

## The Quest 57

Chapter 57: Techniques

Involuntarily, Mo Hua touched his face and then glanced down at his clothes before asking in confusion, "What are you all staring at?"

Bai Zisheng couldn't hold back and asked, "The formation you just drew... was it a Tripartite Array?"

Mo Hua nodded.

"Which kind of Tripartite Array?"

"Are there many types of Tripartite Arrays?"

"What I mean is... was it the one that includes the Six Paths Array Patterns?"

"Yes, is there something wrong with that?"

Bai Zisheng's gaze sharpened, "Your cultivation level is only at the third level of Qi Refining, right?"

"So what?"

Bai Zisheng and Bai Zixi looked at each other, bewildered.

After pondering for a moment, Mo Hua suddenly realized, "Being at the third level of Qi Refining and being able to draw a formation that includes Six Paths Array Patterns, is that considered an impressive feat?"

He had assumed that drawing a few extra array patterns wouldn't be difficult given the abundance of talent in a great family.

Bai Zisheng was slightly unconvinced, "It's not that unusual."

"Could you draw the Tripartite Array when you were at the third level of Qi Refining?"

Bai Zisheng didn't want to answer and after a long pause, hesitantly said, "Well, that... Although I couldn't draw it, it was because the family elders wouldn't allow it. Qi Refining cultivators have weak spiritual awareness, and forcefully drawing complex formations could deplete it too much, damaging the sea of consciousness, and preventing one from becoming an Array Master. One shouldn't be reckless and harm their foundation out of greed for quick progress."

"Oh," Mo Hua replied, half-doubtful.

"However," Bai Zisheng added, "Some cultivators in our family are exceptionally gifted and could draw seven or eight array patterns at the third level of Qi Refining. It's really not that rare."

Mo Hua nodded, knowing his own talents were decent but not extraordinary in the cultivation world, where geniuses abound.

There are always people better than oneself, a concept he understood well.

Bai Zisheng then patted Mo Hua's shoulder, comforting him, "Even though it's not rare to be able to draw six array patterns at the third level of Qi Refining, it's still quite commendable. With such talent for formation, even in our family, you would be considered average. Just keep working hard, and you will surely achieve something in formations."

Bai Zisheng's words eased Mo Hua's mind.

His goals were not that ambitious; becoming a first-rate Array Master and having a livelihood in the cultivation world, ensuring his parents' happiness, was enough for now. Anything beyond that could wait.

Bai Zixi silently observed Bai Zisheng.

Bai Zisheng, feeling somewhat guilty, then pretended to cultivate earnestly.

Among Mr. Zhuang's formally acknowledged disciples, the Bai siblings, twins, were two to three years older than Mo Hua and had a cultivation level of the seventh Qi Refining layer, four levels above Mo Hua.

This was because the noble family children focused on solidifying their cultivation foundation, emphasizing steady accumulation rather than rapid advancement.

They needed to build a strong foundation step by step before attempting to break through to higher levels; otherwise, their cultivation would have been even higher.

In terms of mastery of formations, Mo Hua felt he could still catch up with the Bai siblings. However, he might never catch up in cultivation level.

Thus, Mo Hua spent about an hour each morning in routine cultivation, absorbing a spirit stone, advancing his cultivation steadily and unhurriedly.

With only a lower-middle-grade spiritual root, this was the only way Mo Hua could steadily progress.

He was not in a rush, nor could he afford to be, as cultivation progress was largely determined by the quality of one's spiritual root, and there were no shortcuts.

One day, while cultivating, Mo Hua felt a tingling and slight swelling in his Qi sea, signaling that it was full and he could consider breaking through to the fourth level of Qi Refining.

Elated, Mo Hua suddenly remembered something crucial: he hadn't chosen a technique yet!

Before, he had planned to save up enough spirit stones to choose an economical and less resource-intensive technique of the Minor Five Elements at the Tongxian Sect.

But after the sect leader of Tongxian Sect changed, Yan Jiaoxi left the sect, and the outer sect stopped teaching formations, Mo Hua simply dropped out.

After being accepted as a formally acknowledged disciple by Mr. Zhuang, Mo Hua focused all his efforts on learning formations, neglecting the matter of choosing a technique.

Both of Mo Hua's parents practiced techniques, but the attributes of their techniques were slightly different from Mo H

ua's and leaned more towards physical cultivation, so they were not suitable for him. Outside of the Tongxian Sect, there were no suitable avenues to learn techniques.

It was best to start practicing a technique early in one's Qi Refining stage, and Mo Hua was about to reach the fourth level, so he couldn't delay any longer.

"Zisheng, when did you start learning techniques?"

During a moment of leisure, Mo Hua asked Bai Zisheng curiously.

Bai Zisheng replied discontentedly, "I'm older than you; you should call me Elder Brother Bai or Brother Bai, not by my name directly. It makes me seem less senior."

"In a few days, when my parents return from hunting demons, I can show you what the demons they hunt look like."

"Really?" Bai Zisheng's eyes lit up.

"Really!"

Bai Zisheng immediately said, "Zixi and I started learning techniques when we began cultivating. It's naturally best to learn techniques early, and ideally, they should be passed down within the family. Otherwise, the more the techniques differ across cultivation stages, the more likely one is to deviate and go mad."

Mo Hua nodded.

Bai Zisheng suddenly thought of something and exclaimed in surprise, "You haven't learned any techniques yet, have you?"

Mo Hua shook his head, "It's not easy for an independent cultivator to choose a technique."

"It can't be so hard that you don't have a technique at all..."

Mo Hua gave him a look, "That's like asking why don't you eat meat paste."

"What do you mean?"

"It means you're talking without considering the reality."

Bai Zisheng scratched his head, "It's a pity that the family techniques can't be passed on to outsiders, otherwise I would secretly teach you a few rare and good techniques."

Mo Hua asked, puzzled, "Aren't the grades of techniques determined by a cultivator's spiritual root? With a lower-middle-grade spiritual root, one can only learn lower-middle-grade techniques. Since it's lower-middle-grade, how can there be a good or bad distinction? It can't be better than a superior-grade technique."

"You don't know this, but some special techniques have unique effects. Some are quicker to cultivate, some focus on physical refinement, and some are suitable for alchemy..."

"Of course, the rank of the technique is still the most important, since a cultivator's strength mainly depends on the amount of spiritual energy. But since the spiritual root is fixed and cannot be changed, there's not much to discuss."

Special techniques with unique effects...

Mo Hua pondered for a moment but shook his head, "Even if there are rare techniques, I can't practice them. If the technique is rare, then the required spiritual materials are naturally also rare. If I can't gather these materials in my lifetime, wouldn't my cultivation be stuck forever..."

"That's also true; I forgot you're an independent cultivator and can't gather those rare heavenly and earthly spiritual materials..." Bai Zisheng frowned and then said, "Why don't you ask Mr. Zhuang?"

Mo Hua thought about it and shook his head, "I'm already greatly indebted to Mr. Zhuang for teaching me formations. How could I take further advantage and ask him to teach me a technique?"

Bai Zisheng nodded, "Good, that's having integrity! That's how you qualify to be my little brother Bai Zisheng."

Mo Hua corrected him, "I'm not your little brother."

Bai Zisheng said, "How are you not? I'm older, you should call me elder brother. Zixi, don't you agree?"

Bai Zisheng looked at Bai Zixi, who was reading a book with her head down, ignoring him.

"Zixi is also older than you, so you should call her Sister Zixi." Bai Zisheng added.

Bai Zixi was momentarily startled, her dark eyelashes lifting slightly, her eyes sparkling.

Mo Hua snorted, "Dream on."

"So many people want to be my little brother, and I'm not even interested." Bai Zisheng held his head high.

"Who cares, I won't take you to see the demons then."

"Alright," Bai Zisheng said angrily, "You're not keeping your word. You said you would, how can you go back on your word?"

After a bit of bickering, Bai Zisheng agreed not to make Mo Hua call him elder brother, and Mo Hua agreed to take him to see the demons at the end of the month, and the matter was settled.

As they cultivated and read until the evening, upon parting, Bai Zisheng asked, "So what are you going to do about the technique?"

"Hmm..." Mo Hua thought, "I'll ask my parents when I

get home. After all, I want to be an Array Master, and Array Masters rely on spiritual awareness, not so much on spiritual energy. A passable technique will do."

"How can just passable be okay? We're all Mr. Zhuang's apprentices; if your cultivation is too poor, wouldn't it reflect badly on me?"

Bai Zisheng huffed, "I'll go home and look for a suitable technique that isn't strictly regulated by the family. You can secretly learn it later."

After speaking, he left with Bai Zixi.

Mo Hua helplessly shook his head but felt warmed by Bai Zisheng's good intentions. He packed up his things and went home too.

At that moment, in the bamboo room, Mr. Zhuang, who was resting, opened his eyes. His pale, slender fingers tapped on the armrest of the bamboo chair as he murmured, "Techniques, huh..."