

The Quest 296

Chapter 296: Evil Thoughts

After dinner, Mo Hua spent some time drawing arrays and then lay down on the bed to rest. As soon as it was midnight, he entered his Sea of Consciousness.

In the Sea of Consciousness, the ethereal Dao Stele emerged.

Mo Hua scrutinized the Dao Stele, finding it no different from usual.

Mo Hua felt a bit disappointed.

He had thought that after devouring the Blue-faced Demon and refining its divine sense, with his own divine sense reaching the Foundation Building stage, the Dao Stele would undergo some mystical transformation.

But it seemed he had overthought it.

The Dao Stele remained ethereal, ancient, profound, and silent, like the Dao itself, eternal and unchanging.

Mo Hua silently stared at the Dao Stele.

This Dao Stele had accompanied Mo Hua in his Sea of Consciousness for more than a decade. It was utterly familiar, yet now it appeared unfathomable, as if it concealed many unknown causes and effects.

"I wonder if, when my cultivation advances further, and my divine sense grows stronger, or when my experience in cultivation deepens, I will be able to uncover the secrets within the Dao Stele?"

Mo Hua pondered in his heart.

Then Mo Hua set aside his miscellaneous thoughts and practiced drawing arrays on the Dao Stele as usual.

Cultivation values accumulation over time, and arrays require constant effort, like water dripping through stone.

Both need relentless effort day and night, with persistent practice. Nothing can be achieved overnight, nor should one seek quick success.

Even though Mo Hua's divine sense was already strong, he still needed to practice arrays diligently, honing and consolidating his skills.

Mo Hua used his finger as a pen, drawing complex and profound array patterns on the Dao Stele.

These were esoteric patterns that ordinary first-grade array masters could not learn. The array formed by these esoteric patterns was the Reverse Spirit Array of ten patterns, a first-grade array.

This was also the most difficult array Mo Hua had learned so far.

For Mo Hua now, only this array was worth spending time practicing.

After all, his divine sense had reached the Foundation Building stage. Ordinary first-grade arrays could no longer deepen his understanding or hone his divine sense; drawing them was as easy and flavorless as drinking water.

Of course, this was just Mo Hua's inner thought. If spoken out loud, it would surely provoke resentment.

Mo Hua concentrated on practicing the Reverse Spirit Array.

But as he practiced, Mo Hua felt something amiss.

Whenever he consumed his divine sense, remnants occasionally appeared in his Sea of Consciousness.

Among the remnants, there were visions of a Taoist temple hidden in the green mountains, a Taoist boy who was sometimes innocent and sometimes evil, a Taoist who was sometimes ethereal and sometimes greedy, and various cultivators with ulterior motives...

Mo Hua's state of mind fluctuated frequently.

Sometimes he felt pure, sometimes restless, sometimes despondent, sometimes violent, and even occasionally developed a craving for human flesh and blood.

Mo Hua quickly sat in meditation, discarding distracting thoughts.

After a moment, Mo Hua opened his eyes and frowned.

"Could it be that the divine sense of the Blue-faced Demon wasn't completely purified, leaving so many evil thoughts behind?"

He recalled what Mr. Zhuang had said about the visualization diagram being perilous and that the divine sense visualized might belong to some "non-human" entity...

If that were true, the aftermath of "eating" the demon could be more dangerous than he had imagined.

"I'll ask Mr. Zhuang about it tomorrow."

Since evil thoughts remained, it wouldn't be wise to use his divine sense to practice arrays.

Otherwise, the remaining evil thoughts might subtly corrupt his Sea of Consciousness, leading him astray or even causing him to deviate from the right path.

Mo Hua continued to meditate, reflecting on himself, overcoming evil thoughts, and maintaining his true self.

At the hour of the Rabbit, as dawn broke, Mo Hua sat cross-legged, bathed in the morning sun, and performed his routine cultivation.

After finishing his cultivation, feeling more energized, Mo Hua ate the breakfast his mother had prepared and took some wine and meat to visit Mr. Zhuang at the Sit and Forget Abode.

It had been a while since Mo Hua last visited Mr. Zhuang.

The scenery at the mountain residence was as serene and leisurely as ever, calming one's mind just by looking at it.

It was still early, and Mr. Zhuang was dozing.

Mo Hua peeked inside and saw that Mr. Zhuang was indeed lying leisurely on a bamboo chair, eyes closed, seemingly lost in a trance. Not wanting to disturb him, Mo Hua quietly sat on the steps outside as usual, reading a book on arrays.

Above him was the golden sunlight, and before him, the emerald-green mountains.

As Mo Hua read and gazed at the scenery, he felt his evil thoughts dissipate, and his mood became much more relaxed.

While reading, Mo Hua suddenly sensed movement inside. He turned and saw Mr. Zhuang standing up, looking at him seriously.

"Who are you?"

Mr. Zhuang asked, his tone slightly cold.

Mo Hua was taken aback and scratched his head. "Sir, it's me, Mo Hua..."

Mr. Zhuang's expression softened slightly after looking at Mo Hua for a few moments. He then asked, "Where did your divine sense come from?"

"I encountered a visualization diagram."

A visualization diagram...

Mr. Zhuang nodded slightly, "And then?"

"There was a little demon in the diagram. It jumped into my Sea of Consciousness, and I ate it..."

Mo Hua was succinct.

Mr. Zhuang, who was usually calm and composed, couldn't help but show a shocked expression.
"Ate it?"

Mo Hua nodded, "Ate it."

Mr. Zhuang twitched his mouth, "How did you eat it?"

"It tried to eat me, so I injured it with an array. It turned into wisps of blue smoke, which I swallowed..."

Mo Hua briefly recounted the incident, omitting the part about the Dao Stele.

In fact, it was the aura of the Dao Stele that burned the Blue-faced Demon into blue smoke.

"Can your divine sense manifest?" Mr. Zhuang asked.

"Yes." Mo Hua nodded.

Mo Hua had learned from the Blue-faced Demon that the appearance of a self-manifested divine sense in the Sea of Consciousness was called divine sense manifestation.

Mo Hua had been able to manifest his divine sense since he was young, thinking it was commonplace. But seeing the demon's reaction, he realized not all cultivators could manifest their divine sense in the Sea of Consciousness.

At this moment, Mr. Zhuang's expression was unsurprised. It seemed that although he hadn't asked before, he had long guessed that Mo Hua's divine sense could manifest.

Mr. Zhuang continued, "So after eating the demon and refining it, your divine sense suddenly surged?"

Mo Hua nodded, thinking that Mr. Zhuang indeed lived up to his reputation. He had figured out most of the situation with just a few words from Mr. Zhuang.

Mr. Zhuang stood there, his expression complex, hesitating several times before finally confirming slowly:

"So your divine sense has now reached the Foundation Building stage?"

"Yes, sir!" Mo Hua smiled shyly, his eyes sparkling with a bit of pride.

Mr. Zhuang sighed and slowly sat back down, his expression returning to leisure, though his heart was far from calm.

These past days, Mo Hua hadn't come to see him. He thought Mo Hua had gone off somewhere and lost track of time. Little did he know that in just a few days, Mo Hua's divine sense had reached the Foundation Building stage.

"It's too fast..." Mr. Zhuang thought silently.

Though it's said that planning leads to success and lack of planning leads to failure.

But Mo Hua's rapid growth in divine sense was beyond anticipation. As a result, all his previous preparations and plans had to be overturned...

Seeing Mr. Zhuang deep in thought, Mo Hua voiced his concern:

"Sir, after eating the demon in the visualization diagram, it seems to have left its memories in my Sea of Consciousness. I occasionally experience various illusions and distractions. Could this be dangerous?"

"Hmm..." Mr. Zhuang's gaze deepened. "It's hard to say."

Mo Hua didn't expect the knowledgeable Mr. Zhuang to give such a vague answer and couldn't help but ask:

"Why is it hard to say?"

"Because no one has done this before..."

Mo Hua was stunned, "No one has eaten a demon?"

"No." Mr. Zhuang looked at Mo Hua with a complex expression. "Usually, it's the demons eating people. You're the first to eat a demon..."