

The Quest 130

Chapter 130: Spices

The effectiveness of the Earth Fire Array exceeded expectations.

Yu Chengyi's predictions were spot on; laying out the Earth Fire Array required only a few Qi cultivators of the sixth layer to hunt down a mid-tier first-rank demonic beast, and with a bit of caution, major casualties could be largely avoided.

Previously, the hunting teams comprised of veterans leading novices. This not only protected the newcomers but also allowed them to acclimate to the environment, gain experience, refine their Daoist practices, and earn some spirit stones to support their families. However, this team arrangement significantly reduced the hunting efficiency of the experienced hunters.

Now, with the array in place, simply teaching the novices some basic techniques enabled them to hunt on their own. Since the Earth Fire Array inflicted severe injuries on the demonic beasts, disrupting their meridians and slowing their demonic power, the novices were relatively safer.

Thanks to the Earth Fire Array, the novices could earn spirit stones, and the veterans had an easier time; the days of the demon hunters had become more comfortable.

However, Mo Hua was alone. Despite his quick mastery of the array, the number of Earth Fire Arrays he could draw in a day was limited.

After some thought, Yu Chengyi decided to save a few arrays and deploy more manpower.

Five arrays would require three or four demon hunters to finish off the beasts.

Now, with three arrays, six or seven demon hunters were needed to complete the job.

The results were comparable.

Mo Hua had memorized the Earth Fire Array so well that he could draw it faster and in greater numbers, and more demon hunters were using Mo Hua's arrays for hunting.

Over time, most of the Qi cultivators in the mid-stages had become familiar with Mo Hua.

Some wore armor drawn by Mo Hua; others used his Earth Fire Arrays for hunting; and yet others had their homes' doors and windows arrayed by him.

And many of the late-stage Qi cultivators also knew Mo Hua well.

Some had life-saving bonds with Mo Shan and naturally knew Mo Hua; some had asked Mo Shan to have Mo Hua draw arrays for them; others, even without direct relations with Mo Hua, had heard of this young array master from relatives and friends.

Some were specifically instructed by Yu Chengyi to keep an eye on Mo Hua in Dahei Mountain.

Thus, after spending over a month on the mountain, Mo Hua found that nearly everyone in the outer mountain was now an acquaintance.

Often, as he walked along, familiar cultivators would greet him.

Some would even offer him wild fruits they picked from the mountain.

The fruits were sour and sweet, crisp and delicious.

Apart from wild fruits, others offered dried grains, dried meat, pine nuts, and rice wine.

With such generosity, Mo Huali could enter the mountain empty-handed and still return full and satisfied.

But one should always reciprocate kindness.

Afterward, every time Mo Hua went to the mountain, he would ask his mother to pack several pounds of sliced beef in his storage bag, available in various flavors.

Whenever others offered him food, he reciprocated with beef.

Gradually, some began to hope for encounters with Mo Hua in the mountain.

Especially some older demon hunters, who craved liquor but lacked meat for pairing.

Previously, they couldn't bear to stay in the mountain when not hunting.

Now, they would specifically wait along the mountain paths, eager for Mo Hua's arrival. Then they would invite him for snacks and wild fruits, while he would invite them to enjoy the meat with their drink.

These demon hunters had been entrusted by Yu Chengyi to look after Mo Hua, and sometimes, when Mo Hua faced difficulties in the mountain, they would also lend a helping hand.

Mo Hua remembered their kindness.

So sometimes, he would bring some meat to the mountain and sit with them on large boulders among the scenery, eating meat and listening to their hunting stories.

Occasionally, they would offer suggestions about the beef.

For instance, it wasn't spicy enough, was too mushy, or lacked a certain flavor...

As they critiqued, they enjoyed the meat more than anyone else.

Some hunters also suggested that there were some spices in the mountain that could enhance the flavor of the meat when cooked.

Mo Hua's eyes lit up, and he immediately inquired about these spices.

"There are many in the mountain, but you'll have to find them yourself," said the demon hunter, pulling out a thin booklet. The booklet depicted various plants and trees, indicating which parts could be used as spices—flowers, leaves, branches, dew, flower pastes, resins, etc.

There were dozens of types listed.

The demon hunter handed the booklet to Mo Hua with only one request—that he be allowed to taste the delicious meat once it was cooked.

Mo Hua nodded eagerly, treasuring the booklet.

Afterward, as he

traveled through the mountains, he kept an eye out for the spices listed in the booklet.

If he found them, he would collect them and later hand them over to his mother.

Liu Ruhua was pleasantly surprised; she had been devoted to studying various Daoist dietary practices, and with these spices, her cooking could only improve.

Using the spices, Liu Ruhua prepared some meat dishes that Mo Hua tasted and found even more flavorful and rich.

As promised, Mo Hua shared this meat with the demon hunter who had given him the booklet.

After tasting it, the hunter's expression was so content and liberated, it was as if he had no regrets in this life...

His reaction was so exaggerated that Mo Hua was at a loss for words.

Mo Hua also delivered some of this beef to the Sit and Forget Abode.

Bai Zisheng tasted it and found the flavor had improved, enviously saying, "Mo Hua, your mother is truly wonderful!"

Then, a spark of inspiration struck him, and he asked, "Why don't you ask your mother if she'd like to adopt me as her godson?"

Mo Hua rolled his eyes at him.

Bai Zixi couldn't help but throw a paper ball at Bai Zisheng's head.

The beef Mo Hua delivered to Mr. Zhuang was the best, both in appearance and taste, each dish uniquely flavored with either vibrant green onions or spicy red chili.

Mr. Zhuang took a bite and frowned. After a moment, he lamented:

"The desires of the palate can corrupt one's will!"

Unable to resist, he took another bite.

The spices were excellent, and the restaurant's business improved even more.

Mo Hua was delighted. During his subsequent spice gathering, he thought it wouldn't hurt to collect some medicinal herbs as well.

After all, setting up arrays and hunting demonic beasts didn't really require his presence.

He just needed to draw the arrays and then collect blood at the end.

The rest of the time, he usually wandered around the outer mountain.

He gathered spices, herbs, and even mined some minerals.

Mo Hua consulted with Mr. Feng for a copy of "Daoist Herbology" and Master Chen for a copy of "Daoist Mineralogy."

Following the descriptions in these books, he gathered herbs and various minerals.

It was a convenient way to expand his Daoist knowledge and collect useful materials.

The herbs he gathered were given to Mr. Feng, and the minerals to Master Chen.

They did not stand on ceremony with Mo Hua, simply telling him to come to them if he needed any pills or spiritual instruments.

Thus, Mo Hua continued to map, gather spices, and collect herbs and minerals in the outer areas of Dahei Mountain, waiting for other demon hunters to kill the beasts before he ran to collect the blood, storing it to mix spirit ink.

Until one day, he realized that more and more hunters were using the Earth Fire Array. Often, before he had finished collecting blood from a beast killed in the south, another beast in the north would be slain.

By the time he learned of it, the northern beast was already cold, and its blood unusable.

Ten bottles of demonic blood were lost this way...

After several such instances, Mo Hua furrowed his brow, pondering:

"I need to think of a solution, otherwise it's just too wasteful..."