

## The Quest 33

### Chapter 33: Crafting

The following day, Mo Hua did not practice the Magma Array but instead took some spirit stones to Chen's Artifact Crafting Shop to find Master Chen.

Master Chen was surprised to see Mo Hua, and even more so when he heard that Mo Hua truly intended to craft a stove.

"Are you really planning to craft a stove?"

"Of course, but just a small one, about four feet high. It doesn't need to be made from expensive materials, just sturdy and durable."

Master Chen nodded, "That's just right, if it were a larger stove, I might not have enough hands on deck. Since it's for personal use and you're from the neighborhood, I'll pick some affordable and durable materials for you, ensuring they are cost-effective yet long-lasting."

"Thank you, Master Chen!"

"However," Master Chen looked at Mo Hua and peered behind him, puzzled:

"Where are your parents? Crafting a stove isn't a minor matter; it usually requires an adult to discuss it."

Mo Hua patted his chest, "My father has left it to me, just talk to me if there's anything, Master Chen."

Master Chen looked at the youngster, Mo Hua, and nodded, "Indeed, the children of the poor have to shoulder responsibilities early."

After frowning and hesitating for a moment, he still said:

"Did you bring the deposit? The materials for the stove cost one hundred and fifty spirit stones, with the crafting taking twenty days at five spirit stones per day, and a crafting fee of one hundred spirit

stones. The deposit covers the material costs and must be paid first, amounting to one hundred and fifty spirit stones, while the crafting fee can be settled after completion."

"Yes, I brought it."

Mo Hua took out a heavy storage bag from his chest, opened the bag, and inside were sparkling, translucent spirit stones.

Such an amount of spirit stones would be considered a fortune in a common independent cultivator's family, and here the child was, carrying it in his chest...

Master Chen took the storage bag with a complex expression, counted exactly one hundred and fifty spirit stones, and then took out a spirit contract, detailing the materials, costs, and delivery date for crafting the stove.

The spirit contract is a recognized proof of agreement in the cultivation world, specially made and difficult to destroy or forge, serving as a record for transactions involving spirit stones among cultivators. In case of disputes, one could seek arbitration from an authoritative cultivator or request mediation from the Dao Court.

Two copies of the spirit contract were made, with Master Chen signing one, and then handing it to Mo Hua.

Mo Hua also signed his name, and each kept a copy as proof of the crafting transaction.

Master Chen initially wanted Mo Hua to sign using his father's name, but thinking better of it, he decided that since his parents had entrusted him, it was the same if he signed.

Under the heavens, all beings are equal, regardless of cultivation level or age; once the spirit contract is signed, it is binding.

"Mo Hua..."

Master Chen saw the dignified and handsome handwriting on the spirit contract and realized that the child's name was "Mo Hua." Looking again at his features—red lips, white teeth, and brows like paintings—he found the name quite fitting.

After securing a not insignificant business deal, which would take care of half a month's livelihood, Master Chen grew increasingly fond of Mo Hua.

"Young brother, the spirit contract is signed, and we'll start crafting tomorrow. I'll make sure to hurry and get it done for you. If you have time, you could also come over to check on the progress or learn about crafting. Normally, I don't let those who aren't apprentices in the shop watch."

"Sure, thank you, Master Chen!"

Mo Hua was quite interested in crafting. Although he might never craft a spiritual artifact in his lifetime, learning about crafting was beneficial, and this practical crafting skill was not taught in his sect.

In the following days, Mo Hua continued to practice the Magma Array as usual. Whenever he had spare time, he would go to the crafting shop to check on the progress of the stove and inquire about crafting knowledge.

Master Chen did not withhold information, answering all inquiries. After a few days of interaction, he was amazed at Mo Hua's aptitude for learning yet lamented his poor physical constitution for crafting. He had seen weak-bodied children before, but rarely one who couldn't even swing the crafting hammer.

Otherwise, Master Chen would have truly liked to take Mo Hua as his apprentice.

Mo Hua spent several days in the crafting shop, partly to learn the basics of crafting and partly to adjust the flow and measurements of the Magma Array.

While the array was usually drawn on paper, allowing for practice without consequence, now it needed to be drawn on the stove, and Mo Hua couldn't just ask Master Chen to craft another

if a mistake was made...

Thus, Mo Hua needed to be very familiar with the structure of the stove, frequently visiting the crafting shop to monitor progress.

One morning, after finishing porridge personally cooked by his mother, Mo Hua practiced the array for a bit and, before the day grew too hot, slowly made his way to Chen's Artifact Crafting Shop.

Upon arrival, he found the usually bustling shop unusually quiet today, without the loud calls or the "clang" of iron being struck.

Mo Hua walked to the backyard and saw Master Chen and a few apprentices cleaning up, the crafting furnace was unlit, and the lid was open with some cleaned ashes on the ground.

"Master Chen, what happened?"

Seeing Mo Hua, Master Chen apologized, "Young brother, I'm sorry, the crafting furnace is broken, and the stove you ordered might be delayed."

"The crafting furnace is broken?"

Master Chen also looked dejected, "This furnace is quite old, and it had some minor issues before that were manageable with repairs, but today it just wouldn't light, alas..."

"Can't it be fixed?" Mo Hua asked.

Master Chen shook his head, "Before, it was just external parts that I could repair, but now it seems to be an issue with the internal array, and that's beyond repair. We'll need to consult other masters from the crafting pavilion, and if we need an array master to repair the array, it will cost quite a few spirit stones..."

"Array?" Mo Hua perked up, "May I have a look?"

Master Chen paused, "Look at what?"

"The array."

"Why do you want to see the array?" Master Chen was puzzled, "Do you understand arrays?"

Mo Hua replied, "I've studied some arrays with a master in my sect, and maybe I can help, at least to see if the problem is indeed with the array."

Half in doubt, Master Chen thought since the furnace was already broken, looking at it wouldn't cause any harm, so he said, "Alright, I'll have them completely disassemble the crafting furnace for you to examine the array inside."

After speaking, he and the apprentices started to dismantle the crafting furnace piece by piece.

The furnace was as tall as two men and made of various types of refined iron, making it very heavy. However, the apprentices, endowed with strong physiques and decent cultivation, managed to cooperate and handle it without much difficulty.

Mo Hua knew his limitations well and didn't even think of helping physically.

Once the crafting furnace was dismantled, the dense array of dark red array patterns inside became visible, some obscured by black ash, but still discernible. The patterns inside were indeed a complete fire array.

It was the very Magma Array that Mo Hua had been practicing every day but had not yet managed to complete...