

The Quest 157

Chapter 157: Offensive

The Earth Fire Array exploded continuously, as dazzling as fireworks. Amidst the explosions were the cries of Qian family cultivators, adding to the chaos.

Satisfied after a hearty meal, Mo Hua nodded in approval.

At the entrance of the mine, other demon hunters watched, cheering at the sight of the Qian family's misery.

"Great explosion!"

"Make it louder!"

The frustration caused by the Qian family's constant harassment over the past few days was swept away.

Elder Yu was also pleased, cursing the Qian family from top to bottom once more.

Now, the pressure had shifted to the Qian family cultivators.

To fight or not to fight?

Attacking would lead to disastrous explosions, but not fighting would mean handing over the spirit mine.

Either way, it was unacceptable to the Qian family.

The next day, the Qian family cleaned up the battlefield and carried the wounded back for treatment.

Originally, there were many injuries but few deaths.

However, some wounded cultivators were ambushed by demonic beasts on their way back.

The beasts, attracted by the scent of blood, found them, and the severely injured Qian family cultivators, just off the battlefield, ended up in the bellies of the demonic beasts.

Qian Hong, the head of the Qian family, was furious and ordered the capture of the spirit mine at all costs!

Qian Zhuang, a direct descendant of the Qian family, felt the pressure. Although not from Qian Hong's branch, he was tasked with this dangerous mission.

This suited him. Despite being a direct descendant, he was underutilized within the family, with an uncertain future.

If he could capture the spirit mine, the family would look at him with new eyes, and he might receive spirit stones and pills as rewards, giving him a chance to build his foundation.

Once a Foundation Building cultivator, he could become an elder, gaining significant power in the Qian family.

Qian family elders had significant power, but advancement was strict.

One needed either Foundation Building cultivation, high proficiency in arrays, alchemy, or artifact crafting, a key position in a sect or the Dao Court, or significant contributions to the family.

Qian Zhuang met none of these conditions, so his only path to becoming an elder was through Foundation Building cultivation.

Thus, he had to capture the spirit mine, or else he would face severe punishment.

In the Qian family, fellow cultivators were considered family, but not truly close. Failing to bring benefits to the family made one useless.

Qian Zhuang didn't want to be useless. He wanted to capture the spirit mine, stepping on these demon hunters to climb higher within the Qian family.

Soon, a Qian family disciple reported:

"Big brother, the brothers have investigated. The explosion last night was an array!"

Qian Zhuang frowned. "An array? These bumpkins can use arrays?"

"Yes!"

Qian Zhuang's frown deepened.

He recalled their previous attack, wondering if the unbreakable rattan armor was also enhanced with arrays.

"What kind of array?"

"A disciple asked Master Qian, who said it looked like an Earth Fire Array."

Master Qian was an array master in the Qian family, not yet a first-grade master, but well-respected.

"Earth Fire Array? What level?"

"Seven-pattern array."

Qian Zhuang's expression turned cold. "A seven-pattern array, no wonder."

A seven-pattern array could harm late-stage Qi cultivators, and several combined would be even more powerful.

Qian Zhuang's heart was filled with hatred, but he couldn't help but sneer, "An array master helping these paupers!"

He didn't believe these poor wandering cultivators could afford to hire an array master.

This array master probably signed a spirit contract with them, receiving spirit stones from the mine in return.

In this world, people were driven by profit, and this array master was no exception.

The disciple asked, "Big brother, what should we do next?"

Qian Zhuang replied, "No matter, it's just a seven-pattern array master."

How many arrays could one master draw?

The previous night's explosion must have used many Earth Fire Arrays, and he doubted they had any left for tonight.

Mo Hua indeed couldn't draw many arrays, just seven or eight Earth Fire Arrays a day.

But Mo Hua still had plenty of regular Earth Fire Arrays, stockpiled for trapping and hunting demonic beasts.

With the demon hunters and the Qian family at odds, Elder Yu had stopped the demon hunters from entering Dahei Mountain for hunting, leaving Mo Hua with a surplus of Earth Fire Arrays to use now.

Thus, the Qian family disciples were unlucky.

On the first night, they were bombed.

On the second night, they were bombed again.

On the third and fourth nights, they were still bombed.

Qian Zhuang was furious but kept pressing on, curious to see how many more Earth Fire Arrays the demon hunters had.

But the Qian family disciples were reluctant.

Stepping on Earth Fire Arrays might not be fatal, but it would cause injuries, making them easy prey for demonic beasts.

So many Qian family cultivators hesitated, staying on the outskirts, afraid to enter the array's range.

Qian Zhuang knew this was bad and passionately encouraged them:

"Brothers, we've attacked for four days. They can't have that many arrays left. They're probably running out..."

"We're just one step away. We can't let our efforts be in vain! Otherwise, all the sacrifices will be for nothing!"

"As long as we capture the spirit mine, the family head will reward us generously!"

The Qian family cultivators, roused with fervor, set off again.

And once more, they fled in defeat, escaping the fire of the Earth Fire Arrays.

Mo Hua stood halfway up the mountain, watching, and couldn't help but respect the commanding Qian family cultivators.

Using lives to deplete his array stock—truly ruthless!

At the same time, Qian Zhuang, watching the scene, almost spat blood.

Damn, how do they still have arrays?

Do you have ten hands to draw so many arrays?

Facing the rugged, verdant mountain terrain ahead, Qian Zhuang felt a shadow over his heart.

But with the current morale shattered, they couldn't attack again soon. The Qian family had to retreat once more.

The demon hunters repelled the Qian family's offensive without losing a single soldier.

Elder Yu looked at Mo Hua with a kinder expression, making Yu Chengyi, his son, feel uncomfortable.

His father never showed him such kindness, always stern and harsh, like a rock used to press salted vegetables.

After these days of rest, the demon hunters were in better spirits, looking more relaxed.

Mo Hua suddenly thought of a question and asked Elder Yu worriedly:

"If the Qian family sends a Foundation Building cultivator, what do we do?"

"Do what we can."

Mo Hua was slightly surprised, "Foundation Building cultivators are supposed to be very powerful, right?"

Elder Yu nodded, "Foundation Building is powerful, but not invincible."

Mo Hua frowned, not quite understanding.

Elder Yu explained further:

"A Foundation Building cultivator's power is roughly equivalent to ten late-stage Qi cultivators. If there's only one, even five or six late-stage Qi cultivators can't match them, unable to last a few moves..."

"But if there are more than ten experienced late-stage Qi cultivators, they can contend with a Foundation Building cultivator. The outcome is uncertain. It would likely be an exchange of injuries, lives for lives, ten lives for one. Even if the Qi cultivators die, the Foundation Building cultivator would be severely injured or dying."

"If there are dozens, even hundreds of late-stage Qi cultivators, the Foundation Building cultivator, if unable to escape, will be worn down to death."

"There's a saying, 'Even a fierce tiger fears a pack of wolves,' which illustrates this principle."

Mo Hua suddenly understood.