

The Quest 260

Chapter 260: The Cave

Cultivators have two general methods for dealing with arrays: breaking the array and resolving the array.

Breaking the array involves a cultivator using their cultivation or martial arts to forcibly destroy the array's core, medium, hub, or patterns.

Resolving the array can only be done by Array Masters, and only a few with extensive experience and high proficiency can do so.

Resolving an array involves utilizing the interactions among array patterns, the opening and closing of array hubs, or the positive and negative spiritual power of the array core.

Currently, Mo Hua only knows one method to resolve arrays, which is through the interactions of array patterns.

Mo Hua had just used his spiritual awareness to observe for a while, confirming the array painted on the stone wall. Inside, the array mainly consisted of an Earth-Wood Array, mixed with several smaller arrays.

For ordinary cultivators, this array was quite impressive.

But in Mo Hua's eyes, it was insufficient.

Mo Hua took out his pen and ink from his storage bag and began drawing array patterns on the stone wall.

There are two situations when resolving arrays through array pattern interactions: from the inside or the outside.

When resolving from the inside, one can see the array patterns, and the patterns drawn to resolve the array are on the same side as the array medium.

Mo Hua usually practices by drawing and resolving his own arrays, which is considered internal resolution.

This method is relatively easier.

Resolving from the outside means drawing patterns without seeing the array patterns, based only on one's understanding of arrays and using spiritual awareness to sense the position of the patterns, drawing counter-patterns in the same position to cancel out the array.

The current situation required external resolution.

Mo Hua had never tried this method before.

Fortunately, the array painted on the stone wall wasn't too difficult. With Mo Hua's experience and the strength of his spiritual awareness, he could sense the specific positions of the array patterns.

All that remained was to draw the counter-patterns, which was simple enough.

Within two cups of tea's time, Mo Hua finished drawing the resolving patterns on the stone wall.

These patterns resembled the array structure but were drawn with a special technique, embodying the principles of interactions, looking like the mirror image of the array, strange and profound.

Zhang Lan watched in amazement.

As Mo Hua completed the last stroke, the resolution was done.

The patterns on the stone wall flashed with a glow, spiritual power seeped inside, and then the earth and stone began to crack and crumble, resembling dried tree bark, the entire stone wall gradually turning into a dry gray-brown color.

Zhang Lan was secretly astonished: "It actually worked..."

Moreover, from Mo Hua's effortless demeanor, it was clear he wasn't guessing but had a solid foundation in array resolution, otherwise, it wouldn't have been possible to resolve the array in one go.

Zhang Lan sighed, realizing he had underestimated Mo Hua's talent in arrays.

It wasn't just talent anymore; it was solid proficiency.

If he hadn't seen it with his own eyes, he wouldn't believe that a young cultivator, barely over ten, had already mastered array resolution.

Zhang Lan felt deeply moved.

With the array on the stone wall resolved, the protection was gone.

Someone needed to break through the wall.

Mo Hua glanced at Zhang Lan, who silently said, "I'm not a Body Cultivator."

Mo Hua looked at him disdainfully and called out, "Father."

From a distance, Mo Shan responded, "What's wrong?"

Mo Hua pointed at the stone wall, "Father, we need to break this."

Mo Shan nodded, his spiritual power enhancing his physical strength. With one punch, the stone wall shattered. As the dust settled, the scene inside was revealed.

It was a large cave, dark and dry.

The cave was filled with spirit stones, various spiritual tools, and many bottles and jars, mostly medicinal pills, and some fine wines.

Mo Hua looked shocked, then felt uneasy.

The more cultivation resources here, the more cultivators had been robbed, and the more people had died at the hands of these criminals.

Zhang Lan, with a heavy expression, sighed, “No wonder those criminals didn’t say anything under interrogation. With this cave discovered, they’re doomed even if they hadn’t committed capital crimes before.”

A cave full of stolen goods—they must have killed countless people...

“What should we do with these?” Mo Hua asked.

After some thought, Zhang Lan said, “Categorize and register them.”

He explained, “Many missing caravans and cultivators are unaccounted for. These items can help identify who was robbed by these criminals and which cultivators were killed.”

“Many families of the missing are still waiting for them. Whether they are alive or dead, there should be an answer.”

Saying this, Zhang Lan sighed.

Cultivation is perilous. Without sufficient strength, one’s fate is uncertain.

Mo Hua nodded in agreement.

Zhang Lan looked at Mo Hua and said, “If you see anything you like, take it. You’ve done a great job this time. The Dao Court will reward you handsomely. Taking some things is well-deserved.”

Mo Hua thought for a moment but shook his head, “No, these things mostly belong to innocents who died unjustly. Let’s register them first. Identifying them might give their families some closure.”

Zhang Lan looked at Mo Hua approvingly and nodded.

Mo Hua scanned the cave again, feeling puzzled, “There seems to be nothing from Kong Sheng’s caravan.”

“Aren’t there those medicinal pills?”

Kong Sheng’s caravan dealt in medicinal pills.

Zhang Lan, suddenly realizing something was wrong, walked to a corner, picked up a few bottles, opened them, and smelled them. His brows furrowed, “These are all old pills, their scent is faint. They weren’t recently stolen.”

A caravan dealing in medicinal pills wouldn’t sell old pills. Even if they mixed in some inferior ones, most would be freshly made within six months.

Fresh pills have a strong fragrance, while old pills gradually lose their scent.

All the pills in this cave had a faint scent, indicating that these criminals hadn’t robbed a medicinal pill caravan recently.

“It can’t be...” Zhang Lan murmured, “Did they eat all the pills?”

Even if they ate pills as food, they couldn’t have consumed so many in such a short time.

Mo Shan, pondering, said, “When we arrived, there wasn’t much blood in the valley.”

This meant that the criminals didn’t bring their victims to the valley to kill them.

Based on Guang Toutuo’s confession, they usually killed their victims on the spot and took their goods.

When Kong Sheng’s caravan was robbed, there wasn’t much blood at the scene, only signs of a struggle, no slaughter.

If eaten by demonic beasts, the scene would be bloodier.

The three of them were puzzled.

Logically, Guang Toutuo should have robbed the caravan, taken the pills, and killed the cultivators on the spot.

Kong Sheng should have died with the merchants.

But now, it seemed Guang Toutuo's group hadn't robbed that caravan, and naturally, hadn't killed Kong Sheng.

So where did that caravan go?

And what happened to Kong Sheng?