

## The Quest 191

### Chapter 191: Predictions

With the artifact crafting shop now built and the array formations complete, they could no longer cause trouble.

Once the outer wall is enclosed and the arrays activated, trying to sneak in would be as futile as a dream.

Master Qian glanced at the artifact crafting shop and suddenly asked:

“Patriarch, do you know what array formations are used in this shop?”

“Common architectural arrays generally involve earth and wood systems. As for the specific arrays, I am not an array master, so I am not sure,” Qian Hong thought for a moment and replied.

“You have encountered these arrays before,” Master Qian said calmly.

Qian Hong pondered briefly, then his eyes lit up, “Are you referring to the array used at the entrance of the spirit mine that day?”

“Exactly!” Master Qian nodded, “Among the First Grade arrays, there is one called the Earth Stone Array, which can strengthen soil and stone to defend against external enemies. If I am not mistaken, this artifact crafting shop's outer wall uses this very First Grade Earth Stone Array.”

Qian Hong frowned, suddenly realizing something.

Master Qian continued, “One Earth Fire Array and one Earth Stone Array, these were the two arrays before, and they remain the same now. As I predicted, the array master among the demon hunters knows few arrays, so he can only reuse these two.”

“This is not his fault,” Master Qian sighed, “First Grade arrays are difficult to learn. The fact that he has mastered these two is already commendable.”

Qian Hong nodded slightly. Arrays are indeed difficult to learn, and mastering a First Grade array is even more challenging.

Learning array formations is hard, and dealing with them is even harder.

During the previous battle on Nameless Peak against the demon hunters, these two arrays caused the Qian family a lot of trouble. Without these arrays, the Qian family would not have suffered such heavy losses.

Yu Changlin, that old rogue, and the demon hunters would not have escaped with so many spirit stones unscathed.

Every time Qian Hong thought about it, his heart ached as if being cut by a knife.

Master Qian said, "Since the artifact crafting shop is built, there is no need to dwell on it. The Patriarch can proceed according to plan."

Qian Hong nodded, "Yu Changlin built the artifact crafting shop to craft spiritual tools and compete with our business. If we produce more and better spiritual tools first and lower our prices, their shop will naturally not be able to sustain itself."

"The key to mass production of artifacts lies in the refining furnace," Qian Hong said, then asked, "Master, how is the progress on understanding the First Grade Molten Fire Array for the refining furnace?"

Master Qian stroked his beard, "These days, I have been studying day and night and have almost fully comprehended it. It won't be long before I master it completely."

Qian Hong smiled with joy and cupped his hands, "Thank you, Master!"

Master Qian returned the gesture, "Since I am a member of the Qian family and supported by the family, I should do my best to serve the family. The Patriarch is too kind."

Qian Hong seemed to think of something but hesitated.

"If the Patriarch has something to say, please speak directly," Master Qian said.

Qian Hong frowned and thought, “Could the array master among the demon hunters also have mastered the First Grade Molten Fire Array? Otherwise, why would Yu Changlin build an artifact crafting shop?”

Master Qian was slightly taken aback, then thought carefully and found it plausible but quickly denied it:

“Impossible. The First Grade Molten Fire Array is different from other First Grade arrays. Its patterns are more intricate, and the array hub is more complex. It is not easy to learn. If he really knew the First Grade Molten Fire Array, combined with the Earth Fire Array and the Earth Stone Array, he would already have the strength of a First Grade array master.”

“Every First Grade array master is highly esteemed and honored by families and sects. How could they demean themselves by associating with these wandering cultivators?”

Qian Hong found this reasoning convincing but still had concerns, “What if he really knows how to draw the Molten Fire Array?”

“Rest assured, even if he can draw the Molten Fire Array, it will be a common one with five or six patterns at most, not an authentic First Grade Molten Fire Array.”

“After these days of research, I deeply understand how difficult the Molten Fire Array is to learn. This array is not comparable to ordinary First Grade arrays. That array master definitely cannot learn it!”

Master Qian asserted.

Mo Hua indeed did not know how to draw a First Grade Molten Fire Array.

He had no use for it before and did not spend time learning it. Now that he wanted to attempt a First Grade composite array that included the Molten Fire Array, he needed to take time to learn it.

After starting to learn, he realized that the Molten Fire Array was indeed difficult to master.

The array patterns were more intricate and differed slightly from general fire-type patterns. The array hub required a higher intensity of spiritual awareness. After a day and a half of practice, Mo Hua was starting to get the hang of it when he noticed Elder Yu with a troubled expression.

“Elder, is the Qian family causing trouble again?” Mo Hua asked.

Elder Yu shook his head, “We lack enough artifact crafters.”

“How many are we short?”

“About ten or so.”

“So many?” Mo Hua was surprised, “There should be quite a few artifact crafters in the city. Are they unwilling to come?”

“Yes.” Elder Yu was somewhat helpless, “They either already have their own artifact crafting shops and don't want to move, or they don't want to work for others and be restricted, or they are solitary and don't want to interact with others... There are all kinds of reasons, but in the end, they just don't want to come.”

“Are they also worried about the Qian family?”

Elder Yu nodded, “That's part of it. They fear the Qian family causing trouble and worry that we won't be able to compete with the Qian family, which would bring them bad luck.”

“Oh.” Mo Hua nodded, then asked, “Is Master Chen willing to come?”

“Which Master Chen?”

“The one from Chen's Artifact Crafting Shop near the pond on South Street, thin and dark-faced.”

“Oh.” Elder Yu remembered, “He is not willing to come either.”

Mo Hua put down the unfinished Molten Fire Array and said, “I'll go and see.”

“What will you see? Will he listen to you?” Elder Yu was a bit surprised.

“Not necessarily, but I can try. I have a good relationship with Master Chen,” Mo Hua said.

Elder Yu looked at the half-grown Mo Hua and thought of Master Chen's stern face, unable to imagine any connection between the two.

“Well, you try first. I'll find some other artifact crafters.”

“Alright.”

After speaking, Mo Hua returned home, asked his mother for some wine and meat, put them in a food box, and placed them in his storage bag. Then he went to Chen's Artifact Crafting Shop and found Master Chen.

Master Chen was forging iron with Da Zhu and the others, the clanging sounds echoing, and sparks flying everywhere.

Mo Hua called out twice before Master Chen heard him. He let Da Zhu practice on his own, washed his hands, wiped his sweat, and invited Mo Hua into the courtyard.

The courtyard had many small stools and tables.

Mo Hua picked a small stool and sat down, then took out the wine and meat from his storage bag.

“This is for everyone to enjoy!” Mo Hua said.

“How can I accept this...”

Master Chen verbally refused but his eyes never left the wine jar.

“No need to be polite!” Mo Hua said.

Master Chen didn't stand on ceremony, knowing that Mo Hua was not an outsider, and smiled, "Then I won't be polite."

Master Chen called out to the apprentices, "Take a break, come and have some food."

The group of apprentices cheered, stopped their work, and gathered around.

Since Mo Hua entered, placing the food box on the table, their minds were no longer on forging.

Artifact crafting is physically demanding, and these young apprentices, still growing, often felt hungry.

The business at the artifact crafting shop wasn't great, and they were usually just glad to have enough to eat, let alone enjoy delicious food. So when they saw the meat Mo Hua brought, their eyes sparkled.