

The Quest 304

Chapter 304: Commander Yang

Zhang Lan had previously decided not to let Mo Hua enter the mountain. Now, needing Mo Hua's help, he felt a bit embarrassed.

Mo Hua, however, didn't mind. He figured that Zhang Lan's request was likely related to exterminating the Heishan Stronghold.

As long as they could wipe out Heishan Stronghold and kill all the demonic cultivators there, he was more than happy to help.

Zhang Lan led Mo Hua into the inner mountain, arriving at a desolate peak.

The area around the peak was pitted and scarred, with numerous signs of past battles, though these marks were quite old. Several mining caves remained on the mountain.

Mo Hua was somewhat surprised.

This peak turned out to be the Nameless Peak.

It was the same peak they had fought the Qian family over, where a small spirit mine was located.

The battle scars were left by the Demon Hunters and Qian family cultivators. Most of them were from the Earth Fire Array he had set off.

Unexpectedly, the Dao soldiers had secretly stationed themselves here.

Zhang Lan and Mo Hua reached the foot of the mountain. Mo Hua's spiritual sense detected shadows moving within the mining caves.

These cultivators had steady auras and were well-trained, indicating they were Dao soldiers dispatched by the Dao Court.

Suddenly, Mo Hua's expression tensed; someone had sensed his spiritual presence!

And it was a Foundation Building cultivator!

Simultaneously, a tall, robust, stern-looking cultivator with a square face appeared at the cave entrance halfway up the mountain.

His expression was grave, his spiritual sense extended, and his gaze was sharp, carrying a hint of killing intent.

Upon seeing Zhang Lan and Mo Hua at the foot of the mountain, his expression relaxed a bit. He nodded slightly to Zhang Lan before turning back into the cave.

"Reaching Foundation Building, he sure is putting on airs..." Zhang Lan muttered disdainfully.

Though Zhang Lan's voice was low, Mo Hua heard it and couldn't help but ask, "Uncle Zhang, do you know him?"

"Sort of," Zhang Lan replied, unwilling to elaborate. He then said to Mo Hua, "Let's go up."

Mo Hua nodded.

Amid the shrubs and rocks near the mining caves, numerous Dao soldiers in standard armor stood guard with long spears, their expressions vigilant.

Mo Hua had already spotted them with his spiritual sense, so he wasn't surprised.

Zhang Lan remained composed, as if he were a regular visitor.

The Dao soldiers seemed to recognize Zhang Lan, greeting him respectfully, "Inspector Zhang!"

One of the Dao soldiers stepped forward and led Zhang Lan and Mo Hua into a stone chamber inside the cave.

The stone chamber was spacious, suitable for habitation and discussions.

Mo Hua recalled that during the battle with the Qian family over the spirit mine, Elder Yu had stayed in this very chamber, while he had stayed in a smaller, warmer, and more comfortable stone chamber next door, eating beef and drawing arrays every day.

He hadn't expected this place to now serve as a temporary camp for Dao soldiers.

The large stone chamber's layout hadn't changed, but its furnishings were entirely different.

Silver armor and a red-tasseled spear were placed around the room. In the middle, a large table held a sand table with a map on it.

The sand table resembled Heishan Stronghold.

Standing before the sand table was the tall, stern Foundation Building commander.

The commander nodded at Zhang Lan, acknowledging his presence, then frowned and asked, "Didn't you say you'd bring an Array Master? Where is he?"

Zhang Lan pushed Mo Hua forward. "Here."

The commander was momentarily stunned before his expression turned angry. "Zhang Lan! Damn you, I'm not beating you because I'm now at Foundation Building, and it wouldn't be fair. But if you keep messing with me, I won't hold back!"

Zhang Lan scoffed. "Open your eyes and see clearly. This kid is a genuine Array Master. He's very busy, and if it weren't for my sake, you wouldn't have been able to invite him."

"You're talking nonsense!" Commander Yang cursed. "How could such a young kid know any arrays? Do you think I'm completely ignorant about arrays?"

Zhang Lan retorted, "I'll write to my mother, telling her you cursed her. Let's see if she skins you alive..."

Commander Yang's eyelids twitched. "Nonsense, I cursed you, not your mother!"

"What's the difference?" Zhang Lan argued confidently.

"There's a big difference! Can you stop being so shameless at your age?"

"I'm not old! A man at thirty is in his prime. I'm at my most dashing and handsome age..."

...

Mo Hua was dumbfounded.

These two grown men were arguing more childishly than he ever did.

After a while, Zhang Lan and Commander Yang, both feeling parched, sat down to drink tea.

Commander Yang realized that arguing with Zhang Lan, a Qi Refining cultivator, in front of a child was quite embarrassing for a Foundation Building cultivator.

He blamed Zhang Lan for being so inconsiderate, always dragging him into arguments.

Commander Yang coughed, trying to pretend nothing had happened, and asked Mo Hua as kindly as he could, "Young brother, are you really an Array Master?"

But his stern face made him look more like a plotting villain than a kind uncle.

Mo Hua didn't know how to address him, so Zhang Lan interjected, "His surname is Yang. Just call him 'Commander Yang'."

Mo Hua responded crisply, "Commander Yang, Uncle Zhang is right. I am an Array Master."

Commander Yang nodded, sighing inwardly.

Zhang Lan was truly a troublemaker, bringing a child for such an important task.

Looking at Mo Hua's young age, he doubted how much array knowledge the kid had...

But there was no choice. None of them, including himself, understood arrays. Among so many Dao soldiers, barely a handful could even recognize array patterns.

Commander Yang took a sip of tea and asked, "How far have you studied in arrays?"

Mo Hua modestly replied, "Not far, just reached the First Grade..."

At these words, Commander Yang spat out his tea, soaking the sand table and map.

Seeing this, Zhang Lan felt a wave of satisfaction and taunted, "Look at you, acting like you've never seen the world. What's so surprising about a ten-year-old First Grade Array Master?"

Zhang Lan's tone was calm, but he couldn't hide his inner glee.

Commander Yang cursed Zhang Lan again, "Damn it! How could there be so many genius Array Masters in the cultivation world, reaching First Grade at such a young age? And you just happened to find one?"

Zhang Lan shrugged. "Believe it or not."

Commander Yang said, "I don't believe it. Show me some of the arrays this kid has drawn."

Zhang Lan pointed to the map on the sand table. "Isn't that it?"

The map on the sand table depicted the layout of Heishan Stronghold.

Commander Yang was dumbfounded. "Nonsense! The report to the Dao Court stated that the 'Inspector of Tongxian City' risked his life to infiltrate Heishan Stronghold and draw this map. How could it be this kid's work?"

Zhang Lan smiled and told Mo Hua, "Take out the badge and show Commander Yang."

Mo Hua hesitated for a moment before taking out the bronze badge given to him by the Dao Court from his storage bag.

Commander Yang was taken aback.

Zhang Lan said proudly, "See? A bronze badge. He's a cultivator of the Dao Court. His map is our Dao Court's map."

Commander Yang was speechless. "A bronze badge is just an auxiliary position..."

"But it still belongs to the Dao Court."

Commander Yang frowned. "If this kid drew the map, he should be credited. Why wasn't his name written on the report?"

Zhang Lan sneered. "Who would believe it if his name was written? Would you?"

Commander Yang glanced at the young Mo Hua, then at the intricate map of Heishan Stronghold on the sand table, containing many First Grade arrays. He sighed silently.

Any cultivator with a bit of common sense wouldn't believe it.

He certainly didn't.