

The Quest 261

Chapter 261: Map

“I’ll go back and ask Guang Toutuo again,” Zhang Lan said.

“Alright.”

Mo Hua nodded. This matter seemed strange and needed clarification.

For the remaining time, Zhang Lan had his subordinates inventory the stolen goods. After they were catalogued, the Dao Court would send people the next day to transport these items back to Tongxian City.

Mo Hua and his companions would stay the night in the inner mountain.

Once the cave was tidied up, they prepared to leave for the campsite.

Just as they were about to leave, Mo Hua suddenly exclaimed, "Huh?"

Zhang Lan turned back and quickly asked, “What is it?”

Mo Hua pointed to a small corner, “There’s something here.”

Zhang Lan’s eyes lit up. He walked to the corner Mo Hua pointed out, extended his spiritual sense, and carefully inspected it before exclaiming in surprise:

“There’s actually a hidden compartment.”

Previously, this spot had been covered by miscellaneous items, so no one had noticed.

Now that the cave was cleared, Mo Hua’s spiritual sense detected the hidden compartment.

“Is there a formation?” Zhang Lan asked.

“No,” Mo Hua shook his head.

Zhang Lan looked at Mo Shan, “Mo brother, it’s up to you.”

Mo Shan nodded, clenched his fist, which ignited in flames, and then struck the stone wall in the corner with a “boom.”

The stone wall creaked and cracked.

Mo Shan punched it five or six times, shattering the stone completely.

Behind the broken stone wall was a small, square hidden compartment, containing a wooden box.

Zhang Lan retrieved the wooden box, scanned it with his spiritual sense, and finding no danger, opened it.

Mo Hua also leaned in to look.

Inside the wooden box were two books and a map.

One book was the "Long Wind Technique," and the other was the "Gale Technique."

The Long Wind Technique was a wind element cultivation method, while the Gale Technique was a wind element movement technique, both learned by Guang Toutuo.

It seemed this hidden compartment was where Guang Toutuo stored his belongings.

As for the map, it appeared to be a topographical map.

The lines sketched mountains and cliffs simply, with rough handwriting and no annotations, making it difficult to determine its purpose.

Zhang Lan said, “These cultivation methods and techniques are valuable, but few can learn them due to the rarity of wind spiritual roots. Copy them down later; they can be sold or exchanged for other cultivation methods, likely worth a good number of spirit stones.”

“As for this map...” Zhang Lan frowned and asked Mo Hua, “Can you tell where this map is from?”

Zhang Lan wasn’t familiar with the area around Tongxian City, especially the mountain paths of Dahei Mountain.

He didn’t use maps often.

He remembered that Mo Hua had personally drawn a map of Dahei Mountain, marking every stream and tree clearly.

If this map was indeed of Dahei Mountain, Mo Hua should be able to recognize it.

Mo Hua took the map and examined it carefully, feeling both familiar and strange.

“This mountain shape looks like Dahei Mountain’s map, but I haven’t seen it exactly like this before.”

Mo Hua pondered and then asked Mo Shan:

“Dad, can you identify it?”

Mo Shan looked at it for a while, also finding it peculiar, and said, “Didn’t you draw maps of the inner and outer mountains? Compare it with those.”

“Oh, right.” Mo Hua nodded, retrieved his own maps, and spread them out on the ground.

Since Guang Toutuo had been captured, the criminals’ hideout had been destroyed, and Lu Hui was dead, they had time to carefully compare the maps.

After half an hour of searching, they couldn't find a matching location.

Zhang Lan said, "It could be a map of the mountain range outside Tongxian City."

Mo Hua nodded, thinking it was quite possible.

Dahei Mountain was large, and its terrain extended beyond the area near Tongxian City.

If so, it's no wonder Mo Hua found it familiar yet couldn't pinpoint the exact location.

"We can ask Guang Toutuo about the map's origin and its purpose when we return," Mo Hua suggested.

Since Guang Toutuo had hidden the map with his cultivation and movement techniques, it was evidently important, likely holding a significant secret.

Mo Hua copied the map as well.

The three then stayed the night at Dahei Mountain. The next morning, they rose early and returned to Tongxian City with the morning dew and sunrise.

After a brief rest, Mo Hua went to the Dao Court to find Zhang Lan and asked:

"Are you going to interrogate Guang Toutuo? Take me with you."

Zhang Lan hesitated, "Interrogations by the Dao Court can't have outsiders..."

"I was involved in capturing Guang Toutuo, how can I be considered an outsider?"

"True, but rules are rules." Zhang Lan gently declined.

"Then I'll ask the chief officer."

Mo Hua started to leave, and Zhang Lan quickly stopped him, “Why seek the chief officer?”

“If you can’t decide, naturally the chief officer can.”

“The chief officer won’t agree.”

Mo Hua grinned slyly, “How do you know he won’t?”

Zhang Lan pondered and realized the chief officer might not refuse.

Since Mo Hua helped capture Guang Toutuo, it seemed reasonable for him to be present at the interrogation.

Moreover, Mo Hua had many connections and sources of information, potentially knowing more than Zhang Lan himself.

Allowing Mo Hua to help might indeed yield more information.

The chief officer already admired Mo Hua, and Mo Hua was a first-grade array master. He would definitely give Mo Hua this consideration.

Zhang Lan’s expression was complex, and he sighed, “The interrogation might be bloody...”

Mid-sentence, Zhang Lan remembered that Mo Hua was a demon hunter, accustomed to the blood and violence of battles between cultivators and monsters.

Realizing this, Zhang Lan relented, “Come with me.”

Mo Hua smiled, “Thank you, Uncle Zhang.”

The Dao Court’s torture chamber was in a dark corner to the west.

Mo Hua followed Zhang Lan into the chamber, immediately smelling blood and decay. The dim room had torture instruments hanging on the walls, dark blood stains on the floor, and a furnace with branding irons.

The atmosphere was oppressive and sinister.

No wonder Zhang Lan didn't want him here.

Zhang Lan instructed, "You can listen from the side. If you feel uncomfortable, go outside for some air. This isn't a good place to be."

"Thank you, Uncle Zhang!"

Mo Hua thanked him again.

Zhang Lan smiled slightly, patted Mo Hua's shoulder, and then ordered Guang Toutuo to be brought in.

Mo Hua found a clean spot to sit. Soon, he heard the clinking of shackles and saw several officers bringing in the chained Guang Toutuo.

Guang Toutuo was covered in wounds, looking battered and exhausted, clearly having suffered in the Dao Prison.

The officers bound Guang Toutuo to a torture rack.

Zhang Lan put on a cold expression and said:

"Guang Toutuo, I'll ask you some questions. Answer truthfully, and you'll suffer less."

Guang Toutuo kept his eyes closed, saying nothing.

Zhang Lan asked several questions, but Guang Toutuo remained silent, not even responding to torture.

He seemed resigned to death, regarding the Dao Court cultivators as lackeys, having been captured by them.

Facing imminent death, he had nothing to lose.

Zhang Lan tried several times, using various methods, but finally shook his head in frustration.

Then he noticed Mo Hua signaling to him.

Zhang Lan thought for a moment and nodded.

Mo Hua walked up leisurely, smiling, and asked, “Big Baldy, do you know the Water Prison Technique?”

Hearing the clear voice, Guang Toutuo looked up and saw a young, red-lipped, white-toothed cultivator smiling at him.

How could there be a child in the Dao Court’s torture chamber?

And this figure and aura seemed familiar, likely the young demon hunter who saved Ji Qingbai.

Guang Toutuo was puzzled and asked, “What Water Prison Technique?”

Mo Hua smiled, raised his small hand, and spiritual chains formed, locking onto Guang Toutuo.

This technique...

Guang Toutuo trembled violently, his eyes widening.

“It’s you!”