

The Quest 55

Chapter 55: Strolling the Streets

After releasing the lotus lanterns, it was still not late, so the group continued to stroll along the street.

Perhaps because of a few verbal spats, Bai Zisheng and Mo Hua had warmed up to each other, no longer standing on ceremony, and thus their conversation flowed more freely.

"What are those cultivators doing?" Bai Zisheng asked, pointing curiously at a platform.

Following his gaze, Mo Hua saw a simple platform where several cultivators dressed as Demon Hunters were wrestling with a bovine-shaped "demonic beast." The "beast" had a copper head and a brocade-like hide, shimmering as if it were alive, though it was actually a cultivator disguised in beast skin.

"Oh, it's a demonic beast fighting play."

"Demonic beast fighting?" Bai Zisheng's interest was immediately piqued.

"The cultivators of Tongxian City mostly make their living as Demon Hunters, routinely battling demonic beasts, so during festive celebrations, Demon Hunters perform these fighting plays. It's both a form of entertainment and a traditional activity for them."

As they spoke, the fighting play on stage reached a climax.

Several Demon Hunters, one wielding a knife that suddenly wrapped in intense flames, another swinging his fists creating a whooshing sound, and a third standing afar, forming hand seals that summoned several fireballs that soon engaged the beast in combat. The area sparkled with overflowing spiritual energy and lights.

"Wow, Blazing Knife, Whirling Fist, Fireball Technique!"

A child nearby shouted excitedly, clapping his hands loudly.

Bai Zisheng was equally enthralled, his face flushed with excitement.

Mo Hua couldn't help but ask, "You've reached the later stages of Qi cultivation, haven't you? You must have learned some spells by now..."

His expression was one of someone who hadn't seen much of the world yet...

Bai Zisheng gave Mo Hua a look, "Of course I know spells, but my mother doesn't let me use them. She says that building a foundation during the Qi cultivation phase is most crucial. Learning some superficial spells to fight others is foolhardy. An injury could damage the foundation and ruin my future cultivation."

"Oh," Mo Hua acknowledged.

For noble families, the Qi cultivation phase is merely for laying a solid foundation; focused cultivation is sufficient, with no need for practical spell use.

For ordinary independent cultivators, who might remain in the Qi cultivation phase their entire lives, learning various spells to battle demonic beasts and scraping a living on the knife's edge is a necessity.

"It would be nice if the lower ranks of independent cultivators didn't have to live so hard," Mo Hua sighed, feeling a mix of emotions.

Beyond the fighting plays, there were also novel spell tricks, fascinating shadow plays, wooden dogs that moved when fed spirit stones, and various aromatic snacks...

After a full round, Bai Zisheng was still visibly excited, and Bai Zixi's cheeks were flushed, looking even brighter than the lanterns above.

As dusk approached, they regretfully parted ways, each heading home.

"Thank you for showing us around and introducing us to the local customs of Tongxian City," Aunt Xue thanked Mo Hua, then mysteriously produced a small box of snacks she had purchased along the way as a token of gratitude, not costing many spirit stones.

Mo Hua accepted it graciously, replying with a smile, "Thank you, Aunt Xue."

Aunt Xue nodded with a light smile.

Bai Zisheng then said to Mo Hua, "If you have time, come to Qianzhou. I'll show you the Grand Heavenly Ceremony. It's not as lively as here, but it's a grand spectacle with all sorts of rare spiritual beasts and flying vessels—it's a sight to behold."

"Definitely!"

Mo Hua was quite intrigued, wondering about the grandeur of the millennia-old noble families and sects of Qianzhou, though he wasn't sure if he would ever get to visit.

The world of cultivation is vast, and even Li province alone contains countless immortal cities; Tongxian City is just one of many. With Mo Hua's cultivation level, even leaving Tongxian City was challenging, let alone venturing to the distant Qianzhou.

After saying goodbye to the Bai siblings, Mo Hua met up with Meng Da Hu and his brothers.

The three kids had also enjoyed themselves, presenting Mo Hua with a variety of curious trinkets and a white sugar tiger.

"Eat the sugar figure quickly before it melts," Xiao Hu advised Mo Hua, then enthusiastically explained how to play with the trinkets. These items were not expensive, costing only a fraction of a spirit stone, but their novelty was appealing, some of which Mo Hua had never seen before.

Mo Hua shared Aunt Xue's snacks with the three young friends, and while

licking the sugar figure, he examined the toys.

Meng Da Hu and his brothers ate the snacks and walked home with Mo Hua. Along the way, Xiao Hu suddenly asked, "Mo Hua, you won't always be with the young master and young miss of the Bai family, will you?"

"What's wrong?" Mo Hua asked.

Xiao Hu shook his head and didn't answer immediately, but after a moment's hesitation, he said, "That young miss from the Bai family... she's too pretty..."

"Is being pretty a bad thing?" Mo Hua was puzzled.

"You shouldn't play with pretty girls," Xiao Hu replied.

Meng Shuang Hu and Meng Da Hu nodded in agreement.

"Why not..."

Meng Shuang Hu said seriously, "My mother told me that beautiful women make men stupid. The prettier they are, the stupider men become!"

"That's right, that's right. My father saw a beautiful woman and left home, only to be swindled of all his money and eventually lost his life."

"Exactly, exactly. I've also heard that many cultivators with good spiritual roots have wasted their cultivation because they married beautiful dao partners, achieving nothing in the end."

"Yes, yes. I just glanced at that girl once and was dazed for a moment. My mind stopped working. If I looked a few more times, I might become a fool. It's terrifying..."

"Indeed, it's terrifying..."

Meng Shuang Hu patted Mo Hua's shoulder, "Mo Hua, you're the smartest among us, and you might become an Array Master in the future. If you become a fool, that would be troublesome."

Meng Da Hu and Xiao Hu looked at Mo Hua worriedly.

Mo Hua, somewhat amused yet considering their point, replied, "There's not much I can do, we're all learning array formations under the same master, seeing each other every day."

"That's a problem," the three kids looked solemn.

Mo Hua smiled, "Drawing array formations makes one smarter. I'll just draw more array formations, so I shouldn't become too stupid."

"Does drawing array formations really make you smarter?" Xiao Hu asked.

"Of course," Meng Shuang Hu replied, "Isn't Mo Hua smarter because he draws good array formations?"

"Would you guys like to learn array formations? I can teach you," Mo Hua offered.

The three had decent physical aptitude but lacked talent in drawing array formations; just the sight of dense array patterns gave them headaches.

Xiao Hu hesitated for a long time before finally deciding, "I'd rather be a fool all my life than become smart by drawing array formations!"