

The Quest 329

Chapter 329: The Evil Pill

Mo Hua found a clean place to sit cross-legged and began to ponder.

The only place he had seen an evil array was at Heishan Stronghold.

The outer perimeter of Heishan Stronghold used the orthodox Five Elements Array, not an evil array.

The Five Elements Array aligns with the Dao of Heaven's laws, being an orthodox array, whereas the aura of an evil array is filthy and, even with a Concealment Array, cannot be completely hidden if used excessively.

Thus, the Third Master had only set up a few evil arrays in the most secretive blood-colored pill room in the rear stronghold.

One was the bronze beast gate, and the other was the Bone Pill Furnace.

The evil array on the bronze beast gate was for guarding, while the evil array in the Bone Pill Furnace was for refining pills.

The Third Master's painstaking research into this evil array was certainly not for guarding.

Given this, it was for refining pills.

Refining evil pills naturally requires an evil furnace, and making an evil furnace naturally requires an evil array.

The evil array drawn by the Third Master was very likely for pill refining.

But what pill could it be?

The Longevity Pill?

At this time, is he still thinking about refining the Longevity Pill?

Is this Third Master so "dedicated"?

Heishan Stronghold has fallen, the stronghold leader has fled, and he is still diligently studying evil arrays, preparing to refine life-preserving pills?

It seems unlikely...

Mo Hua felt something was off, but couldn't grasp it immediately.

"Should I ask Mr. Zhuang?"

Mo Hua thought for a moment and then shook his head.

Taking this array to ask Mr. Zhuang might make him think Mo Hua wanted to learn evil arrays.

Moreover, Mr. Zhuang cherished peace and quiet, and Mo Hua didn't want to bring such filthy arrays to disturb his serene cultivation.

Besides, Mr. Zhuang was likely leaving soon, and Mo Hua would have to rely on himself in the future.

Thinking of this, Mo Hua felt a bit downhearted.

Mr. Zhuang is leaving...

I wonder if I will ever see him again.

After a moment of gloom, Mo Hua shook it off and continued to think.

If not from the evil array, then maybe some clues could be found from the pills.

Mo Hua took out paper and a brush, sketched a rough diagram of the Bone Pill Furnace, the blood-colored pill room, and some strange herbs from the Third Master's storage bag.

Mo Hua went to the Alchemy Hall in the south of the city and showed these to Mr. Feng.

Mr. Feng's face changed dramatically and he exclaimed, "These are..."

"Pills refined by evil cultivators!"

Mo Hua explained the situation, including the matters of Heishan Stronghold and the Third Master, as well as his suspicions:

"Are they still refining other pills?"

Mr. Feng took a deep breath, thought for a moment, and then said:

"It's possible. These strange herbs look similar but have different properties, not like they are for refining the same batch of pills..."

Mo Hua quickly asked, "Do you know what pills they might be?"

This stumped Mr. Feng.

Mr. Feng politely said, "I am not an evil pill master..."

Mo Hua sighed, "What a pity..."

Mr. Feng glared slightly at Mo Hua and said irritably:

"Would it not be a pity if I were an evil pill master?"

Mo Hua realized his blunder, scratched his head, and gave an embarrassed smile.

Mr. Feng chuckled, shook his head, and said, "I will call other pill masters from the Alchemy Hall to help you ask."

Mo Hua asked doubtfully, "If you don't know, will they?"

Mr. Feng smiled gently and said, "Do not underestimate anyone..."

"People in this world are diverse, each with their strengths. On the long road of cultivation, even an ordinary person has experiences others haven't had, knowledge others don't know, and insights others don't understand."

"How will you know they don't know if you don't ask?"

Mo Hua seemed to understand and nodded.

After a while, Mr. Feng gathered the pill masters from the Alchemy Hall. The room was soon crowded.

Mr. Feng explained the situation and showed them Mo Hua's sketches of the Bone Pill Furnace and the strange herbs.

For a moment, there was an uproar.

"The Qian family's patriarch is truly despicable."

"Refining such pills, truly devoid of conscience!"

"An outrage against heaven and earth, he will sooner or later feed pigs and dogs!"

They only knew that the Qian family's patriarch was an evil cultivator who colluded with Heishan Stronghold and did bad things, but they were not clear on the specifics. Upon learning about the human pill refining, they were furious.

Pill masters research the Dao of Pills to cure and save people, not to use people to refine pills.

This violated their initial purpose as pill masters.

Mr. Feng raised his hand, signaling everyone to quiet down, and asked:

“Does anyone know what other pills these herbs could refine?”

The pill masters looked at each other in confusion; they were not evil pill masters and had never refined evil pills, so they were unfamiliar with these.

Mr. Feng said, “You can also mention uncertain guesses to see if there are any clues.”

Now the pill masters had much to say.

This was about refining evil pills. They might not have "professional" knowledge, but they had plenty of "unprofessional" information.

“I guess it’s a Blood Fiend Pill...”

“I guess it’s a Human Essence Pill.”

“How could it be a Human Essence Pill?”

“I only know this one evil pill, so I can only guess this one...”

“How can you guess?”

“Guessing is just guessing, isn't it?”

...

“I once dealt with an evil pill master who used the blood of his closest kin as a medicinal guide to refine a Blood Source Pill...”

“To my shame, an ancestor of mine was an evil pill master who refined several types of evil pills and even shamelessly recorded their names in the family genealogy. It’s a disgrace I’ve never mentioned until now...”

Mr. Feng listened carefully, noting down the names and origins of the pills.

In a short time, he filled a whole page.

Mo Hua glanced at it and saw it was full of pill names like "Swallow," "Human," "Blood," "Evil," and "Fiend," indicating they were not good pills.

Yet, none of these seemed to match the pills the Qian family's patriarch was refining.

Mr. Feng also frowned.

Just then, a young pill master hesitated, saying, “I...”

He “I”ed for a long time without saying anything.

The pill master next to him grew impatient, “What are you ‘I’ing about? Speak up if you have something to say!”

“I, I... have heard a rumor.”

This young pill master was young and of low status, so he was nervous speaking in front of so many people.

Everyone waited patiently for him to continue.

“I don’t recognize these herbs or this furnace, but... but I’ve heard a rumor.”

The pill master next to him grew impatient again, “Get to the point!”

“Don’t rush him, let him speak slowly.”

After some commotion, Mr. Feng quieted everyone down and gently said to the young pill master:

“Speak slowly, no need to hurry, it’s okay if you’re wrong.”

The young pill master finally relaxed, took a breath, and continued:

“When I was traveling with my master, we passed by a dilapidated temple. It was cold at night, and I slept in my clothes. I woke up in the middle of the night, freezing, and saw my master talking to a strange Daoist.”

“That Daoist’s voice was peculiar. Though he spoke, it sounded like the voice was borrowed from someone else...”

“He told my master about a pill named... the ‘Life-Transforming Elixir.’ It uses human lifespan as a medicinal guide to convert a person’s life force into blood and qi, then refines it into medicinal power to create a pill that can break through cultivation levels...”

“What happened next?” a pill master asked.

“Next...” The young pill master said embarrassedly, “I was cold and hungry, and I fell back asleep. I don’t know what happened afterward...”

Everyone felt regretful.

Someone asked, “What about your master?”

“He went in.”

“What?”

The young pill master said softly, “He was taken to the Dao Prison...”

Everyone: “...”

“Did he refine this... Life-Transforming Elixir?”

The young pill master shook his head, “He hadn’t refined it yet. He was just caught buying a few herbs, and then the Dao Court found out and took him...”

“The Dao Court didn’t trouble you?”

The young pill master said, “I was also taken in, but I knew nothing, so they let me go after ten days.”

The young pill master sighed, looking troubled:

“My parents spent spirit stones to get me a master to learn some skills for a living.”

“But I didn’t learn much before my master was taken...”

“Fortunately, I didn’t learn my master’s skills, or I might have been taken too...”

“When I returned, my parents told me to keep my mouth shut, not to mention this to anyone, but now seeing you all discussing such matters, I thought I might as well share it in case it helps...”

Mr. Feng nodded, “It indeed helped. However, this matter should not be mentioned to outsiders in the future.”

The young pill master beamed at the praise and nodded repeatedly.

The impatient pill master patted his shoulder and sighed:

“You’re lucky you didn’t go astray, or your life would have been ruined.”

The young pill master gave an awkward smile.

Mo Hua's expression grew more serious.

The

Longevity Pill... the Life-Transforming Elixir...

Breaking through cultivation levels, enhancing power...

Mo Hua felt a chill in his heart.

If the Qian family patriarch is really refining the Life-Transforming Elixir, then there's big trouble.