spirit Talisman in his hand.

"Capture!"

The Spirit Talisman fluttered onto the Xuan Bird's body, with no effect.

(Humiliation, this is an utter disgrace! This idiot dares to shame me with a scrap of paper!)

Aunt Bird was enraged, and the consequences were severe.

With an angry screech from the Xuan Bird, its wings quivered, and a terrifying burst of True Qi exploded from within.

Under the influence of that burst of True Qi, the Xuan Bird's strength suddenly multiplied several times.

It soared into the sky with a high head, and the Xuanwu Practitioners on the ground were instantly lifted off their feet, falling one after another from the sky; some sustained broken arms and legs, while others perished on the spot.

The Spirit Talisman fell to the ground, crushed into bits by a claw of the Xuan Bird.

That was no Spirit Talisman at all, but merely a scrap of paper.

"My Spirit Talisman!"

Heir Yang's face was a picture of disbelief.

200,000 taels of silver wasted!

Heir Yang could hardly believe his own eyes.

Then from up ahead, there was a thwack of a wing sweeping through.

Heir Yang was sent flying.

He tumbled awkwardly onto the ground and struggled to get up.

"Don't come any closer, I am the Princely Heir, my royal father won't let you off!"

Heir Yang, looking at the imposing creature before him, realized how foolish he had been earlier.

He actually thought about capturing such a colossal beast.

Heir Yang shouldn't have mentioned it, for with his words, Aunt Bird's anger intensified.

(Ignorant humans, you have caused me to lose my offspring, I will make sure all of you perish.)

Heir Yang looked around; his men were either injured, fleeing or gone, leaving only him behind.

Just then, Heir Yang caught a glimpse of a figure from the corner of his eye.

It was that simpleton!

Heir Yang saw the same simpleton from earlier, hiding aside, quivering in fear.

Heir Yang was overjoyed and grabbed Xin Lin, using him as a human shield.

Heir Yang never considered how, amidst all the casualties, such an incapable simpleton remained unharmed.

Sworn enemies' eyes burn bitter red upon meeting.

The Xuan Bird recognized "Cao Duozhi" at a single glance!

All its iridescent feathers stood on end.

(A death for an egg, die! All of you must die!)

Under the wrath of the Xuan Bird, its wings vibrated fiercely once more.

Multiple tornadoes ripped from the ground, swirling towards Xin Lin and Heir Yang.

"Don't, don't! I beg for mercy, great Xuan Bird, please spare me!"

Seeing the tornadoes pounce like ferocious tigers, Heir Yang almost pushed Xin Lin out.

But then, he sensed that something was amiss.

"Do you know, my dear sir, the difference between a persimmon and a persimmon cake?"

In front of him, the supposed human shield looked at him with a tilt of the head, an expression of "innocent naivety".

"The difference between me and a cake?"

Heir Yang instinctively echoed the question.

An idiot stays an idiot, asking such nonsensical questions when death is near.

"You'll know the answer very soon."

The little simpleton flashed him a smile, and leisurely took out a handful of grass from his bosom, handing it to Heir Yang.

The next moment, the little simpleton in front of him vanished.

Heir Yang was left stupefied, holding a handful of grass.

The tornado swept over, and Heir Yang, like a leaf, was instantly caught in the storm...

(Foolish humans, this is the consequence of offending me)

The Xuan Bird wore an expression of fury when suddenly, it felt a tickle in its nose—the air filled with a faint scent of grass.

Chapter 216: Escaping the Beak of Death

The Xuan Bird, still filled with lingering anger, felt a sudden wave of drowsiness when the fragrance of Wind Breath Grass drifted to its side.

(Where's Cao Duozhi)

Struggling to be alert, the Xuan Bird looked around.

The hurricane had ceased, leaving the pitiful Heir Yang barely alive, with a swollen and bruised face and his bones shattered all over, almost naked—his condition was as dreadful as could be.

However, only Heir Yang was found, with no sight of the detestable "Cao Duozhi."

(Damn it, did it escape again?)

Just as the Xuan Bird was about to rise and search for Xin Lin's whereabouts,

before it could flap its wings, its vast body swayed and, with a loud crash, the Xuan Bird collapsed onto the ground.

A rustling noise followed.

Xin Lin poked her head out from the dense grass.

She sighed in relief and walked up to "Yang Shibing."

"Heir Yang, Heir Yang, thank you so much for being my 'meat shield'."

Xin Lin glanced at the miserable state of Heir Yang and then at what he held in his hand.

Heir Yang was still clutching a few Wind Breath Grass.

Needless to say, what knocked the Xuan Bird unconscious and out of combat was that handful of Wind Breath Grass.

Due to the Overlord Egg, Xin Lin was well aware that her feud with the Xuan Bird had intensified significantly.

It was now impossible for her to leave Qin Mountain easily; all she had left to use was the Wind Breath Grass.

The dried Wind Breath Grass, once ground into powder, serves as the best sleeping pills.

However, how could someone small like Xin Lin approach the Xuan Bird and leave unscathed?

After much deliberation, Xin Lin simply utilized Heir Yang.

Poor fellow thought to use Xin Lin as a human shield, but it backfired, and she used him instead.

The attack from a Level 5 Dark Beast, when enraged, is unimaginably powerful.

Heir Yang was now unconscious beyond any more unconsciousness.

Beside him, the Xuan Bird too had passed out.

"Congratulations life master, you've narrowly escaped from the jaws of death, Heaven-defying Value +20."

In her mind, the voice of the Heaven-defying Book sounded.

Due to this battle, many ancient trees in the Ancient Forest were destroyed.

Seizing the opportunity, Xin Lin searched around; she emptied the possessions and medicines from Heir Yang and others' bodies, gaining nearly a thousand silver taels, some medicinal herbs, and animal hides, apparently all obtained by Heir Yang's party during their hunting expedition into the mountain.

"How should I deal with this big fellow?"

Xin Lin looked at the Xuan Bird and felt somewhat troubled.

The dose of Wind Breath Grass she used was not light, enough to keep the Xuan Bird and Heir Yang unconscious until tomorrow.

To let it go would be risky; this creature was vengeful, and she was bound to have endless troubles with it in the future.

But to kill it seemed troublesome, especially since she and Aunt Bird had a misunderstanding.

"Leave it to me."

Inside the Sealing Spirit Talisman, Gui Hu spoke.

Without waiting for Xin Lin to agree, a flash of Talisman Light from the Sealing Spirit Talisman and the Xuan Bird, comparable to a small mountain, was sucked into the talisman.

Xin Lin was startled.

How big was the Sealing Spirit Talisman for it to swallow the Xuan Bird directly?

Was the talisman sealing it, or was it controlling the talisman?

But Xin Lin had no time to inquire further, as it was getting late. After managing everything, she had to hurry back to Purple Cloud City to catch the early morning Zixiao Palace Exam.

However, she still lacked the True Qi of a Xuanwu Practitioner in her body, making her unsure whether she would be able to pass the Zixiao Palace Exam smoothly.

With some worries, Xin Lin hastily descended the mountain.

Shortly after Xin Lin left, another group of people swiftly entered Qin Mountain.

Chapter 217: The Origin of Qin Mountain

The passerby hurried along, the leader among them in his forties.

His features stern, a full forehead, and a large, imposing figure; even in the dark of night, this person moved extremely quickly, his shining eyes full of sharp light.

"A bunch of useless servants, Prince has only left the city a few days, and such a significant matter as the Princely Heir going to capture the Xuan Bird, yet you dare to conceal it."

This person is named Yang Ce, an aide in the Prince Manor. Although called an aide, he is the first Martial Artist by Prince Yang's side, and apart from the Prince, he is the only expert at the Little Perfection state of the Xuan Bridge Realm.

Earlier, Prince Yang was commanded to patrol outside, and he escorted the Prince out of the city, little did he know that the Princely Heir would seize the chance to enter Qin Mountain.

To most people of Purple Cloud City, Qin Mountain was just a wild mountain for hunting, but as the first Martial Artist by the Prince's side, Yang Ce knew far more.

The history of this Qin Mountain goes back even further than Longteng Country, rumored that a thousand years ago, there was a battle between a dragon and a phoenix.

Longteng Country has ancient legends of dragons.

But no one had ever seen a real dragon until a thousand years ago when a hunter near Qin Mountain witnessed a dragon and phoenix fighting.

Some say, at the end of the battle, the giant dragon triumphed, and the phoenix turned into a fiery fireball, falling to the summit of Qin Mountain, flattening a radius of ten miles on the mountain top.

Rumors have it the giant dragon sealed the summit with ice to prevent the phoenix from undergoing Nirvana and reviving from the dead ashes.

Since then, the giant dragon vanished.

But hunters living near Qin Mountain occasionally say some claim to hear the phoenix's lament near the mountain, while others insist it is the call of the Xuan Bird.

Nevertheless, it is an undisputed fact that the Xuan Bird is a descendant of the phoenix.

Why would the Princely Heir, Sealing Spirit, choose to seal the only descendant of the phoenix inside Qin Mountain? That is utterly reckless.

The Xuan Bird dwells in the Ancient Forest, and Yang Ce hurried all the way to the forest.

Upon reaching the entrance of the Ancient Forest, Yang Ce and his team were stunned.

The Ancient Forest looked as if it had been struck by a hurricane, trees all toppled and in disarray; more heart-wrenching was that half of the guards from the Prince Manor were dead or injured, luckily, after a search, they found that Heir Yang was still breathing, pinned under a piece of pine wood.

Fortunately, they discovered him in time, any later and not even an immortal could have saved him.

Yang Ce was dumbfounded seeing Heir Yang in such a state.

"Lord Yang, what should we do now? With the Princely Heir in this condition, how can he participate in the Zixiao Palace Exam?"

The guards nearby also showed distressed expressions.

The Princely Heir was already fifteen, and Prince Yang had high hopes for him. With his abilities, he was fully capable of excelling in the Imperial Examination at Zixiao Palace, but now, in such a state, how could he participate in the exam?

"First, get the Princely Heir back and make utmost efforts to save him. Damn that Xuan Bird, when Prince Yang returns to the city, the first thing to do is to flatten Qin Mountain."

Yang Ce searched the vicinity but found no sign of the Xuan Bird, and had no choice but to take people to carry the Princely Heir down the mountain.

Before dawn, Xin Lin returned to Purple Cloud City.

"Gui Hu, what should I do at the Zixiao Palace Exam?"

Xin Lin quietly asked Gui Hu.

Perhaps because of capturing the Xuan Bird, Gui Hu seemed to be in a good mood, surprisingly not casting his usual sarcastic remarks on her during the journey.

"Fend for yourself."

Dropping these cold three words, Gui Hu stopped paying attention to Xin Lin.

He must quickly refine the Spiritual Energy drawn by the Heaven and Earth Devouring Spirit Array into Ghost Power, only by doing so could he refine the Xuan Bird.

Men are really unreliable, relying on others is worse than relying on oneself, forget it, just have to play by ear during the Zixiao Palace Exam.

Xin Lin looked speechless and very unwillingly returned to her residence.

Chapter 218: Zixiao Palace Exam

On the day of the Zixiao Palace Exam, Purple Cloud City was bustling from early morning.

All over Longteng Country, numerous youngsters from various large county towns and villages hurried towards the city.

For children from poor families, whether they could make it into the top ten of the Zixiao Palace Exam and enter Qingtian Academy depended on this very moment.

"Little Lin, Princely Heir, you must be careful. If you encounter people from the Empress, you must avoid their sharp edges and definitely not conflict with them."

Noble Lady Shi gave numerous reminders and instructions before sending the two off.

"Madam, rest assured. These days, the city has been quite peaceful. The Empress's people have already withdrawn, and my Water Wraith Gang has insiders within the Imperial Palace. If anything goes wrong, we will be notified immediately, and they won't have any trouble."

Ma Jingtian reassured her by her side.

It was strange to say, the Empress's people had been tightly controlling both inside and outside the city earlier, but just the day before yesterday, for some reason, all the warrants at the city gates were withdrawn. This was indeed good news for Noble Lady Shi and her son.

"Mother, don't worry, I will not embarrass you. You just wait for my return, I will definitely meet the Emperor and welcome you back."

Little Xinzhuo, unable to part, bid farewell to Noble Lady Shi.

Xin Lin watched from the side, but her mind was filled with other plans.

The matter of the Empress was somewhat strange.

She wasn't as optimistic as Ma Gang Leader and Noble Lady Shi, she believed the Empress would not just give up easily; she must have other plans.

After saying goodbye to Noble Lady Shi, Ma Jingtian personally escorted the two to the location of the preliminary round of the Zixiao Palace Exam.

In previous years, the Zixiao Palace Exam only had one round of testing the Dark Spirit Root, but this year, by the decree of Emperor Longteng, there were two additional rounds, namely the re-examination and the final examination.

Only those who passed all three rounds could finally enter the top ten and become a student of Qingtian Academy.

Xin Lin and Little Xinzhuo's target was also this final round, the Holy Final Exam.

"Little girl, these past two days we haven't seen the little expert, do you know where he might have gone?"

On the way, Ma Jingtian curiously asked.

After receiving the Water Element Skill's Cultivation Technique, he cultivated for two days, and found that his True Qi had increased a lot. Delighted, he admired Gui Hu even more, and was eager to meet Gui Hu to learn more kung fu.

The little expert came and went without a trace, and the only one who had interactions with him was the little girl in front of him.

"You've just said he's an expert, how could he just be seen whenever."

Xin Lin thought of Gui Hu and was not in a good mood.

"Little girl, about today's palace exam, do you think you have a chance?"

Ma Jingtian, still not giving up, probed further.

These past few days, Little Xinzhuo had been in closed-doors cultivation practicing Spiritual Formulas.

It was the little expert who mysteriously slipped out of the city alone, not allowing anyone to follow him, and only hurried back this morning. Who knows what cards he had up his sleeve.

Ma Jingtian also surreptitiously noticed that there was still no trace of True Qi on Xin Lin's body.

Unless Xin Lin was intentionally hiding her capabilities, it meant she planned to enter the Zixiao Palace Exam as a Spiritual Practitioner.

However, even an outsider like Ma Jingtian could see that Xin Lin's talent as a Spiritual Practitioner might not even compare to Little Xinzhuo.

"Don't worry, I haven't forgotten our bet."

Xin Lin responded, not pleasantly.

This Ma Jingtian really knew how to bring up the most inappropriate topics.

"Heh, little girl, you still have time to admit defeat now. Do you know, this year's Zixiao Palace Exam is said to be swarming with experts, there are quite a few famous prodigies just from within the country. Just the young lords and ladies from several Prince Mansions have already..."

Ma Jingtian was about to elaborate when the three of them arrived at North Square.

This place was already packed with people, crowded everywhere.

Chapter 219: The First Place Appears

There is a quarter of an hour left before the Zixiao Palace Exam begins, but the North Square is already packed to the brim.

Among them, the majority are children and teenagers in their teens, Xin Lin and Little Xinzhuo mingled among them, soon disappearing into the crowd.

Emperor Longteng rules with an iron fist, and the scale of this Zixiao Palace Exam is unprecedentedly grand, intending to broadly recruit talented individuals from across the nation. Emperor Longteng had announced early on that this Imperial Examination must be open, fair, and just.

Including Ma Jingtian, the attendants could only stop in front of the North Square.

Around the square, there are Imperial Guards clad in heavy armor, each bearing a majestic aura and possessing no small amount of cultivation.

"Do not crowd, queue up to register your place of origin and name."

A white-faced Imperial Guard captain commanded at the front.

Just as it was almost Little Xinzhuo and Xin Lin's turn to register, a girl in front of them was about to sign up.

Unexpectedly, a hand pushed from behind, shoving Little Xinzhuo aside and pushing her behind Xin Lin and the girl, jostling the two girls.

"Move aside, where did these blind little ghosts come from? Is this a queue you can stand in?"

Several young masters and misses dressed meticulously approached.

The queue that Xin Lin and Little Xinzhuo were in was already very long, with around a hundred or so people, and the two had been waiting for a long time to register. But these few young masters and misses who were late not only cut in line, they also pushed people around.

However, the children and teenagers standing around, upon seeing the dress and demeanor of these few individuals, did not dare to provoke them and all avoided them from a distance.

"How can you be so unreasonable, isn't there any order anymore?"

Xin Lin protected Little Xinzhuo in her arms, glaring angrily at the group.

"Reasonable? Only low-grade people talk about reason. We are unreasonable, and what can you do to us? This queue is only for the children of officials and nobles, people of your low-standing should never queue here, now scram!"

The boy who had pushed Little Xinzhuo looked eleven or twelve, fair and clean, wearing a golden silk robe, obviously from a wealthy family.

He looked down snobbishly, giving Xin Lin and the others a brief glance.

"Forget it, little sister, we're not in a hurry, let's register later."

The girl behind Xin Lin tugged at her, signaling them to step aside.

Xin Lin couldn't help but take another look at the girl who seemed about thirteen or fourteen, roughly the same age as Xin Lin, and very pretty with delicate features, indeed a lovely young beauty in the making.

Previously she had been very quiet, and Xin Lin hadn't taken much notice of her.

Seeing that Xin Lin looked young, she had thought her to be only seven or eight years old.

The girl seemed like a good person, if a bit too timid.

Just as Xin Lin was about to speak, a scene flashed through her mind.

"It's her, Murong Ziyue, born a commoner, Xuanwu Practitioner of the Fourth Rank, she should be the top candidate in this Imperial Examination by strength, but the Third Prince has decreed that the Grand Tutor's son must come first. Put this medicine in her food."

A few eunuch-like characters were looking at a girl not too far away, whispering among each other.

"Are you Murong Ziyue?"

Xin Lin suddenly asked.

The girl looked surprised; being a reserved person, she had come to Purple Cloud City alone and should not be known to anyone here.

And how does this young girl know her?

However, this young girl was very cute, making Murong Ziyue feel a sense of fondness towards her, otherwise, she wouldn't have kindly advised her.

Murong Ziyue nodded slightly.

"Be very cautious with your food and drink these next few days."

Xin Lin whispered in a low voice.

Chapter 220: Friends

Water and food?

Murong Ziyue was slightly taken aback, not understanding why the little girl would say such a thing.

Murong Ziyue was not lacking in strength, but she was naively pure-hearted. Before coming to Purple Cloud City, she had never known what malevolence people were capable of.

She wanted to inquire further, but who knew that the group, seeing that Xin Lin and her siblings wouldn't give way, without a word began to grab Little Xinzhuo and Xin Lin, attempting to forcefully cut in line.

"You people are being too bullying!"

Little Xinzhuo's face flushed with anger.

Everyone has a temper, and if it hadn't been for their mother's earlier admonition to stay calm and cautious, he would have already made a move.

Little Xinzhuo formed a Spiritual Formula with his hand, ready to teach this group of officials' children a lesson.

"Ah Zhuo."

Xin Lin gave Little Xinzhuo a look, her gaze quickly scanning the surroundings.

The commotion here had attracted the attention of many people, some of whom had even stopped registering and were just watching them.

The Empress seemed to have ceased her aggression, but Xin Lin thought it was just a stalling tactic. The Empress, having been "wounded by a hidden arrow" from her, would not let things rest. It was very possible that her people were lurking in the shadows.

If Little Xinzhuo made a move now, they could very well be discovered.

Before the results of the Zixiao Palace Exam were announced, they needed to be as careful as possible.

"Get lost."

The young masters and misses shoved Xin Lin and her brother aside, causing the siblings to stagger and nearly fall to the ground.

"Stop!"

Murong Ziyue could not stand by and watch; she reached out to grab the golden-clothed youth who was pushing Xin Lin and the others.

"You brat, I told you to get lost."

The golden-clothed youth had an arrogant face, intent on shoving Murong Ziyue away as well, but when he pushed, the seemingly frail girl did not budge an inch.

"The hell! I don't believe this; even I could not deal with you. You guys, come together and throw these low-grade people out!"

The golden-clothed youth waved his hand, and the youths beside him swarmed forward.

Several of the youths were clearly Martial Artists, each with adept movement techniques, grabbing at Murong Ziyue's wrists and shoulders, trying to subdue her.

But as Murong Ziyue was being grabbed, a surge of True Qi suddenly shot out from within her, causing the girls who touched her to feel as if something had stung their hands, their palms numbing instantly and they hastily withdrew them.

Seeing this, a ruthless light flickered in the eyes of the golden-clothed youth as his hand reached into his bosom.

"What is all the noise about?"

At the front of the line, the Imperial Guard Captain approached.

The golden-clothed youth reluctantly put away whatever he had in his bosom.

"Captain Qin, I am Jin Chen, the son of Grandmaster Jin. These commoners are brawling in public, especially her, trying to stir up trouble with us. They should be disqualified."

The golden-clothed youth, recognizing the Imperial Guard Captain and relying on the fact they were acquaintances, quickly revealed his identity and preemptively complained, playing the role of the one wronged.

The golden-clothed youth saw that Murong Ziyue was skilled and that even his companions together could not subdue her, which meant that her strength was at least that of a Dark Martial Artist Second Rank or even higher.

He himself was a Dark Martial Artist Second Rank, and if this woman participated in the Zixiao Palace Exam, she would surely become his competitor. He intended to strike first and get Murong Ziyue disqualified directly.

"It was they who cut in line first and hit us siblings. This sister merely saw injustice and helped us out."

Little Xinzhuo was filled with righteous indignation.

These people were simply too shameless.

"Little ghost, if you spout nonsense again, be careful of your dog life."

Jin Chen had an air of arrogance.

His father was Grandmaster Jin, the favored minister of Emperor Longteng, and even the Imperial Guard Captain had to show him some courtesy.

These three low-grade persons, just wait to be disqualified!