

The Quest 396

Chapter 396: Self-Rescue (1)

Mo Hua decided to reconstruct the Spirit Fields of Thousand Families Town with the Thick Earth Formation.

But, he actually had no authority in this matter.

The Spirit Fields weren't his, and he wasn't even from Thousand Families Town.

The elders of East Mountain Village, although not possessing high cultivation, were of advanced age with deep experience and considerable respect.

Their actual power might not be great, but generally, the elders had the final say in matters.

So, Mo Hua went to ask one of them:

"Elder, would you like to have the Spirit Fields Drawing Formation re-done?"

The East Mountain Village Elder had anticipated this but still couldn't quite believe it and said quivering:

"Re... redo the Drawing Formation?"

"Yes," Mo Hua nodded. "The same kind that was drawn by the Old Ancestor of the Sun Family."
The Elder's pupils shook.

The Old Ancestor of the Sun Family was a Second Rank Formation Master, held in high esteem in Thousand Families Town, and always a mythical figure among cultivators.

Redrawing the Old Ancestor of the Sun Family's Formation...

The Elder's tone became even more respectful:

"The Formation of the Old Ancestor of the Sun Family... Young Gentleman, have you learned it?"

"I've learned some, not daring to claim I have mastered it completely, but I have managed to grasp seventy to eighty percent," Mo Hua modestly stated.

The Elder was momentarily lost in thought, murmuring:

"The Old Ancestor of the Sun Family was a Second Rank Formation Master..."

Mo Hua explained: "He was a Second Rank Formation Master, but the Formation he laid out was actually first-grade. Otherwise, Qi Refinement cultivators wouldn't be able to afford a Second-Grade Formation with their Spirit Stones."

The Elder understood.

Mo Hua further laid out the pros and cons for him:

"Drawing the Formation will require reconstructing some of the Spirit Fields and redrawing the Formations on the ridges of these fields."

"I have inherited the techniques from the Old Ancestor of the Sun Family, so I can offer my services without charging for Spirit Stones in drawing the Formation for you."

"However, the Formation itself also requires a considerable quantity of Spiritual Ink and quite a few Spirit Stones, along with certain manpower to re-cultivate and reorganize the Spirit Fields."

"These manpower and resources will have to be provided by your village."

The Elder understood the implications and slowly nodded.

In the end, Mo Hua said: "I can draw the Formation, but whether or not to employ this Formation is ultimately up to you to decide."

After long contemplation, the Elder finally saluted with his hands and said:

"Young Gentleman, may I have some time to discuss this with everyone?"

"Yes," Mo Hua nodded.

Such a decision couldn't be made by the Elder alone; it surely warranted a discussion with others.

Mo Hua did not press the issue. Experience more on

If they were willing, he would draw the Formation for them.

He would also be able to apply what he had learned and deepen his understanding of the Formation.

It was for both his own sake and that of the cultivators of East Mountain Village, as well as for the land of Thousand Families Town.

If they disagreed, Mo Hua wouldn't force them.

He would have to look for another opportunity to build the Thick Earth Formation from scratch and deepen his understanding of Formations...

...

After Mo Hua left, the Elder summoned the Spirit Farmers and cultivators of East Mountain Village.

He conveyed Mo Hua's intentions to them.

The people looked at each other, perplexed.

Most couldn't believe it:

"Has this young gentleman truly mastered the Old Ancestor of the Sun Family's Formation?"

"Impossible..."

"How old is he?"

"At the Qi Refining Seventh Level, can someone really learn such a Formation? I see other Formation Masters are all old with white beards."

"What do you know? There is no order in learning; respect goes to the competent."

"Although this young gentleman is young, I think his skill in Formations is much higher than the current Family Head of the Sun Family."

"Indeed, though I do not understand much, his Formation drawing is both fast and good."

"Better than anyone from the Sun Family."

"So why is he helping us?"

"Yes, what does he gain from it, and he isn't even taking our Spirit Stones..."

"If he wanted Spirit Stones, could you afford it?"

"We're so poor we can't even scrape the bottom of the pot..."

"The Old Ancestor of the Sun Family's Formation, could it be just an ordinary Formation? How many Spirit Stones would it take to draw such a Formation?"

"Even if we emptied out all the village's reserves, the gathered Spirit Stones might still be insufficient to pay the fee..."

"I just find it odd, this young gentleman seems too kind-hearted."

"Isn't that just a cheap mentality? If this young gentleman were like the Sun Family, riding roughshod over us, would that be better?"

"Drawing this Formation requires reconstructing the Spirit Fields, but these fields are ancestral, untouchable."

"Why are they untouchable?"

"Because they are ancestral; that makes them untouchable..."

...

The crowd was buzzing with discussion, some agreeing, some disagreeing, and others anxious and uncertain.

They were Spirit Farmers, relying on the Spirit Fields for their livelihood.

Anything concerning the Spirit Fields touched upon their lifeblood, so making a decision was complicated, fraught with concerns.

The Elder listened to their argument, and after a long contemplation, he finally said slowly:

"We need to build this Formation."

The room fell silent for a moment.

A Spirit Farmer frowned and said, "But Elder, this matter is not without risk."

The Elder shook his head, "I don't want the descendants of East Mountain Village to suffer from hunger anymore."

"Indeed, there is risk involved, but what doesn't carry risk? Can people like us, poor Cultivators, ever encounter risk-free good fortune?"

"If we don't take this risk, it will fall to our descendants to do so."

"But our descendants may not get this opportunity."

The Elder's cloudy eyes shone with a glint of determination as he looked over everyone, his voice heavy with gravity:

"Although this young Gentleman is of young age, he is an expert in the art of Formations."

"Him willing to help us is our opportunity."

"Once he leaves, who else could understand such profound Formations, and even if someone does, who would be willing to help us draw them?"

"Don't rely on luck, thinking the future will be better."

"If we don't seize the present, the future will only get worse."

"This is our only hope."

"If we don't take this chance, our descendants will starve!"

The Elder's voice was hoarse and heavy, and upon finishing, an old ailment flared up, causing him to cough violently while frowning deeply.

Everyone fell silent.

Some still looked hesitant, but the eyes of many became resolute.

...

The next day, the Elder approached Mo Hua and relayed the villagers' decision.

"Everyone has agreed to contribute what they can, whether it be Spirit Stones or labor, to rebuild the Formation in the Spirit Field."

Afterward, the Elder gave Mo Hua a grave bow:

"I implore you, young Gentleman, save the Cultivators of Thousand Families Town from this famine!"

Mo Hua could not accept such a grand gesture and hurriedly helped the Elder to his feet.

The Elder looked at Mo Hua expectantly.

But Mo Hua shook his head and said, "I can't save you."

The Elder looked astonished.

Mo Hua sighed, "I can only help you draw the Formation, but if a Formation could really save you, the Formation painted by the Old Ancestor of the Sun Family would have already done so."

"But it hasn't..."

"Over the years, you still live day to day, half-starved."

The Elder was visibly shaken, then reflective, his emotions fluctuating momentarily.

Mo Hua continued:

"I can draw the Formation well, make the soil fertile, and the Spirit Field bountiful, so everyone can have enough to eat."

"But what then?"

"The Sun Family is still there, still oppressing you."

"The restored Spirit Field will still be destroyed."

"The newly drawn Formations will still be eradicated."

"Without knowing Formations, you are still at the mercy of others, exploited by the Sun Family."

"With well-drawn Formations in the Spirit Field and fertile land, you might live better for a year or two, even five or six years, you'll have enough to eat."

"But what about after ten years, decades, or even a century?"

"Will you not end up back where you started?"

The expression in the Elder's face turned bitterly sorrowful, eventually morphing into an indissoluble gloom.

Helplessly, he said, "But the Sun Family, they have a Foundation Building Cultivator..."

Mo Hua shook his head, "Only at the Initial Stage of Foundation Establishment, and he's half a Formation Master; he seldom engages in combat, his Taoist Skills are rusty."

"Generally speaking, a dozen or so Cultivators at the Ninth Level of Qi Refinement who are truly determined can make him wary."

Mo Hua continued, "The Sun Family's tyranny relies on the weakness and complacency of the Spirit Farmers."

"If you truly unite and stand together, they would not dare to be so reckless."

The Elder's face showed hesitation as he sighed:

"But... this way, there might be bloodshed, lives lost..."

Mo Hua's tone became somewhat solemn:

"If you shed blood, your descendants can eat their fill, but if you starve, your descendants will also starve."

Upon hearing these words, the Elder suddenly became distant.

Mo Hua then reassured him, "Actually, the Sun Family wouldn't dare go too far."

After all, the Taoist Court of Shangtai City exists.

The local Taoist Court, although not directly intervening with matters outside the Immortal City, must step in if conflicts escalate.

The Taoist Court operates according to Taoist Law.

At least, that's what it appears to be on the surface.

With the constraints of Taoist Law, and it being the duty of the Taoist Court, the Sun Family also dares not be too presumptuous.

After all, the Sun Family is not the same as the Qian Family or the Patriarch of the Qian Family's Black Mountain Stronghold.

They are merely leeches that suck blood for pleasure rather than ruthless executioners who kill without batting an eye.

"So I can only help you, not save you..."

Mo Hua looked earnestly, his gaze clear as he spoke honestly, "Only you can save yourselves."

With furrowed brows the Elder pondered for a long while, then slowly relaxed and bowed again to Mo Hua, speaking earnestly:

"Thank you, young Gentleman, I understand now."