

## **Re: God of Formation.**

### **#Chapter 21: Creating a Runic Gun. - Read Re: God of Formation. Chapter 21: Creating a Runic Gun.**

*Chapter 21: Creating a Runic Gun.*

The following day, news about Jun Wu claiming to be a Grade-1 Array Formation Master spread throughout the city.

He became the laughingstock of the city, and many called him by various mocking names.

To the people, he was a disgrace to the Jun aristocratic clan.

Upon hearing the news, Jun Jiahao sneered in disdain. How could Jun Wu claim to be a Formation Master when he knew nothing about it?

Realizing Jun Wu was still delusional, Jun Jiahao couldn't help but chuckle.

"Let's go. He's just a retarded bastard," he commanded his entourage and prepared to leave Silver Star City.

His mission was complete, and as for Jun Wu, he had placed his men around the city to kill him.

Jun Wu, however, paid no attention to the gossip, as he was busy studying formations.

Now that he had a goal, he wouldn't waste his precious time on trivial matters.

At the moment, he was in the smithing room, working on inventing a new weapon.

Standing close to him, Elder Peng watched intently as Jun Wu forged the item.

Behind Elder Peng stood Jun Wu's two retainers, who were equally confused yet intrigued.

They all held their breath, waiting to see the final creation.

An hour later, after intense concentration, Jun Wu completed his forging and inscribed runes onto the item.

A bright smile appeared on his face as he held it up.

"Finally, I did it!" he exclaimed with excitement.

Seeing his enthusiasm, everyone in the smithing room looked at him in bewilderment.

"Young Master, can you tell us what this is?" Mao Yun asked in anticipation.

"Before I tell you, let me show you." Jun Wu picked up the device, opened a small compartment, and inserted a small spirit stone.

"Is that a Spirit Stone?" Elder Peng asked in shock.

"Yes," Jun Wu nodded.

"Is this weapon going to use spirit stones?"

Elder Peng couldn't believe his eyes. Who in their right mind would use a spirit stone to power a weapon?

Did Jun Wu realize how rare and precious spirit stones were?

Jun Wu understood Elder Peng's skepticism but didn't care.

If anyone from Earth saw the item in his hand, they would instantly recognize its lethality.

Using his knowledge of ancient formations and the Hundred Forging Technique, he had created the world's first **Runic Revolver**.

At the center of the training ground, Jun Wu stood twenty meters away from a wooden target dummy.

Holding his breath, he raised the Runic Revolver and pulled the trigger.

Instantly, the runes on the revolver lit up, and a powerful force shot out of the weapon.

**Bang!**

A hole appeared in the dummy's head, shocking everyone present.

"How could this be?!"

Elder Peng and the two retainers widened their eyes in disbelief.

Rushing to the wooden dummy, Elder Peng examined it closely to confirm the hole was real.

"My goodness," he exclaimed, turning to Jun Wu with an expression of awe.

Seeing their shock, Jun Wu grinned. "That's not all. Elder Peng, please step away from the target."

Quickly, Elder Peng moved away as Jun Wu raised the strange weapon again.

**Bang! Bang! Bang!**

Under the continuous barrage, the wooden dummy's head exploded into pieces.

Lowering the revolver, Jun Wu said confidently, "This will be the signature weapon of my organization. What do you think?"

"Can I try it?" Zhang Wei asked excitedly.

Jun Wu handed him the Runic Revolver, and everyone watched in anticipation.

**Bang! Bang!**

Zhang Wei was so mesmerized that he couldn't put the gun down.

"Young Master, I want one!" he shouted, exhilarated.

The feeling of standing still and shooting down enemies was intoxicating.

...

A week had passed since Jun Wu created the first Runic Revolver. After completing the initial revolver, he crafted three more and distributed them among his people.

Now, apart from their cultivation-based strength, they were also armed with revolvers.

Their journey to Mystic City had never felt more secure.

Under the cover of night, Jun Wu and his two retainers left the city.

Though they were equipped with Runic Revolvers and mortal-grade weapons, they didn't want unnecessary battles and chose to leave quietly.

Before departing, Jun Wu had created a camouflage formation at the entrance of his mansion.

Moving silently through the dark streets, Jun Wu and his retainers slipped away unnoticed. The camouflage formation shrouded their departure, leaving the assassins convinced that Jun Wu was still in the mansion.

Outside the city, Elder Peng was waiting with a carriage.

Quickly, Jun Wu boarded the carriage, and they departed while their enemies still thought they had him cornered.

As the carriage rolled along the quiet road, Jun Wu glanced back at the dimly lit city.

*This isn't the end. When I return, I'll make you all pay with your lives,* he thought, gripping the Runic Revolver at his side.

## *Chapter 22: The Mystic City*

Jun Wu and his group arrived at Mystic City after a grueling five-day journey. His body was sore, and he was utterly exhausted.

They quickly found an Inn and booked a room for a week. Without even taking off his clothes, Jun Wu collapsed onto the bed and immediately fell asleep.

He woke up at noon the following day, feeling refreshed and energetic.

After taking a bath, he changed into a new robe and went downstairs for a meal.

When he came down, he saw Elder Peng and Zhang Wei seated by the window, observing the bustling street outside.

"Young Master, you're awake," Zhang Wei said, standing up to find him a seat.

"Yes. Did anything happen while I was asleep?" Jun Wu asked.

"No..." Zhang Wei shook his head.

"Good." Jun Wu nodded and called a waiter to order his meal.

"There are many young people here for the competition," Elder Peng remarked.

"That's to be expected. This is Mystic Path Academy City, one of the best academies in the region," Mao Yun's voice came from the entrance as he walked in.

Taking a seat, Mao Yun handed a booklet to Jun Wu. "Young Master, I've gathered all the information about the competition. Here it is."

"Thank you." Jun Wu took the booklet and opened it.

He quickly read through the thin book, and a bright smile crept across his face.

"So, the registration ends today. Huh, I'm quite lucky," Jun Wu muttered. "Mao Yun, follow me. I need to register for the competition."

Dressed in a long black robe, Jun Wu walked calmly among the throng of people.

Mystic City was bustling with life, with many Array Master apprentices gathered for the competition.

Before long, they arrived in front of a magnificent five-story building.

Outside the building, numerous registration tents had been set up. Without hesitation, Jun Wu entered one of the tents.

Inside, a young lady was seated behind a table, conducting registrations.

Looking at Jun Wu, she said calmly, "One hundred silver coins."

Jun Wu paid the fee, and the girl brought out a parchment.

"To qualify for the competition, you must identify this formation in less than thirty seconds."

Jun Wu's lips curled upward. He realized the organizers were making a fortune from the competition.

Just to participate in the test, he had to pay one hundred silver coins. If he failed, his money would be gone.

Seeing him remain silent, the young lady frowned and said coldly, "If you can't identify it, just give up. There's no need to pretend."

Jun Wu furrowed his brows and sneered at her. The formation was an incomplete Concealing Grade-1 Array Formation.

What caught his attention, however, was the excessive number of unnecessary nodes and patterns.

For a Grade-1 Formation, there should be no more than eight to ten patterns with three to four nodes.

In comparison, this formation had over thirty patterns and ten nodes. It was absurd.

"Is this correct?" he couldn't help but ask.

To him, this wasn't a formation but total nonsense.

"What do you know? This is one of the simplified formations. Just give up if you can't identify it," she responded with a smirk.

She had seen many young men like Jun Wu who came in confidently but knew nothing about formations.

Some were even perverts who showed up just to see her face.

She clicked her tongue, ready to chase this pretentious boy away.

Jun Wu didn't know what was going through her mind, but the thought of this erroneous formation being a simplified version left him speechless.

He couldn't imagine what the complex version would look like. Shaking his head, he said, "This is a Concealing Formation."

"Hmm?"

The young lady was surprised. She hadn't expected the quiet boy to know the answer.

'How could he get it? He didn't even study the formation to analyze the patterns and nodes,' she thought, baffled as she stared at Jun Wu in shock.

"What? Am I wrong?"

"Ah... No..." She snapped out of her stupor and handed him a form to fill out.

Jun Wu quickly filled out the form and returned it to her.

"The competition starts in two days. Please be here early," she said, giving him a tag.

Receiving the tag, Jun Wu left the tent.

"Young Master, how was it?" Mao Yun asked.

"It was nothing. I passed."

His voice lacked its usual enthusiasm. He had come expecting something advanced but was left disappointed.

'Are ancient formations that different?' he wondered in confusion.

"Young Master, is there a problem?" Mao Yun asked again.

"No..." Jun Wu shook his head. "I want you to get some books on formations. I need to check something."

"Alright."

Although Mao Yun was puzzled by Jun Wu's behavior, he didn't press further.

Just then, they heard a loud commotion from the center of the district.

"What's going on?" Jun Wu frowned. "Let's check it out."

They quickly approached the crowd and saw a young girl being beaten by a fat middle-aged man.

"Thief! I told you never to come near me again. I'll break your legs and leave a scar on your face!"

He kicked the girl ruthlessly, drawing a miserable scream from her.

The girl tried to speak, but each time she opened her mouth, she was silenced by another brutal kick.

Within moments, she was covered in blood and bruises, her face swollen beyond recognition.

She tried to plead, but the man wouldn't give her a chance.

As for the crowd, they watched the inhumane scene without a trace of pity.

Then a voice cut through the crowd.

"How much did she steal?"

Everyone turned to see the source of the voice, and the fat man paused his actions.

It was a young man dressed in a plain black robe. He was handsome, exuding a faint noble aura.

"En..." The fat man stuttered before replying. "She stole five hundred silver coins from me, and I won't let her go without getting my money back!"

Jun Wu stepped forward and approached the girl. Looking at her, he felt a shadow of his younger self.

It reminded him of his days in the clan.

"Mao Yun, pay him, and let's leave," Jun Wu said calmly as he carried the girl.

The fat man was about to protest, but Mao Yun's cold, piercing gaze silenced him.

Accepting the money, a cunning smile appeared on the fat man's face as he returned to his store, satisfied.

### *Chapter 23: Xinyue*

Xinyue opened her eyes slowly and looked around at her clean surroundings.

Her entire body ached, sore in every part.

The memory of what had happened to her earlier flooded back into her mind.

"Who saved me?" she thought out loud.

She was confused. She knew how heartless the people living in Mystic City were. Therefore, she hadn't expected anyone to save her and thought that moment would be her end.

Lost in thought, the door to the room creaked open, and a handsome young man entered.

"You're awake?" Jun Wu asked.

Xinyue stared at Jun Wu's face for a moment before questioning in a low voice, "Are you the one who saved me?"

"Yes," he nodded and sat at the edge of the bed. "How are you feeling?"

"Getting better, I guess."

"Good. The physician said you'd be back on your feet in three to five days."

"Thank you."

She wore a complicated expression as she looked at Jun Wu.

"Aren't you going to ask me what happened?"

"I'll listen if you decide to tell me, but I won't push you to," Jun Wu replied calmly.

He didn't care much about her story. He had helped her simply because he saw a version of himself in her—helpless and forsaken.

In this cruel world, he knew well how evil the human heart could be.

Xinyue stared at his face and realized he genuinely didn't care about her story. He had helped her without expecting anything in return.



To her, this was the first time she'd seen someone offer aid without a hidden motive.

"You're not from this city, are you?"

"No. I came for the competition," Jun Wu responded truthfully.

"You're a Formation Apprentice?" she exclaimed, surprised.

Given how young Jun Wu was, she hadn't expected him to be an Array Formation apprentice.

"I'm not an apprentice but an Array Formation Master," he replied with pride and confidence.

"Impossible!" she exclaimed in disbelief. "How old are you? It's impossible to become a Formation Master at such a young age!"

"That's for you to decide," he shrugged.

Xinyue snorted lightly. *'All these young masters from powerful clans are the same—proud and showy.'*

She silently vowed never to acknowledge him as an Array Formation Master unless she saw his badge.

Without dwelling on the matter any longer, she began narrating her story, leaving nothing out.

When Jun Wu heard her tale, he frowned lightly and sighed.

She had been a student at the Mystic Path Academy but was plotted against by her so-called friend and expelled.

With her beauty and talent, she had failed to notice the vipers around her until it was too late.

Returning home, she discovered her parents had been killed in a Ruin Beast rampage.

Fortunately, her brother was saved along with other children in the village.

Left with no choice, she returned to Mystic City, hoping to survive and care for her brother.

Soon, she realized how naive her thoughts had been. Survival without strength or powerful backing was nearly impossible.

She was only an Initial Third-Rated Martial Artist when she was expelled from the academy.

With her weak strength, joining an adventurer team to explore the ruins was impossible.

Her only option was to work as a servant in stores.

Unfortunately, her beauty made her a target for men who couldn't control their lust.

Her last employer had wanted to force himself on her, but when she refused, it led to a public scene.

"Tell me where your brother is. I'll send my men to bring him to you," Jun Wu said, standing up.

"Why would you help me?" Xinyue asked, her voice tinged with suspicion.

She had seen enough of the world to know that kindness often came with a price.

"Why shouldn't I?" Jun Wu's calm reply unnerved her. She searched his face for any sign of hidden motives but found none.

For the first time in a long while, she felt a sliver of hope amid her despair.

Seeing this, an amused smile appeared on Jun Wu's face as he left the room.

As Jun Wu stepped out, his thoughts lingered on her story.

The cruelty of the world was unrelenting, but her resilience was admirable.

Shaking off the weight of her tale, he returned to his room, his mind shifting to the challenge ahead.

In his room, Jun Wu glanced at the three large books on Array Formation on his table, furrowing his brows.

These books were basic introductions to Array Formation written by three different authors.

Beside the books lay a parchment.

He sat down and began to study. The more he read, the deeper his frown grew.

"This is nonsense," he muttered, slamming the table in frustration.

Moving from one book to another, he noticed they all taught the same outdated principles.

The most notable feature was the long strings of complicated jargon designed to confuse ignorant learners.

After five hours of study, he came to a realization: the current knowledge of array formations in this world was still in the First Generation, comparable to using vacuum tubes, while he was familiar with Fifth Generation techniques using microchips.

Nevertheless, his study wasn't entirely wasted. He picked up a thing or two, including how to draw the overly complicated formations they taught.

He picked up the parchment. It contained an incomplete Wind Array Formation that had cost him five hundred silver coins.

When he'd heard the price, he had been astonished, realizing how fortunate he was to have advanced knowledge.

Without the memories of the ancient being within him, he wondered how his life would have turned out.

Swiftly, he analyzed the incomplete formation for five minutes before taking another parchment and recreating the Wind Array Formation.

This time, he completed the missing portions of the wind formation.

Looking at the finished product, Jun Wu felt a sense of accomplishment.

"This should be enough for tomorrow," he muttered.

The competition wasn't just a test—it was an opportunity to establish himself in this world without revealing too much.

*Chapter 24: Array Competition.*

For the next two days, Jun Wu did not leave the inn. Apart from occasional conversations with Xinyue and his younger brother, he did not leave his room, studying array formation.

The ancient being's knowledge was vastly different from current array formation. Thus, he was preparing himself, not for competition, but for what lay ahead.

Finally, it was the day of the competition.

Mystic City was bustling with crowds and new faces appearing everywhere.

Everyone was talking about the Array Formation Competition. For such a large competition, every array formation apprentice and array master throughout the Soaring Cloud Region came to witness such a grand event.

For an array formation master, it was the best chance to find a disciple and pass on their knowledge.

The knowledge of array formation came from the ruins, and every time books and manuals on array formation were found, they were always treated like rare gems.

Therefore, without a master to pass on his knowledge, it was very difficult to progress on the path of array formation.

Walking on the bustling street, many young and old array formation apprentices wore expressions filled with confidence and hope.

Most came here to find the right master or be noticed by powerful clans. It was a chance to change their lives for good.

Among the throng of people, Jun Wu walked calmly without any change in his expression. Unlike most apprentices, he was different.

This was the stage to make his mark.

He arrived at the competition venue and was stopped by a guard.

"Please, show us your pass," the guard said in a deep, cold voice.

He showed them his pass, and he was allowed into the venue. The venue was a massive hall with tables and chairs.

When he entered, most of the apprentices turned their heads and looked in his direction.

"What!"

Various gasps echoed in the hall. Jun Wu's young face shocked them. Most of them were in their twenties and thirties, while some were in their forties and fifties.

Looking at a boy who was not even twenty left them dumbfounded for a moment.

"Did he enter the wrong hall?" a voice couldn't help but ask.

"That's impossible. The guards would have stopped him if that were the case."

"So... he's an apprentice..."

"For him to be an apprentice at such a young age, he must have a powerful master."

The apprentices discussed among themselves, their faces filled with envy and jealousy while also having sharp glints in their eyes.

To Jun Wu, this had nothing to do with him. He picked a random seat and sat, waiting for the competition to start.

Slowly, many apprentices arrived, and the massive hall gradually filled up. Just then, a young man in his early twenties entered, and he immediately caught everyone's attention.

Dressed in an expensive blue silk robe, he walked proudly to the front. He stopped at the foremost seat and looked at the woman who was seated on it.

Without uttering a word, the woman left the seat in large strides. Everyone knew the young man, and it wouldn't be wise to be on his bad side because of a seat.

"Ah! With him here, he's going to win the competition."

"Indeed. I heard his master is a powerful array formation master."

"What should we do now?"

"Nothing."

While the apprentices were discussing him, the door opened, and a beautiful woman entered the hall.

"What! She is also participating?" a voice exclaimed.

"I can't believe this..."

"I thought her clan was not interested in the association competition."

At the front seat, the young man looked at the beautiful woman with a sharp glint in his eyes. He sneered and averted his gaze.

The beautiful woman elegantly took a seat from one of the empty spots. She sat quietly, without bothering about the gossip around her.

"The two rising stars. We are doomed to get nothing in this competition."

"Ah! What bad luck."

"I heard the next competition will be in another ten years."

Jun Wu listened to the gossip around him in fascination. He looked at the two rising stars and chuckled inwardly.

After another few minutes, another batch of apprentices arrived, but they did not cause any sensation like the two rising stars of Mystic City.

Now, the hall was almost full. All chatter from the apprentices had reduced as they all sat in their seats, wearing tense expressions.

Creak!

The side door at the front was pushed open, and five elders from the array formation association entered.

Their faces were cold, devoid of any expression. They took their seats, and the old man at the center opened his mouth and announced,

"The competition is going to start. Anyone found speaking will be sent out immediately."

Instantly, all the apprentices held their breath as they waited quietly for the competition to begin.

The only woman among the elders stood up. "There will be three stages to the competition. This is the first stage."

With her announcement, the side door was pushed open, and many attendants entered.

Swiftly, they began to distribute two scrolls, ink, and brushes to the apprentices. One of the scrolls contained an array formation diagram, while the other was empty.

When all the apprentices had been given their test scrolls, the woman continued.

"In your hand is an array diagram with many errors. To pass this stage, you must correct at least three of the errors."

"You have one hour to find and correct the errors. You may start."

The moment she finished speaking, the apprentices sprang into action and took the array diagram.

Jun Wu unhurriedly took the array diagram and looked at it. A deep frown appeared on his face when he saw the diagram.

He sighed and shook his head. He reached out his hand, picked up his ink brush, dipped it inside the ink, and began to draw.

To him, the complicated array diagrams were full of errors that almost blinded his eyes. He did not need to think, his hand danced swiftly on the scroll.

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### *Chapter 25: First Round*

The competition hall was deadly quiet, leaving only the shallow breathing and the ink brush scraping against the scrolls.

Both old and young apprentices wore solemn expressions on their faces. Even those that were acclaimed as geniuses in array formation were serious.

At this stage level, as long as they could prove themselves, their bright future would be set in stone, and the association wouldn't stop at anything in nurturing them.

At the forefront, the proud young man contemplated every second before he continued drawing the array formation.

He raised his head and turned his gaze, and a sneer crept up his face when he saw the various tensions plastered on other apprentices' faces.

He shifted his gaze and looked at the calm and beautiful girl in the middle area.

'Continue to pretend. When I come first and show the world your clan's inheritance is nothing, but a joke compared to my master's, then it will be too late to come back to me.' He gloated inwardly.

He lost interest in the other apprentices. To him, apart from her, the others were nothing but stepping stones to his fame.

So, he thought.

Just when he wanted to turn his head and focus his attention on the last part of the array formation diagram, he saw something that stunned him.

A young man younger than him stood up, wearing a calm expression.

'What's he doing?'

'Don't tell me he's done? Impossible!' He screamed in his heart.

He knew how difficult the test was. How could anyone dare claim they had finished the test?

While he was having a tug-of-war inwardly, other apprentices also raised their heads and looked at the youngest person in the hall.

"What happened?"

"Is he giving up or what?"

"Of course, he's giving up. This damn test is too difficult."

"What a shame. Such a young apprentice. He should have held it in until the end of the competition."

Jun Wu walked calmly forward, unbothered by the various gazes directed at him and their gossip. Why would he care about their insignificant gossip?

The test barely took him a minute to complete, and the rest of the time was him contemplating his next action when he left the array competition.

He was a Grade-1 Array Formation Master. How could some insignificant test pose any challenge to him?

Arriving before the five elders, "Elders, I'm done," he said calmly. His voice was clear, without any nervousness.

"You're done?" the only woman among the elders asked, knitting her brow.

"Yes," Jun Wu nodded.

All the elders locked their gazes on him before they shook their heads in pity.

"Alright. You can submit it," she said and received the scroll. "Go out and wait for the test result."

Jun Wu nodded and left the hall under the various gazes locked on him. One of the elders looked at him and clicked his tongue in irritation.

This was not the first time he had seen someone like Jun Wu who wasn't serious about the competition.

They thought they were special, only to get a reality check.

"Just throw his scroll aside. He's just a waste of our precious time," he said, his voice filled with irritation.

The female elder nodded and placed Jun Wu's scroll to the side.



Seeing this, all the apprentices could only sigh. They'd expected such a result.

How could anyone claim to have completed such a difficult test in less than half of the time?

The young man at the forefront sneered. 'I knew it! How can a nobody dare claim to have completed the test when I'm not even done with it?'

He clicked his tongue, and a prideful smile crept up his lips as he resumed the test.

Meanwhile, Jun Wu did not know what was going on in the competition hall, as he had already found a seat in the quiet lobby, calmly waiting for the competition to end.

Close to an hour later, the first person came out. It was a young man with a prideful smile on his lips.

He looked at Jun Wu with a condescending gaze before he sauntered to the corner and picked a seat. 'Continue with your act. Humph!'

Slowly, more and more apprentices trooped out of the competition hall. When they saw Jun Wu, most would gloat. At least they tried their best, unlike an ignorant brat.

Quickly, they formed groups of two or three, discussing the test.

Surrounded by a lot of array apprentices, Ma Lon, the young man with a prideful expression, responded to their queries with an air of arrogance.

He was a lot younger than most of the apprentices, yet they couldn't help but come to flatter him.

Standing in the corner, Yuan Lan wore a calm expression as she watched the noise in the lobby.

Apart from coming for the competition, this was a rare chance for many to network themselves with many powerful clans.

Her gaze fell on Jun Wu, and she creased her brow. To her, Jun Wu was an enigma. He did not look like someone who didn't know what he was doing.

He was just too calm and confident for it.

Shaking her head, she averted her gaze and closed her eyes to clear her mind, preparing for the next stage in the competition.

While the apprentices were talking in the lobby, the five elders had already started grading their scrolls.

For a Grade-1 Array Formation Master, marking apprentices' tests was nothing. Swiftly, they graded the scrolls into two groups.

Those that passed and those that failed.

Among those that passed, there was an inner ranking to determine their ranks. This was based on the number of errors they found and corrected.

Quickly, time whisked by and they had all completed the marking.

"Hahaha. Who would have expected the Young Miss of the Yuan clan to come first in this round?" an elder said with a light smile on his face.

The elders nodded. Most of them thought Ma Long would come first, but they were wrong. He was short by a few points.

"This is just the first round. There are two more rounds to go. Anything can still happen," Elder Feng, the leading elder, said with an air of indifference.

Just as they thought everything was over, Elder Shen, the only female elder, raised her head, her face filled with shock.

"How did he do it?!" she exclaimed.

*Chapter 26: Jun Wu Array Diagram.*

All the elders turned their heads and looked at Elder Shen.

"What happened?" Elder Kang asked, creasing his brow.

Elder Shen raised her head and looked at the four, and opened her mouth, shock still visible on her face.

"H-He..." Her voice trailed off, and she took a deep breath to contain her ecstatic emotion.

The elders were reeling in confusion as they saw the wide shock on her face. This was the first time they had seen such an emotion on her face.

Even when she became a Grade 1 Array Formation Master, her emotion was not this uncontrollable.

Regaining her bearing, she pushed the scroll to the leading elder—Elder Feng.

"The boy found seven errors in the array diagram," she said in a low voice.

Hmm?

"What did you say?" Elder Feng asked, creasing his brow.

"We got it all wrong. That boy... the first boy that submitted his scroll did not make any mistake. His array diagram is neat, without any mistakes, as if it were drawn by a master."

The more she spoke, the more she found it hard to believe.

The array formation diagram had been revised many times, and only five errors were deemed in the array diagram. But the boy found seven, which shocked her, shattering her previous belief.

"Impossible!" Elder Feng shouted and quickly took the scroll to examine it.

How could there be seven errors when only five were present? The three other elders also joined in to examine the scroll.

They wouldn't believe it until they saw it with their own eyes.

"This... This... how..." Elder Kang stuttered, his face filled with shock and disbelief.

For the next five minutes, various gasps echoed in the still quiet hall. Elder Feng had the highest mastery in Grade 1 Array Formation, and he refused to believe what he was seeing.

He shook his head. "This is impossible. How could he call node 35, node 13 errors? I don't believe it."

"This is just total nonsense!" His voice raised an octave, mixed with anger.

Looking at him, all the elders were quiet. They also found it hard to believe, but from the array diagram, the probability of it being right was a lot higher than being wrong.

The array formation diagram was neatly and expertly drawn, giving no room for doubt. Just studying it for a few minutes, they could see a discrepancy in their previous array diagram compared to this.

Although they knew all this, they did not want to go against Elder Feng in the organization.

However, Elder Shen did not share their sentiment. Her pursuit was the peak of array formation; their minor politics meant nothing to her.

"Elder Feng, why do you say this is impossible?" she questioned with a sharp voice.

Hmm?

Elder Feng was stunned for a moment. He did not know that Elder Shen would dare question him. Still, he recovered quickly and snorted.

"A mere array formation apprentice dares claim there are errors in what we claim is perfect? How can it be true? Does he suggest we're wrong while he's right?"

"This is nothing but nonsense covered in a nice-looking diagram," he shouted.

Elder Shen stared at him unblinking. "So, you're claiming this array formation is perfect, right?"

"Yes. This is the conclusion of all Grade 1 Array Formation Masters," Elder Feng responded confidently.

"How can anyone claim it is perfect when we don't even understand half of it? We're nothing but mere Grade 1 Array Formation Masters. In other regions, there are rumors of a Grade 2 Formation Master. How dare we claim it perfect when we have not even surpassed that level?" she fired back.

Huh!

The elders sucked in a cold breath when they heard Elder Shen's counter-response. Indeed, they were not in any position to claim a mere Grade 1 was perfect unless they surpassed that level.

Elder Feng was stunned, and he opened his mouth, but the words refused to come out. Staring at her, his rage boiled.

He was a well-known Grade 1 Array Formation Master in the region and the organization. When was the last time he had been questioned like this?

Watching the unsightly expression on his face, the elders knew things were going to spiral out of control if they did not interfere.

"Why don't we take a step back," Elder Kang rose to his feet. "Instead of arguing among ourselves, why don't we confirm if the array diagram is true or not?"

The others nodded in agreement. Indeed, the best solution was to set up the array formation according to the diagram.

"Fine by me." Elder Shen nodded.

Elder Feng clenched his fist and snorted. Since things had developed to this stage, he knew there was no way he was going to turn it around without confirming the array diagram.

Quickly, they arrived behind the association building—a large open field.

"Elder Kang, why don't you set up the formation?" one of the elders suggested.

All the elders agreed, nodding their heads.

"Since you all want me to set up the formation, I will begin right away."

All the necessary array flags needed for setting up the formation were already prepared.

Quickly, Elder Kang began to set up the formation. It was a simple, basic Grade 1 Fog Formation.

Watching as he set up the formation, the elders held their breath, their hearts pounding with anticipation.

If that boy was right, this would change how they looked at Grade 1 array formation—which meant the boy was nothing but a genius, and the association would not hesitate to nurture him.

However, if not, he could forget about being an Array Formation Master for the rest of his life.

Ten minutes later, Elder Kang had completely set up the formation. He raised his head and looked at his fellow elders.

No one spoke. The area was silent for a moment before Elder Shen broke the silence.

"Elder Kang, activate the formation. If it's wrong, I'll apologize to Elder Feng," she said seriously, but inwardly, she knew she couldn't be wrong.

That array diagram was too perfect for there to be a mistake.

"Humph! Since Elder Shen agreed to apologize, Elder Kang, activate the formation," Elder Feng said, filled with confidence.

"Alright." Elder Kang nodded and activated the Fog Formation.

For a moment, nothing happened. But when they thought the formation had failed, fog began to appear, and quickly it spread throughout the array formation.

Watching the thick fog, all the elders had their jaws dropped to the ground.

*Chapter 27: Qualified For The Second Round.*

Inside the grand lobby, all the apprentices were getting restless. The elders were taking too much time than expected.

"Do you know what is going on?" a voice asked.

"How would I know?"

"I believe something must have happened."

"Indeed, something must have happened. Perhaps they discovered one of us cheated."

"What! Who would be so foolish as to cheat? Besides, is it even possible to cheat in such an exam?"

Quickly, various conjectures came from the people as they tried to guess the situation with the elders.

Ma Long had long lost interest in the people surrounding him with flattering smiles. He knew they were all hoping to ride on his growing fame, and he did not mind.

However, the absence of the elders gave him a bad premonition. Something was up. That was certain—but what could it be?

The calm and quiet Yuan Lan also creased her brow. The long absence of the elders unsettled her. She might not show it, but she was worried.

The clan mission was to use this competition to raise the fame of their clan. Thus, they had poured all their resources into her to nurture her in hope she would become first in the competition.

But now...

Creak!

The door was pushed open, and the five elders entered the lobby. Instantly, the noisy lobby descended into perfect silence.

All the apprentices had their eyes locked on them, hoping to understand what was going on. Unfortunately, the elders' faces were expressionless.

Elder Kang stepped forward. "The first round is over, and now we're moving to the second round. If you don't hear your name, you're out of the competition."

Listening to this, all the apprentices wore a solemn expression. This was it! The moment they'd been waiting for.

"Yuan Lan..." Elder Kang began calling the names slowly.

When the apprentices heard her name, they looked at Yuan Lan with various conflicted expressions.

As expected from the genius of the Yuan clan, they thought.

However, Ma Long's face was ugly. How could this be? He should have been the first person to be called. Why did they have to call her name?

Did she perform better than me?

His thoughts were in disarray, but the elders seemed not to care.

"Ma Long..."

Listening to his name, Ma Long forced out a bright smile before he looked at the quiet Yuan Lan. He did not know why her name was called first, but he would not let this happen again.

One by one, names were called. Those that heard their names couldn't help but breathe a sigh of relief.

As time went by, fear crept up in those that did not hear their names. Out of the hundreds of people that sat for the exams, ten percent of them only passed the first round.

"And the last name is Jun Wu," Elder Kang called.

Jun!

The apprentices were shocked.

There was only one Jun in the Soaring Cloud Region—the uncrowned king of the region. Quickly, all the apprentices tried to look for the Jun.

Ma Long widened his eyes. His eyes scanned the crowd, trying to quickly find him.

Yuan Lan was also stunned.

Her clan had worked for the Jun clan several times. Her father would not hesitate to praise how powerful and terrifying the Jun aristocrats were.

In the Mystic Academy, there were many Jun studying there, and each of them commanded power and authority that any average clan could never hope to control.

Apart from that, their talent was terrifying. Each of them was a genius in martial arts.

Watching the others scanning the lobby, Jun Wu remained seated in his seat with an air of indifference. Now that he had passed the first round, he was getting closer to his goal.

While the apprentices were trying to find out who Jun Wu was, Elder Shen stepped forward.

"Follow me," she commanded and led them through another door.

Quickly, the apprentices abandoned their thoughts of finding the Jun descendant as they followed Elder Shen.

Jun Wu also got on his feet and followed them.

Seeing him, all the apprentices were stunned.

What is he doing?

Didn't he fail the first round?

An older apprentice could not control his annoyance and shouted, "What are you doing? Go back. This is for us who passed the first round."

Jun Wu did not bat an eye at the older apprentice and continued walking forward. Seeing this, the middle-aged man was furious.

"Go back now or don't blame me if I call the elders," he threatened.

With his outburst, all the apprentices, including Elder Shen, halted in their tracks and looked at the middle-aged man and Jun Wu.

The apprentices were surprised when they saw Jun Wu, but they chose to remain quiet. They wanted to see how Jun Wu would escape from this trouble.

Trying to sneak in when you failed was a great offence in the association. And they couldn't imagine the punishment.

Ma Long clicked his tongue in disdain. "Allowing such a brat in this level of competition is already bad enough."

The others nodded.



How could a kid who has not even studied the Compendium of Array Formation dare to call himself an Array Formation apprentice?

What gave him the guts?

With a look of ridicule, all the apprentices waited for Elder Shen to lash out at him.

"What is going on here?" Elder Shen asked in a cold, sharp voice.

"Elder Shen, this brat is trying to sneak into the second round," the middle-aged man responded and looked at Jun Wu with a smirk playing on his lips.

Jun Wu stood quiet and confident, as if all the piercing gazes around him were nothing but air.

Elder Shen looked at the middle-aged man in disdain. "At your age, you're still trying to trample on others to satiate your vanity? Who told you he did not pass the first round?" She looked at him from head to toe in disgust.

"This is the reason you can never become an Array Formation Master."

"Let's go. If anyone dares to cause any trouble again, I'll send them packing." Her voice was sharp, leaving no room for doubt.

Huh!

Everyone was stunned. They looked at Jun Wu with wide eyes.

He passed!

How?!

Even the calm and peaceful Yuan Lan could not help but widen her eyes.

Elder Shen did not care about them as she continued to move forward. She pushed open the door at the end of the corridor and then appeared in an open field.

*Chapter 28: Second Round.*

Jun Wu looked at the massive coliseum with slight shock. The coliseum was twice as big as a football stadium.

Seated around the coliseum were people waiting patiently for the next round of the competition.

Looking at them, the audience screamed, calling the two most popular rising stars of Mystic City.

Listening to his name, Ma Long wore a bright, prideful smile and waved to the crowd.

As for Yuan Lan, her expression did not change. She raised her head and looked in the direction of the VIP area.

Although she couldn't see those who were seated inside the VIP rooms, she knew her clan's elders would be there watching her.

With this thought, her determination to come first in this competition grew stronger.

Among the audience, Mao Yun and Zhang Wei sat together, looking at Jun Wu with bright, confident smiles tugging at the corners of their lips.

Against these apprentices, they knew no one could compare to their young master. This competition was just a stage for him to rise to fame.

On the open field, the other four supervising elders had also arrived. They stood on the podium without any expression on their faces.

Elder Shen led the apprentices to the center and left to join the elders on the podium.

Clearing his throat, Elder Feng stepped forward and began to speak. "This is the second round of this year's competition."

When the crowd heard his loud voice, they quieted down and listened attentively. Against such a powerful master, no one wanted to get on his bad side.

"For this round, all the apprentices need to find the weakness in the array formation and break it to get out. Those that fail to break out of the formation before the time runs out will be disqualified."

Elder Feng gazed at the apprentices and commanded,

"Spread out."

Quickly, all the apprentices spread throughout the large field. They looked at each other with burning competitive spirit.

At this stage, no one was ready to lose to anyone.

Jun Wu was far from other apprentices. It was as if no one wanted to get close to him. For Ma Long and Yuan Lan, there were a lot of apprentices around them.

Although they were told to spread out, the distances were not as large as for others.

Meanwhile, inside the VIP room, a group of old people were drinking and talking with light smiles on their faces.

"It looks like those people are trying to ride on the tails of both of them," a voice said with a light chuckle.

"Hahaha. What do you expect?" another voice responded.

"Elder Kai, your disciple should pass this round with ease," an elder said, looking at a proud formation master.

"Of course, no one can compare to him," Elder Kai responded with a prideful smile.

In Mystic City and the surrounding cities, everyone knew him. His mastery in array formation was very high, and only a few could best him.

"Humph! Don't blow your horn too soon," a middle-aged woman snorted. "My clan's young miss is not to be underestimated."

"Hahaha. Could that kid compare to my disciple?" Elder Kai responded, smoothing his long white beard. "Watch and see."

The elders from the Yuan clan looked at the elders from the Array Formation Association without uttering a word.

For years, the two sides had been at odds with each other. The association wanted to control the activities of the Yuan clan, but they refused.

The Array Formation Association wanted to control their dominance of array formation in the Soaring Cloud Region, but the presence of the Yuan clan made it impossible.

But with rising talent emerging every few years, the influence of the Yuan clan was reducing.

To compete for this new talent, the Yuan clan decided to show the world their foundation was as solid as the Array Formation Association.

Back on the field, the apprentices had taken their positions. Each of them wore a solemn expression.

The audience spoke in hushed voices, debating who would be the first person to break the formation and come out.

Mao Yun and Zhang Wei sat calmly, not bothered by the noise all around them.

Suddenly, the plain grass field began to change. The scene around the apprentices shifted, and slowly they could barely see what was around.

"This is an illusory formation. You only have an hour to break it and come out," Elder Feng's voice echoed in the ears of the apprentices.

Inside the illusory formation, all the apprentices were thrown into different illusions. Some found themselves inside a thick forest, while some found themselves in an endless desert region.

For Jun Wu, he found himself inside a maze. To many, this was a dangerous situation. However, a faint smile tugged at the corner of his lips as he stepped forward and moved in a particular direction.

Bang!

*Chapter 29: Passing the Second Round Shocking Everyone.*

The audience was bustling with activity as they guessed who would be the first apprentice to break out of the Illusory Formation.

"Who do you think will be the first person to come out?"

"Do you need to ask? Obviously, it is Ma Long."

"Wrong! It is Yuan Lan."

"Idiot! How can you compare a measly clan to the giant Array Formation Association? Do you know how deep their inheritance is?"

Listening to the crowd's argument, Elder Kai couldn't help but grin happily. Elders from the Array Formation were also happy.

Indeed, how could a mere clan compare to their rich inheritance? Besides, Ma Long was a talented array formation apprentice.

However, the five elders supervising the competition did not share their wild fantasies. Their gazes locked in a particular direction.

'Humph! I don't believe you can steamroll this round.' Elder Feng snorted in his mind.

Although they left a lot of openings in the Illusory Array Formation, those without a rich foundation would not be able to find them and would be lost in the formation forever.

Thus, he believed this round would show Jun Wu was just lucky to pass the first round.

Beside him, Elder Shen knitted her brows. She did not have any thoughts. She was merely curious about Jun Wu.

For him to discover so many flaws in the Fog Array Formation, her instinct told her this would be a walk in the park.

Suddenly, she raised her brows and her jaw dropped.

It was not only her; everyone in the coliseum stopped whatever they were doing and looked at the scene agape.

Elder Feng's lips trembled and his eyes widened.

'This is impossible!'

'How!'

'There must be a problem with the Illusory Formation!' He screamed in his mind and wanted to jump down from the podium to check the Illusory Array Formation.

However, he managed to control the impulse.

Beside him, Elder Kang's jaw dropped for a moment before he recovered and whispered,

"Interesting..."

Jun Wu stepped out of the Illusory Array Formation calmly. Each of his steps was filled with confidence and nobility.

Merely looking at him, the audience thought he was going for a stroll.

He arrived before the podium and raised his head calmly.

"Elders, I'm out?" he said.

"Indeed, you're out," Elder Shen responded with a bright smile. "Congratulations on reaching the last round."

"Thank you," Jun Wu responded humbly.

Elder Shen was pleased with his behaviour. "Stay by the side and wait for the others."

Before he could move to the side, Elder Feng couldn't help but ask, "Tell us, how did you do it? It is impossible to come out of the illusion without spending time deciphering the array formation's weakness."

When the audience heard this, they came out of their shock and nodded. They all wanted to hear how he did it.

He barely spent a minute in the illusion.

How could he come out so quickly?

In the VIP section, Elder Kai's face had lost all the previous pride. He knitted his brows and his gaze locked on Jun Wu.

"Who is that boy?" he couldn't help but ask.

For such a young man to compete in the apprentice array formation, he must be from a well-known clan or have a reputable master.

Yet, he had never heard of him.

"We don't know..." one of the elders responded, shaking his head.

Elders from the Yuan wore ugly expressions looking at Jun Wu. Teachers from the Mystic Academy had indifferent expressions on their faces.

Inwardly, they were interested in such a talent.

As for how he came out from the Illusory Array Formation, who cared?

Just beating Ma Long and Yuan Lan had already proved his superiority compared to them.

When they heard Elder Feng's question, their ears perked. They all wanted to hear how he beat those proclaimed geniuses.

Jun Wu stopped in his tracks and glanced at Elder Feng before he ignored him.

'Who is he to question me?'

When the audience saw Jun Wu's action, they were stunned. They did not expect a mere apprentice to ignore an Array Formation Master.

Elder Feng was furious. How dare he ignore me?

He opened his mouth to berate Jun Wu but was stopped by Elder Shen.

"That's enough!" she said sharply. "You've already made us lose face with that question."

This was the association ground with many Grade 1 Array Masters present. How could a mere apprentice cheat without them knowing?

"Indeed, Elder Feng. You need to control your temper," Elder Kang couldn't help but add.

If they were inside, he wouldn't have cared, but they were in the open where everyone was looking at them.

Asking such a question was already questioning the fairness of the competition.

Even though other elders did not speak, they all shared the same sentiment with Elder Kang and Elder Shen.

Everyone knew Elder Feng was close to Elder Kai, but they could not let him tarnish the image of the Array Formation.

Elder Feng realized this and gritted his teeth without speaking. He had only asked at the spur of the moment without thinking too much about it.

Besides, he did not believe a mere apprentice would not answer him. But he was wrong.

Jun Wu was unlike any apprentice.

Looking at the calm elders, the audience was stunned, and the quiet stadium came to life.

"Do you see?"

"Who is he to ignore the elder?"

"How would I know? But I like his swag..."

"Hahaha. We were all wrong. Who would have expected there to be a strong dark horse in this competition?"

"Indeed, a strong dark horse that beat the two proclaimed geniuses."

"Haha. I can't wait to see Ma Long and Yuan Lan's faces when they come and realize they were not the first."

Listening to the comments flying around them, Mao Yun and Zhang Wei were basking in glory, grinning from ear to ear as if they were the ones that just passed the second round.

*Chapter 30: Third Round - The Last Round.*

Half an hour later, the Illusory Array Formation trembled, catching everyone's attention.

Instantly, everyone in the arena fixed their gaze on the formation, their faces filled with curiosity and anticipation.

An electric silence hung in the air.

Jun Wu shifted his gaze to the formation. He was also curious; he wanted to see the next person that would come out.

From the Illusory Array Formation, a silhouette stumbled out, drenched in cold sweat. Her chest rose and fell, but the bright smile on her face spoke volumes of her emotion.

"Finally, I'm out," Yuan Lan muttered in satisfaction and pride.

She adjusted her robe, straightened her back, and raised her head to look at the now quiet audience.

Although she tried to hide her happiness, it was still obvious on her face. With chin raised, she turned and looked at the five elders supervising the competition.

She approached them and said calmly, "Elders, I'm out."

"Congratulations. You've passed the second round. You're the second apprentice to pass," Elder Shen announced, giving her a slight nod of encouragement.

"Go to that side," she added.

She froze, unable to believe her ears. She was the second person!

How!

She believed she was quite fast in finding the weakness of the Illusory Array Formation and breaking it.

To her, no one could beat her speed.

But now... she learned she was in second place.

Her thoughts were in disarray, and she tried to mask it with calmness and indifference. However, when her eyes locked on the lone figure at the side—

Her jaw dropped slightly.



"Y-You!" she exclaimed subconsciously.

How could it be him?

The only person that could beat her in coming out could only be Ma Long, but she was proven wrong. It was the boy that was a lot younger than her.

How could this be?

Her mask of calmness and indifference faltered. The pride of the Yuan clan's youngest Array Formation Apprentice to become a master held no value to her any longer.

She arrived beside Jun Wu and looked at him intently. She wanted to question how he broke the Illusory Array Formation faster than her.

But she controlled the impulse.

She took a deep breath to control her erratic emotions, returning to her calm and indifferent self as she focused her attention on the Illusory Array Formation.

'At least, I came second,' she thought, regaining a bit of her confidence.

The thought of her rival coming, only to find out two people had beaten him, made her forget her current situation.

Twenty minutes later, another person came out. It was a middle-aged man. His presence did not raise any stir.

He joined Jun Wu and Yuan Lan with an air of confidence.

With the third person coming, the others followed after. Each of them was shocked when they saw Jun Wu was already out.

To them, they did not believe he would pass the second round. But here he was.

Now, no one dared to look down on him.

With only a few minutes left for the second round to be over, the noise in the arena grew with each passing second.

Inside the VIP section, Elder Kai wore a deep frown on his face. His fist was clenched under his robe.

He had bragged and looked down on others, praising his Ma Long. Yet, he was still stuck in the Illusory Array Formation.

This was not even a complete Illusory Array Formation. For the competition, the association had left many flaws in the array formation for others to use.

As long as one had a solid foundation in Array Formation, it wouldn't be difficult for them to pass this round.

To him, Ma Long would pass this round with ease.

Yet, reality was different from his thoughts.

"Hahaha. Elder Kai, I guess your so-called talented disciple will fail this round," one of the elders of the Yuan clan mocked.

"Humph! That's not for you to say," Elder Kai snorted but had nothing to add.

'This bastard! What's he doing in there!' His frown deepened.

But the Yuan clan would not miss the chance to ridicule him.

"I won't blame that boy if he failed this round. It's not his fault but the fault of his master. I guess he was too busy caring about his face instead of teaching him."

"Y-You!" Elder Kai snapped, pointing his finger at the Yuan clan elders, his eyes bloodshot.

"What! There are only a few minutes left. I guess you won't mind becoming Mystic's laughingstock when your disciple fails," she added, not caring about Elder Kai's deadly glares.

Every word pierced Elder Kai's heart. He trembled on the brink of fainting when he heard a loud yell.

"He's out!"

Hmm?!

Quickly, he turned and looked at the Illusory Array Formation and saw Ma Long staggering out of the formation.

He looked exhausted and drenched in sweat.

Looking at him, Elder Kai released the pent-up breath that he did not know he was holding.

'At least he is out.' He sighed in relief.

A sneer crept up his face as he gave the Yuan clan a sharp glare before he returned to his seat.

Although this round, he lost all face, there was still the last round. As long as his disciple passed the last round and beat everyone—

He would regain his lost dignity.

On the field, Ma Long had lost all his previous haughtiness. With slumped shoulders, he joined the group that passed the second round.

When he saw Jun Wu, his eyes widened in disbelief, but he kept his thoughts to himself.

Time up.

The Illusory Array Formation was switched off and those still inside found themselves back on the field. For a moment, they were confused, but slowly they realized what happened.

They had failed the test.

Elder Feng stepped forward and announced,

"For those that failed to come out, please leave. You're out of the competition." He paused and looked at the group that passed the second round.

"Now, for the third round, the final round of this year's competition, please return to the field."

"This round, we're going to determine the winner and best apprentice that is close to becoming a Grade 1 Array Master in the Soaring Cloud Region."