

The Quest 26

Chapter 26: Advancement

After classes each day, Mo Hua went to Yan Jiaoxi's place to study the theory of arrays and seek advice on array formations. With Yan Jiaoxi's explanations, Mo Hua quickly learned the Gold Stone Array Diagram, and after practicing repeatedly on the stele in his sea of consciousness, it took him just over ten days to complete five sets of the Gold Stone Array Diagram.

Due to having ample time, Mo Hua painted carefully, failing only once, which after deducting the cost of materials, earned him about twelve spirit stones.

During a period of rest, Mo Hua handed over the array formations to Manager Mo, who after reviewing them was quite satisfied, nodding and saying, "Your... elder brother's array formations are increasingly systematic."

Mo Hua looked at Manager Mo doubtfully.

For some reason, being watched made Manager Mo somewhat guilty; he coughed, waved his hand, and said, "Nothing's wrong, just head back to the sect; I'm quite busy here."

Mo Hua glanced at the empty Destiny's Shop, which lacked even a single customer, and curiously asked, "There aren't any customers here, what are you busy with?"

Manager Mo felt that his management style was more about being laid-back rather than poor business, which he saw as fundamentally different.

But the lack of customers was indeed obvious at a glance.

Manager Mo became a bit annoyed, "What does a kid know? I'm always busy here handling big deals, customer or no customers! When I say I'm busy, I am busy!"

"Then, keep busy, I'll be leaving now," said Mo Hua.

As Mo Hua walked a few steps away, he suddenly turned back and asked, "By the way, are you and Yan Jiaoxi close?"

Manager Mo guiltily replied, "Not really close, just some camaraderie from the same sect. His temper is both stinky and tough, not something ordinary people can endure, and we haven't been in touch for many years. It was only because we happened to meet recently that we had a cup of tea together and caught up."

"Oh..." Mo Hua gave a meaningful "Oh."

Saying they were not close, yet the tone was very familiar; that means they were quite close, at least not without a good relationship.

Manager Mo quickly waved his hand, "Go on, go on, don't disturb my business."

Mo Hua left Destiny's Shop, thinking to himself:

"It seems Manager Mo and Yan Jiaoxi indeed have some secrets between them..."

Afterward, Mo Hua's life in the sect was monotonous and ordinary. Every day he attended classes, consulted Yan Jiaoxi about array formations after class, returned to his disciple residence to paint array formations, and after midnight, entered his sea of consciousness to practice on the broken stele.

Simple yet fulfilling.

Mo Hua's mastery over array formations improved daily, and his spiritual sense grew stronger. He was now able to comfortably draw four array patterns of the Gold Stone Array, without feeling a lack of spiritual sense.

The orders for Manager Mo's array formations also changed a few times, each time with the excuse, "The market has changed, the previous arrays are no longer bought, need to draw new ones," then handing over new array diagrams to Mo Hua.

When Yan Jiaoxi taught the theory of arrays, he would also explain the array formations that Manager Mo gave to Mo Hua, which basically fed Mo Hua with a spoon.

This also essentially confirmed Mo Hua's guess that Manager Mo and Yan Jiaoxi must have a relationship, and probably both knew about him painting array formations for Destiny's Shop.

However, everyone kept this tacit understanding, and Mo Hua also pretended not to know.

Mo Hua was puzzled why the instructor was so attentive to him, answering every question about array formations, and Manager Mo also provided many conveniences.

Could it really be just because he was talented in array formations?

Later, Mo Hua thought it over and felt that he was probably overthinking it.

Yan Jiaoxi was meticulous and serious, whether in teaching or array formations, never hiding anything from his disciples. His care for Mo Hua was probably out of a desire to cherish his talent, not wanting it to go to waste, and truly hoping he would advance in array formations.

Manager Mo's acquaintance with Yan Jiaoxi was likely under Yan Jiaoxi's arrangement, gradually setting up array formations for Mo Hua to draw.

Mo Hua kept their kindness in mind.

But for now, he was just a low-level Qi Cultivation Third Level minor cultivator, unable to do much. Even if he wanted to repay this kindness, he would have to wait until later.

Two months later, besides the Gold Stone Array, Mo Hua also learned the Mud Sand Array, Flowing Sand Array, and Ventilation Array.

Including the spirit stones he had saved from painting array formations, he had a total of over one hundred eighty.

Mo Hua planned to save up two hundred spirit stones and then choose an intermediate lower-tier technique, which would relieve his parents of some burden.

Once he had enough spirit stones and had chosen the technique, he would then tell his parents, who he thought would be happy about it.

But before Mo Hua had saved enough spirit stones, trouble arose at home.

One day during an alchemy class, Yan Jiaoxi suddenly called Mo Hua out with a somewhat solemn expression, telling him his mother was seriously ill and urging him to go home immediately.

Mo Hua was stunned for a moment, then felt as if a bucket of cold water had been poured over him, chilling him to the bone.

He asked for a few days off from the instructor, then hurried home.

But the door to his house was closed, and after knocking several times with no response, he became anxious. Just then, Neighbor Aunt Yang came out upon hearing the noise and said:

"Is that you, Mo Hua?"

"Aunt Yang, my mother..."

"I was just about to tell you, your mother is seriously ill and is currently at the Xinglin Medical Hall seeking treatment from Old Master Feng. Hurry and go see her!"

Mo Hua thanked her repeatedly and then rushed to Xinglin Medical Hall.

Xinglin Medical Hall was the only pill hall nearby.

The pill hall had alchemists stationed there, and generally, if cultivators were injured or sick, they would go to the pill shop to have the alchemists diagnose and refine pills for treatment and healing.

Old Master Feng of Xinglin Medical Hall was a highly reputable old alchemist in Tongxian City, having studied the way of the pills for most of his life, and in his later years, he passed the fixed-grade assessment to become a true first-grade alchemist, one of the few in Tongxian City.

Moreover, Old Master Feng was the only alchemist in Tongxian City who, after becoming a first-grade alchemist, still chose to open a shop in the lower-tier cultivators' market to diagnose and treat patients.

When Mo Hua arrived at Xinglin Medical Hall, Old Master Feng was seeing patients. Wearing a clean but somewhat worn black daoist robe with white trim, his hair and beard both white, he looked amiable. Upon seeing Mo Hua, he advised the patient in front of him for a moment, then beckoned to Mo Hua.

Mo Hua hurriedly approached and bowed, saying, "Grandfather Feng, how is my mother..."

Old Master Feng nodded and said, "Good child, I have seen your mother's condition. Although it is somewhat serious, it is not life-threatening. You can put your mind at ease."

Mo Hua finally breathed a sigh of relief and regained his composure, but felt his throat dry and burning as if on fire.

Mo Hua had been frail since childhood, and in his rush had run too fast. Now suddenly stopping, he felt sweat all over his body.

Old Master Feng gently pressed Mo Hua's back with his right hand, a pale blue light flashed through his hand, transferring some spiritual power to Mo Hua. Mo Hua felt a spring breeze passing through his limbs, and his breath became much smoother in an instant.

Old Master Feng then gently poured a cup of tea and instructed, "Drink a little at a time, slowly."

Following Old Master Feng's instruction, Mo Hua slowly drank some of the misty tea, and his breathing finally eased.