

The Quest 297

Chapter 297: Visualization Diagram

Mo Hua couldn't help but gape.

He didn't expect that in such a vast cultivation world with so many cultivators, he could be lucky enough to become the first person to "eat a crab."

Mo Hua was conflicted. He didn't want to eat a crab; without any prior examples, he might end up with a stomachache if he did it wrong.

"So what should I do?" Mo Hua asked, "Will there be a day when my sea of consciousness is eroded by evil thoughts, losing my true self, and I really become a little demon that eats people?"

Mr. Zhuang glanced at Mo Hua, "Don't worry unnecessarily. You've eaten all the living demons; what do some remnants after death count for?"

"At most, it could be..." Mr. Zhuang thought for a moment and found a term, "Indigestion."

"Indigestion..." Mo Hua pondered for a moment and understood.

"Indigestion, right?"

Mr. Zhuang nodded, "You could say that."

Mo Hua felt relieved and began to ask other questions:

"Sir, where did the visualization diagram come from? And you said the visualization diagram contains dangers. Is the little demon one of them? Is it the 'non-human' way you mentioned? Do all visualization diagrams have such little demons? What should I do if I encounter them again?"

Mo Hua's voice was clear and he asked a long string of questions in one breath.

Mr. Zhuang couldn't help but rub his forehead.

Having a clever disciple was both a blessing and a burden. The faster the brain worked, the more questions there were, and answering them all was a bit strenuous.

Mr. Zhuang thought for a moment and decided to start from the basics, then asked Mo Hua:

"All extraordinary powers of a cultivator rely on three things. Do you know what they are?"

"Is it spiritual sense, spiritual power, and the physical body?" Mo Hua replied.

Mr. Zhuang nodded, "Correct, all abilities of a cultivator are based on spiritual sense, spiritual power, and the physical body."

"Martial arts stimulate the body with spiritual power, spells condense spiritual power with spiritual sense, and arrays communicate with the Dao of Heaven through spiritual sense, using array patterns to transmit spiritual power. Other cultivation methods are generally the same, just with different focuses."

"If you encounter anything strange or bizarre in the cultivation world in the future and can't figure it out, you can consider it from these three aspects."

Mo Hua suddenly understood.

"The little demon in the visualization diagram has no physical body or spiritual power. It is purely spiritual sense, right?"

"Correct," Mr. Zhuang said, "In other words, the so-called visualization diagram is just a medium for carrying spiritual sense. What it carries are the remnants of some cultivators' spiritual sense left by chance, or the spiritual thoughts of some non-human beings born by coincidence."

"These spiritual senses or thoughts are often called evil beings or ghosts by cultivators."

Mo Hua asked, "Can these evil beings and ghosts be eaten?"

Mr. Zhuang knocked Mo Hua's head lightly, "Don't be greedy, thinking of eating everything."

Mo Hua smiled sheepishly.

Mr. Zhuang warned, "These evil beings and ghosts vary in strength. The Blue-faced Demon you encountered was relatively weak, so you could eat it. If you encounter a stronger one, who knows who will eat whom."

"How strong can they be?" Mo Hua was curious.

Mr. Zhuang's eyes flashed with deep fear, and he said gravely:

"Very strong and terrifying."

Mo Hua also became serious.

Even the unfathomable Mr. Zhuang found them terrifying?

Mr. Zhuang glanced at Mo Hua, thought for a moment, and decided to give him a warning.

Originally, Mo Hua's realm was too low to encounter these, but now he unexpectedly found a visualization diagram and even devoured the demon within. Who knows what he might encounter in the future.

Mr. Zhuang liked this clever disciple and didn't want him to fall into a doomed situation due to ignorance and fearlessness.

"There are some dangers in this world that you cannot see," Mr. Zhuang said.

"Desolate mountains, ancient temples, sealed caves, and ancient tombs often harbor unspeakable evil beings or ghosts. They feed on human spiritual sense and are adept at corrupting the human heart."

"Cultivators with weak spiritual sense who encounter these beings might not even know how they died, as they can't see or touch them. Either their spiritual sense is completely devoured, or their sea

of consciousness is occupied by the evil being, becoming unknowingly controlled and turning into a puppet-like living dead."

"Some beings have existed for even longer, with overwhelming spiritual thoughts, nearly indestructible. Some cultivators, out of awe, regard them as 'ghost gods' or 'evil gods' and worship them."

"But most of these ghost gods and evil gods are inherently evil, with treacherous spiritual thoughts. Cultivators who revere them often do not meet a good end..."

"Whether they are weaker evil beings or ghosts or extremely powerful ghost gods and evil gods, they need a place to reside in this world. That residence is the visualization diagram."

"That's why I told you that the visualization diagram contains dangers and embodies non-human ways..."

Mo Hua listened in horror but also asked in confusion:

"Are they all hidden in the diagram?"

Can such a small diagram hold them all?

Mr. Zhuang shook his head, "Although it is called a visualization diagram, it doesn't necessarily have to be a picture. Some murals, statues, or strange patterns can also be visualization objects. Cultivators just habitually refer to them all as 'visualization diagrams.'"

Mo Hua nodded, feeling enlightened.

Without Mr. Zhuang's guidance, he would never have known these cultivation secrets. If he really encountered a powerful ghost, he might not even know how he died.

Mo Hua asked, "Is this knowledge part of cultivation basics?"

"These are not basics," Mr. Zhuang said, "but cultivation secrets. They are the secrets known only to ancient families proficient in spiritual sense or ancient sects that pass down arrays. Ordinary cultivators are unaware of them."

Mo Hua nodded repeatedly, carefully remembering these rare cultivation secrets.

Other than Mr. Zhuang, no one could tell him these things.

"Do you understand?"

"Yes," Mo Hua replied, then suddenly thought of something, "but..."

Mr. Zhuang saw his hesitant expression and said helplessly, "Just ask if you have a question, don't keep it inside."

Mo Hua smiled brightly, "Thank you, sir!"

Then he asked, "When I first saw the visualization diagram, I saw a little Dao child. But later, the Dao child turned into a little demon. Why is that? Does every visualization diagram have two forms?"

Mr. Zhuang glanced at Mo Hua in surprise.

He hadn't mentioned such a subtle point, but Mo Hua thought of it himself. He was indeed talented and highly perceptive.

Mr. Zhuang smiled slightly, showing approval:

"All things in the world have an appearance and an essence. The visualization diagram is the same. The various scenes in the diagram are its appearance, and beneath the appearance is the essence of spiritual thoughts."

Mo Hua followed Mr. Zhuang's words and thought:

"So, the little Dao child in the visualization diagram is the appearance, and the Blue-faced Demon is its essence?"

Mr. Zhuang nodded, "Correct."

"Do all visualization diagrams have both appearance and essence?"

"Yes, but it's not that simple," Mr. Zhuang patiently explained:

"Some diagrams' appearance is the essence, while others' essence is just a deeper hidden appearance."

"Appearance and essence, essence and appearance..."

Mo Hua thought for a while, feeling a bit confused, then asked:

"How can I distinguish them?"

Mr. Zhuang raised his long finger and said slowly:

"First, rely on spiritual sense. If your spiritual sense is strong, stronger than the spiritual thoughts or evil beings in the visualization diagram, you can see through their true nature."

"Second, rely on experience. The more visualization diagrams you see, the more intuitively you can distinguish some authenticity and see through some appearances."

"Third, rely on understanding the Dao of Heaven. The deeper your understanding of the Dao, the closer you are to the essence of the Dao, the more you can see the essence hidden beneath the appearance."

"These three points, the first is the most direct, the second takes time, and the third is the hardest."

"The Dao of Heaven..." Mo Hua pondered for a moment and asked, "How can I deepen my understanding of the Dao of Heaven?"

Mr. Zhuang said, "First, look at your character; second, look at your tempering."

Mo Hua frowned, thinking carefully for a moment, then suddenly his eyes lit up, "Meditation to enhance character, arrays to temper comprehension?"

Mr. Zhuang didn't expect him to grasp it immediately and nodded, "Yes."

Mo Hua thought it through from beginning to end and gradually understood:

"My spiritual sense is strong, and because I meditate and draw arrays every day, my understanding of the Dao of Heaven is deeper. So, unknowingly, I saw through the Blue-faced Demon's essence. The Blue-faced Demon then entered my sea of consciousness, trying to devour my spiritual sense..."

"But..." Mo Hua was puzzled, "The Third Master also has strong spiritual sense. Why didn't he see through the essence of the visualization diagram?"

Mr. Zhuang said indifferently, "His spiritual sense may be strong, but his character is too greedy, blinded by desire. His understanding of the Dao of Heaven is poor, so he couldn't see through."

Mo Hua understood.

It seems that character is very important. Otherwise, it's easy to be blinded by appearances and fail to see the essence, deviating from the Dao of Heaven.

Through this

conversation with Mr. Zhuang, Mo Hua understood a lot and sincerely said, "Thank you, sir!"

Mr. Zhuang's gaze became profound as he asked, "Do you know why I'm telling you so much now?"

"Because I asked you..."

Mo Hua thought silently, but he knew that since Mr. Zhuang asked this question, it couldn't be that simple.

He could ask, and Mr. Zhuang could answer or not answer.

How much Mr. Zhuang chose to answer and what he chose to answer could have many considerations.

Mo Hua reviewed Mr. Zhuang's answers in his mind and felt that they were all related to 'spiritual sense' and 'the Dao of Heaven.'

But he couldn't figure out why Mr. Zhuang was saying these things.

Mr. Zhuang saw Mo Hua's thoughtful but confused expression and decided not to keep him guessing. Instead, he asked meaningfully:

"Foundation Building is about laying the foundation for the Dao..."

"Have you thought about what kind of foundation you want to build?"