

Immortality 1231

Chapter 1231: Annihilation (2)

The Formation is correct.

He checked the shape of the Armor again.

Master Gu is a Third Grade Artifact Refiner, with rich experience and skilled techniques, and this external armor was also flawlessly made.

The Formation had no issues, and neither did the armor.

But this Five Elements Fire Source Armor did not activate.

His Spiritual Power was not augmented, and the power of the Fireball Technique was also not enhanced.

Mo Hua was puzzled in his heart.

Where exactly did the problem lie?

He recited the entire structure of the Spiritual Artifact armor in his mind and then sorted out the path of Spiritual Power circulation within the entire Formation in his mind; he did not find a single error.

Mo Hua racked his brain in meditation but couldn't think of anything; he simply lay on the ground, with his legs crossed, leisurely pondering.

This Five Elements Source Armor was refined according to the ordinary structure of a Spiritual Artifact.

But ordinary Spiritual Artifacts correspond to ordinary Formations.

The Ultimate Formation is definitely different.

Or at least, the Five Elements Ultimate Formation is different.

"How did I draw the Five Elements Source Formation before?"

"Why did it work when drawn on the ground, but not when drawn on the Armor?"

Mo Hua remembered a little about the process of Drawing Ground into Formation and generating the Five Elements Source Formation.

After comparing the two, he had some guesses in his heart.

Drawing Ground into Formation and the Five Elements Source Armor, apart from the "Formation media" acting as a carrier being different, the only difference lay in the circulation of the Formation's power.

Drawing Ground into Formation, the Five Element Ultimate Formation is driven by Divine Thought, with Divine Thought and Spiritual Power blending and circulating.

Within the Five Elements Source Armor, the Five Elements Ultimate Formation is purely driven by Spiritual Power, with only the circulation of Spiritual Power and lacking the integration of Divine Thought.

Mo Hua took note of this.

The essence of the Five Elements Source Formation lies in "Divine Thought conversion" through the Formation to augment the Five Elements Spiritual Power.

The part of Spiritual Power that is augmented doesn't appear from nowhere, but is converted from "Telekinesis".

Upon this realization, Mo Hua suddenly felt a shiver in his heart.

Power conversion to augment Spiritual Power...

The logical reasoning behind the Five Elements Source Formation bears some similarity to that of the Divine Formation.

Both contain the "Divine Thought conversion" law, but the final conversion goals differ.

The Five Elements Source Formation converts into augmented Spiritual Power.

Whereas the Divine Tao Array converts into an "augmented" Divine Thought.

Mo Hua's eyes lit up, as if suddenly enlightened, feeling that he might have discovered something very important.

But when he tried to think through it, he suddenly couldn't articulate exactly what he understood.

Perhaps it's because his current level of Cultivation is still low, his experience still insufficient, so there was only a bit of inspiration, without a profound understanding...

Mo Hua slowly nodded his head.

Since he couldn't figure it out for the time being, he didn't dwell on it, and instead focused his attention back on the Five Elements Source Armor.

Understanding the principle is one thing, but solving it in practice is quite troublesome.

This involves the fundamental rules of power circulation within the Spiritual Artifact Formation and the Formation media.

After activation of a Formation, it is controlled by Divine Sense.

After a Spiritual Artifact is activated, it operates on its own.

Simple Formations, like those Mo Hua drew before, those Earth Fire Formations without Nine Patterns or ranking, are simple to activate.

Generally speaking, it's fine to use Spiritual Power to activate them.

Crush Broken Spirit Stones, and let the Spiritual Power flow into the Formation Patterns, and the Formation will naturally circulate.

But this is when the Pattern count is low, and the structure is simple.

The further one goes in a Formation, the more numerous the Patterns, the more complex the structure, and the more complete the functionalities.

Like a Compound Formation, Large Formation, or a Single Formation of Second Grade or above.

These Formations will embed Formation Eyes in advance, powered by Spirit Stones to provide Spiritual Power.

And they contain complex Formation Pivot structures, to be opened and controlled by Divine Sense, capable of controlling the opening and shutting of Spiritual Power, its direction, strength, inhibition, and so on.

To control a Formation by Divine Thought requires a certain foundation in Formations, as well as a relatively ample Divine Sense.

Spiritual Artifacts, however, are different.

Spiritual Artifacts are meant for all Cultivators, and so the thresholds can't be too high.

Besides, using them can't be too complex.

Spiritual Artifacts can be used as long as there is Spiritual Power.

The Formation inside a Spiritual Artifact, once supplied with Spiritual Power, will operate on its own, without the need for additional Divine Sense control.

But the problem lies in the fact that the Five Elements Source Formation requires "Divine Thought conversion".

Drawing Ground into Formation is a Formation logic that can be controlled by Divine Sense.

With Divine Sense control, Divine Thought can be infused, allowing for the conversion of Spiritual Power.

But the Five Elements Source Armor is a Spiritual Artifact.

Its formation inside cannot be controlled by Divine Sense; naturally, it cannot be infused with Divine Thought, cannot "convert", cannot strengthen the Five Elements, and cannot augment Spiritual Power.

Mo Hua had a bit of a headache.

Indeed, what seems like a simple issue can present a host of unexpected problems once it involves practical applications.

This makes the Five Elements Source Armor unlike ordinary Spiritual Artifacts that have an "enclosed Formation" structure.

The Formation within the Five Elements Source Armor must be "Open Source".

Divine Sense can intervene, Divine Thought can convert, and then Spiritual Power can be augmented.

But such a design certainly does not meet the standards of general Spiritual Artifacts; it's more like a special "Formation Artifact" that sits between "Spiritual Artifact" and "Formation media".

The situation became more complicated...

But this difficulty doesn't even count as a setback.

Mo Hua was well-prepared mentally and naturally did not feel discouraged, but rather, his ambition soared.

After all, once this "Five Elements Source Armor" is researched and developed, it can break free from the confines of location and the constraints of Formation drawings, elevating the power of Taoist Skill significantly.

With the amplification of Five Elements Source Armor, even if one's Cultivation is slightly weaker, with the right strategy, one can still overcome opponents of higher levels.

Mo Hua was full of anticipation.

"Let's take it step by step..."

Mo Hua thought it over and could only go back to start from the Refining Diagram of the Five Elements Source Armor, attempting to "Open Source" the Formation that was encased within the Spiritual Artifact, restructuring the Formation design.

Chapter 1232: Extermination (3)

Meanwhile, he was also concerned about the situation in Qingping City.

He really wanted to send a message to Uncle Gu to inquire about the situation.

But he knew that for a matter as important as encircling and suppressing Demon Cultivators, Uncle Gu's Letter Token would definitely be "sealed."

Even if he asked, it was impossible for him to get a reply.

Anyway, he would know the outcome in two days.

Mo Hua patiently continued to study the Five Elements Source Armor, and not even two days had passed when Cheng Mo and the others returned.

Mo Hua counted the number of people and found that there were exactly fifty, neither more nor less, which finally put his mind at ease.

Cheng Mo and the others all had some injuries, but their expressions were excited beyond description.

"Eleven sustained minor injuries, two broke their arms, and one got stabbed with a sword, but none of them are in critical condition,"

"After taking Pills and resting a bit, they'll be mostly recovered in a few days,"

Cheng Mo reported back to Mo Hua.

Mo Hua nodded in satisfaction, then asked further:

"What about those Demon Cultivators?"

Cheng Mo said: "Those Demon Cultivators, the dead are dead, the captured are captured, but since there were quite a few of them, some managed to escape in a life-and-death struggle."

"Do you know which family they intended to annihilate?"

Cheng Mo shook his head, "I don't know, as soon as they appeared, Supervisor Gu ordered us to take action, and the caught Demon Cultivators have been taken to the Taoist Court for strict interrogation."

"Supervisor Gu's expression was very serious, I didn't dare to ask too much..."

Mo Hua nodded and said: "Alright then."

He looked over everyone and then instructed: "Keep this matter to yourselves, otherwise it might invite trouble."

Everyone nodded in agreement.

Cheng Mo also said: "Supervisor Gu gave the same instruction."

Then Mo Hua let everyone go to rest, "After the Taoist Court finishes their count, the Merit Points should be credited to your accounts."

The disciples all smiled joyously, bowing and saying:

"Thank you, Junior Brother!"

...

Mo Hua returned to the Disciple's Residence and sent another message to Gu Changhuai:

"Uncle Gu, do you know which family the Demon Cultivators intended to exterminate?"

After waiting for a long time, Gu Changhuai did not reply.

It seems like Uncle Gu is quite busy...

Mo Hua said silently in his heart.

The next day, Gu Changhuai still didn't reply.

Mo Hua was somewhat puzzled.

On the third day, Gu Changhuai replied: "A family was exterminated."

Mo Hua was shocked, "What?"

Gu Changhuai sighed deeply, "Someone... a family has been wiped out."

Mo Hua's pupils shrank, "Wasn't Qingping City defended? It's not Qingping City?"

Gu Changhuai said: "It is..."

He fell silent for a moment, then slowly explained to Mo Hua: "These Demon Cultivators... they actually split into two groups and struck simultaneously, Qingping City was just one of the targets."

"We discovered their plot in Qingping City and gathered forces to thwart their plans, but we overlooked the other location..."

Mo Hua's gaze became grave, "What was the other location?"

Gu Changhuai said: "On the banks of Mistwater River, Yu Family's Water Fortress."

"Yu Family's Water Fortress?" Mo Hua was somewhat confused.

Gu Changhuai nodded, "That's right, it's a secluded fortress located on a remote island surrounded by water near the Mistwater River. The residents are Fish Cultivators, and they are relatively isolated, seldom interacting with outsiders."

"The night before last, the entire Mistwater stronghold was massacred by Demon Cultivators..."

"But at first, no one knew. A day later, a Fish Cultivator rowing by nearby smelled the stench of decay and a strong scent of blood. Upon drawing closer and taking a look, he then saw that the river outside the stronghold was dyed bright red with blood. The Fish Cultivators of the entire stronghold were killed to the last one, leaving no survivors..."

Gu Changhuai sighed.

Mo Hua felt a chill in his heart and asked, "Do you know who did it?"

Even if the culprits were Demon Cultivators from outside, they should at least have some identifiable traits.

Gu Changhuai said, "We're still investigating. There should be some news in the next few days, but without any eyewitnesses, it will probably be very hard to trace."

"What about the Demon Cultivators caught in Qingping City?" Mo Hua asked.

"Although there were many Demon Cultivators, most of them were just underlings. We've interrogated them under torture, but haven't extracted any useful clues."

Mo Hua frowned.

Gu Changhuai's expression was grim, but after thinking for a moment, he still said, "You should not concern yourself with these matters. I'll handle the investigation; you just focus on your cultivation."

After that, Gu Changhuai no longer paid attention to Mo Hua.

However, Mo Hua's mood became increasingly heavy.

He had a strong premonition that the footsteps of the Great Wilderness Evil God seemed to be drawing closer and the secret plots were accelerating...

But what, exactly, were His plots?

Resurrection?

How to resurrect?

Mo Hua's brows furrowed tighter and tighter.

And now that the Yu Family's Mistwater stronghold had been annihilated, did it mean that on the banks of Mistwater River, in some hidden, unknown place, another altar had been built?

What was the background of these Demon Cultivators who slaughtered the Yu Family's Mistwater stronghold?

And who exactly was leading them?

Mo Hua let out a long sigh.

Unfortunately, he couldn't leave his residence; even if he wanted to investigate, he wouldn't be able to.

Mo Hua tried to suppress the myriad thoughts in his mind, planning to draw a few Formations to calm his emotions.

But as he was drawing, Mo Hua suddenly felt a pang in his heart.

Then, as though possessed, he took out a Jade Slip from his Storage Bag.

This Jade Slip contained the list from Boss Jiang.

Now, the Sin Cultivators on the list were either dead, had fled, or had been captured. Most of the names had already faded away.

Even Fire Buddha's name, a name ablaze with fierce fires and tainted with bloody karma, had also dimmed considerably.

This list was useless now.

But Mo Hua always felt that there was some kind of karmic debt that remained unsettled in the universe.

Furthermore, just now, it seemed as though some karmic bond had undergone a change...

What could it be?

Mo Hua stared at the list for a long time, but after looking it over, he still could not find any clues.

Just as Mo Hua was about to set the list aside, he suddenly felt a shock in his heart, and then his expression became slightly focused.

His eyes deepened, intertwining the patterns of Heavenly secret, the tortuous paths of Gui Tao, and the pale gold of Divine Way.

Looking in this way, indeed, there were changes on the Jade Slip.

The name of Fire Buddha completely dimmed.

Then before his eyes, everything blurred, and the karmic cycles shifted.

The sea of fire receded, and tides surged violently.

The tides were first blue, then as if irrigated by fresh blood, they turned half blue, half red, resembling a sea of blood.

The sea of blood extinguished the sea of fire.

Within the Jade Slip, the three characters of Fire Buddha were erased, gradually revealing another ominous name entwined with the karma of bloody waters:

Water Yama.

Chapter 1233: Secondary Thunder Flow

Water Yama?!

Mo Hua felt a chill in his heart, followed by a frown.

"Who is Water Yama?"

He had been mixing in the Qianxue State Boundary and nearby Immortal Cities for over two years now, capturing a good number of Sin Cultivators and Evil Cultivators, and dealing with quite a few Demon Cultivators.

He knew secrets far beyond what an average cultivator would know.

But he had never heard the moniker "Water Yama."

Mo Hua looked down again.

The name "Fire Buddha" on the list had already faded, completely erased.

Replaced by "Water Yama."

This meant... Fire Buddha was dead, so had the Evil God promoted another Demon Head to lead the massacre of the Tu Family?

This Water Yama, since he could replace Fire Buddha, does it mean that his power, even if not as strong as Fire Buddha's, would not be too far off?

Mo Hua's brows knitted tightly together, his mood somber, then he couldn't help but sneer inwardly.

If this Water Yama is taken down too, won't they just keep coming one after another, like Gold Arhat, Wood Yaksha, Earth Kṣitigarbha or something...

It never ends...

Mo Hua shook his head, feeling a headache, and even more puzzled, he then thought:

What could be the origin of this Water Yama?

A Sin Cultivator wanted by the Daoist Court? Or a Demon Cultivator with heinous crimes?

If he is a minion chosen by the Evil God, does he bear an inheritance capable of rivalling Forbidden Techniques on his person?

Could there be more clues related to the Evil God?

Unable to figure it out, Mo Hua could only ask others.

During his leisure time, Mo Hua used a Letter Token to secretly ask Gu Changhuai: "Uncle Gu, do you know the name 'Water Yama'?"

Gu Changhuai was clearly taken aback, "Water Yama?"

"Yes."

After musing for a while, Gu Changhuai sent a message back: "I've never heard of it."

Mo Hua was stunned and somewhat surprised.

Even Uncle Gu, the Supervisor, had never heard of it...

Could it be that this Water Yama has just started out?

Gu Changhuai: "Why do you ask about this name?"

Before Mo Hua could answer, Gu Changhuai continued: "Is it related to the massacre of the Yu Family's water fortress?"

Mo Hua nodded slightly.

As expected of a Dao Court Canon, Uncle Gu's mind is really sharp.

As long as it's not about Formations, Uncle Gu is quite intelligent.

"Yes," Mo Hua said.

Gu Changhuai frowned, puzzled: "How do you know this name?"

That's a long story.

And it's complicated with many things involved, not convenient to explain, Mo Hua vaguely responded:

"I obtained a Letter Token, the token mentioned it..."

Gu Changhuai frowned.

Another Letter Token?

The Letter Token can't be that omnipotent, can it? Able to dig up any secret.

It's not like Demon Cultivators are that foolish to write everything in a Letter Token...

He felt that Mo Hua was definitely keeping something from him.

But with the youngster full of tricks, if he didn't want to say, one couldn't get it out of him.

"Hmm..." Gu Changhuai said indifferently, "Does your Letter Token... contain any other clues?"

"No more," Mo Hua said, "Only this name."

Gu Changhuai pondered briefly, then replied: "Alright, I've made a note of it, I'll find someone to look into it when I have time."

"Mm-hmm." Mo Hua nodded.

"By the way, Uncle Gu," Mo Hua suddenly remembered something and asked: "Have you been to Yu Family's water fortress? Are there any other clues there?"

Gu Changhuai was silent for a long time, and after a moment, his expression became serious and he slowly sent a message back:

"Yu Family's water fortress... It was tragic."

"I visited once, the whole fortress was blood-red, with blood everywhere, the soil stained red, but the corpses were all gone, only some flesh and bone fragments remained on the scene..."

"On the ground, you could see the traces of kneeling in blood, the marks of rolling heads, and the remnants of chains..."

"Judging from the only traces left, the Fish Cultivators of the water fortress seemed to have been locked with iron chains, kneeling on the ground, and beheaded to death."

"It's like..."

Gu Changhuai paused for a moment, then used an apt metaphor, "Like criminals being judged and beheaded at the execution ground..."

Mo Hua's expression turned stern.

Judgement... Beheading...

This "Water Yama" seems to have some peculiar predilections.

Or is there some other profound meaning behind this method of annihilating a clan?

Mo Hua very much wanted to visit the massacred Yu Family's water fortress to see if there were any clues in the cause and effect, but he could not defy Elder Master Xun's orders.

Knowing this, Gu Changhuai said:

"Regarding the Yu Family water fortress and this Water Yama, I will look into it when I return. You stay put in the Sect. If there are any developments, I'll let you know."

He actually didn't want to tell Mo Hua.

But if he didn't, Mo Hua would certainly try to find out in any possible way. Rather than that, it would be better to tell him himself, to prevent Mo Hua from wasting time, hindering his Cultivation, or due to excessive curiosity, endangering himself.

The conversation ended here.

Gu Changhuai went back to his affairs.

In the following days, while Mo Hua cultivated and studied in the Sect, every now and then he paid attention to any movement from the Daoist Court side.

But afterward, it was all calm.

Nothing happened.

The number of appearances by the group of Demon Cultivators also became less frequent.

Water Yama too vanished without a trace.

As for the case of the Yu Family water fortress, although the Daoist Court was investigating, there were still no developments.

The remote water fortress was not an Immortal City after all.

The cultivators inside were all poor Fish Cultivators, relatively isolated on normal days and not having much interaction with the outside world.

After the annihilation, to avoid startling the snake in the grass, the Daoist Court temporarily sealed the news.

Therefore, this calamity only caused a temporary commotion around Mistwater River, and then gradually subsided to become just a topic of strange tales over tea and dinner.

The Yu Family water fortress was gone, the nearby Fish Cultivators still struggled for their livelihoods.

The Daoist Court continued to investigate cases but to no avail.

Beyond Mistwater River, the various Immortal Cities went on as usual, and the large and small families continued to live their luxurious lives.

Chapter 1234: Secondary Thunder Flow (2)

Mo Hua's emotions were somewhat complex.

For a Loose Cultivator in such an out-of-the-way place, lowly as duckweed in the water, whether they flourished or perished, lived or died, in reality, no one cared.

Some more time passed, and this incident didn't even stir much of a ripple before it seemed to be gradually forgotten by people.

But Mo Hua knew, the shadow was spreading little by little...

The bloody karmic ties had thickened yet another shade.

The Great Wilderness Evil God, must have established yet another Taoist Field.

Mo Hua sighed deeply.

But for now, he was still powerless.

All he could do was what he ought to do, to diligently cultivate and strive to break through to the Middle Stage of Foundation Establishment soon.

In the unseen darkness, a storm was brewing.

Whether it was cultivation, Divine Sense, or Formation, being stronger by even the slightest bit counted.

Besides that, the study and application of Formations and Spiritual Artifacts, especially the refining of the Five Elements Source Armor which had amplifying power, was also of paramount importance.

During his rest days, Mo Hua once again took the time to visit the Gu Family.

He wanted to discuss with Master Gu the method of connecting Divine Sense to control the "Open Source" of the Five Elements Source Armor.

Master Gu looked astonished, then his eyebrows furrowed as tight as twists of dough.

"Such Armor... is unheard of, Gushan Refining Workshop has never refined such a thing."

"The Young Master's ideas are truly extraordinary..."

It was hard to tell if this comment was a compliment or not.

Mo Hua took a sip of tea, sorted through his thoughts and slowly said:

"Because the Formation this time is quite special, we can't use the standard Artifact Refining norms; we need to modify the structure so that the Formation within the Spiritual Artifact can be controlled by a Cultivator's Divine Sense..."

Master Gu pondered carefully and then said:

"The Formation inside the Armor can be controlled by a Cultivator's Divine Sense... that means the Cultivator who can use Divine Sense to control the Formation is not limitable."

"Once the Armor's Formation is 'Open Source,' all other Cultivators, friend or foe, could use their Divine Sense to control the Armor's Formation..."

"That's a massive disadvantage."

"In a life-or-death battle, if another Cultivator with powerful Divine Sense forcibly intrudes into this Armor and manipulates the Formation to close, reverse, or even self-destruct, it equates to handing the enemy a weapon, cutting off one's own abilities..."

Mo Hua furrowed his brows.

It indeed seemed to be the case...

After thinking for a moment, his eyes brightened as he shook his head and said:

"No matter. It's not a problem."

The Formation on the Five Elements Source Armor is the Five Elements Source Formation.

It's an Ultimate Formation; even if it's 'Open Source,' there are hardly any who could master it, let alone compete with oneself for control rights of Divine Thought.

Seeing Mo Hua's confident appearance, Master Gu slowly nodded in agreement.

He was only responsible for giving advice and references; ultimately, it was up to Mo Hua to decide how to proceed.

"So, this kind of Armor, it stands between 'Spiritual Artifact' and 'Formation media,' incorporating both, it serves as a Spiritual Artifact and also as Formation media..."

Master Gu quickly understood as well.

"Yes." Mo Hua nodded and said.

"Alright," Master Gu mused, "then I'll go back and think about it and do more trials..."

"However, this Armor is of a special design, without precedent, it might take time and effort to refine; it will probably take at least half a month to produce another set to see the effect..."

"No worries," Mo Hua smiled and said, "I appreciate your hard work, Master Gu."

"Young Master, you're too kind. This is what I should do."

Master Gu smiled and then cordially invited, "By the way, Crane Pavilion in Qingzhou City has received some new top-quality Spiritual Fish, would Young Master like to give it a try?"

"Spiritual Fish?"

Mo Hua was somewhat tired of eating fish.

Especially after eating the fish-headed River God in a nightmare, as well as a myriad of fishy Evil Spirits, now hearing the word "fish," he felt quite full.

But it's difficult to decline Master Gu's kind offer.

Not wanting to spoil Master Gu's kind intention, Mo Hua agreed:

"Sure, sure."

Inside the Crane Pavilion, the environment was elegant.

The table held several Spiritual Fish; they were shaped like corals, tasted exquisite, served in golden broth, fresh, fragrant, and beautiful.

Mo Hua enjoyed the meal with satisfaction.

But while eating, Mo Hua's thoughts suddenly turned to the Fish Cultivators of the small fishing village.

It occurred to him that these fish might have been caught by those Fish Cultivators amidst stormy waters, risking their lives, with great difficulty and effort.

In Mo Hua's mouth, the taste suddenly became bland.

He flipped through the menu again.

In Crane Pavilion, the fish were extremely expensive.

But for the Fish Cultivators who toiled to catch them, the Spirit Stones they earned were merely enough to scrape by.

After pondering for a moment, Mo Hua mused:

"I wonder if there is a way to help those Fish Cultivators earn more Spirit Stones..."

After the fish meal, Mo Hua bade farewell to Master Gu.

Master Gu was going back to Gushan Refining Workshop to study the refinement of the "Open Source" Five Elements Source Armor.

Mo Hua, on the other hand, returned to the Gu Family.

He had to greet Aunt Wan first and then return to the Sect.

But when he arrived at the Gu Family, Wenren Wan was entertaining guests—it seemed to be relatives from the Wenren Family, bringing some items for Wenren Wan.

Mo Hua sat in the main hall drinking tea, waiting quietly for a while.

In less than 30 minutes, Wenren Wan appeared at the door, waving mysteriously at Mo Hua.

Mo Hua was startled, "Aunt Wan?"

Wenren Wan beckoned again, her eyes smiling, whispering softly: "Come here, I have a few things for you."

Mo Hua was puzzled, put down the teacup, and followed Wenren Wan to a side room.

There were Formation Patterns isolating eavesdropping arranged around the room.

Wenren Wan took out a Storage Bag, handed it to Mo Hua stealthily, and gently cautioned:

"Keep this safe, don't let anyone find out."

Mo Hua was stunned, slowly opened the Storage Bag, probed with his Divine Sense, and his mouth fell open in astonishment.

So many Formation Diagrams...

And most were complete sets, encompassing all from the initial Formation Patterns to First Grade, and even High-level Second Grade complete Formations.

Mo Hua exclaimed in shock, "Aunt Wan, this is...?"

Chapter 1235: Secondary Thunder Flow (3)

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"I know you enjoy studying Formation..." Wenren Wan smiled, "These are some Formation Books and Formation Diagrams I asked Uncle Shangguan to get for you from the Shangguan Family. There are also some treasured by the Wenren Family that are now being given to you. Keep them, and take a look when you have time."

Mo Hua exclaimed in surprise, "This is too precious..."

Wenren Wan shook her head, "You deserve it."

Mo Hua wanted to refuse.

Wenren Wan then blinked, "Since you've called me 'Aunt Wan,' take what I give you."

"But," Mo Hua hesitated, "what about the Shangguan Family and the Wenren Family..."

Wenren Wan said, "Don't worry, these Formation methods were given to you through your Uncle Shangguan and me. No one will cause trouble for you."

"Of course, don't mention it to others unnecessarily."

"Okay!" No longer being pretentious, Mo Hua then laughed crisply, "Thank you, Aunt Wan!"

Wenren Wan's eyebrows curved like a crescent moon, and she gently smiled, "See if these Formation Diagrams suit your taste."

"Mhm!"

Mo Hua began to carefully examine the Formation Diagrams.

The scope of these Formation Diagrams was very broad.

Most of them were still based on the Five Elements and Eight Trigrams method.

The Five Elements Bagua Formation Method is the most universally used and broadly applied in the Cultivation World, and is almost the foundational Formation Method that all Formation Masters must learn.

However, the Five Elements Bagua Formation traditions of the Shangguan Family and Wenren Family differ slightly from those of the Taixu Gate.

Taixu Gate is a Sect that focuses on imparting Dao and teaching, using "heritage teaching" as its foundation for Formations.

The Shangguan Family runs Tao Cultivation enterprises, with "industrial practicality" as its main focus for Formations.

The Wenren Family seems to have a deeper origin, with "Formation principle research" as their primary pursuit.

Each family has its strengths, which can be referenced to complement each other.

Mo Hua looked delighted.

Seeing Mo Hua pleased, Wenren Wan also couldn't help but smile a little.

As Mo Hua continued flipping through, flipping and flipping, suddenly he paused, and then his eyes lit up.

Yuan Magnetic Formation!

Beyond the Five Elements Bagua Formation, this collection even included Yuan Magnetic Formations!

The first was a "Fixed Magnetic Pattern Collection Record" with the Shangguan Family's Formation Pavilion seal on it.

Following that was a "Fixed Magnetic Pattern Supplement Record," with the cover stamped with the Wenren Family's Formation Pavilion seal.

After that, there were several High-level Second Grade Yuan Magnetic Formations.

These Formations were ones Mo Hua had never even heard of.

They were Yuan Magnetic Formations that were not part of Taixu Gate's traditions.

Mo Hua was extremely shocked.

"Aunt Wan, this is..."

Wenren Wan smiled, "I knew you were closer with Changhuai, so I asked him what Formations you usually study."

"But Changhuai is completely focused on the affairs of the Taoist Court and isn't very proficient in Formations, so he couldn't really explain. It took a lot of effort to get it out of him, and he only said that you seem very interested in Yuan Magnetic Formations, so I gathered these Magnetic Pattern annotations and Yuan Magnetic Array Maps for you..."

Then Wenren Wan's brow furrowed slightly, "However, the Yuan Magnetic Formations are quite obscure, and both the Shangguan Family and Wenren Family have only recorded a few of them.

There aren't many Disciples willing to study them either. I'm not sure if these Formation Diagrams are enough..."

"They're more than enough!" Mo Hua nodded repeatedly, then gratefully said with a beaming smile, "Thank you, Aunt Wan!"

Seeing that Mo Hua truly appreciated them, Wenren Wan also felt gratified in her heart.

Mo Hua held these Formation Diagrams in his hands, treasuring them like precious gems, his heart bursting with joy.

Aunt Wan is truly a great kindness from heaven!

Clutching the Formation Diagrams, Mo Hua couldn't let go, unable to restrain himself from flipping through them over and over again, suddenly, his expression froze.

He noticed that one of the diagrams was a bit peculiar.

It seemed the number of Formation Patterns... were a little too many?

Mo Hua swept over them with his Divine Sense and deliberately counted again.

One, two, three... a total of twenty patterns.

Twenty Patterns?

Mo Hua paused, feeling something was amiss, then suddenly it dawned on him, and his eyes widened in disbelief.

Second Grade... twenty patterns?!

Ultimate Formation?!

He immediately took out that particular diagram and saw several ancient and strange seal characters written on it:

Second-born Thunder Stream Formation.

Mo Hua drew a sharp breath and looked towards Wenren Wan, somewhat incredulous:

"Aunt Wan, this..."

Wenren Wan saw his reaction, somewhat puzzled, and looked down before nodding and saying:

"This is a Formation Method treasured by the Shangguan Family. I had Uncle Shangguan bring it out for you. It is said that after the Shangguan Family made great achievements, they were rewarded by the Taoist Court and obtained the inheritance of this Formation from the Heaven Shu Pavilion. However, it is too difficult and its use is unknown, so nobody has learned it, and over time, it was just put away and forgotten..."

"Is this Formation Method very valuable?" Wenren Wan asked Mo Hua with curiosity.

Mo Hua nodded, his voice trembling slightly: "It's extremely valuable, extremely valuable!"

Even more valuable than Aunt Wan could imagine...

This is the Ultimate Formation of the Yuan Magnetic Method that is closest to the original essence of Secondary Thunder Pattern!

Even a Formation Master, if not well-versed in the Yuan Magnetic Method, or is well-versed but has never glimpsed the original nature of the Yuan Magnet and is ignorant of the Secondary Thunder Pattern, would simply fail to comprehend the meaning of "Second-born Thunder Stream Formation."

Second-born Thunder Flow Ultimate Formation!

Mo Hua was emotionally shaken and could not calm down for a long time.

Wenren Wan, on the other hand, had not thought so much; seeing Mo Hua's astounded expression and how he couldn't take his eyes off the Formation Diagram, she knew this Formation meant a lot to Mo Hua and was thus satisfied.

"Keep it well, and take your time to study it back at the Sect." Wenren Wan said with a gentle smile.

"Yes!"

Mo Hua immediately stuffed the Formation Diagrams into his Storage Bag and then tucked the Storage Bag into his own bosom.

If it wasn't for Aunt Wan being present, he would have wanted to immediately secure this Ultimate Formation Diagram in the Storage Ring.

Only in the Storage Ring would it be absolutely safe.

After seeing Mo Hua had properly stored all the Formation Diagrams, Wenren Wan finally felt relieved and said:

"It's getting late, let's head back to the Sect. Also, please take good care of Yu Er for me."

"Aunt Wan, rest assured!"

Mo Hua nodded solemnly.

From now on, Yu Er would be his own brother.

Anyone, even if it were the Great Wilderness Evil God, as long as they dared to target Yu Er, he would obliterate their Divine Remains, slay their Incarnation, and turn them into "snacks" to be devoured one bite at a time!

Chapter 1236: Discussing the Dao

After returning to the Sect, Mo Hua immediately and preciousy collected all the Formation Diagrams into his Storage Ring.

These are all valuable treasures that must be kept safe.

Moreover, he must study them secretly, not letting anyone know, so as not to cause Aunt Wan any trouble.

Despite Aunt Wan appearing unconcerned, Mo Hua knew in his heart that after all, these Formations were heritages of the two great families, the Shangguan and Wenren, and were immensely precious.

Aunt Wan is the legitimate daughter of the Wenren family and the daughter-in-law of the Shangguan family.

But in other words, she is the daughter sent away by the Wenren family and the "outsider" married into the Shangguan family.

Giving away the heritage Formation Diagrams of both families to him, once discovered, would certainly become a source of accusation and criticism.

The situation of Aunt Wan within the family would definitely become even more difficult.

What's more, among them is an Ultimate Formation!

Aunt Wan does not specialize in Formation arts; she may not know what kind of Formation she has given to him.

Second Grade Ultimate Formation...

Second-born Thunder Stream Formation!

Mo Hua held back, but ultimately, he couldn't resist. He took out the Formation Diagram of the Second-born Thunder Flow Ultimate Formation again, rubbing it in his hand and smiling with narrowed eyes like a silly child.

This is an Ultimate Formation!

And it is the Secondary Thunder Flow Absolute Array, which is closest to the essence of the Yuan Magnetic Formation among the derivations of the Eight Trigrams Thunder Series Formation!

Mo Hua itched to learn it.

But after a few glances, he realized that he couldn't learn it for now.

First, his foundation in the Yuan Magnetic Formation is not enough.

He has learned much of the Five Elements Bagua Formation, establishing a solid foundation and profound understanding.

But for the Yuan Magnetic Formation, Mo Hua has only learned a few, making his foundation inevitably weak and understanding unlikely to be profound.

Furthermore, the more advanced Secondary Thunder Formation, being an Ultimate Formation, was even less likely to be truly understood by Mo Hua at first sight.

Secondly, his Divine Sense is also insufficient.

An Ultimate Formation with Twenty Patterns naturally requires Divine Sense with Twenty Patterns.

Currently, Mo Hua's Divine Sense only possesses Seventeen Patterns, barely qualifying as a near Eighteen Patterns.

Being near Eighteen Patterns, there is still a long way to reach Twenty Patterns.

Especially between Nineteen and Twenty Patterns lies the immense obstacle of advancing from Foundation Establishment to Golden Core.

It's hard to imagine how long it would take to cross this barrier, perhaps as arduous as water eroding a stone.

Or else, it might require a "feast" to achieve a breakthrough...

"Can't learn..."

A Second Grade Ultimate Formation is right before his eyes, yet he can only look, not learn.

Mo Hua sighed.

He reluctantly stored away the Formation Diagram of the Second-born Thunder Flow Ultimate Formation, which had Second Grade Twenty Patterns, and then his gaze became resolute.

Regardless, he must focus on improving his Divine Sense!

"I must find a way to satiate the Heavenly Dao Laws, break the constraints, then enhance the Divine Sense, elevate the realm, and reach the Divine Sense Realm of Twenty Patterns as soon as possible, to comprehend the Secondary Thunder Absolute Array!"

The quickest way to enhance Divine Sense is to "consume" Evil Spirits.

The fastest method to "consume" Evil Spirits is to find an altar.

By stealing the authority of an Evil God, one can get a "delivery" that can instantly satiate.

But being confined now, he couldn't go out to look for altars or place orders.

This method has to be abandoned.

Besides that, refining the Divine Sense through extensive practice of Formation Patterns is another possibility.

But this is what Mo Hua has been doing every moment of every day.

With his strong Divine Sense and the Taoist Stele that can trace back Divine Thought, Mo Hua's daily practice of Formations is nearly tens of times that of other Formation Masters at the same cultivation level.

Since obtaining the Taoist Stele, Mo Hua has been practising relentlessly every day, without any slack, so there's not much to say about that.

Lastly, just like ordinary cultivators, systematically advancing one's Cultivation Realm to enhance the Divine Sense Realm is another path.

Mo Hua pondered for a moment.

Being "grounded", other than practising Formations in great quantities every day, it seems his only option is to strengthen his Divine Sense through increasing his Cultivation.

"Foundation Building Middle Stage!"

He decided to elevate his Cultivation to the Middle Phase of Foundation Establishment as soon as possible before considering other options.

Mo Hua nodded.

Thereafter, Mo Hua set aside all else, single-mindedly solving Mystery Formations, hoping to break through the bottleneck and advance to the Middle Stage of Foundation Establishment soon.

He also temporarily stopped interfering with the matters of Yu Family's Water Stronghold and the Water Yama.

Of course, he couldn't manage them now even if he wanted to.

The refining of the Five Elements Source Armor continues.

In his free time, he still met with Master Gu for meals and discussed improvements to their methods.

If his fellow disciples sought his help with rewards, he would guide them, fulfilling his responsibilities as the "Junior Brother".

Master Gu, on the other hand, could sell more customized spiritual tools, earning more Spirit Stones.

Besides these, Mo Hua spent almost all his time and energy on breaking through the bottleneck of the Middle Stage of Foundation Establishment.

The bottleneck of Heaven Yan Jue, seemed somewhat unfathomable to ordinary people.

Complex Formation Patterns, massive amounts of Mystery Formations, and the qualitative change of the Divine Rank.

For ordinary Cultivators, each hurdle seemed like an insurmountable gap.

But Mo Hua was accustomed to it.

At least in his view, these were just "routine" bottlenecks.

Inside the Sea of Consciousness, with profound Formation knowledge, powerful Divine Sense foundation, deep Calculation power, and the multiple speeds of Tricky Calculation,

The vast and complex Mystery Formations were rapidly solved by Mo Hua like pouring hot soup over snow.

The bottleneck was gradually loosening.

After more than a month, just as Mo Hua had nearly solved all of Heaven Yan Jue's Mystery Formations and was about to break through the Middle Stage of Foundation Establishment, Cheng Mo suddenly came to look for Mo Hua.

"Junior Brother, are you going to attend the Sword Discussion Conference?" Cheng Mo asked.

Mo Hua was taken aback.

The Sword Discussion Conference?

This term, he had heard of it before.

It was occasionally mentioned in conversations among his fellow disciples, though often in vague terms.

Mo Hua felt it was something distant from him, so he did not ask further.

Of course, what he heard most was the term "Debating Sword Conference."

Chapter 1237: Discussing Dao (2)

"What's the difference between the Sword Discussion Conference and the Taoist Skill Discussion Conference?" Mo Hua asked Cheng Mo.

Cheng Mo replied: "The Taoist Skill Discussion Conference is a general term that includes categories such as pills, artifacts, talismans, formations, and swordsmanship. The Sword Discussion Conference is just one of those categories."

"Pills, artifacts, talismans, and formations are assessments of Taoist cultivation skills."

"The Sword Discussion Conference assesses combat skills. Disciples from various Great Sects within the Qian Learning State Boundary spar and engage in martial contests..."

Mo Hua was puzzled, "If there are sword discussions, magic battles, and martial meetings, why call it a Sword Discussion Conference alone?"

Cheng Mo scratched his head, "I don't know either, maybe it's because sword cultivators are the coolest?"

Mo Hua silently looked at him.

Cheng Mo gave an embarrassed smile, "How about I call Situ Jian over? He's a sword cultivator; he definitely knows."

Cheng Mo indeed ran off to call Situ Jian over.

By the time Situ Jian arrived, Mo Hua realized that it had been a while since they met, and Situ Jian had reached the Foundation Building Middle Stage.

Among fellow disciples, cultivation progress varies.

Moreover, it's affected by the cultivation techniques and Taoist skills practiced, as well as whether one has ample cultivation resources, whether they need to solidify their foundation further, and considerations of perfecting the Spiritual Power Cycle, hence, disciples' cultivation progress cannot be generalized.

Situ Jian was quite successful, having prepared ample Spiritual Objects and having nearly completed the Cycles, so his breakthrough came earlier.

For Cheng Mo and Yang Qianjun, they needed to temper their Blood Qi further, so they were slower.

As for Mo Hua...

He didn't need anything; as long as he could breakthrough realms, Blood Qi and Spiritual Power didn't matter at all.

His Spiritual Root didn't have much to be particular about either.

Situ Jian explained to Mo Hua: "The term 'Debating Sword' has a long history..."

"The Sword Discussion Conference initially only involved debates on swordsmanship, with sword cultivators sparring with each other to determine superiority and decide who's the best."

"Whoever claims first place is recognized as the leader of the Sword Discussion Conference and is generally accepted as the foremost among fellow disciples in terms of cultivation and combat strength."

"But Body Cultivators and Spiritual Cultivators were not convinced. Why should the first among sword cultivators be considered the first among all disciples?"

"So later on, Body Cultivators and Spiritual Cultivators also joined in."

"But since Body Cultivators and Spiritual Cultivators don't use swords, competing against sword cultivators and winning meant that someone who does not practice swordsmanship could claim first place in the Sword Discussion Conference, which didn't make sense."

"Thus, it turned into team battles, with one sword cultivator, one body cultivator, and one spiritual cultivator making a team of three to fight each other."

"Later, following the organization of Taoist Soldiers, it became a competition of five-person squads."

"Initially, it was straightforward combat, with the best team winning."

"Some senior ancestors from Qian State felt that such brashness wasn't reflective of real combat situations and therefore changed the rules by adding objectives like capturing flags, monster hunting, seizing swords, among other restrictions, to create what is now the Sword Discussion Conference..."

"Five disciples from the same sect team up, working together to achieve the goals, discussing both cultivation techniques and valuing cooperation and strategy. If they win, all five are champions; if they lose, they're all eliminated. They share the glory or the disgrace."

Mo Hua nodded, beginning to understand a bit.

Cheng Mo patted Situ Jian on the shoulder and praised: "You really do know a lot."

Situ Jian helplessly replied, "Sometimes you should also pay more attention, instead of just swinging your axe..."

Cheng Mo smiled and then invited Mo Hua: "Junior Brother, do you want to come and see? This is the grand event of Qianxue State Boundary that happens once every three years."

Situ Jian added: "And for us, it's probably the only chance we'll get in our lifetime."

Mo Hua was somewhat confused, "Can we only participate once?"

Situ Jian nodded slightly, "Generally, only disciples who have been in the sect for more than nine years, in the Foundation Establishment Late Stage, with their cultivation, Spiritual Power, and Blood Qi at their peak, and who have not yet had a breakthrough to Golden Core can participate in the Sword Discussion Conference."

"If someone is from a later cohort, lacking a few years of learning, their cultivation, Blood Qi, and Spiritual Power would all be far inferior, unable to compete with the Heavenly Prides of other sects..."

Mo Hua nodded in understanding.

Cheng Mo sighed: "I wonder if I could participate in the next batch..."

"Forget about it," Situ Jian shook his head, "At least not until the batch after the next."

Cheng Mo was a bit unconvinced.

Situ Jian continued: "The Taoist Skill Discussion Conference is of great significance. It's not just about an individual disciple's cultivation future but also about the development of the Sect. Selection of disciples for the conference is extremely strict; every spot is precious..."

Cheng Mo was somewhat unhappy, but he knew that what Situ Jian said was true.

Mo Hua, on the other hand, was curious.

It's understandable that it's about an individual disciple's future prospects. If one performs well at the cultivation conference and gets noticed, not only will the sect value them more, but they will also be appreciated by other cultivation powers and might even earn a great deal of Merit Points.

But how does this relate to the development of the Sect...

Is a debate about Dao really that important?

Mo Hua asked Situ Jian, and Situ Jian inquired:

"Junior Brother, do you know about the Qianlong Mountain Range?"

"The Qianlong Mountain Range?"

Mo Hua furrowed his brow, seeming to have a slight memory of it.

Situ Jian said: "The Qianlong Mountain Range is a gigantic mountain range that spans across the Qianxue State Boundary. Within this range lies an enormous Spirit Mine with an astonishing output of Spirit Stones."

An astonishing output of Spirit Stones, a gigantic Spirit Mine!

Mo Hua was inwardly startled.

Situ Jian lowered his voice and said: "This is what I heard from my grandfather..."

"Apparently, the Taoist Court tried every possible means to take over this Qianlong Spirit Mine, employing various tactics, but they were ultimately suppressed by the efforts of dozens of senior ancestors from the Great Families of Qian State."

"However, the Taoist Court still refused to give up."

"With such a vast amount of Spirit Stones at stake, the families would not budge an inch."

"Finally, both sides compromised. A small portion of the output from these Spirit Mines were to be handed over to the Taoist Court as 'Spiritual Tax', with the rest being used by the Great Sects within the Qianxue State Boundary."

"The Sects, having obtained these Spirit Stones, expanded and grew, widely accepting disciples, teaching, and nurturing talent. By doing so, the Spirit Stones from the Qianlong Spirit Mines were used for the benefit of all."

Chapter 1238: Discussing the Dao (3)

"The Daoist Court has agreed, and the family has no say in it."

"As a result, this huge Qianlong Spirit Mine has fallen onto the heads of hundreds and thousands of Sects within the Qianxue State Boundary."

"But such a large amount of Spirit Stones, how exactly to divide them, has also become an issue..."

Mo Hua understood and then said, "Tao Discussion Meeting?"

"Yes." Situ Jian nodded, "Sect Disciples will participate in the Tao Discussion Meeting to determine their rankings."

"This ranking affects the order of the Sects, and the order of the Sects determines the share of the Qianlong Mountain, that massive Spirit Mine."

"That is a gargantuan Spirit Mine, any tiny share means a massive volume of Spirit Stones."

"And Spirit Stones are the foundation for the development of a Sect."

"So, the Tao Discussion Meeting is not just about the personal future of the Disciples, but it is closely related to the interests of the Sect and its future development..."

"So that's how it is..."

Mo Hua came to a realization and nodded slightly.

"Junior Brother, it seems that this year's Tao Discussion Meeting has already started, do you want to go and see?" Situ Jian also asked from the side.

After pondering for a moment, Mo Hua replied: "Sure."

He also wanted to know what exactly the Tao Discussion Meeting was like.

As for reaching the Foundation Building Middle Stage, it was happening soon anyway, not in a rush for these two days.

Thus, Mo Hua gave himself a half-day off and went to watch the Tao Discussion Meeting along with Cheng Mo and Situ Jian.

The Tao Discussion Meeting is held on the Dao Mountain in the central Qianxue State Boundary.

From the outside, Mount of Tao is majestic and solemn, with a Large Formation constructed around it.

Mo Hua could tell at a glance, this was a Large Formation.

Moreover, it was not a closed Large Formation, but one that was slightly activated.

Above the Large Formation, light flowed, the aura was astonishing, like a giant beast lying dormant, gently breathing.

"This Formation is..."

Mo Hua looked towards Cheng Mo and Situ Jian, was about to ask something, but seeing their expressions were even more shocked than his, he did not voice his question.

Never mind, the matters of the Formation, it's better not to trouble them.

The requirements for entering the Tao Discussion Meeting are not strict, as long as one is a Sect Disciple within the Qianxue State Boundary.

The three of Mo Hua arrived at the mountain gate entrance, showed their Taixu Tokens, confirmed their identities as Sect Disciples, and were allowed to enter the Mount of Tao.

To enter the Mount of Tao is to enter the inside of the Large Formation.

Cheng Mo and Situ Jian were somewhat baffled, not understanding anything.

But to Mo Hua's perception, the vastness and mysterious grandeur of the Large Formation, as well as the immense and boundless spiritual aura, were extremely intense.

He could even faintly sense the intricate movements of the high-grade Formation Patterns throughout the whole mountain, as well as the profound yet unruffled movement of the massive, ocean-like Spiritual Power...

Mo Hua was profoundly moved, his eyes wide open.

Truly worthy of being the Fifth Grade Qianxue State Boundary, so many grand things!

He wondered when he could set up a Large Formation of this grade himself...

Mo Hua longed with anticipation.

Situ Jian walked with Mo Hua, explaining as they went:

"The Tao Discussion Meeting will assess in the order of Alchemy, Artifact Refining, Runes, Formation."

"Debating Sword is somewhat different, due to the long cycle, more competitions, hence the timing of each session may vary, but generally it will not coincide with the Alchemy, Artifact, Rune, Formation discussions..."

The three talked and walked together.

Nearing the Taoist Field, indeed it was a sea of people, not only the Taixu Gate, but disciples from the other Four Great Sects, Eight Great Gates, Twelve Streams, as well as Qian Learning Hundred Gates were all present to watch.

Around the Taoist Field, it was bustling with excitement, full of young disciples wearing various Sect Taoist Robes, with dashing handsome youths as well as lovely young ladies with elegant figures.

Cheng Mo was somewhat yearning, "Do you think, if I demonstrated great prowess in the Sword Discussion Conference six years from now, making a name for myself, would these girls and fellow junior sisters adore me and insist on devoting themselves to me..."

Situ Jian patted his shoulder, sighed, and said:

"This place is crowded; if you're daydreaming, it would be better to move somewhere else."

Cheng Mo was taken aback, then somewhat annoyed, he lowered his voice and said:

"Well, Situ Jian, how dare you look down on me! Let's find a place to spar, we'll see if your sword is faster or if my axe is harder..."

Mo Hua felt a bit helpless and sighed, "Alright."

"Okay, Junior Brother." Cheng Mo immediately became amenable and then gave Situ Jian a look, whispering:

"Out of respect for Junior Brother, I won't hold this against you."

Situ Jian shook his head.

Meanwhile, the Alchemy Conference had already begun.

In the vast Taoist Field, many Alchemy Furnaces were set up.

A group of Sect Disciples, evidently older and deeper in Cultivation than Mo Hua and his peers, and also noticeably taller, all with solemn expressions, began to light the flames to start Alchemy.

There were Elders supervising the examination.

Many Disciples gathered around to watch.

However, at this moment, the scene had already quietened down, and no Disciple dared to speak loudly.

Above the Taoist Field, Disciples in the Foundation Establishment Late Stage focused on Alchemy. After completing their Pills, they presented them to the Elders above, who would critique them and give out grades of A, B, C, or D, before announcing the results to all.

Those eliminated would look up to the sky and sigh, leaving the field dejectedly.

Those who advanced showed joy on their faces and bowed to the Elders.

Then a new group took their place to continue Alchemy.

After the Pills were made, the process repeated...

Mo Hua watched for a while but found it dull and tedious.

The Tao Discussion Meeting was indeed a grand event, but watching from the side was also rather boring.

And it was even Alchemy Dao.

Mo Hua was not completely ignorant in Alchemy, but his knowledge was limited at best.

He only had a cursory understanding of some practical Pill knowledge, which he remembered well.

Such as which Pill heals what injury, cures what poison, and its effects.

Also, what herbs could be used for trickery, poisoning, and so on.

Beyond that, Mo Hua had done little research into the specifics of Alchemy.

He hadn't even managed to successfully refine many Pill batches.

If it were his Junior Sister doing Alchemy, he might watch for a while longer.

But as for those in the Taoist Field, most were from other Sects, Disciples he didn't recognize.

So after watching for a while, Mo Hua began to feel sleepy.

Cheng Mo was even more so.

Situ Jian was somewhat better, but not by much.

The three exchanged glances, nodded slightly, and silently left the crowd.

"Alchemy is a bit dull..." Cheng Mo said, "Apart from those determined to be Pill Masters or those with a high mastery in Alchemy Dao wanting to rank in the Alchemy Conference, few Disciples follow such Alchemy contests every day..."

"Unlike the Sword Discussion Conference, where punches connect flesh, Spells fly wildly, and one battles with Sword Control, that's exciting to watch..."

Situ Jian also nodded: "Indeed, these Tao Cultivation skills in Alchemy are not much of a spectacle to most people."

"It's just that the Tao Discussion Meeting has just started, and people have come to join the excitement, hence the crowd. In a few days, the attendance will thin."

"We'll have to wait until some time later, when the Sword Discussion Conference begins, that's the real grand event!"

"The Tao Discussion Meeting is a grand event in Qian State, and the Sword Discussion Conference is the highlight of the Tao Discussion Meeting!"

"Not just within the Qianxue State Boundary, but even the Central Dao Court, and many Great Families and Great Sects from outside will specially send people to watch."

"If one comes out on top in the Sword Discussion Conference, only then is one truly distinguished among the thousands of Heavenly Prides, bringing glory to the Sect and fame to oneself!"

Chapter 1239: Breakthrough

"Oh oh," Mo Hua nodded.

Cheng Mo looked around and then asked Mo Hua and Situ Jian, "Are you guys still watching?"

Situ Jian looked at Mo Hua.

After a moment of contemplation, Mo Hua shook his head, "Let's go back first. Watching alchemy isn't very interesting. We can come back and see more if there's time later."

"Alright!"

Cheng Mo and Situ Jian nodded in agreement.

Then the three of them made their way home, leaving Mount of Tao and returning to their Sect.

Back at the Sect, Mo Hua resumed his usual cultivation routine, breaking through bottlenecks, practicing formation painting, and refining armor.

When he had the time, he still went to the Mount of Tao to watch the Daoist Conference.

The Daoist Conference was after all the grand event in Qian Learning State Boundary that only occurred once every three years.

Though he was not participating, it was still necessary to have some understanding.

Furthermore, just because he wasn't participating now didn't mean he wouldn't be in the future.

Mo Hua calculated that in six years, if his cultivation advanced to the Foundation Establishment Late Stage, perhaps he, too, would compete and measure himself against the talents of ten thousand Sects.

However, such an event was too high-profile and did not suit his own low-key and humble temperament.

"Tall trees catch much wind."

"The protruding nail gets hammered down first."

These were all earnest teachings from his master.

Hence, whether or not to participate in the Daoist Conference in the future was something Mo Hua still struggled with.

Nonetheless, that was still an issue for six years in the future and not something he needed to rush to think about. He decided to observe the situation first before deciding.

The Daoist Conference continued as scheduled.

Mo Hua would go to have a look whenever he had the opportunity.

The agenda of this Daoist Conference started with debating pills, followed by artifact forging, then discussing runes, continuing with array crafting, and finally concluding with debating swordsmanship.

There was nothing interesting about debating pills.

It was just a bunch of people working on their furnaces, discussing the techniques, control of heat and skills of Alchemy, and in the end, they were judged based on factors such as the time it took to form the pills, success rates, and quality.

Mo Hua didn't care much about it.

As for who achieved the title of leader, Mo Hua didn't recognize them.

He only knew it was a senior sister from the "Danqing Sect" who was two classes above him.

Danqing Sect, as one of the Twelve Sects in Qian Learning State Boundary, has most of its disciples dedicating their lives to Alchemy.

Practicing Alchemy to aid the world and heal the injured.

Mo Hua unexpectedly thought of First-Grade Pill Master Old Mr. Feng from Tongxian City.

Having a strong Divine Sense but a weak constitution since childhood, it was thanks to Old Mr. Feng's treatment and care that he was able to grow up safely.

The atmosphere of Danqing Sect gave Mo Hua a feeling somewhat similar to that of Old Mr. Feng.

Mo Hua felt a sudden surge of fondness in his heart.

Next came the debating artifacts conference.

Mo Hua paid more attention to this.

Even though, in reality, his Artifact Refining skills were not as good as his Alchemy skills, he still had some knowledge.

Especially in recent times, he had exchanged many insights on Artifact Refining with Third-Grade Golden Core Artifact Refiner Master Gu.

Mo Hua also took the lead in designing the Refinement Array Map and customizing a large batch of Spiritual Artifacts, spending much time in research to ensure that the form of Spiritual Artifacts matched the structure of the formations.

So although his actual level of Artifact Refining was still unmentionable—he couldn't swing a Second Grade hammer—his perspective and scope in Artifact Refining significantly improved.

This is something that ordinary Artifact Refiners, especially those disciples who meticulously follow the inherited system and standard Artifact Refining guidelines, do not possess.

Now, as Mo Hua watched others forge artifacts, by observing and summarising their techniques and improving his own design ideas for the Refinement Array Map, he also benefited greatly.

A few days later, the debating artifact conference also came to an end.

However, the winner of the debating artifact conference was somewhat unexpected to Mo Hua. He did not belong to the Twelve Streams or Sects known for specializing in Artifact Refining within the Qian Learning Hundred Gates, but came from one of the Eight Great Gates, the Tai'a Sect, which has some connections with the Taixu Gate.

"Tai'a Sect..."

Mo Hua paused for a moment.

He remembered that Senior Brother Feng, Ouyang Feng, with whom he had a friendship, also came from Tai'a Sect.

However, the winner of the debating artifacts conference should be one class above Senior Brother Feng, presumably Senior Brother Feng's own Senior Brother.

The Artifact Refining Method that won him the first place was a Swordsmanship spell point.

"Tai'a Sect, the Spell for forging swords..."

Mo Hua stroked his chin, lost in thought.

Then came the rune competition.

Mo Hua had the least exposure to Runes.

Simply put, Refining Rune means consuming Spiritual Power to condense Spells and sealing those Spells into Jade Talismans that have been prepared in advance.

In this way, when using it, one can directly activate the Spells.

Runes indeed have certain thresholds related to the Cultivation Realm, but they generally do not require much additional expenditure of Spiritual Power by the user.

It can be seen as a convenient supplementary method of attack.

Refining Rune itself is also a category that combines the industries of Tao Cultivation.

The Jade Talismans used in Refining Rune can store Spells and inherently rely on Artifact Refining and Formation crafting.

And for a Rune Refining Master, the most important thing is Spiritual Power.

Outstanding Rune Refining Masters all have abundant Spiritual Power and are proficient in Spells, particularly rare or Superior Skills.

This aspect was naturally incompatible with Mo Hua.

Although Mo Hua is a Spiritual Cultivator, he has inferior Spiritual Roots and weak Spiritual Power.

He is proficient in Spells, but he follows the approach where "All Techniques are Mastered," mastering common low-grade spells.

Moreover, the base material for Jade Talismans is quite expensive.

Mo Hua was too frugal to buy them.

He felt pained even when purchasing Formation media and Spiritual Ink.

For these reasons, of all the Tao Cultivation categories, Mo Hua's Rune Refining was the weakest.

Even though he scored Grade A with six Grade Cs.

But among these "Grade Cs," his Rune Refining was the weakest, barely avoiding falling into "Grade D."

Therefore, during the Rune Competition, Mo Hua only glanced over it briefly.

As for who became the leader in the end, he didn't even look.

Chapter 1240: Breakthrough (2)

After that, it's the Array Competition.

Fewer people attend the Array Competition.

In the Dao Discussion Conference, among the four categories of Tao Cultivation—Alchemy, Artifact Refining, Runic Magic, and Formation—Formation is the climax, scheduled last.

But the disciples, having watched the first three, have mostly lost interest.

Besides, next up is the Sword Discussion Conference.

Most disciples' expectations are placed on the Sword Discussion Conference, a competition bustling with contestants from the Four Great Sects, Eight Great Gates, Twelve Streams, and Qianxue Hundred Gates, all vying for supremacy.

Thus, they naturally don't care much about the Array Competition.

Moreover, among the various Tao Cultivation categories, although Formation is prestigious, it's also relatively the most tedious and the most boring to watch.

Alchemy begins with lighting a furnace, and the flames rise.

Artifact Refining swings a heavy hammer, sparking brilliantly.

Refining Rune involves Condensing Techniques, brimming with flowing light and color.

Only the Formation Masters merely draw formations, which really appear very plain and ordinary.

For those disciples who are well-versed in formations, it's fine; ordinary disciples, who only learn general formation traditions, can hardly comprehend the intricacies.

Having them sit by, watching a group of disciples perplexed as they draw formations for several hours, is indeed tough to endure.

Therefore, relatively speaking, the Array Competition is the least attended.

However, Mo Hua is quite the opposite.

He is most interested in the Array Competition.

He attended almost every important competition.

After observing many disciples' Formation drawings, Mo Hua had a rough estimation of the proficiency level of the genius disciples participating in the competition.

These participating senior brothers and sisters are definitely stronger than himself.

All of them have Cultivation at the Foundation Establishment Late Stage, with most possessing Nineteen Patterns in their Divine Sense.

Occasionally, there are those at the peak of Eighteen Patterns.

But Eighteen Patterns are actually just there to "accompany" the race.

The sects of these disciples generally have mediocre Formation traditions, so managing to select a few disciples with Eighteen Patterns who specialize in formations to participate in the Array Competition is already quite remarkable.

And the difficulty of the formations for assessments is not all Nineteen Patterns High-Order Formations.

Starting from Seventeen Patterns, then Eighteen, and finally Nineteen.

Eliminating step by step.

Those who remained at the end all had deep Divine Sense of Nineteen Patterns at the Foundation Establishment Late Stage and most had already passed the assessment as Second-grade High-level Array Masters.

Mo Hua currently does not know how to construct Nineteen-Pattern Formations.

But that's because his Divine Sense is not sufficient, not because these formations are overly difficult.

Even the final, more niche and profound Nineteen-Pattern Array used in the championship assessment—the Postnatal Eight Trigrams Concealment Array.

Mo Hua watched it and didn't think it was very difficult.

"With this level..." Mo Hua couldn't help thinking, "could I possibly win first place in six years..."

Mo Hua thought about it and found it hard to believe.

First place in the Array Competition within the Qianxue State Boundary?

He quickly shook his head.

It shouldn't be that simple...

One must not aim too high without grounding; stay practical!

He shouldn't have such conceited thoughts, underestimating the heroes of the world!

Mo Hua slowly nodded, calming his mind, maintaining a humble attitude, and then continued watching.

He watched until the Sword Discussion Conference concluded.

To Mo Hua's surprise, the top three of the Array Competition were all disciples of "Four Great Sects."

Specializing in formations and named after "Formation," the Ten Thousand Formations Sect only got fourth.

The first place was taken by a disciple bearing the surname "Shen," who seemed talented but carried an air of pride, and even looked somewhat disdainful.

He wore an exquisite cloud-white Taoist robe trimmed in gold.

Mo Hua recognized this Taoist robe.

It was the robe of the Qian Daoist Sect.

First place in the Array Competition, from the Qian Daoist Sect...

One of the Four Great Sects of Qianxue, the Qian Daoist Sect.

It was that very sect, whose Sect-Entering Order Mo Hua carried when he approached them, but was politely dismissed, belittled for his lowly Spiritual Root, and not allowed to enroll.

Even now, thinking about it, Mo Hua still felt somewhat bitter.

Mo Hua couldn't help but curl his lips, muttering in his heart:

"Looking down on me..."

Mo Hua considered himself not to be petty, but he needed to stand up for himself.

This matter had to be addressed sooner or later.

That bun must be eaten back one day.

"Qian Daoist Sect!"

Mo Hua hummed softly, remembering it in his heart.

The surrounding Elders and other upper-level cultivators from various sects and families stood up, congratulating the winning disciple.

The Array Competition, although less attended by disciples,

Seemed to have more Elders watching, due perhaps to the unique status of formations, than previous Alchemy, Artifact, and Rune Competitions.

The top-ranked disciple from the Shen Family returned the greetings respectfully, however, his face still held traces of arrogance.

The Elders of the Qian Daoist Sect all had smiles on their faces, appearing dignified yet arrogant, exchanging pleasantries with others.

As if the first place in the Array Competition was expectedly in the bag for Qian Daoist Sect.

The Array Competition thus concluded.

...

After a while, it was time for the most important event, the Sword Discussion Conference.

The Sword Discussion Conference was also held at Mount of Tao.

Upon reaching Mount of Tao, Mo Hua realized what it meant for an event to truly be a grand affair.

The entire Mount of Tao was indeed bustling with noise and excitement like a sea of people.

The mountain was densely packed with disciples from various sects.

Nearly every disciple's face showed excitement, anticipation, envy, and aspiration among other emotions.

Usually, such expressions only appear on the faces of disciples during yearly holidays.

Mo Hua was also infected by the atmosphere, feeling a thrill in his heart.

Cheng Mo, Situ Jian, and Hao Xuan were also there.

Especially Cheng Mo, who had also advanced to the Foundation Building Middle Stage, had nothing to do the following year, so he ran to Mount of Tao every day.