

## The Quest 299

Chapter 299: Staying True to Oneself

Spiritual Awareness Proving the Dao, Seeing the Great Dao with Supreme Spiritual Awareness...

Mo Hua was utterly shocked as he listened.

He pondered deeply. Indeed, focusing on spiritual awareness seemed to be the most suitable path for him.

All of his cultivation and skills relied on his spiritual awareness.

Firstly, drawing arrays required spiritual awareness. Without strong spiritual awareness, it was impossible to comprehend arrays, let alone learn and use them.

Arrays and spiritual awareness complemented each other. Constantly practicing arrays could also hone the sea of consciousness, enhancing spiritual awareness.

Secondly, the bottleneck in Mo Hua's cultivation technique was the maze array, which resided in the sea of consciousness.

Without strong spiritual awareness, he couldn't unravel the maze array, break through the bottleneck, and his cultivation would remain stagnant forever.

Finally, the spells he practiced, whether it was the Fireball Technique, which required precise spiritual awareness for targeting and speed, the Passing Water Step, which needed spiritual power manipulation, or the Concealment Technique, which hid his presence from others—stronger spiritual awareness made these spells more effective.

Thus, using spiritual awareness to prove the Dao was the most suitable and possibly the only path for Mo Hua.

Mo Hua nodded, suddenly recalling a question and asked Mr. Zhuang:

“But my spiritual awareness has already reached the Foundation Building stage, what else needs to be done?”

“It's not enough.”

“Even reaching the Foundation Building stage in spiritual awareness is not enough?” Mo Hua was surprised and puzzled.

Wasn't it said that achieving the Foundation Building stage in spiritual awareness at the Qi refining stage was extremely difficult? Even so, his spiritual awareness was still insufficient...

Mo Hua scratched his head.

Mr. Zhuang said, “It's enough for others, but not for you.”

“Why?”

Instead of answering directly, Mr. Zhuang asked, “Bai Zisheng and Bai Zixi have higher talents than you, are older, have better inheritances, and more spirit stones...”

Mr. Zhuang listed many advantages, and Mo Hua could only sigh inwardly.

Comparison was indeed discouraging.

Despite being registered disciples, Mo Hua felt like he was dragging Mr. Zhuang's registered disciples down, and not just by a little.

After listing the advantages of the Bai siblings, Mr. Zhuang asked, “Do you know why they haven't reached the Foundation Building stage yet?”

Mo Hua thought for a moment and answered, “Are they honing their foundation?”

“Correct,” Mr. Zhuang nodded, “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. Qi refining is the first stage and the starting point of cultivation, so one must solidify the foundation, build up vitality, and not rush.”

Mo Hua frowned, “Sir, if that's the case, then Qi refining should be the stage for Foundation Building, shouldn't it? Isn't it about honing the foundation and laying the groundwork for the Great Dao?”

Mr. Zhuang shook his head, “Qi refining is only for solidifying the foundation, but it's different from the Foundation Building stage.”

“Does the Foundation Building stage have any extraordinary significance?”

Mr. Zhuang solemnly said:

“The Foundation Building stage is the first major breakthrough among the various stages of cultivation!”

“When a cultivator reaches the Foundation Building stage, spiritual power undergoes a qualitative change, condensing into liquid; the physical body undergoes a qualitative change, with blood and Qi like mercury; at the same time, the sea of consciousness expands, and spiritual awareness doubles!”

Spiritual awareness doubling!

Mo Hua's heart skipped a beat, “Could it be...”

Mr. Zhuang nodded slightly, his gaze deep, “This means that no matter how strong your spiritual awareness is during the Qi refining stage, it could potentially double after reaching the Foundation Building stage!”

Mo Hua's heart trembled, showing an expression of disbelief.

Other cultivators would have their Qi refining stage spiritual awareness doubled, reaching Foundation Building stage spiritual awareness.

But he already had Foundation Building stage spiritual awareness. If it doubled, how powerful would his spiritual awareness become...

Mo Hua couldn't imagine, so he looked at Mr. Zhuang and asked:

“What about my spiritual awareness...”

Mr. Zhuang said, “Your current spiritual awareness is roughly equivalent to the early Foundation Building stage. After doubling, it will be at the mid Foundation Building stage.”

Mr. Zhuang paused and then continued, “If you had mid Foundation Building stage spiritual awareness before reaching the Foundation Building stage, after reaching the Foundation Building stage, though not as strong as the Golden Core stage, it would be at the peak of the late Foundation Building stage.”

Mo Hua couldn't help but open his mouth wide.

If this were true, with such strong spiritual awareness after reaching the Foundation Building stage, becoming a second-grade array master would be a breeze.

Furthermore, breaking bottlenecks would be easier, the Fireball Technique would be faster, Passing Water Step would be stronger, and Concealment Technique would be harder to detect.

Mo Hua couldn't help but fantasize for a while, but when he looked up, he found Mr. Zhuang watching him with a faint smile.

Mo Hua's heart skipped again.

Based on his intuition and his understanding of Mr. Zhuang, Mr. Zhuang definitely had more to say.

“Is it not that simple...” Mo Hua asked quietly.

Mr. Zhuang smiled slightly and asked Mo Hua, “How do you plan to enhance your spiritual awareness?”

Mo Hua thought for a moment and answered truthfully:

“Just like before, by drawing arrays and practicing 解阵?”

“Your spiritual awareness has already reached the Foundation Building stage. Drawing first-grade arrays now will hardly increase your spiritual awareness.”

Mo Hua was taken aback, only then realizing that no wonder drawing first-grade arrays had felt boring and meaningless these past few days.

It was because these were too simple, no longer honing his spiritual awareness or comprehending the laws of the Dao.

“Then should I consume the Visualization Diagram?” Mo Hua asked quietly.

Mr. Zhuang couldn't help but knock on Mo Hua's head, shaking his head:

“Even if you could see through the Visualization Diagram's true nature and distinguish what you are consuming, what would be the consequences?”

“Even if you could consume it, Visualization Diagrams are rare. How could you be lucky enough to obtain another one?”

“Moreover, Visualization Diagrams vary in strength. If the evil entity in the diagram is too strong, it's uncertain who would consume whom...”

Mo Hua had the Dao Stele in his sea of consciousness, so he might not be consumed, but he didn't want any extra trouble.

If a powerful evil entity entered his sea of consciousness, saw his Dao Stele, and he couldn't keep it, letting it escape, it would be a big problem.

Mo Hua couldn't help but nod.

Since he couldn't consume the Visualization Diagram and couldn't draw first-grade arrays, there was only one way left.

Mo Hua said, "Can I draw the Reverse Spirit Array?"

"Not just the Reverse Spirit Array, all first-grade ten-pattern arrays that contain heavenly anomalies can help you enhance your spiritual awareness," Mr. Zhuang said.

"There are other heavenly anomaly arrays?"

Mr. Zhuang nodded, "Yes, but I don't have them."

Mo Hua's eyes lit up, "Can we obtain them?"

Mr. Zhuang chuckled, "We'll talk about that later. Learn the Reverse Spirit Array first. Once you've mastered it, I have other things to teach you. If you can fully grasp the Reverse Spirit Array, I'll find other heavenly anomaly arrays for you to learn."

Mo Hua felt grateful and respectfully bowed, "Thank you, sir!"

Mr. Zhuang had said so much, his face showing signs of fatigue.

Mo Hua then prepared to leave, not wanting to disturb Mr. Zhuang's rest. After taking a few steps, Mr. Zhuang called him back.

"I forgot to tell you," Mr. Zhuang lay on the bamboo chair, looking at Mo Hua with gentle eyes, "Those evil thoughts are actually useful."

"The Blue-faced demon's evil thoughts?"

"Yes."

"What are they used for?"

"To refine the heart with evil thoughts," Mr. Zhuang's gaze sharpened as he spoke to Mo Hua:

“Cultivators seek the Dao and longevity, facing countless obstacles and dangers. Beyond cultivation stages, the greatest obstacle is the Dao heart.”

“Can cultivators lose their Dao heart?”

“They can,” Mr. Zhuang nodded, his expression melancholic:

“Cultivators’ path is long. Initially, they may be devoted to the Dao with a firm Dao heart.”

“But as time passes, worldly desires taint the heart, and gradually, they forget what they are cultivating for. Living long enough, they also forget why they are living.”

“Devotees to the Dao indulge in sensual pleasures, demon slayers become demonic, those concerned with the world become tyrants, and the compassionate become callous...”

“The most resilient and fragile thing in this world is the human heart.”

“In this vast world, appearances are deceptive. Over time, the Dao heart erodes.”

“That’s why I want you to prove the Dao with spiritual awareness.”

“With strong spiritual awareness, you can see through appearances, keep your thoughts clear, and fend off external evils. No matter what happens in the future, I hope you remain true to your Dao and never forget your original Dao heart...”

Mr. Zhuang spoke earnestly, his expression suddenly becoming extremely fatigued. He involuntarily closed his eyes and quietly fell asleep.

Mo Hua respectfully bowed to Mr. Zhuang.

He silently remembered Mr. Zhuang’s words, especially the last two sentences:

Stay true to your Dao, and never forget your original Dao heart.

