

The Quest 347

Chapter 347: Beyond the Ten Patterns

Mo Hua returned home and eagerly began reading the jade slip on the Five Elements Demon-Slaying Array.

However, even after reading until nightfall, he had not finished a single jade slip.

And there were ten jade slips in the entire set.

Mo Hua sighed. The array was indeed a "great" array, its complexity vast, with just the instructions on its construction taking up so many jade slips.

Time was of the essence, but Mo Hua couldn't afford to be hasty.

The array was crucial and couldn't tolerate any mistakes.

He had to be patient, study meticulously, and not rush.

A single careless mistake could lead to a chain reaction, causing the entire array to collapse.

Yet learning at this pace would take too long...

Mo Hua considered his options and decided to prioritize. He would start with the most important parts and work his way through the rest later.

He first spent some time skimming through all ten jade slips.

Then, he extracted the core parts of the array's hub and eyes, leaving the arrangement of array patterns, single array compatibility, and array medium construction for later.

Mo Hua began studying the array's hub.

The difficulty of the array's hub was significantly higher than that of any composite array hub he had learned before.

This level of complexity was the pinnacle of First Grade array formations.

The array's hub, managing the entire array and connecting numerous single arrays, required a structure that was robust, resilient, and stable, yet inclusive.

Inside the hub, numerous tracks for spiritual power had to be accommodated, controlling the opening, closing, direction, and flow of the spiritual power.

The outer edge of the hub also needed to leave interfaces to integrate various single arrays with different functions.

In the grand array, if single arrays were the veins, then the hub was the meridians; if single arrays were the flesh, then the hub was the skeleton.

The hub was the backbone of the array, the nexus of spiritual power flow.

Although Mo Hua understood these principles before, it was only now, hands-on, that he truly comprehended them.

Mo Hua first memorized a portion of the array hub. At night, he immersed his spiritual consciousness into the sea of consciousness and began practicing on the Dao Stele.

After practicing twice, he discovered something unbelievable:

His spiritual consciousness was far from sufficient!

Even after memorizing only a part of the array hub, his spiritual consciousness was exhausted and he still couldn't complete the hub.

The requirement for spiritual consciousness was simply too exaggerated...

Was this really a First Grade Ten-Pattern array?

Mo Hua found it hard to believe.

But then he thought, if it weren't so difficult, it wouldn't be called an ultimate array, nor would it be revered as the strongest array, and sought after by array masters worldwide as a lifelong pursuit.

Since it was so, no matter how difficult, it was reasonable.

Instead of complaining, it was better to practice more.

Persistence was key in array formations. As long as one persevered, there would eventually be progress.

If he couldn't master it in one try, he'd draw it ten times. If ten times wasn't enough, he'd draw it a hundred times...

Even if he ultimately couldn't master it, at least he wouldn't have any regrets.

Mo Hua forced himself to calm down.

Ignoring how difficult the array was, and not worrying about whether he could master it in the end, he began to learn step by step, practicing repeatedly.

Mo Hua drew the hub once, exhausted his spiritual consciousness, erased it, and then continued drawing.

On the Dao Stele, from nothing to something, from something to nothing, repeating the cycle over and over.

He didn't know how much time had passed, but it seemed he sensed a faint Dao rhythm from the Dao Stele.

This rhythm was elusive and hard to describe, but it made him feel more at peace, more focused, and his understanding of the array hub gradually deepened.

Compared to composite and single arrays, the grand array's hub shared the same origin but was fundamentally different.

Single array hubs were extremely simple, with only a few strokes.

Even simpler hubs didn't require strokes; the array's structure itself could serve as the hub.

Composite array hubs were more difficult, with heavier strokes and greater consumption of spiritual consciousness.

But the grand array's hub was much more complex.

It wasn't just one stroke but countless fine strokes connected to form a unified pattern, creating the hub.

The unified pattern was the hub's outline, and the fine strokes were the specific tracks of spiritual power flow.

This unified pattern, though seemingly a thicker stroke than the composite array hub, was actually filled with countless fine strokes of specific lengths, shapes, and lines.

Like weaving hemp into a rope.

Except each strand of hemp had strict regulations on shape, angle, and connection during weaving.

This was why the hub was so complex and consumed so much spiritual consciousness.

Understanding this principle, Mo Hua found it hard to believe.

How could such a concept be conceived?

Or rather, was this really something a human could come up with?

Learning it was so strenuous; the array master who created this grand array must have had an incredible understanding of the Dao and array formations.

Mo Hua felt a sense of awe.

The more he learned about array formations, the more he realized his own inadequacies, the more he learned, the more he felt ignorant.

And the more he felt ignorant, the more he wanted to learn.

Mo Hua resolved to eliminate distractions and focus on studying the hub.

In the following days, Mo Hua practiced the array hub tirelessly, day and night.

Even while eating, his hands would sometimes unconsciously make gestures.

Sometimes, he'd get lost in thought while eating, staring blankly until the food in front of him went cold.

Liu Ruhua could only reheat his meals helplessly.

Mo Shan quietly watched his son, not disturbing him.

Mo Shan and Liu Ruhua originally planned to migrate to the city with their demon-hunting brothers and neighborhood friends.

But they were worried about Mo Hua.

Mo Hua was their flesh and blood. No matter what choices he made, what he did, or what the future held, they wanted to stay by his side.

A few days later, Mo Hua's understanding of the hub made significant progress.

The reason was that his spiritual consciousness had increased considerably.

Mo Hua realized this after some thought.

Mr. Zhuang had said that spiritual consciousness had a limit.

The closer one got to the limit, the harder it was to increase spiritual consciousness.

The limit for spiritual consciousness in the Qi Refining stage was the First Grade Ten-Pattern Foundation Building.

So previously, Mo Hua's spiritual consciousness grew slowly through practicing array formations.

But after consuming the Blue-faced demon and refining the Visualization Diagram's divine thought, his spiritual consciousness had already broken through the Ten-Pattern limit.

In other words, Mo Hua's current spiritual consciousness limit was that of the Foundation Building stage.

The Foundation Building limit was still far away for Mo Hua.

Thus, practicing complex array formations still significantly enhanced his spiritual consciousness.

Before, Mo Hua hadn't realized this because the arrays he studied weren't difficult enough, consuming too little spiritual consciousness, leading to slow growth.

But now, the grand array was difficult enough, consuming a lot of spiritual consciousness, so naturally, his spiritual consciousness grew quickly.

At this rate, with his spiritual consciousness continuously strengthening, he might really master the Five Elements Demon-Slaying Array before the migration!

Thinking this, Mo Hua's eyes lit up with hope.

With renewed hope, he practiced even more diligently.

When encountering difficulties, he would consult Mr. Zhuang.

If Mr. Zhuang was resting, he would wait at the bamboo house's door or under the large locust tree.

While waiting, he would take out paper and ink to practice the array hub.

One day, as Mo Hua practiced under the large locust tree, Bai Zisheng saw him and, curious, put down his book and leaned over to take a look, frowning at what he saw.

"What is this?"

It looked very complex, like random strokes of ink, but not as orderly as array formations, yet still seemed like one.

"The array hub."

Mo Hua answered without looking up, his hands still drawing with full concentration.

Bai Zisheng was stunned.

The array hub?

What kind of array hub was this complicated?

He wanted to ask more but didn't want to interrupt Mo Hua's concentration.

Yet his curiosity got the better of him, and he kept watching Mo Hua draw.

Watching for a while, Bai Zisheng felt a headache and dizziness, thinking:

"Not good, my spiritual consciousness is overextended..."

He quickly looked away, resting for a long time before recovering, looking at Mo Hua with a hint of shock.

What was Mo Hua drawing?!

"I only watched for a while, how did my spiritual consciousness deplete?"

Bai Zisheng was incredulous.

For a moment, he felt that Mo Hua's array was something beyond his understanding of array formations...

Bai Zixi, seeing this, was also curious and quietly approached Mo Hua, looking at the array he was drawing.

Her eyebrows furrowed, and as she watched, she suddenly guessed something, her expression momentarily stunned.

"Zixi..."

Bai Zisheng started to speak, but Bai Zixi shook her head, signaling him not to disturb Mo Hua.

When Mo Hua's spiritual consciousness was exhausted and he stopped to rest, he suddenly found two pairs of beautiful eyes staring at him intently.

One pair of starry eyes, one pair of bright, watery eyes.