

## The Quest 113

Chapter 113: Magic Techniques

On the way back, Elder Yu advised his son, saying:

"Don't mention Mo Hua's work on array formations to anyone else for now."

Yu Chengyi, surprised, asked, "Why?"

"He's young and from a humble background, yet his talent is outstanding. He may attract jealousy, which might not bode well."

"Oh," Yu Chengyi responded, somewhat understanding.

"But we can't keep it a secret forever. If Mo Hua truly has a gift for arrays, it'll come out sooner or later," Yu Chengyi added.

"At least wait until he's older and can protect himself," Elder Yu said, his gaze filled with pride yet tinged with worry.

I hope this child can grow up safely...

After completing the Iron Armor Array, Mo Hua earned some spirit stones, received some spirit ink, and even got a gift from Elder Yu, leaving him in high spirits.

The next day, he went to see Bai Zisheng to test the effects of the Passing Water Step.

Bai Zisheng was initially pleased, but then he suddenly thought of something, and his head drooped, his expression turning to disappointment.

"Aunt Xue has given me a lot of homework, and she doesn't allow me to spar with you anymore."

Mo Hua was stunned, "How about a quick spar then?"

Bai Zisheng hesitated.

"We could spar secretly. Aunt Xue won't know, right?"

Bai Zisheng sneaked a glance at his sister Bai Zixi, who was sitting nearby, "Aunt Xue has told Zixi to watch me, and I'm not allowed to engage with you."

Bai Zixi, who was quietly reading a book nearby, heard this and shifted her gaze faintly, looking at Bai Zisheng with a soft and melodious voice, "I won't tell Aunt Xue, but can you finish your homework?"

Bai Zisheng was at a loss for words.

The homework Aunt Xue assigned was plentiful, including alchemy, artifact crafting, and cultivation theory. A spar with Mo Hua would certainly mean he couldn't finish it.

Mo Hua looked sympathetically at Bai Zisheng, "You better focus on your homework. I'll bring you some treats when I have time."

That slightly improved Bai Zisheng's mood.

As Mo Hua left the Sit and Forget Abode, he sighed.

Having finally learned a technique, he found no use for it, which was quite disappointing.

"Why not take this time to learn another technique?" he thought, his spirits lifting again.

To advance is to attack, and to retreat is to defend; that's what makes a proper spiritual cultivator.

But who else could teach him a technique? Mo Hua felt a bit stuck.

He hadn't seen Zhang Lan in many days, wondering what he was busy with, probably tied up with the affairs of the Dao Court.

Even if Zhang Lan were available, it wouldn't be right to disturb him.

You can't always pull wool from the same sheep.

Learning the Passing Water Step quietly was one thing, but to learn more from him might be pushing it.

If Zhang Lan impulsively taught him a sect-defining skill, the elders of the Zhang family would surely not let him off.

They might not kill him, but they'd likely force him to marry into the family.

That would be a huge loss for Mo Hua.

But there seemed no one else to teach him techniques...

After much thought, Mo Hua decided to brazen it out and ask Mr. Zhuang.

The next day, Mo Hua brought some beef and pastries for siblings Zisheng and Zixi, and also brought some meat and wine to see Mr. Zhuang.

After asking a few questions about array formations, Mo Hua repeatedly hesitated to speak further.

Mr. Zhuang, looking the part of an immortal with his ethereal demeanor, was neither perceivable in vitality nor spirit power. What if he wasn't skilled in magical arts and never engaged in conflicts?

What if he couldn't answer Mo Hua's questions?

Considering Mr. Zhuang's feelings, Mo Hua eventually chose not to ask.

As he left, he encountered Elder Gui playing chess alone in the pavilion. Mo Hua gave him several boxes of pine nuts and then played a couple of games of Five Elements Chess with him.

As he was leaving, Elder Gui asked, "Something on your mind?"

"How did you know?" Mo Hua couldn't help asking.

"Your chess skills have regressed," Elder Gui said.

Mo Hua was speechless.

Five Elements Chess was so simple; one could play it with eyes closed. How could he possibly regress...

Yet Elder Gui's words reminded him, and Mo Hua quietly asked, "Elder Gui, do you know any magical techniques?"

Elder Gui hesitated for a moment, then replied, "Somewhat."

Mo Hua

's eyes lit up, "Could you teach me a little?"

Elder Gui got up and walked away.

Mo Hua thought Elder Gui was unwilling, but after a few steps, Elder Gui turned back and looked at him, saying:

"Follow me."

"Oh!" Mo Hua quickly followed.

Elder Gui led Mo Hua to a grassy area far from the great pagoda tree.

The area was open and green, surrounded by a small bridge, a pond, and a rustling bamboo forest.

"When learning magic, don't just look at the power level. The right technique is the best," Elder Gui said.

Mo Hua listened intently and then asked, "Elder Gui, what kind of magic should I learn?"

Elder Gui thought for a moment, "Mysterious and unpredictable techniques, like illusion, trickery, strange techniques..."

Mo Hua's eyes sparkled.

"...your spiritual roots are weak; you can't learn those."

Mo Hua: "..."

"Powerful techniques, like the Great Five Elements..."

Mo Hua perked up again.

"...you don't have enough spirit power to use them."

Mo Hua looked at Elder Gui with a bit of resentment.

Elder Gui's face had a barely perceptible smile, "But your spiritual awareness is exceptional; you don't need to learn those complex ones. Start with the simplest technique."

Elder Gui threw a thin booklet to Mo Hua.

Mo Hua opened it to see three big characters:

Fireball Technique.

Mo Hua frowned and thought for a moment, then couldn't help asking, "Elder Gui, is this Fireball Technique different from the others?"

Elder Gui shook his head, "The same."

Mo Hua flipped through it and found that the Fireball Technique recorded in Elder Gui's booklet was not much different from the 'Basic Fireball Techniques During the Qi Cultivation Stage' he had seen before.

He felt a bit let down.

"Don't want to learn it?" Elder Gui asked.

Mo Hua hesitated for a moment, thinking that Elder Gui was right. Techniques that were too complex, too difficult, or required too much spirit power really weren't suitable for him.

After all, he hadn't intended to learn any remarkable techniques; starting from the basics was best, practicality mattered.

Elder Gui was willing to teach him, he should be grateful, not choosy.

Mo Hua shook his head, sincerely saying:

"I want to learn, Elder Gui. Please teach me."

Elder Gui imperceptibly nodded.

"The key to a technique is three points: spiritual awareness, spirit power, and meridians."

"Use spiritual awareness to mobilize spirit power, travel through the meridians to specific acupoints to form a cycle, and you can condense the technique."

"Body techniques are also a kind of magic; you've learned a body technique, the principle should be clear to you. Now learning the Fireball Technique shouldn't be difficult..."

...

Elder Gui and Mo Hua discussed a few key points, and Mo Hua memorized them, then followed the incantations and meridian charts of the Fireball Technique to circulate his spirit power.

The Fireball Technique was simple, and the pathway for circulating spirit power was much simpler than the Passing Water Step.

Mo Hua tried a few times and then mastered it.

"Give it a try," Elder Gui said.

Mo Hua held his breath, concentrated, activated his spirit power, stimulated his meridians, formed a cycle, and then, pointing his fingers at a nearby pond,

A faint red spirit power gathered at Mo Hua's fingertips, forming a ball of gaseous red flame, which then, directed by Mo Hua's spiritual awareness, flew straight towards the pond.

The fireball exploded on the water's surface, stirring up the pond water, shattering the water grass, and startling the fish below.

The surface of the pond rippled tumultuously, leaving it in disarray.