

Talent 101

Chapter 101: Ascending to Grandmaster!

In the strength-testing chamber, Ye Tian unleashed a punch at the machine, channeling both his raw physical power and his elemental force.

"Two Elephants of Force!"

Then, Ye Tian activated his pseudo-mystic-level strength talent.

Boom!

The machine quivered, and the whole room shook with it. A startling number appeared on the display.

"Sixty Elephants!"

"It's actually sixty Elephants of Force—a thirtyfold increase. Oh my God!" Ye Tian exclaimed.

However, he still had one crucial test to perform—to see if he could break the one-hundredfold limit. Previously, his increase in attack power had plateaued at a hundredfold, and if he couldn't break that barrier, then achieving a pseudo-mystic-level talent in strength would be meaningless. After all, the limit would still be a hundredfold increase, which wasn't much different.

Ye Tian drew his elemental blade and swung it ferociously at the testing machine.

"One-Ten," "Green Wind Slash!"

"Pseudo-Mystic-Level Strength Boost!"

One boosted by sixfold, the other by thirtyfold.

Combined, they would result in an 180-fold increase in attack power. If he truly could break the limit and achieve an 180-fold increase, then Ye Tian's attack power could reach 360 Elephants of Force.

The outcome would tell it all!

Boom!

The air burst open, the room quivered violently, and the machine was sent flying, crashing into the wall.

Ye Tian saw a blade mark on the machine, about an inch deep.

Fortunately, the material of this machine was quite special and featured memory metal. Even if damaged, it would slowly heal itself; otherwise, Ye Tian suspected he'd owe someone money.

The machine wasn't fully broken, and a number appeared on it—

"360 Elephants!"

Gazing at the number, Ye Tian remained silent for a long while, too exhilarated to speak.

"I've finally broken the hundredfold limit. It must be because I've built a perfect foundation and shattered some kind of universal law, allowing me to achieve an 180-fold increase," Ye Tian speculated.

An 180-fold increase—that was a terrifying boost!

With just two Elephants of Force, he could generate an attack power of 360 Elephants, surpassing even the 200-Elephant limit of a normal Grandmaster.

One could only imagine how formidable Ye Tian would be once he advanced to the Grandmaster realm.

"Green Wind Slash is just a common bronze-level blade technique. My blade intent could soon reach a 20% mastery, allowing me to practice even stronger silver-level blade techniques, thereby amplifying my attack power even more. And what if my talent in strength reaches a true mystic level? Then wouldn't it be..."

The thought quickened Ye Tian's breath.

But acquiring a mystic-level special talent was easier said than done. Unless he encountered a beast or a warrior possessing mystic-level talents that he could copy.

Unfortunately, such beasts or warriors were exceedingly rare and beyond his current reach.

If he couldn't copy someone else's mystic-level talent, then he would have to find a way to elevate his own talent to the mystic level—a method he had no clue about.

As for the Demon Sea Base, he shouldn't count on it. It was likely that no one here knew about mystic-level talents; perhaps only a select few had even heard of them.

"Never mind the mystic-level talent, I can now aim for the Grandmaster Realm!"

Ye Tian had lingered at the peak of the Great Warrior realm for quite some time. By now, he had established a perfect foundation and saw no reason to stay stagnant any longer.

So, Ye Tian rented a cultivation room in the Cultivation Tower and began cultivating the Grandmaster Realm.

Qi Cultivation Room.

Seated cross-legged, Ye Tian started to reflect on the details of the Purple Blood Body Refining Technique. Unlike the Great Warrior Realm, the cultivating the Grandmaster Realm focused on refining one's meridians.

The human body contained eight extraordinary meridians. In the Grandmaster Realm, refining these eight meridians could each add about 10 units of strength. Once all eight meridians were refined, one could reach the peak of the Grandmaster Realm, and then further refine the body to reach the Grandmaster limit of 100 units of strength.

Without high-level Elemental Qi body forging techniques, one could only rely on mid-level methods to absorb the spiritual qi of heaven and earth, and the power of fierce beasts to slowly refine a single meridian; the speed would be inevitably slow.

High-level Elemental Qi body forging techniques had a strict sequence for meridian refining. For example, the first meridian to refine in the Purple Blood Body Refining Technique was the Yin Wei Meridian.

To successfully break through to the Grandmaster level, one had to open up the Yin Wei Meridian. Only when the meridian was unblocked could one proceed with refining it. This was an essential step.

For those with top-level cultivation talent, opening up the meridian and advancing to the Grandmaster Realm was relatively easy. But for those with high-level talents, it was much more challenging. A slight mistake could lead to meridian confusion or obstruction, resulting in failure.

Ye Tian possessed Morning Star-level cultivation talent, a rank above the transcendent level, so he had no worries about failing the breakthrough.

"Let's begin."

Ye Tian consumed a drop of top-grade fierce beast blood and began practicing the Purple Blood Body Refining Technique to open up the Yin Wei Meridian.

Boom!

A surge of power instantly coursed through the Yin Wei Meridian, making it unobstructed. Simultaneously, the constraints between the Great Warrior and Grandmaster realms disappeared, and an influx of Elemental Qi from heaven and earth surged into Ye Tian's body, boosting his strength, speed, and defenses, among other things.

Ye Tian was undergoing a rapid transformation.

This process lasted for three days, and at the end of it, Ye Tian had become a Grandmaster-level warrior.

Subsequently, Ye Tian tested his physical strength—

"1.3 elephants of strength!"

This was the strength level immediately after breaking into the Grandmaster Realm, and Ye Tian also calculated the speed of his Morning Star-level cultivation.

In normal circumstances, a day's cultivation could add about 100,000 pounds of force. In a month, that would be an increase of approximately 3 million pounds or 3 units of strength, accumulating to 36 units in a year.

The Grandmaster limit was 100 units of strength. According to his calculations, he could reach that limit in at most three years.

Based on Ye Tian's research, most warriors with transcendent-level cultivation talent took at least ten years to reach the Grandmaster limit, while top-level talents needed at least 30 years.

"My Morning Star-level talent should be about five times faster than transcendent-level talents. After all, I only need three years to reach the Grandmaster limit under normal conditions. If I occasionally train in the Elemental Qi cultivation room, I might even shorten that time to two years. That's just a fraction of the time needed by those with transcendent-level talents; the speed is equivalent to five times theirs," Ye Tian calculated.

If this data were made public, it would certainly create a massive uproar.

Reaching the Grandmaster limit in two years, and with Ye Tian's Morning Star-level cultivation talent, progressing to the King-level would be a breeze.

This meant that in two or three years, Ye Tian would become a King-level existence, the pinnacle within the Demon Sea Base!

After becoming a Grandmaster, what Ye Tian was most concerned about was his lifespan.

A typical Grandmaster had a lifespan of 200 years. Yet, Ye Tian sensed through his Blood Devouring talent that his vitality was 50% stronger than other Grandmasters. Instead of a 200-year lifespan, he estimated his to be around 300 years.

Why did he have a 300-year lifespan? Ye Tian speculated it was due to his perfect foundation, which provided more benefits upon becoming a Grandmaster.

Having wasted two months of duplication opportunities, Ye Tian, now a Grandmaster, prepared to use his two duplication chances.

And this time, his target was a rather special talent...

Chapter 102: High-tier Array Talent!

Array Talent!

This was a magical talent. Many of the arrays in the Demon Sea Base were set up by array masters. While their combat abilities might not be particularly strong, their methods of array setup were incredibly diverse—killing arrays, defense arrays, illusion arrays, sound-proofing arrays, energy channels, qi gathering arrays, and so on.

Ye Tian wanted to replicate array talent. His aim was not to master arrays, but to create an qi cultivation chamber for himself, obviating the need for a cultivation tower.

Array masters weren't hard to find; they were vital figures within the Demon Sea Base. Many major powers had array masters stationed within them. The Martial Pavilion headquarters even housed a high-ranking array master.

Previously, Ye Tian had reviewed the talent profile of an array master but had not chosen to replicate it as array talent was not his target then.

That day,

Ye Tian returned to the Martial Pavilion headquarters again.

Whoosh!

His talent-copying ability enveloped the entire Pavilion, and he finally located that same array master again.

Human: Nie Qi

Cultivation Talent: Top-grade

Array Talent: High-tier

"Copy!"

Silently, Ye Tian copied the man's array talent. He then discovered another high-tier array talent.

"My array talent is only high-tier; if I copy two more high-tier array talents, I can advance to top-grade array talent!"

Ye Tian's eyes lit up in delight.

So, he copied this high-tier array talent as well, recognizing that such talents were rare opportunities not to be missed.

Having copied two talents, Ye Tian had completed his mission. However, he didn't leave immediately. He wanted to purchase a basic array inscription manual and a Qi Gathering Array design diagram.

To build a cultivation chamber, a Qi Gathering Array must be laid to gather the elemental qi of heaven and earth.

The Qi Gathering Array design diagram was indispensable, and he also needed to learn the basics of array inscriptions. After all, even if Ye Tian copied array talent, without inscribing the arrays, he couldn't set them up.

"Do you have basic array inscription manuals and Qi Gathering Array design diagrams here?"

Ye Tian approached a counter to inquire.

The service attendant smiled, "Respected Master, we do have basic array inscription manuals, but we don't have Qi Gathering Array design diagrams. Those can only be purchased from the Array Masters Association."

"Array Masters Association!"

Ye Tian understood. High-level confidential items like Qi Gathering Array design diagrams were generally not for sale and were controlled by the Array Masters Association.

The Array Masters Association was an organization formed by array masters within the Demon Sea Base.

"It seems I must first become an array master and then join the Array Masters Association to get the Qi Gathering Array design diagram," Ye Tian mused.

Joining the Array Masters Association was not an issue for him. He knew it was a loose organization, not binding its members, who were affiliated with various powers or were freelancers.

He had no objections to joining such a casual organization.

"Then please give me a basic array inscription manual," Ye Tian spoke up.

The attendant nodded, "Alright, a basic array inscription manual will cost 50 million."

After paying, the service attendant quickly brought over a basic array inscription manual and handed it to Ye Tian.

He then returned home to study the basic array patterns.

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Opening the basic array inscription manual, it was filled with numerous array inscriptions that looked like mysterious characters.

At first glance, it was hard to discern their function.

So, Ye Tian activated his high-tier array talent.

Boom!!!

The world before him transformed; each array inscription became an illumination, flying out of the manual.

This was the world of arrays!

"Amazing!"

"Power!"

"Control!"

"Illusion!"

Ye Tian stared at the various runes and quickly understood the meanings of these basic symbols, knowing their functions.

"No wonder only those with a natural talent for array formations can become array masters. If you don't have this talent, you can't even understand the runes, let alone become an array master," Ye Tian exclaimed, his face lighting up in sudden realization.

Shortly thereafter, he began to study how to engrave array formations. To do so, he needed engraving pens, beast blood, and paper or materials infused with energy.

To prepare these items, Ye Tian spent tens of millions. It was clear that being an array master was a costly profession. Entering this field was difficult without enough money, unless one chose to join a powerful organization, which would then nurture the individual to become an array master. But doing so would undoubtedly sacrifice one's freedom.

The second type of array master slowly accumulated wealth to study array knowledge. Once they successfully entered the field, making money became easier.

Ye Tian was not concerned about money; he purchased large quantities of materials and practiced engraving runes fervently. Coupled with his high-level array talents, his progress was exponentially faster than that of a regular array master.

On the first day, he mastered ten runes; on the second day, he mastered eight; and on the third, seven. As he progressed, the runes he needed to master became increasingly complex, requiring more time.

However, after half a month, Ye Tian had already mastered fifty runes. With just twenty runes, one could be considered a junior array master. Mastering fifty runes undoubtedly made Ye Tian a true array master. He only needed to draw an array design, and he could then set up an array.

"It's time to go to the Array Masters Association!" Ye Tian announced, leaving his home to head toward the Array Masters Association.

Before long, a magnificent building appeared before him.

"Array Masters Association!"

The five ancient Chinese characters were engraved on the placard of the Array Masters Association.

"Beautiful writing!" Ye Tian exclaimed.

Actually, these were no longer just characters but a combination of various runes, ingeniously forming the words 'Array Masters Association.' If one activated their array talents, they would see another image: the five words composed of countless intricate runes.

However, most people lacked the talent for array formations, so they couldn't perceive the intricacies of these five characters.

As Ye Tian entered the Array Masters Association, a young girl approached him.

"Master, may I assist you with anything?" the girl inquired, bowing slightly.

Clearly, she was a staff member of the Array Masters Association. Ye Tian glanced at her and realized that she didn't possess any array talent; otherwise, she wouldn't be working here as regular staff.

Quickly, Ye Tian used his cloning talent to survey the area. There were only about twenty or so array masters in the Association, most with either beginner or intermediate-level talents for array formations. This matched his expectations. True array grandmasters would not be staying in the Array Masters Association; they either had their own dwellings or were sponsored by large organizations.

That's why he didn't come here first to clone array talents; instead, he went to the Martial Hall to clone high-level array talents.

"I want to participate in the array master examination," Ye Tian declared his intention.

"Ah, Master, you have an array talent as well?" the girl asked, surprised.

"Yes," Ye Tian nodded.

"Very well, let me handle the examination procedures for you," the girl said, leading Ye Tian to complete the necessary formalities and pay the exam fee.

Soon after, a notice arrived in Ye Tian's hands: "The examination will commence in three days."

Chapter 103: Formation Master Examination!

Three days later.

Ye Tian arrived once again at the Formation Master Association and was promptly led to the grand hall on the second floor of the Association.

"Ten people!"

Ye Tian surveyed the grand hall and saw eight young people, one middle-aged man, and one old man. Including himself, there were eleven people.

After Ye Tian reached this place, the staff member who had led the way left.

"Esteemed Grandmaster, are you the examiner?"

A young warrior walked over and nervously inquired.

"No, I'm also here to participate in the Formation Master Examination!"

Ye Tian responded indifferently.

There was a stir.

The looks the other examinees gave him varied; some were reverent, while others were disdainful.

To some examinees, the fact that Ye Tian could attain the rank of Grandmaster indicated he had extraordinary talent. However, participating in a Formation Master Examination at this time perhaps suggested that he was not very talented in the field of formation mastery. Otherwise, why would he not have passed the examination earlier?

Grandmasters indeed inspired awe, but they held no particular superiority over Formation Masters. Even a junior Formation Master could command enough respect to deter a Grandmaster from offending them. This was because Formation Masters were highly united and, although fewer in number, were crucial to the construction of the large base in Demon Sea Base.

So, no one dared to offend the community of Formation Masters.

For this reason, within the Formation Master community, one would address others based on their Formation Master rank. Even if someone was only a low-level Formation Master, they would be more distinguished than a Grand Martial Warrior but a junior Formation Master..

"It seems I've been underestimated."

Ye Tian thought to himself.

After all, it wasn't easy to gauge the age of a Grandmaster-level warrior. Some Grandmasters might be in their late teens but appeared no different from people of that age. With a life span extending up to 200 years, as long as one became a Grandmaster at seventeen or eighteen, there would be no noticeable change in their appearance for many years to come.

No one assumed Ye Tian was only seventeen or eighteen years old; they thought he must have reached his late teens by now.

Formation Master talents were usually identified as early as ten years old. If one had not become a Formation Master by the late teens, it would only prove that their talent for being a Formation Master was subpar—either weak or inferior.

Ye Tian keenly sensed the disdain directed at him by several people, who themselves had basic Formation Master talents and were assuredly destined to become junior Formation Masters.

"Interesting, a few elite warriors and Grand Martial Warriors dare to look down on me, a Grandmaster?"

Ye Tian sneered.

In an invisible manner, Ye Tian released a strand of his aura, suppressing those young people.

Boom!

Overwhelmed by the pressure, several young people took a step back, their faces turning slightly pale.

The individuals who had suffered greatly didn't dare to look at Ye Tian anymore. They finally realized their own recklessness. How could they, who were not even junior Formation Masters, dare to disrespect a Grandmaster?

If it weren't for the fact that fighting was prohibited in the large base in Demon Sea Base, these individuals would likely have turned into corpses upon encountering other Grandmasters.

"Grandmaster, this old man has taken part in many examinations and has never seen you before. Is this your first time participating in an examination?"

The sole old examinee walked over and respectfully asked.

"Yes, it is indeed my first time participating in an examination,"

Ye Tian nodded.

Immediately afterward, he scrutinized the old man. According to what he saw from his Talent Copying ability, the old man was named Li Zhong and had a weak Formation Master talent. With such a meager talent, he probably didn't even have a chance of becoming a Formation Master, did he?

However, it was not entirely accurate to say so. The profession of Formation Master was somewhat unique. As long as one had some level of Formation Master talent and took some special measures, there was a slim chance of advancing to junior Formation Master. However, the difficulty was tremendous, and the success rate was less than one percent.

Li Zhong was already so old, yet he was still participating in the Formation Master Examination. Clearly, he had indomitable willpower.

"Master, are you familiar with the examination?" Li Zhong asked Ye Tian.

"I'm not," Ye Tian shook his head.

Li Zhong elaborated, "Let me explain it to you, Master. The examination for an Array Master is divided into three stages. The first stage involves engraving array patterns; you need to engrave at least 20 to pass. Anyone who comes for the examination can get through this part. The second stage is to set up a simple array. This is where it becomes difficult, as the complexity of engraving an array pattern and setting up an array are entirely different. Most people fail at this second stage. As for the third stage, it is neither easy nor difficult. It involves identifying loopholes in an array. The more you find, the higher your score. You need to find at least one to pass. I myself have failed the third stage a hundred times!"

"Failed a hundred times?" Ye Tian was shocked. Was the third stage really that hard? Given Li Zhong's modest talent, he was still able to engrave 20 array patterns and set up a simple array. The effort that must have taken was not something just anyone could achieve. Yet, this determined Li Zhong had failed the third stage a hundred times.

Although Li Zhong hadn't succeeded in the exam, he was still an incredibly capable apprentice Array Master. He could set up the most basic arrays and make money from it, just without the prestige of being a junior Array Master.

Soon after, a man in his thirties who was a mid-level Array Master arrived.

"I'm Chen Yao, a mid-level Array Master from the Array Masters Association. I am here to oversee your examination today. The first stage of the examination begins now. Distribute the engraving pens, monster blood, and elemental papers to them," said Chen Yao.

Members of the Array Masters Association handed out the engraving pens, monster blood, and elemental papers. The examination had begun!

Shush, shush, shush!

Ye Tian picked up the engraving pen and effortlessly etched 20 characters, then stopped.

"Array Master talent," Ye Tian silently activated his own Array Master talent. He looked at the elemental papers that he had worked on and saw the array patterns emitting light, leaving the paper and vividly appearing one by one. Each pattern's meaning was very clear.

This confirmed that these array patterns were engraved accurately and were qualified. If they were not, then activating his Array Master talent would not result in any change or it might show flaws.

Soon, the other participants also finished their engravings.

Examiner Chen Yao glanced around and nodded, "Good, everyone passed. Now, onto the second stage. Bring the array design charts!"

A girl brought over ten design charts and handed them to Chen Yao.

"This is a basic soundproofing array that only involves the basic 20 array patterns. Each of you take one and review it. Remember, you cannot use this design for profit, or you know what will happen—the Array Masters Association will never employ you," Chen Yao sternly warned.

Soon, the design charts were distributed to the participants. Ye Tian carefully started to read the soundproofing array design.

"Huh, so it's like this," Ye Tian was surprised.

The design was similar to building a house. The array patterns laid the foundation, creating a three-dimensional space, forming a perfect looping array space. This array space, when infused with elemental power, became an array.

This soundproofing array was not complicated; Ye Tian understood it at a glance.

Just then, a young man suddenly spoke up, "Master, how about we compete to see who can set up this soundproofing array first?"

Ye Tian looked over and realized that the person provoking him was one of the individuals he had intimidated earlier.

"Sure, how about we raise the stakes?"

Ye Tian grinned mischievously.

Chapter 104: Seven Flaws!

"A wager? Alright!"

The young man pondered for a moment before speaking, "Betting money is too uninteresting. How about we bet on points instead? Once you become a junior array master, you can earn 100 points as a reward from the Array Masters Association. These points can't be bought with money; you can only earn them by taking on tasks from the association. Therefore, points are extremely valuable. I am quite confident in becoming an array master, although I'm not sure about you. Shall we settle on this wager?"

"Agreed!"

Ye Tian consented.

He wasn't short on money, but he did lack points. Although he wasn't sure how many points he needed for the Qi Gathering Array design, it was undoubtedly good to earn more points.

Why wouldn't he agree if this young man was willing to give him points?

Name: Chen Dong

Cultivation Talent: High-level

Array Talent: Low-level

Looking at the talent information of the young man, Chen Dong, Ye Tian sneered internally, "A mere low-level array master, even if you have studied array patterns for a longer time, the gap between high-level and low-level array talents is insurmountable with just time alone."

The second round of the examination began.

One by one, array plate embryos were brought over by the staff, one for each person.

Array plate embryos were made of special materials capable of holding array patterns, whereas energy paper could only hold array marks. If one were to connect the array marks into an array, the energy paper would inevitably shatter, unable to withstand the power of the array.

Therefore, to lay out an array, one must use an array plate embryo.

"Begin!"

As the voice of Examiner Chen Yao fell, the examinees began to set up their arrays.

Ye Tian picked up an inscription pen, dipped it in a bit of beast blood, and began to inscribe.

With the support of his high-level array talent, he inscribed the first array mark.

Then, building on that first array mark, he continued to inscribe one mark after another.

Guided by his high-level array talent, he was constructing a soundproofing array in a three-dimensional space.

"Draw a stroke here, and another here..."

Thanks to the amplification of his high-level array talent, Ye Tian had a clear grasp of how to inscribe the array, a level of detail control that low-level array talents couldn't match.

Soon enough.

Ye Tian had inscribed 20 array marks, forming an array space.

"Just one final step left," Ye Tian thought to himself.

Immediately after, he channeled some energy into the three-dimensional array space.

Boom!

The array plate burst into brilliance, forming a simple array!

A soundproofing array had been successfully set up!

Examiner Chen Yao looked at Ye Tian with surprise and admiration, then nodded, signaling Ye Tian to sit to the side and practice, waiting for the examination of the others to finish.

Ye Tian glanced over at Chen Dong and saw that Chen Dong was very anxious at this moment because he realized Ye Tian had already completed his array while he had only inscribed 12 array marks.

"I've lost. I'm doomed. I'm going to lose 100 points," Chen Dong muttered in despair.

His mind was strongly shaken; his hand trembled, and an array mark was messed up.

Crash!

The array plate was ruined; the setup failed.

One failure was not critical; the examination allowed for one mistake, but if he failed again, he would lose his qualification for the exam.

A staff member brought over a second array plate embryo. Chen Dong knew this was his last chance. If he failed again, he would have to come back next time, and the one-time registration fee was not a small amount either!

Moreover, he absolutely couldn't fail the exam; otherwise, he might be ridiculed when he returned.

"Losing is losing; let's first pass the exam," Chen Dong steadied his emotions and started to seriously set up the soundproofing array.

Chen Dong steadied his emotions and began to seriously set up the sound-proofing array. This time, Chen Dong performed with remarkable stability, completing the sound-proofing array in no time. Even though he had failed once, he wasn't the last one to finish; that dubious honor went to Old Man Li Zhong.

Li Zhong's talent in array formation was abysmal, which slowed down his progress considerably. He dared not make a single mistake because his mediocre talents offered no advantages in setting up the array; a small mistake would mean failure.

"Very good, everyone has passed the second round. There are no freeloaders here. Let's move on to the third round!" Chen Yao nodded in satisfaction.

The third round was the most crucial—it required finding the flaws in an array. Chen Yao produced an array disk genuinely engraved with array patterns. Then he activated it, instantly enveloping the entire hall in an array.

At that moment, everyone was enclosed within the array.

"Basic-tier array!" Ye Tian sensed the array's level. It was not too strong and was a trapping array. Although he could easily break such an array, today's examination was not about breaking it but about finding its flaws.

"This is the Xiao Qing Yuan trapping array. Due to a mistake during its construction, it does have several flaws. I can promise you all, find one flaw and you can become a junior array master. For each additional flaw found, you'll get 100 extra points. Conversely, if you identify a wrong flaw, you'll lose 100 points. Don't get too ambitious; if you find one right and one wrong, you'll end up with zero points and fail the examination! The examination time is half an hour," Chen Yao explained.

Upon hearing this, Ye Tian was thrilled. Finding more flaws would earn him 100 extra points each, and he was short on points. As Chen Yao announced the start, Ye Tian immediately activated his high-tier array talent.

The entire array transformed into a field of array patterns in Ye Tian's view, consisting of roughly 50 array markings. He scrutinized each one, searching for flaws.

"This array marking conflicts with this one. It's wrong—take note!"

"This one is also wrong—take note!"

"Hmm, this should have had a different array marking engraved. It's wrong; the two array markings look similar but have slight differences. This mistake reduces the array's power by at least 10%—take note!"

Half an hour passed, and the examination ended.

Ye Tian was beaming. He had found seven flaws and was quite confident he had made no mistakes. On the other side, Old Man Li Zhong looked utterly disheartened; he hadn't found a single flaw.

Ye Tian noticed Li Zhong's expression and knew the old man had failed. But he understood why—simply put, it was a matter of talent. Inferior talents couldn't even see the entire array space, let alone identify the markings and their flaws. Thus, the third round was essentially a talent screening, a fact that Old Man Li Zhong did not understand. No one had bothered to enlighten him. No matter how many times the exam might be taken, Li Zhong would never pass. Talent ruled the age, and without the talent for being an array master, all of Li Zhong's efforts would be futile unless he could find an item that improved his array mastery talent.

"Write down the flaws on paper and hand them to me one by one!" Chen Yao deactivated the array and instructed.

One by one, Ye Tian and the others wrote down the flaws they had discovered. Old Man Li Zhong also jotted down what he thought were flaws, essentially guessing in the dark. After all, who knew? He might get lucky. But the odds were overwhelmingly against him.

Once everyone had handed in their papers, Chen Yao, the intermediate array master, began to announce, "There are a total of seven people who passed the exam: Ye Tian, Chen Dong, Li Dehai..."

Chapter 105: The Shanghe Array Tower Mission!

Three people had failed the assessment. Old man Li Zhong was one of them, another was a middle-aged man whose talent was only mediocre; he had failed as well. The third was a young man who, despite possessing basic array talent, failed due to his shaky foundational grasp.

"Next, I will announce the number of loopholes each of you found!" Chen Yao declared.

"Li Dehai, you found one loophole!"

"Zhang Keke, you found two loopholes!"

...

"Chen Dong, you found four loopholes!"

At that moment, Chen Dong was so excited he could barely contain himself. He shot a provocative glance at Ye Tian. He was no longer afraid of offending Ye Tian. As far as he was concerned, he had become a basic array master and a member of the Array Master Association. What could a grandmaster like Ye Tian do to him, especially when he had no intention of leaving the Demon Sea Base? He was fearless!

"Ye Tian, you found seven loopholes and are the only one who found all of them!" Chen Yao walked over to Ye Tian and said, "Your talent must be high-level. This flawed Small Azure Cloud Array was set up by a high-ranking master, and only someone with high-level array talent can find all the loopholes at the basic array master level."

High-level array talent? Chen Dong looked at Ye Tian incredulously, his face filled with despair and jealousy. He himself only had basic array talent, and although it was better than average, it couldn't compare with high-level array talent. The two were in entirely different leagues.

"That's correct," Ye Tian admitted without argument.

"Ye Tian, if you're willing to test your array talent, the Array Master Association will award you an extra 1000 points once your talent level is confirmed. Would you like to take the test?" Chen Yao inquired.

Testing talent was a confidential matter, and the loosely organized Array Master Association didn't compel anyone to disclose their array talent level; it was all voluntary. The association

wouldn't force any array master. If Ye Tian chose not to test, they wouldn't compel him, but they would also not offer any additional rewards.

"Master Chen Yao, may I ask how many points are required for the Qi Gathering Array design diagram?" Ye Tian suddenly asked.

"For a design that can gather qi threefold, it requires 500 points; fivefold requires 1000 points, and sixfold needs 2000 points," Chen Yao explained.

But he was a bit puzzled. Why was Ye Tian suddenly asking about this?

"2000 points for a sixfold Qi Gathering Array diagram?" Ye Tian frowned slightly.

Gathering energy sixfold didn't necessarily mean one could cultivate six times faster. If that were the case, cultivation would be too easy. The amplification depended not only on the concentration of energy but also on one's own talent for cultivation. According to Ye Tian's calculations, if he cultivated in a sixfold energy environment, given his Morning Star level cultivation talent, his cultivation speed should increase by threefold. For someone at the Transcendent level, doubling the speed would be good, and those with top-level talent could at most increase their speed by 1.5 times.

"I must buy that sixfold Qi Gathering Array design. If I take the talent test, I can get 1000 points. Plus, the 700 points from this assessment and the 100 points won from Chen Dong, I would have a total of 1800 points. I would then be only 200 points short of 2000," Ye Tian calculated.

Immediately, he nodded, "Alright, I'm willing to take the test."

"Excellent, I'll get the Array Talent Testing Orb right away," Chen Yao said excitedly.

Having successfully recruited an array master with high-level array talent, once confirmed, would mean he could earn extra points for this assessment task. That's why he was so eager.

"Master Chen Yao, the testing orb won't reveal other talents, will it?" Ye Tian asked in advance, lest his hidden talents be exposed.

"No, it won't!" Chen Yao assured him immediately. "The Array Master Association wouldn't do something like prying into others' private talents. Our testing orb can only evaluate array talents."

"Then I'm relieved," Ye Tian said.

Soon after, Chen Yao brought over a testing orb to measure Ye Tian's array talents.

The test ended quickly—

"Indeed, you have a high-tier array talent. Congratulations, you've earned an extra 1000 points from the Array Master Association!" Chen Yao said, somewhat envious.

After all, even for him, earning 1000 points at once was a difficult task. Who wouldn't envy Ye Tian for so easily achieving 1000 points? But there was no helping it; those with great talent received such treatment.

Shortly thereafter, Chen Yao distributed array master badges and point cards to the seven examiners. Points were stored on the point cards, which could only be used by the individual it was tied to, rendering it useless to anyone else.

"Chen Dong, 100 points!" Ye Tian demanded.

Not daring to offend Ye Tian, Chen Dong relented. If Ye Tian had merely been a grandmaster, Chen Dong wouldn't have felt pressured, but Ye Tian was a high-tier array master, destined to climb high within the Array Master Association.

"Grandmaster Ye Tian, I apologize, I was wrong. I'll give you the 100 points right away!" Chen Dong capitulated, unashamed. After all, who would dare not yield before a grandmaster with high-tier array talents?

"Turn it over," Ye Tian said indifferently.

Once Chen Dong transferred the 100 points, Ye Tian completely disregarded him. Spending time on such an inconsequential person would be a waste.

Array Master Association, first-floor task hall—

Ye Tian was looking at tasks, seeking to quickly earn the 200 points.

Tasks flashed by at high speed; Ye Tian examined each, but most were not suitable for him, either requiring too much time or too high a skill level.

Suddenly, a task caught Ye Tian's eye:

[Shanghe Array Tower Task: Accept the task to gain entry into the Shanghe Array Tower. Can be accepted once a year. Requirements: Grandmaster, high-tier array talent, and at least beginner-level array skill. Missing any one disqualifies. Points rewarded depend on completion.]

Stunned by the task, Ye Tian wondered if it had been prepared specifically for him, but the date it was posted indicated otherwise; the task had been hanging there for decades.

"I'd like to take the Shanghe Array Tower task," Ye Tian announced at the counter.

"Please hand over your ID card," the staff member stood up, very polite.

Anyone qualified to accept the Shanghe Array Tower task would have to be an individual with high-tier array talents; such a person was undoubtedly a high-level array master. Even a king would be polite to a high-level array master.

Ye Tian handed over his ID card. The staff member quickly confirmed his qualifications.

After accepting the task, Ye Tian received some information about the Shanghe Array Tower.

Chapter 106: Achieving the Goal through Integration

Ye Tian opened the information; all related contents about the Shanghe Array Tower were displayed one by one. The Shanghe Array Tower was established by King Shanghe, who was once a renowned figure in the Demon Sea Base. Not only was he a king-level powerhouse, but he was also a top-tier array master. He was one of the few with the highest attainments in array

skills in the Demon Sea Base and was also one of the contributors in the construction of the base's defensive array. Unfortunately, due to an accident, King Shanghe returned to the Demon Sea Base with serious injuries. He hastily constructed the Array Tower and left behind his legacy.

Anyone with high-tier array talents was eligible to challenge the Shanghe Array Tower. Clearing each floor would reward one with a array design diagram. Once someone cleared the ninth floor, they could become the successor of King Shanghe. However, no one had become his successor to date. The reason was unknown. Many who had high-tier array talents had given up after reaching the eighth floor.

What couldn't be ignored was that the Array Tower offered numerous array diagrams and benefits. But it was also fraught with dangers, mainly consisting of death traps. Therefore, only grandmasters were allowed to take on this mission; otherwise, ordinary warriors might easily perish within the Shanghe Array Tower.

Having understood the situation of the Shanghe Array Tower, Ye Tian proceeded to visit it.

"This is the place!"

Ye Tian arrived in an old town area, one of the earliest constructed neighborhoods, which was now located on the periphery of the Demon Sea Base. Although it had few residents, it was tranquil, making it a chosen place for many retired warriors to reside.

The Shanghe Array Tower was situated in this area and was protected by the Array Master Association. They had hired a group of soldiers to guard it day and night, prohibiting ordinary people from approaching.

Ye Tian presented his mission credentials and identification card and successfully entered the Shanghe Array Tower.

Inside the tower.

Ye Tian walked into the first array.

Boom!

The world changed dramatically, as countless flames surged out, making Ye Tian feel as though he was in a world of fire.

"A fire-based offensive array!" Ye Tian was intrigued.

The attack power of these flames was very strong; ordinary warriors would find it hard to survive. Only a few specialized warriors could manage to save themselves.

Ye Tian tested whether he could break the array with his strong power.

"Quasi-Mystic-Level Strength Talent—Green Wind Slash!"

Ye Tian's strongest attack descended upon the array, but it was quickly deflected by an unknown force.

"As expected, there's no easy way out. Unless my strength reaches the king-level, any attack will be deflected by an unknown force," Ye Tian mused, frowning.

To break the array, one needed to rely on array talents.

Thus, Ye Tian activated his high-tier array talents.

In an instant, the realm of fire transformed into a array space, and a large number of array marks appeared before Ye Tian.

He saw that these array marks were interconnected, forming bursts of fire that attacked him.

Upon understanding the composition of the fire array, Ye Tian gradually developed a strategy.

"Destroy the array nodes!"

After some attempts, with the assistance of his high-tier array talents, Ye Tian quickly located a array node—the connection point between array marks.

"Break!"

Focusing his energy into his finger, Ye Tian shattered the node.

Ye Tian focused his energy into a single finger and struck down one of the nodes. Forced back, the fire array began to destabilize. Soon after, Ye Tian identified one node after another, shattering them one by one. When more than ten nodes had been broken, the array imploded with a bang, fragmenting into pieces. The first layer of the array was broken!

"Whoa!"

A scroll appeared in Ye Tian's hand out of thin air.

"Basic Defensive Array Blueprint: Rain Curtain!"

Ye Tian pocketed the elementary array blueprint and immediately started on the second layer. The second layer was more complex, an ice array. It took Ye Tian several hours to break the array. Fortunately, his strength was significant; he was able to endure in the array space for a long time. Had an average grandmaster come, they would not have been able to withstand the attack from the ice array before breaking it.

The third layer of the array was the Green Wood Array, a wood-element offensive array. It took Ye Tian nearly a whole day to break the array. His elemental energy was almost exhausted, and he was also physically worn out. Reluctantly, Ye Tian chose to abandon continuing the assessment.

"I've broken through three layers, obtained one Basic Defensive Array Blueprint: Rain Curtain, one Basic Fire Array Blueprint: Fire Dragon Ascending Sky, and one Stealth Array Blueprint: Concealment. That's three blueprints in total—a decent haul. I just don't know how many points I can get."

Carrying the three blueprints, Ye Tian left the Shanghe Array Tower. After resting for one night, Ye Tian visited the Array Master Association the next day.

"I'm here to claim my mission!"

Ye Tian arrived at the mission office to claim the Shanghe Array Tower mission. The staff took Ye Tian's identification card, checked it, and then confirmed, "We received word from the Shanghe Array Tower that you did indeed complete the mission and even broke through the third layer. You're rewarded 900 points—100 points for the first layer, 200 for the second, and 400 for the third. Reminder, Ye Tian, you can take on this mission again next time, but if you don't break through the fourth layer, there won't be any reward."

"Understood!" Ye Tian nodded.

The staff credited Ye Tian with 900 points and asked, "Ye Tian, you must have obtained three array blueprints from the Shanghe Array Tower, right? If you have blueprints that our Array Master Association doesn't possess, you can exchange them for certain points. Would you like to do that?"

"Sure!"

Ye Tian took out the three blueprints. Unfortunately, only the Stealth Array Blueprint: Concealment was something the Array Master Association didn't have. The other two blueprints they already had in their collection and couldn't be exchanged. However, just with that one blueprint, Ye Tian earned 500 points, significantly boosting his point total.

After doing some calculations, Ye Tian found that he now had 3300 points, enough to purchase a Qi Gathering Array Blueprint with a 6-fold amplification. Although the blueprints were not expensive—the Array Master Association had plenty—this specific one was valuable because they didn't have it yet. Normally, an elementary array blueprint would only cost dozens of points. However, the Qi Gathering Array Blueprint, although a mid-level array, was priced as expensively as high-level arrays, costing 2000 points.

Without any hesitation, Ye Tian bought a Qi Gathering Array Blueprint capable of 6-fold elemental amplification, and he also spent 1000 points to buy some high-level array disks. After all, unused points were a waste.

Once the Qi Gathering Array Blueprint and array disks were purchased, almost everything was ready. Next, he needed to study the array patterns to attain the proficiency necessary for setting up the Qi Gathering Array. Once that was done, he could proceed to establish the array.

Once the Qi Gathering Array was completed, Ye Tian would be able to step into the ultimate realm of grandmasters within a short period.

Chapter 107: Flying and Blood Bone Talent!

At Home

Ye Tian closely examined the design diagram of the Qi Gathering Array. Only then did he realize that to set up a Qi Gathering Array, one not only needed to master 100 array glyphs, but also required spirit stones to activate the Qi Gathering Array.

"The most basic Qi Gathering Arrays don't need spirit stones, but the energy they slowly absorb is hardly more than what's available in the outside world. Only with the help of spirit stones in the intermediate Qi Gathering Arrays can one quickly condense the natural essence. No wonder the villa doesn't have this kind of intermediate Qi Gathering Array—it requires spirit stones. Ordinary people can't get hold of spirit stones; even if they have a Qi Gathering Array, they can't activate it!"

Ye Tian had an epiphany and subsequently burst into delighted laughter.

Spirit stones were something he had in abundance! In the secret realm, he had dug up over 2000 spirit stones. Each of these stones could be used for a month, so 2000 spirit stones would last him many years.

Indeed, Ye Tian was not lacking in spirit stones.

"My next goal is to practice Purple Blood Body Refining Technique, understand the Dao, and comprehend the array glyphs."

Though the practice routine was quite complex, Ye Tian took great pleasure in it.

In a flash, half a month had passed. During this time, Ye Tian's cultivation hadn't made significant progress primarily because he had devoted less time to the Purple Blood Body Refining Technique. However, his physical strength had reached the power of two elephants, and his understanding of the Dao had finally increased to 22%, enabling him to practice silver-level techniques.

Since he didn't have any silver-level techniques at the moment, he put that plan aside for now.

As for the array glyphs, Ye Tian had already engraved 71 of them, reaching the level of a junior array master. All he needed was to engrave 80 array glyphs and master some intermediate arrays to become an intermediate array master.

But Ye Tian felt that if he wanted to engrave 100 array glyphs, he would need at least another two to three months, and he couldn't wait that long.

"I must duplicate more high-tier array talents!"

Ye Tian resolved.

Top-tier array talents were hard to come by, but high-level array talents weren't. Besides, his talent duplication cooldown had ended, giving him two more duplication opportunities.

This time, he planned to duplicate two high-level array talents and combine them to elevate his own array talent to the top-tier.

Once he had top-tier array talents, he could complete the engraving of 100 array glyphs and set up the Qi Gathering Array within a short time.

Eventually, that day came.

Ye Tian visited various bases of major forces and, after some investigation, found traces of two high-level array masters in the Helian family. He duplicated their high-level array talents.

Afterward, Ye Tian returned home and fused the two high-level array talents.

Half an hour passed.

A slightly weary Ye Tian looked at the talent level displayed on his retinal screen with a smile on his face—

"With top-tier array talents, I should be able to engrave 100 array glyphs within a month. Then, I can set up the Qi Gathering Array and make all this time and effort worthwhile," Ye Tian mused.

He continued to ponder on the array glyphs, striving to engrave 100 of them as soon as possible. To achieve this goal quickly, Ye Tian even reduced the time he spent on practicing the Purple Blood Body Refining Technique and temporarily put his understanding of the Dao aside.

Finally, 26 days later, with the help of his top-tier array talents, Ye Tian successfully engraved 100 array glyphs.

Everything was ready except for the opportune moment.

Ye Tian prepared to take out a high-grade array disc embryo and began to engrave the glyphs for an intermediate Qi Gathering Array.

Because he barely met the qualifications for creating a Qi Gathering Array, and considering the complexity of an intermediate Qi Gathering Array, even with the amplification effects of his top-tier array talents, Ye Tian couldn't guarantee a 100% success rate.

"Begin!"

The first array glyph was successfully engraved, followed by the second, the third, the fourth...

During the engraving of the forty-second array glyph, a slight error occurred. The engraving failed, and the array disc embryo was ruined.

He took out a new array plate embryo and continued his work. After wasting three more, Ye Tian finally succeeded on his fourth attempt.

He embedded the completed array plate into the floor of his cultivation room and affixed a spiritual stone on it, thereby activating the Qi Gathering Array.

Boom!

The spiritual energy of heaven and earth surged into the room, gradually thickening the atmosphere within the array's space. About half an hour passed, and the concentration of spiritual energy in the cultivation room had reached levels more than ten times higher than the outside world.

"Such rich spiritual energy; even taking a single breath feels incredibly smooth!" Ye Tian was quite pleased with the effects of the Qi Gathering Array.

He could now focus entirely on cultivation. With his Morning Star-level cultivation talent and a high-tier Qi cultivation technique—the Purple Blood Body Refining Technique—supplemented by the Qi Gathering Array, his rate of progress was astonishing. If outsiders knew, they'd undoubtedly label him a monster among monsters.

After a day of cultivation, Ye Tian mumbled to himself, "At this rate, I can increase my strength by 9 Elephants of Power within a month!" Nine Elephants of Power in a month meant that in ten months he'd reach 90 Elephants of Power. Considering that his rate of progress might slow down a bit later, a year would be sufficient to reach the pinnacle of the Grandmaster level.

Days passed, and Ye Tian had two more opportunities to replicate talents. However, he was indecisive about what to copy.

"Ah, I remember now! Xiao Xue has many talents I haven't copied yet."

Xiao Xue was the name he had given to his dragon companion. Glancing over, he saw Xiao Xue playing with Little Jin and didn't wish to disturb them.

"Which one should I copy?" Ye Tian hesitated.

In the end, his gaze settled on two of Xiao Xue's talents:

[High-Level Flying Talent]

[Medium-Level Blood Bone Talent]

It wasn't that Ye Tian didn't want to copy other talents; it was that most of the other talents were dragon-related. He didn't possess dragon blood, so copying those might not be very effective.

"The High-Level Flying Talent is pretty good; I've wanted to copy it for a while now. Since I don't know which talent to copy at the moment, this seems like a decent choice!" Ye Tian thought.

Copy, integrate!

Quickly, Ye Tian had the High-Level Flying Talent. He tested it by flying around the room. The result was that, without the aid of any other forces, he floated into the air, flying to any corner at will, thanks to the Flying Talent.

After resting for a while, he began to copy the Medium-Level Blood Bone Talent. He already knew what it was from seeing Xiao Xue use it a few times. The Blood Bone Talent was a unique skill that allowed one to choose a bone within the body to refine with blood, ultimately forging it into a Blood Bone weapon that could be taken out or put back into the body at will. The key was that, upon refinement, the Blood Bone could take any weapon shape, even that of a sword. Moreover, a new bone would regrow where the Blood Bone was extracted, so it wouldn't affect the body adversely.

The only drawback was that the Blood Bone Talent was only of medium level; it could at most form a high-level elemental weapon. Once he reached the King level, this talent wouldn't be of much use.

However, it was better than nothing. If he could somehow upgrade the Blood Bone Talent in the future, it would be incredibly powerful.

Chapter 108: Can I Fly, Even if Just a Little?

Ye Tian had originally planned to cultivate until he reached the pinnacle of the Grandmaster level before leaving the Demon Sea Base. However, after only just over twenty days of cultivation, having just raised his physical strength to 10 elephants, a message arrived, disrupting Ye Tian's plans.

"Something's happened at the Linhai Base?"

Ye Tian frowned.

The message came from Yue Ling; its accuracy should be high.

As for the Linhai Base, to say Ye Tian had no emotional attachment to it would be untrue. It was where he had lived and also the hometown of him and his sister, Ye Yu.

Though they had now moved and settled in the Demon Sea Base, that didn't mean he had forgotten his old home. His villa at the Linhai Base was still unsold, indicating his intention to return someday.

But now, something had occurred at the Linhai Base.

Immediately, Ye Tian contacted Yue Ling, hoping to get more accurate information from her. After all, the message she had sent was simply one brief line, making it hard to know the specifics.

An hour later.

Ye Tian met Yue Ling again.

"What's happened at the Linhai Base?" Ye Tian asked, his brow furrowed.

Yue Ling looked gravely serious, "A beast tide is about to erupt, and the Linhai Base is within the affected area. Under normal circumstances, the Demon Sea Base wouldn't stand idly by and let the Linhai Base be destroyed, given its strategic importance. But now, the Demon Sea Base can't afford to worry about Linhai. This beast tide is sweeping across several major bases; Linhai being a smaller base, is just collateral damage. Only the core members of the major families at the Demon Sea Base know this. I came to know it due to my recent breakthrough to the Grandmaster level, which raised my status in the Yue family. Don't spread this news; it could cause chaos. I have a feeling this beast tide is even more fearsome than the one forty years ago!"

"More fearsome than the one forty years ago!"

Ye Tian's pupils constricted, realizing why the Demon Sea Base couldn't spare any attention for Linhai. The Demon Sea Base itself was facing the threat of annihilation; how could they possibly care for a minor base like Linhai?

In this beast tide, the Linhai Base could only rely on itself.

"What do you think is the likelihood of Linhai Base being destroyed?"

Ye Tian asked.

"Close to one hundred percent," Yue Ling sighed. "Ye Tian, you have no idea how many bases have been destroyed over the past hundred years. Our Yue family knows a lot. Don't be fooled by the glamor of the large bases; even they could collapse at any moment. Moreover, the human situation is getting increasingly dire. It's said that the spatial rifts are expanding, and as time passes, stronger and stronger beasts will appear. It's not impossible that humanity could be annihilated someday."

A heavy atmosphere enveloped the room.

At that moment, Ye Tian spoke, "I'm planning to go to the Linhai Base. I hope you can help look after my sister; consider it a favor I owe you."

"You're going to the Linhai Base, are you out of your mind?"

Yue Ling exclaimed.

While the Demon Sea Base also faced risks, it still had a relatively higher chance of survival. In the worst-case scenario, they could seek help from the Super Bases, with which they maintained contact.

But Linhai Base didn't even have defensive arrays. Once the beast tide broke through, the whole base could be flattened in an instant. Even Kings would struggle against the swarm of beasts.

"What's your cultivation level, Ye Tian?"

Just a Grandmaster!

Even a small part of the beast tide is not something a single Grandmaster can resist.

"Ye Tian, this is too dangerous and is not worth it!"

Yue Ling tried to persuade him.

Ye Tian gave a slight smile, "Don't worry, I'm not foolish. I'm only going to try and stop it; if I can't, I'll leave! There aren't many beasts that can stop me if I want to go."

He wasn't bragging. With his current level and top-tier speed talent, he was faster than some Kings. Moreover, he had a high-level flying talent, which allowed him to simply fly away.

With the many special talents that Ye Tian possessed, he was undoubtedly one of the most difficult warriors to kill in this world.

It was precisely because he held these trump cards that he dared to venture to the Linhai Base. Otherwise, he wasn't foolish enough to court death.

Yue Ling knew she couldn't persuade Ye Tian, so she advised, "Ye Tian, be careful. If things really don't go well, hurry back."

Ye Tian nodded, then parted ways with Yue Ling.

Before leaving, Ye Tian gave some instructions to Ye Yu. He did not mention the crisis at the Linhai Base or the looming beast tide; speaking of these would serve no purpose other than to cause Ye Yu worry.

"Xiao Xue, let's go. I'll take you somewhere. You're always saying you're never full, right? This time, I'll make sure you eat your fill. How does that sound?"

Ye Tian kicked the dozing War Blood Sky Dragon as he spoke.

"Really?"

The War Blood Sky Dragon woke up upon hearing Ye Tian's words, lifted its head, and asked excitedly.

"Absolutely true. Let's go," urged Ye Tian.

"Alright!"

The War Blood Sky Dragon immediately followed Ye Tian.

Walking down the street didn't cause much of a stir, as the people of this era had never seen a dragon. Moreover, the War Blood Sky Dragon didn't look like the dragons described in novels; its body was not slender but rather quite robust.

To others, they might just think of the War Blood Sky Dragon as some sort of dragon beast.

Furthermore, Xiao Xue had completely restrained its dragon aura, making it even less likely to be recognized.

Soon, Ye Tian and Xiao Xue left Demon Sea Base and ventured into the wilderness.

"Xiao Xue, carry me and fly. We're going to Linhai Base!" Ye Tian commande

"Fly? Do I know how to fly?" Xiao Xue asked, bewildered.

It never had the chance to fly at Demon Sea Base and had never tried flying before. It even considered itself a land-based beast.

Ye Tian stared at Xiao Xue for a long while, contemplating whether to give it a good beating. This creature was a dragon, after all, and even had a high aptitude for flying, yet it claimed not to know how?

"You have a high aptitude for flying; you definitely can. Try it out. If you don't fly, there will be no beast blood for you to drink this time," Ye Tian started to threaten Xiao Xue with the prospect of no beast blood.

Hearing that, Xiao Xue grew anxious. Spurred by its flying talent, it soared into the sky within just a few seconds, quickly mastering the art of flying.

"So it turns out I'm a flying dragon!" Xiao Xue exclaimed excitedly.

With a flash of light, Xiao Xue appeared beside Ye Tian, lowered its body, and said, "Dear master, climb onto my back. Xiao Xue will take you flying."

Ye Tian jumped onto Xiao Xue's back, sat cross-legged, and pointed in the direction of the Linhai Base. "Take off, let's go to Linhai Base!"

Chapter 109: Arrival at Linhai!

At the Linhai Base.

Warriors were still hunting ferocious beasts in the wilderness, while ordinary people or martial trainees carried on with their daily routines. None of them noticed the impending beast tide. Meanwhile, it seemed that the Demon Sea Base had completely abandoned Linhai Base and would not notify anyone there.

However, many high-ranking officials at Linhai Base sensed something unusual. Not that they discovered the beast tide, but they noticed that the higher-ups from the Martial Pavilion and the banks were secretly evacuating. A meeting was convened in response to this situation.

Zong Shi, the old man, and a group of major warriors, gathered at the Lin family's residence. Since the Lin family was nominally in charge, it was the natural place for the meeting. But this time, the meeting was chaired not by Lin Wanli but by Zong Shi, the only one qualified for the task.

At the meeting, Zong Shi began, "Ladies and gentlemen, you must all be quite aware by now. The top officials in the black market's Martial Pavilion have all discreetly left, and the Pavilion's leader, Wu, is nowhere to be found. The entire Pavilion is left with only martial artists and trainees from our Linhai Base. The same goes for the banks; their higher-ups have also vanished. According to our investigation, they have all gone to the Demon Sea Base."

"Gone to the Demon Sea Base?" The warriors frowned in unison.

"Did something happen at the Demon Sea Base?" one of the warriors asked.

Zong Shi shook his head, "I'm not sure. It could be that something has happened at the Demon Sea Base, but it's more likely that something is about to happen here at Linhai Base!"

"What? Something's going to happen at Linhai Base?" A great martial warrior, originally from the Tieya (Iron Fang) Base, immediately exclaimed. He had experienced the fall of the Tieya Base not long ago. Could it be that Linhai Base was next?

At this point, Zong Shi elaborated, "Think about it. If something happened at Demon Sea Base, what would be the benefit for those people from the bank and the Martial Pavilion to go there? They are but low-ranking individuals at Demon Sea Base; they have better lives here in Linhai. They've all left, obviously in a hurry to leave Linhai Base. I can't think of another reason besides the base being in danger."

"Can we contact Demon Sea Base to find out what's going on?" Lin Wanli asked, furrowing his brow.

"We can't," Zong Shi shook his head. "All the communication equipment capable of making contact has been taken away. The communicators we bought can only be used within Linhai Base; we fundamentally can't reach anyone at Demon Sea Base."

"Could it be the same group of beasts that destroyed Tieya Base coming to Linhai? Their leader is a king-level beast, although the weakest kind. One breath from it could kill us all. If a king-level beast attacks, Linhai Base would certainly not be able to withstand it. That would explain why the people from the Martial Pavilion and the bank are leaving," a warrior speculated.

"Unlikely!" Zong Shi refuted. "I sent people to investigate, and that group of beasts hasn't shown any movement. They shouldn't be coming to Linhai. Furthermore, even if a king-level beast did attack, it would just be the weakest kind of king-level beast, artificially promoted through special means. Its real combat power is equivalent to a quasi-king-level beast. It may have the power and defense of a king-level beast, but it lacks the speed. Demon Sea Base has quite a few king-level beings; any one of them could wipe out that group of beasts."

"Then what is the situation?" Another warrior grew anxious.

"Should we also go to Demon Sea Base to hide?" One warrior suggested.

"No!" Lin Wanli was the first to disagree. "Most of us have families. Are we to abandon them? Moreover, how can we be sure that the issue is not with Demon Sea Base? What if they're currently in a battle? Going there would be sending ourselves to death."

Lin Wanli's words were met with the agreement of several major warriors, and the one who had suggested hiding was given a warning by Zong Shi.

Just at that moment, an elite warrior burst into the room to report. "Master, esteemed warriors, something terrible has happened! A fearsome beast has invaded the base!" The messenger announced in a state of panic.

Old Master Li immediately questioned, "What kind of beast? What exactly has happened?"

The other senior warriors also stared intently at the elite warrior, equally eager to find out what had occurred. "Sirs, just moments ago, a flying beast, ten meters in length, flew into the base. It moved too swiftly for anyone to react. It seems to have landed in the Central Garden District!" said the elite warrior.

"Central Garden District!"

Everyone present was familiar with this area. Long ago, it was just an ordinary villa district, but ever since the rise of Ye Tian, the prices of the villas there had skyrocketed. However, with Ye Tian's departure, the prices had dropped again.

"Let's go and see," Old Master Li led the way, and the senior warriors followed.

Shortly thereafter, they arrived at the Central Garden District. Almost immediately, someone came to report: "Sirs, Master Ye Tian has returned!"

"Master Ye Tian has returned?" The crowd was overjoyed.

Ye Tian had been at the Demon Sea Base for a long time and undoubtedly knew the details of what had happened. They might be able to learn from him why the Martial Arts Hall and the banks had withdrawn.

Old Master Li was both happy and worried at this moment. He was pleased that the strange situation at Linhai Base might finally be explained. However, he was concerned that he could no longer freely command everyone and had to submit to Ye Tian's authority, a matter he found irksome.

Still, he said, "Come, let us go and pay our respects to Master Ye Tian!"

A group of senior warriors followed a grandmaster, creating quite a stir as they walked through the Central Garden. The news of Master Ye Tian's return spread like wildfire throughout Linhai Base, reaching countless people.

However, most went about their usual activities without much emotional upheaval. After all, a person of Ye Tian's caliber was unlikely to interact with them, so excessive attention seemed pointless.

Ye Tian's Villa.

At that moment, Ye Tian was cleaning up a bit. After all, he would be staying here for some time to come.

Xiao Xue, his pet, looked around disdainfully. "Master, this dump is nowhere near as good as our home. Why are we staying here?"

"This was my home before," Ye Tian glanced at Xiao Xue.

Xiao Xue quickly corrected itself: "Master, I think this place has a classical style. It's definitely a great place to live!"

"Your reaction speed is pretty fast, and your will to survive is strong. It seems you've grown quickly," Ye Tian said, maintaining a calm exterior but feeling quite astonished on the inside.

He remembered when Xiao Xue had just been born; it could only say simple words like "hungry," "thirsty," and "sleep." Now, not much time had passed, and Xiao Xue had not only grown to ten meters in length but had also developed intelligence almost comparable to that of a human child.

This rate of growth and talent was truly shocking.

"Truly worthy of a Dawn-tier bloodline talent," Ye Tian mused to himself.

Chapter 110: Insanely Crafting Arrays!

"Someone's coming!"

Ye Tian sensed with his spiritual power that a group of people had arrived outside his villa. They were the high-ranking officials from the Linhai Base.

"We pay our respects to Grandmaster Ye!"

Old Man Li and the other great martial warriors stood outside Ye Tian's door, bowing deeply.

"Come in."

Ye Tian's voice rang out.

Li and the other great martial warriors entered and soon saw Ye Tian and the War Blood Sky Dragon. Though the dragon had restrained its aura, it made no effort to hide its realm or imposing presence.

A top-tier beast!

Old Man Li looked at the dragon, Xiao Xue, his body trembling. He felt that this beast had the power to kill him in an instant. It was undoubtedly a fearsome top-tier beast.

Then, his eyes fell upon Ye Tian, and he was struck with awe.

"Grandmaster!"

Ye Tian's realm had reached that of a grandmaster, not just a great martial warrior. Not only was Old Man Li stunned, but so were the other great martial warriors. They had referred to Ye Tian as a grandmaster solely because he had demonstrated battle prowess exceeding that of an ordinary grandmaster. His true cultivation, however, had been at the level of a great martial warrior. But now, Ye Tian had actually ascended to the realm of a grandmaster.

A great martial warrior-level Ye Tian had been able to slay grandmasters. Now that he was a grandmaster, would killing ordinary grandmasters be as easy as killing chickens and slaughtering dogs?

Respect!

Everyone became even more respectful towards Ye Tian, not daring to slack off.

"Grandmaster Ye, why have you returned?" Old Man Li acted humbly, lacking the grandmaster's domineering aura and pressure, appearing instead like a complete lackey.

"A crisis is impending for Linhai Base, so I've returned," Ye Tian revealed without hiding anything. He felt that the people of Linhai Base had a right to know. Moreover, he hoped that Old Man Li and others could assist him with some tasks. Therefore, he decided to tell them the truth.

"A crisis in Linhai Base!!"

Old Man Li felt panic surge within him. He had suspected this might be the case, which was why he had called a meeting, but until it was confirmed, there had been a glimmer of hope.

But now, Ye Tian, who had returned from Demon Sea Base, had personally declared that a crisis was imminent for Linhai Base. There was no doubt left.

"Grandmaster Ye, please save Linhai Base!"

Lin Wanli pleaded, and Old Man Li and the other great martial warriors also quickly followed suit: "Grandmaster Ye, please rescue Linhai Base!"

"Sigh," Ye Tian sighed deeply, "I returned this time to address this issue. But let me warn you, if we cannot hold, I will not stay in Linhai Base. I'll flee at the first opportunity. You should also prepare to flee at any moment. Whether you can actually escape, that depends on your luck."

Old Man Li's face changed, "Grandmaster Ye, is it the king beast that annihilated the Tieya (Iron Fang) Base planning to strike at Linhai Base?"

"No," Ye Tian shook his head. "If it were just a king beast causing the catastrophe, Demon Sea Base wouldn't abandon Linhai Base. This place is like a gateway for Demon Sea Base. But now Demon Sea Base can't even reinforce Linhai Base because Demon Sea Base itself is facing an existential crisis!"

Boom!!!

This news completely shocked Old Man Li and others. Demon Sea Base was a massive base with countless grandmasters and numerous king-level beings. Could such an enormous base really be facing a crisis of annihilation?

What kind of disaster could that be?

They couldn't even fathom, let alone dare to imagine it.

"Will Linhai Base also face the same crisis as Demon Sea Base?" Lin Wanli asked in despair.

"Yes," Ye Tian replied solemnly, "I don't know the specific details, but I know that an unprecedented beast tide is about to erupt. Demon Sea Base and a few other major bases are all within the attack range. As for small bases like Linhai, they're merely within the affected scope. But even a minor impact is more than a small base like Linhai can withstand. Under these circumstances, Demon Sea Base will undoubtedly prioritize defending their own base and will not be able to assist other bases."

"I understand."

Lin Wanli finally understood why the people from the Martial Pavilion and the bank had fled. In their eyes, although the Demon Sea Base was also dangerous, its chances of survival were much greater than those of Linhai Base. If nothing unexpected happened, Linhai Base was almost certain to be annihilated.

"Master Ye, can we move to Demon Sea Base now?" Lin Wanli asked with hope.

"Absolutely not!" Ye Tian flatly rejected Lin Wanli's suggestion, explaining, "Most people in the Demon Sea Base are unaware of the impending beast tide. This is to prevent panic. Only core members of major powers are informed. If you were to move there, it would become public knowledge. Do you believe that those major powers wouldn't send people outside the Demon Sea Base to kill you?"

Whoosh!

Everyone's expressions changed, and they promptly abandoned the idea.

"Master Ye, what should we do now?" asked Old Li.

Being a master himself, Old Li had more than a hundred good years left and certainly didn't want to die.

"First, let's set up some arrays. According to my estimation, we have several days before the beast tide erupts. I will set up some defensive arrays in the meantime, which should be somewhat useful," Ye Tian said.

"Arrays? Master Ye, are you also an array master?" Old Li was surprised.

He had been to the Demon Sea Base and was well aware of the status of array masters there.

"Indeed," Ye Tian nodded.

"Master Ye, do we need to help with anything?" Old Li looked at Ye Tian.

"Bring me a batch of array plate embryos. These are not complicated but require high-quality elemental materials. The blacksmiths in Linhai Base can forge them. Get me as many as you can," Ye Tian instructed.

"Alright, we'll go right away!"

The group immediately set out to gather array plate embryos. Ye Tian began crafting arrays, primarily focusing on defensive and offensive ones.

This time, he brought quite a number of array plates but knew it wouldn't be enough, which is why he had asked Old Li and the others to get more.

Ye Tian carved the array patterns onto the plates one by one. With his top-notch talent in array crafting, he was able to create a basic array plate in less than ten minutes and a mid-level one in less than half an hour.

As for high-tier array plates, he was not yet capable of crafting them, as his mastery in arrays was only at the mid-level.

"Focus on basic array plates and supplement with mid-level ones," Ye Tian set this as his crafting plan.

Days passed by—

Every day, Ye Tian was able to craft around 100 basic array plates, but only a few mid-level ones. The price he paid for this was a complete lack of rest and no time for cultivation.

Five days flew by.

Ye Tian had crafted a total of 489 basic array plates and 18 mid-level ones.

Subsequently, he had all the defensive arrays embedded into the walls surrounding Linhai Base by Old Li and the others. As for the offensive arrays, they were placed on the open ground outside Linhai Base.

During this period, Linhai Base was closed off, not allowing people to enter or exit, so as to avoid triggering the arrays.

Ye Tian unusually took a half-day off, choosing not to continue crafting. If he didn't maintain his condition, a decrease in his fighting ability would be a significant issue.

The arrays could only slightly hold back the beast tide; what he would really rely on was his own combat strength.

Therefore, he had to remain at his peak state.