

TALISMAN EMPEROR

Chapter 15- Wondrous Effect of the Soul

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These past five years, crafting talismans at dawn had already become a habit of Chen Xi's, no matter if it was rain or shine.

Today was no exception.

After Chen Xi washed up, he sat before the wooden table and started crafting talismans.

Different from before, due to the skin on his entire body faintly aching, his wrist that he drew with obviously had a trace of jerkiness, and his speed had slowed down a great deal as well. It would probably be impossible for him to complete 30 first-grade talisman within five hours.

However, Chen Xi took no notice of this, and his gaze concentrated on the talisman paper with a meticulously attentive expression.

According to the requirements of the Zhang general store, the first-grade basic talisman he needed to craft today was the Earthshield Talisman.

The Earthshield Talisman was an earth attribute basic talisman that prioritized defence. One would be able to condense a shield that was like solid rock before one's self when utilizing it. The structure of the talisman markings weren't complicated, and had a similar difficulty to the Flamecloud Talisman, but the attribute of the two were completely different.

However, this was completely unable to hinder Chen Xi, as during these five years, although he was mocked as trash who could only craft basic talismans.

But if one were to speak of the number of basic talismans mastered, then no one was able to compare to him.

He had no choice, for the sake of earning spirit stones, he had to learn how to craft basic talismans of various attributes, as only in this way would he be able to obtain spirit stones from the Zhang general store.

Until today, the number of basic talismans that Chen Xi mastered proficiently was probably over a thousand, and if this number were to be made public, it would surely cause everyone to be flabbergasted and dare not believe it.

Normally speaking, most talisman masters choose a path of talisman crafting that was suitable to them from the five elemental attributes, then studied and practised in it to swiftly increase their cultivation in the Dao of talismans.

Whereas Chen Xi instead welcomed practising all the basic talismans of the five elements. Even though he'd already skilfully mastered them by heart, he spent even more time than other talisman masters. Only heaven knew if it was worth it.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

The tip of the brush that was stained sufficiently in ink floated atop the snow-white and soft talisman paper, drawing line after line of smooth and winding talisman markings. Chen Xi's brush technique was precise and agile, seeming to not be affected by his wrist strength.

However, when he'd crafted this Earthshield Talisman halfway, an uncomfortable feeling abruptly arose within his heart, as if there was a mistake on the talisman markings. But when he looked carefully, he didn't notice a trace of a careless mistake.

Chen Xi frowned and stopped drawing, then silently pondered. He'd crafted no less than a hundred thousand Earthshield Talismans over these five years, and his brush technique had already attained the state of being able to finish

crafting it without stopping. Why would such an uncomfortable feeling appear today?

Chen Xi took a deep breath then once again carefully inspected the talisman paper on the table — the point he started drawing, the symmetry of the ink markings, the talisman markings pathway... The more he looked at it, the more he felt uncomfortable in his heart, as if his chest was filled with bricks, causing his breathing to become hurried.

Uncomfortable?

Why would I feel uncomfortable? There's obviously not even a trace of careless mistake!

Could it be that it's me who's mistaken, but...

As if he was struck by a bolt of lightning, a trace of a strong urge arose abruptly within Chen Xi's heart, and as if he was possessed, he picked up the talisman brush then swung it downwards!

The talisman marking pathways atop the talisman paper abruptly changed, the talisman marking that originally ought to be fine and intricate were simply completed by Chen Xi with a single stroke, and instead dense and complicated patterns were drawn by him at the end.

Bang!

After drawing the last stroke, Chen Xi put down the talisman brush and breathed heavily with his hand pressed upon the wooden table, but his eyes were instead shockingly bright.

"Sure enough, it looks much smoother now, but... Is this still an Earthshield Talisman?"

After a short moment, Chen Xi took up the talisman paper, and couldn't help but frown as he gazed upon the talisman markings that were only partially familiar.

"Forget it, I'll test it first, if it's wasted, then it's wasted..." Chen Xi pondered for a moment and was unable to understand it, so a strand of True Essence gushed out from the tip of his finger and poured into the talisman paper.

Whoosh!

A dense earthen yellow stream suddenly emerged, and a turtle shaped shield that was as tall as a person appeared within Chen Xi's hand.

Success!

Chen Xi heaved a sigh of relief, and at the same time a wisp of shock suddenly surged within his heart. The structure of talisman markings had experienced infinite years to develop, and had long since formed a fixed structure. The Earthshield Talisman was one of such talismans, as the structure of talisman markings within it had long since been perfected by countless almighty wise men of the past. Not to mention modifying the talisman markings, even a slight divergence on the pathway of the talisman markings would possibly cause the entire talisman to fail.

Whereas at this moment, this Earthshield Talisman's marking pathways had been altered by nearly 50%, but it was still able to be successfully utilized. How could it not cause Chen Xi to be shocked?

I... Actually altered the structure of the Earthshield Talisman's markings?

The knowledge of talismans within Chen Xi's mind nearly crumbled when he realized this, he simple dared not believe that the Earthshield Talisman before him was made by his own two hands.

Then, he was perplexed by a trace of uncertainty, how did he do it earlier?

After bitterly pondering for a long time, Chen Xi abruptly recalled a matter: Senior Fuxi visualized the River Diagram to comprehend the Dao of deducing the secrets of the heavens, and not only did he rely on his knowledge in the Dao of talismans to walk out of the Star Secret Realm, he even obtained the True Body Brand left behind by Senior Fuxi. Could it be that all this was because of that True Body Brand?

Senior Ji Yu had once said, the True Body Brand contained a trace of the River Diagram's true essence, and he'd visualized this True Body brand last night.

Couple with the strengthening of his six senses when he awoke earlier, Chen Xi almost instantly understood that all this was surely related to him visualizing the True Body Brand within his sea of consciousness that was left behind by the master of the Manor!

It looked like this method of visualizing wasn't merely capable of allowing his soul to become stronger, it was even able to silently benefit his comprehension in the Dao of talismans.

When Chen Xi straightened out his thinking and was suddenly enlightened, he took up the talisman brush and once again started crafting.

Time flowed by, in practically not even three hours, 30 Earthshield Talismans that were completely different from those used in society had appeared into the world, and it was an entire two hours faster than before!

Two hours! It was sufficient for Chen Xi to do many things!

What caused Chen Xi to be happy the most was that the True Essence within his Dantian wasn't completely depleted as usual, and instead more than half still remained. This also meant that he was completely capable of crafting another 30 Earthshield Talismans, and would be able to earn an extra 10 spirit stones daily!

I'd better pass these talismans to Uncle Zhang first. I didn't craft talismans yesterday, I wonder if Uncle Zhang will blame me....

Chen Xi took a deep breath and forcefully restrained this pleasant surprise, then stood up and walked out of his home.

Zhang general store.

Zhang Dayong stood behind the counter. The moment he saw Chen Xi enter, he feigned rage as he said, "Kid, why were you absent without a reason yesterday? Do you think you've grown up and become independent to the point you don't intend to work for me?"

A wisp of warmth emerged from Chen Xi's heart, as during these five years, if it wasn't for Uncle Zhang always taking care of him, his entire family would probably have lost its source of livelihood long ago.

Five years ago, he'd only just learned how to craft basic talismans. He went everywhere to sell them, but there was rarely anyone who showed interest, and no retailer was willing to buy them. The consumption of basic talismans within Pine Mist City was extremely great and retailers were much more willing to purchase in batches, whereas at that time, Chen Xi was only capable of crafting five basic talismans a day, and was utterly unable to enter the eyes of the retailers.

Luckily, he chanced upon Zhang Dayong, who expressed his willingness to purchase the talismans Chen Xi crafted, with a price similar to the market price. It had been like this throughout these five years, and Zhang Dayong had never once gone back on his words. This caused Chen Xi to be incomparably grateful to Zhang Dayong, and thus he had always taken Zhang Dayong as a senior that was most worthy of trust and respect.

"Uncle Zhang, these are the 30 Earthshield Talismans for today." Chen Xi withdrew a pile of talismans and passed them over.

Zhang Dayong scolded with a smile. "I knew you'd change the topic, kid."

As he spoke, he received the pile of talismans and didn't even glance at it as he casually placed it on the counter, then withdrew 10 spirit stones and tossed it to Chen Xi as he joked. "Kid, it's already been five years, when do you plan to craft second-grade talismans?"

Chen Xi replied. "I already intend to craft them, I only lack the money to buy the books."

Zhang Dayong was originally joking, but he never expected to receive a serious answer from Chen Xi, and was slightly startled before bursting into laughter. "Then I'll be waiting for you to craft second-grade talismans. I'll buy as many as you have with a price that surely fair."

Chen Xi's heart was incomparably warm as he gazed at the undisguised encouragement in Zhang Dayong's smile, and he nodded solemnly. "Okay, I'll master it as soon as possible."

Chen Xi took the 10 spirit stones and a jade slip book, then turned around and left.

"The jinx has finally left..." A talisman crafting apprentice arrived before the counter and picked up an Earthshield Talisman with a cheeky grin on his face. When he saw clearly the structure of the talisman markings on it, he couldn't help but be astonished. "Uncle Zhang, is this an Earthshield Talisman?"

"Stinking kid, you've practiced for more than half a month and you can't even recognize an Earthshield Talisman. If you don't work hard, then pack up and scram!" Zhang Dayong frowned as he berated, but when his gaze descended onto the talisman paper, he couldn't help but be dumbstruck.

Since managing the general store for nearly 30 years, the various basic talismans that passed through his hands were no less than a hundred, thus Zhang Dayong's eyesight had become incomparably sharp since long ago. In

practically an instant, he'd discerned that the structure of the talisman markings on this Earthshield Talisman had been completely altered.

Could it be that this kid, Chen Xi, has learned to be shifty and started deceiving me?

A trace of an uncomfortable feeling surged from Zhang Dayong's heart. In these years, there were some talisman crafting apprentices got up to little tricks thinking they'd be able to get away with it, but how could they get past Zhang Dayong's eyes? Zhang Dayong extremely detested these fellows that resorted to fraud, and would absolutely not show mercy and send them packing.

Now, the kid that he trusted the most had very likely done this, Zhang Dayong was slightly unable to accept this, and his face slowly went gloomy.

The unusual scene before the counter slowly drew the attention of the other people within the store, and they crowded over.

"Oh! This is the Earthshield Talisman that Deadpan Chen crafted? Why does it look fake the more I look at it?"

"Seems like it to me too. The Earthshield Talisman isn't crafted like this, the structure of the talisman markings on the top are completely wrong. This fellow Chen Xi has really gone too far!"

"Exactly! Uncle Zhang had looked after him for so many years, but he doesn't know to feel grateful and repay the kindness, but instead used this shit to deceive others. It's indeed shameless."

...

Humming sounds of discussions rose and fell, and more or less, there were traces of taking pleasure in Zhang Dayong's misfortune on their face.

Zhang Dayong's face became even more unsightly as time passed, and his heart ached extremely. He'd already decided, that if Chen Xi didn't give him an answer that is satisfactory tomorrow, he'd completely cut off the relationship and not buy the talismans that Chen Xi crafted any longer!

"Let me see!" A voice that was like a twitter of an oriole in a clear valley abruptly sounded out, and a young girl in a simple dress passed the crowd of people. She was comely, with skin that was like snow, and had an appearance that was extremely sweet and beautiful. She'd only just appeared and had instantly attracted the attention of everyone.