

## The Quest 741

Chapter 741: Killing Formation (1)

Second-grade Earth Fire Formation!

And it exceeded expectations, with Thirteen Stripes in the Formation!

Mo Hua's eyes lit up.

Indeed, fortune is conserved; no matter how unlucky one might be, there will always come a time when the tide turns.

Although it wasn't Fourteen Stripes, Mo Hua was already very satisfied.

...

Moreover, the Earth Fire Formation was related to the earth and was also a Killing Formation Method!

This also fit Mo Hua's current Formation needs.

Without delay, Mo Hua immediately took an imprint of the Second-grade Earth Fire Formation Diagram, carefully observed it, thoughtfully calculated, and intently comprehended.

The Second-grade Earth Fire Formation, with its basic framework, was similar to the First-grade Earth Fire Formation.

The Formation Patterns were Second-grade Fire-series Formation Patterns.

The Formation Pivot structure was optimized and expanded on the basis of the First-grade Earth Fire Formation, to accommodate more complex and powerful Formation Patterns with stronger effects.

Mo Hua had thoroughly mastered the First-grade Earth Fire Formation, so now studying the Second-grade Earth Fire Formation amounted to achieving twice the results with half the effort.

It didn't take long for Mo Hua to commit the Second-grade Earth Fire Formation Diagram to memory.

At night, on the Taoist Stele, Mo Hua began formal practice.

Everything is difficult at the beginning.

The Formation advanced from First-grade to Second-grade, and there was a lot more to learn from scratch, so it would be slower.

But Mo Hua had already mastered two Second-grade Formations and had “entered the door,” gradually becoming familiar with the Second-grade Formation system.

What's more, the Earth Fire Formation was a Five Elements Formation, which Mo Hua had derived in reverse from the “Five Elements Source Pattern.”

And what Mo Hua was most proficient in was the Five Elements Formation.

Therefore, studying it now was much easier than before.

After practicing it only four or five times, Mo Hua drew the Thirteen Stripes Second-grade Earth Fire Formation.

Once activated, a red light flashed, and the Earth Fire Formation's flames flowed, seemingly containing a formidable Formation power.

This was a Second-grade Formation!

And not just any Second-grade Formation.

Thirteen Stripes Second-grade, which was almost the most powerful and challenging Formation that a Second-grade Junior Formation Master could master.

And after mastering a few more Thirteen Stripes Second-grade Formations, Mo Hua could even proceed to assessment and become a Second-grade Junior Formation Master.

"I just don't know if, here in Tongxian City, one can be assessed for Second-grade Formation Masters

Mo Hua practiced the Second-grade Earth Fire Formation over a dozen times on the Taoist Stele, ensuring that every stroke, every line was clear in his heart, every Pattern and Pivot thoroughly understood, before he finally put down his pen.

Mo Hua rested for a moment, then pondered:

"The Second-grade Earth Fire Formation, I've learned it, but without Spiritual Ink, I can't draw it out, and I don't know its power

As a Cultivator, one must have a clear understanding of the power of their spells and Formations.

That way, one won't misjudge the situation.

When the time comes to kill, and one is capable, one will not hesitate due to overestimating the enemy's strength, letting the opponent flee to the mountains.

Neither will they rashly engage when they are less powerful than the opponent, thinking "the advantage is mine," only to lose their life.

Neither of these scenarios is acceptable.

Precise judgment, decisive action.

This is also fundamental for a Monster Hunter.

Mo Hua nodded to himself.

Before going into the mountains, Mo Shan, his father, had repeatedly advised him on this.

If you have the advantage, kill without mercy.

If you're no match, then run without hesitation.

Therefore, I need to draw out the Earth Fire Formation and test its power. That way, I'll have a better idea of its strength, and when I encounter an enemy, I'll be able to make decisive choices about whether to fight or flee.

"Spiritual Ink

Inside Tongxian City, Second-grade Spiritual Ink had been almost completely gathered by Mo Hua.

Even if there were ways to purchase it, buying it once or twice would be fine, but doing so frequently would surely be more than Mo Hua could afford.

With the rate at which Mo Hua studied and drew Formations, Spiritual Ink was used up as fast as water...

This was a bottomless pit, no amount of Spirit Stones would be enough.

If buying was not viable, then the only option was to mix it himself.

To mix it, Second-grade Monster Blood was needed...

After giving it some thought, Mo Hua had an idea and asked his mother to prepare a few bags of dried fish, even making them into spicy, flavorful, and fresh varieties.

Early in the morning, Mo Hua, carrying the dried fish, headed to Big Black Mountain and found Big Tiger.

Big Tiger's eyes lit up as it caught the scent of fish but then tried to appear restrained with a "roar," indicating it was a tiger, not really fond of fish.

"Mhm, mhm," Mo Hua nodded repeatedly, "I understand."

He then stealthily handed the dried fish to Big Tiger.

Big Tiger was satisfied.

Mo Hua asked, "Big Tiger, do you have 'enemies' in these deep mountains?"

"Oh, not 'enemies,' perhaps... 'monster enemies'?"

Although Big Tiger couldn't speak, it was cunning enough to understand the gist of Mo Hua's words.

Upon hearing "enemies," Big Tiger nodded its head, then looked at Mo Hua with confusion.

Mo Hua slapped his chest, "I'll take revenge for you!"

Big Tiger was stunned and then looked at Mo Hua, who was just a "little one" compared to itself, visibly doubtful.

"Don't worry, I'm very strong

Big Tiger laid down to sleep, ignoring Mo Hua.

Mo Hua cajoled and bribed with "dried fish," finally convincing Big Tiger.

A Second-grade Monster Beast in Big Black Mountain had virtually no natural enemies.

And the only ones who could deal with Second-grade Monster Beasts were other Second-grade Monster Beasts.

Mo Hua decided to join forces with Big Tiger, to hunt down Second-grade Monster Beasts; then Big Tiger would eat the meat, and he himself would extract the blood to use for Drawing Formation.

So, a little Cultivator and a Big Tiger started to “join forces

Big Tiger’s “enemy” was a Second-grade Kui Wood Wolf.

Big Tiger led Mo Hua near the den of the Kui Wood Wolf, crouching in the bushes, glaring with anger in its eyes.

The den was spacious and damp but not very deep.

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Inside, there were various limbs of monster beasts, even bones of cultivators.

The Kui Wood Wolf was in the lair, feasting on some unknown flesh and blood.

This second-grade Kui Wood Wolf had thick demonic power and a massive body.

Its fur was black-green in color, its claws and teeth were sharp, and they carried a pale green hue of demonic power.

The demonic power of the Kui Wood Wolf Demon belonged to the Wood element, was poisonous, and once someone was wounded by it, the invasive demonic power would spread and breed its poison, making it very difficult to eradicate.

Mo Hua didn’t know, what kind of grudge Big Tiger and this Kui Wood Wolf had...

...

Perhaps it was bullied when it was young?

Generally, the strength of a Tiger Demon was supposed to be stronger than that of a Wolf Demon.

But this second-grade Kui Wood Wolf had obviously lived longer, and although it was only in the early stage of the second grade, its aura was more terrifying, its gaze more sly, and its fur, deeper in color.

The most critical was its teeth.

Soaked in human blood, they were so red they appeared black, clearly having fed on many people, and its saliva reeked of the stench of rotten flesh.

After some thought, Mo Hua felt that he had just entered Foundation Establishment, his formations were not perfect, his combat was also not systematic, lacking in many tactics.

So, he could only resort to a “hard-on-hard” approach.

Of course, the main reliance was on Big Tiger.

He could only resort to some small tricks and take the opportunity to deal the finishing blow.

Mo Hua was a Monster Hunter, very familiar with the habits of monster beasts, and the Kui Wood Wolf was no exception.

He spent some time observing nearby fur and bloodstains, gaining a rough understanding of the Kui Wood Wolf’s movement patterns and daily habits.

On the path the Kui Wood Wolf was bound to take, Mo Hua spread out herbal powder to mask the scent and set up a Concealment Formation, letting Big Tiger lie in ambush within it. *RaNoES*

As for himself, he ran far away and found a small pit with a large rock as cover to settle in, there, he guided ink with Divine Consciousness, first establishing a Concealment Formation, and then, he drew a First Grade Thirteen Stripe Fire Origin Ultimate Formation on the ground.

After that, both man and tiger waited patiently.

Two hours later, the Kui Wood Wolf, having eaten its fill, started to come out of its lair as if going for a walk to digest its meal.

This was its territory.

All living beings, whether monsters or humans, were its food.

As usual, it walked along the deathly silent mountain path, with not a single movement around, nor the slightest sign of anything abnormal.

It was just then that the wind suddenly picked up.

From an empty space by the roadside, where there was nothing, a Big Tiger suddenly sprang out!

Big Tiger opened its huge mouth, both sinister and swift, with a difficult angle, biting at the throat of the Kui Wood Wolf.

The Kui Wood Wolf's vertical pupils showed both shock and ferocity as it quickly tried to dodge, but it was too slow, and Big Tiger managed to bite into its forearm, tearing off a large, bloody wound.

The eyes of the Kui Wood Wolf turned blood-red, its body's fur bristled, and it bared its crimson fangs, but there was also a hint of doubt in its gaze.

It couldn't understand how this second-grade Tiger Demon had suddenly appeared beside it.

But Big Tiger, taking advantage of its weakness, went for its life, eyes gleaming with ferocity, and with a roar, it lunged at the Kui Wood Wolf again.

The two second-grade monster beasts fought to the death, with an earth-shaking commotion.

As demonic power surged, their roars shook the mountains and their terrifying presence spread far and wide.



The nearby birds and beasts trembled with fear and scattered in all directions.

Monster Hunters in the distance turned pale and sent messages far away, reporting that two second-grade monster beasts were fighting to the death, advising everyone to quickly withdraw.

In the midst of the fierce battle, it became clear that Big Tiger was at a disadvantage.

Even though it got the first move and injured the Kui Wood Wolf, it was still inexperienced and no match for such an old Wolf Demon.

Meanwhile, Mo Hua, hiding at a distance, finally found his chance.

First, he closed his eyes and with the strength of Fourteen Stripes, he firmly locked onto the second-grade Kui Wood Wolf.

Then he opened his eyes, concentrated his Qi, pointed with his finger, and cast the second-grade Fireball Technique, while at the same time activating the Fire Origin Ultimate Formation beneath his feet.

Above the Fire Origin Ultimate Formation, flames flowed.

Mysterious aura gathered from above the formation, then flowed into Mo Hua, stimulating his meridians and making his spiritual power surge and amplify.

Five Elements Amplification, spiritual power boiling!

With a flick of Mo Hua's finger, the second-grade fireball condensed, spiritual power materialized, showing some liquidity like mercury made of flames.

With Mo Hua's thoughts, the Fireball Technique whistled out, flying towards the Kui Wood Wolf Demon that his divine consciousness was locked onto!

The Kui Wood Wolf Demon was in the thick of battle with Big Tiger.

Suddenly, a surge of firelight flashed, and a fast and fierce fireball struck its waist.

Powered by the Fire Origin Ultimate Formation, the second-grade Fireball Technique had considerable force.

Flames burst open, the Kui Wood Wolf Demon instantly suffered a deep charred wound, causing not a small injury.

The Kui Wood Wolf howled in rage.

Even Big Tiger was taken aback, seemingly not expecting that this small fireball could pack such a punch.

Throughout the entire Immortal City of the second grade, including the whole of Big Black Mountain, it was rare for any cultivator to cast such a powerful spell.

After all, there weren't many cultivators in Tongxian City who had achieved Foundation Establishment, and spiritual cultivators were even rarer.

Big Tiger only hesitated for a moment before snapping back to reality, excitedly licking its lips, and pounced again on the Kui Wood Wolf Demon.

Big Tiger engaged in the frontal fight, acting as a distraction.

And Mo Hua, at a distance, attacked one fireball after another, wearing down, inflicting damage.

With divine consciousness to lock on, and the Fire Origin Formation to amplify, Mo Hua's fireballs were both accurate and vicious.

Being far away, with the large rock as cover and using Concealment Technique to stay hidden, he did not fear the Kui Wood Wolf Demon discovering or pursuing him.

The Kui Wood Wolf Demon was extremely angry.

Besieged by attacks from near and far, the injuries on its body grew ever more severe.

It wanted to kill Big Tiger, but repeatedly, the Fireball Technique hindered it, it wanted to break free and leave, but Big Tiger restrained it.

Until now, it had no idea what it was, whether a cultivator or a monster beast, casting such a fireball technique that even monster beasts found disgusting...

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As time passed, the Kui Wood Wolf Demon finally suffered heavy injuries, fighting like a trapped beast.

Big Tiger no longer pressed closely but instead focused on containment, occasionally trading wound for wound, to prevent the Kui Wood Wolf Demon from escaping.

And Mo Hua's Fireball Technique became even swifter, more precise, and was handled with even greater ease...

The Kui Wood Wolf Demon tried to flee but couldn't.

It tried to feign death, but in the face of the astute Big Tiger and the crafty Mo Hua, such tricks were obviously ineffective.

Thus, the Second-grade Kui Wood Wolf Demon was slowly worn down by the coordinated efforts of a man and a tiger—one from a distance and the other up close—like a slow knife cutting through flesh, until it was finally killed...

...

And Mo Hua for the first time, had killed a Second-grade Monster Beast!

Although he mainly relied on Big Tiger taking the brunt of the attack, his contribution was nevertheless indispensable!

After the death of the Kui Wood Wolf Demon, man and tiger began to "divide the spoils."

Mo Hua started by using the Blood Drawing Art to extract the Monster Blood of the Second-grade Kui Wood Wolf Demon.

After reaching Foundation Establishment, Mo Hua who could now perform Divine Sense Manipulation, used the Blood Drawing Art to extract the blood of the Monster Beast much faster.

The reddish Monster Blood of the Kui Wood Wolf Demon, tinged with a faint green, was drawn by Mo Hua using Divine Sense, flowing into the jade bottles he had prepared in advance.

He drew a total of twenty bottles!

Afterward, the blood of the Kui Wood Wolf Demon gradually became dull, congealed, and its potency greatly decreased, making the extraction more difficult.

Mo Hua carefully stored the twenty bottles of Second-grade Monster Blood into his Storage Bag, unable to help but smile happily.

Twenty bottles!

That would yield even more when made into Spiritual Ink, enough for his own use for a while.

Mo Hua was thoroughly satisfied.

Then it was Big Tiger's turn to feast.

Big Tiger dragged the corpse of the Kui Wood Wolf Demon into its cave to savor slowly.

Seeing Big Tiger covered with wounds, Mo Hua took out some Pills, ground them into powder, and treated its injuries.

Big Tiger lay on the ground eating meat.

As Mo Hua lay on its back, he sprinkled the cooling medicine powder on its wounds to help detoxify and stop the bleeding.

The demonic power of the Kui Wood Wolf Demon was poisonous, which wasn't a big deal for Big Tiger, another Second-grade Monster Beast, but if left inside the body, it could still cause some complications.

While eating wolf meat, Big Tiger felt a cooling sensation on its body, and its wounds began to improve, prompting it to narrow its eyes and shake its big head contentedly.

After finishing with the medicine, Mo Hua turned his head to see that Big Tiger was eating something strange in its mouth.

It was a ball, crimson with streaks of green, round and heart-like in shape, that still twitched slightly.

"Is this... a Monster Beast Inner Core?"

Mo Hua was taken aback.

This was his first time seeing a Monster Beast Inner Core.

Monster Beasts with rare bloodlines are born with an inner core, but such Monster Beasts are extremely rare.

Typically, Monster Beasts cultivate blood at the First Grade, form the rudiments of an inner core at Second Grade, and at Third Grade, they form a true inner core.

The inner core is like a Cultivator's Qi Sea, the repository of a Monster Beast's demonic power.

This inner core belonged to the Second-grade Kui Wood Wolf Demon. It had the shape of an inner core but had not yet formed into a true core; it could only be regarded as an inner core embryo...

Mo Hua watched with curiosity.

Yet Big Tiger gulped down the inner core in one bite.

Then, the aura on Big Tiger's body suddenly deepened, its demonic power growing more intense, and its fur even seemed to darken a few shades...

Mo Hua was shocked.

Was Big Tiger cultivating by swallowing an inner core?

Mo Hua furrowed his brow, somewhat confused.

As far as he knew, Monster Beasts would consume other Monster Beasts' inner cores, but it was simply a form of "eating," not something that should have such a significant effect.

Then Mo Hua recalled the time at Black Mountain Stronghold, when the second Householder wanted to consume human blood and, in the absence of human blood, would drink from Big Tiger, claiming it was because it had a "special bloodline with extraordinary talent

Swallowing inner cores, increasing demonic power...

No wonder its cultivation had grown so rapidly, and no wonder, in a short period of time, it went from Little Demon Cat to a fully grown Big Tiger...

Mo Hua silently took note.

When he gains more experience, he must figure out what kind of Monster Beast Big Tiger really is.

Swallowing inner cores, getting stronger with each one consumed...

If it kept on eating, what might happen?

Mo Hua shook his head.

Setting aside the matter with Big Tiger for now, he had to start preparing the Spiritual Ink and learn to paint the Second-grade Earth Fire Formation with Divine Consciousness Control Ink.

If the Earth Fire Formation was powerful enough and he could draw it quickly enough, it would become a powerful move during his initial stage of Foundation Establishment.

Later, when he went to kill Second-grade Monster Beasts and extracted their blood, it would be much easier.

He wouldn't have to rely on Big Tiger's trading blows to contain the enemy and use his Fireball Technique to whittle it down, in a painstakingly slow and laborious battle that took half a day...

Mo Hua first tried blending the Spiritual Ink.

He didn't have a formula for Second-grade Spiritual Ink.

He could only adjust and roughly modify the formula for First-grade Spiritual Ink that his Junior Sister had given him to make do.

The formula was different, but the pharmacological principles were the same.

Mo Hua wasn't aiming for perfection; he just wanted something functional.

There was another problem.

The Kui Wood Wolf Demon was a Second-grade Wood series Monster Beast, and its blood carried some wood properties, which weren't quite suitable for painting the Earth Fire Formation.

Blood from Fire-series Monster Beasts would have been ideal.

But fortunately, within the principle of the Five Elements Generation and Restraint, wood generates fire, so it wasn't too conflicting.

Faced with limited conditions, Mo Hua didn't seek perfection; something adequate would suffice.

So Mo Hua managed with what he had, taking two days to finally blend a few bottles of Second-grade Spiritual Ink.

He first used this ink to paint a Second-order Thorn Formation and discovered it worked, and the effect wasn't bad, only slightly less than expected, which was quite satisfactory.

Afterward, Mo Hua began formally painting the Earth Fire Formation.

He chose a spot deep in the mountains, near Big Tiger's cave, just a little farther away.

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Afterward, Mo Hua held his breath and concentrated his spirit, beginning to draw this attack-oriented Second-grade Formation with his thoughts as the brush and the ground as the paper.

Given that it was a Second-grade Formation and not yet mastered, Mo Hua drew it rather slowly and with some difficulty.

Moreover, during the process, he failed several times and wasted a bottle or two of Spiritual Ink.

Heartache filled Mo Hua, so he could only sit in meditation. After calming his mind, he began to draw again.

The interwoven green and red Spiritual Ink followed the movement of Mo Hua's Divine Thought, floating in the air before merging into the ground and solidifying into the Formation...

Big Tiger watched Mo Hua with a stern expression on his little face. After mulling it over for a long while but seeing no movement, Big Tiger couldn't help but grow curious and stared at him with wide eyes.

...

After an indeterminable amount of time and several failures, Mo Hua finally managed to complete the Second-grade Earth Fire Formation.

His Divine Sense had been greatly depleted, leaving his complexion somewhat pale, yet his eyes still shone with excitement.



Once the drawing was completed, it was time to activate the Formation and test its power.

The Earth Fire Formation was rather dangerous.

Mo Hua immediately ran far away, taking shelter beside Big Tiger, then watched expectantly as he slightly stirred his Divine Thought, lighting up the Formation Patterns and activating the Second-grade Earth Fire Formation with Thirteen Stripes.

Three breaths later, all was calm.

Nothing happened.

Mo Hua was taken aback, “Did I draw it wrong?”

Impossible, how could his own Formation be incorrect?

He had checked it several times before.

If it had been wrong, he would have definitely noticed...

"Could it be... a problem with the Spiritual Ink?"

"After all, it's not Fire-series Spiritual Ink, and the materials used were cheap and the methods crude, so perhaps there was some... poor contact with the Spiritual Power?"

Just as Mo Hua was uncertain in his speculations, suddenly his Divine Sense stirred, and his expression changed.

His Divine Sense detected that nearly a hundred Spirit Stones used to stimulate the Formation eye on the Earth Fire Formation had instantly evaporated, vanishing without a trace.

After that, on the Earth Fire Formation, the fire's brilliance was vividly red and piercing.

The flow of Spiritual Power resembled molten red bronze.

In less than an instant, an astonishing explosion sounded.

An extremely violent, even scorching Spiritual Power suddenly ignited, sending heatwaves sweeping outwards in all directions.

The nearby vegetation turned to ash, and the rocks melted.

In the center of the Earth Fire Formation's explosion, the Spiritual Power churned and roiled like the magma in the earth's veins, containing fearsome might...

The explosion startled Big Tiger, who leaped up and quickly backed away. After landing, he dug his claws into the ground and his fur stood on end.

Even after the Earth Fire Formation had finished exploding and the Spiritual Power had dissipated, leaving the surroundings charred and in a mess, Big Tiger still felt the aftermath of the shock.

In silence, it turned its head to look at the small figure of Mo Hua, its large eyes filled with astonishment.

It couldn't fathom how such a small Cultivator could cause such a terrifying commotion...

Mo Hua was equally shocked, murmuring absent-mindedly:

"So this is... the power of the Second-grade Earth Fire Formation with Thirteen Stripes

Formations contain the principles of the Great Dao.

The higher the grade, the stronger the power.

The power of a Second-grade Killing Formation far exceeded Mo Hua's expectations.

At this rate, the Second-grade Earth Fire Formation with Thirteen Stripes could severely injure any cultivator in the Foundation Establishment Initial Stage!

Mo Hua furrowed his brow and pondered once more.

Drawing the ground into a Formation seemed to be more effective than he had thought...

Especially when drawing a Killing Formation!

The power of the Formation was great, but setting it up was cumbersome.

If he could draw Formations unrestrictedly, with a single thought bringing the Earth Fire into being...

Then, in the real world, it would be the same as within the Sea of Consciousness.

Laying down Formations would be as simple as casting Spells...

Even if his own Spiritual Power was not strong, but relying on his Divine Sense to lay down Formations, he would possess sufficient power to protect himself, to intimidate, and to inflict heavy casualties in actual combat...

The condition was that he could draw quickly enough...

The faster he drew, the stronger it would become, and he might even catch the enemy off guard and bury them in the blaze of the Earth Fire...

Chapter 745: The Trickster's Robe (1)

But the problem is, I still can't draw fast enough...

Divine Consciousness Control Ink consumes a lot of Divine Sense, and Drawing Ground into Formation is difficult, so it's hard to draw quickly.

Mo Hua felt somewhat regretful.

For now, it seems that I can only prepare in advance, to strategically ambush with a prepared mind against an unprepared one, unable to deploy on the fly like a "spell".

Unless the opponent is an idiot.

Another problem is that it's too expensive...

To activate the Formation eye of a Second-Grade Formation, at least seventy to eighty Spirit Stones are required.

For an Earth Fire Formation like this, with Second-grade Thirteen Stripes, an advanced beginner-level formation, at least a hundred Spirit Stones are needed.

That's no small sum.

Every time a Earth Fire Formation is detonated, it means a hundred Spirit Stones are burned away...

For a Sect Disciple from Noble Clans and Family Sects, these Spirit Stones might not amount to much.

But for Mo Hua, it feels very "extravagant".

Besides Spirit Stones, there's also Spiritual Ink.

A Second-grade Earth Fire Formation requires the use of Second-grade Spiritual Ink.

Converted into Spirit Stones, it's also quite expensive.

Mo Hua is currently using his own mix of cheap, inferior-quality Spiritual Ink for Drawing the Earth Fire Formation.

If I used higher-quality Spiritual Ink, the power of the Earth Fire Formation would likely be stronger, but at the same time, the cost would be much higher...

For a Cultivator practicing Tao Cultivation, "Dharma, Wealth, Companion, and Land" are indeed essential.

Mo Hua sighed.

"Forget it, take it one step at a time..."

I'll think of ways to earn more Spirit Stones later.

The urgent task at hand is to put the Second-grade Earth Fire Formation into practice.

The power of the Second-grade Earth Fire Formation was far beyond Mo Hua's expectations, which delighted him.

Similarly, his subsequent plans are likely to go more smoothly.

"Using the Second-grade Earth Fire Formation, I can trap and kill the Second-grade Monster Beasts from Big Black Mountain, then extract their Monster Blood to mix with the Spiritual Ink, and use the Ink to layout the Second-grade Earth Fire Formation, kill more Second-grade Monster Beasts, draw more blood, and mix more ink..."

This way, a virtuous cycle is formed.

The output of Spiritual Ink, its use, and its production increase, and the more Ink I have, the more accumulates.

Practice with formations, their application, and more practice make the usage of formations more proficient.

The only cost is the hundred Spirit Stones consumed to power the Formation eye.

Detonating an Earth Fire Formation burns nearly a hundred Spirit Stones.

Mo Hua felt some heartache.

However, Tao Cultivation always involves some sacrifice.

Compared to his proficiency with Spiritual Ink and formations, those costs don't amount to much.

In the following days, like when he first entered Big Black Mountain, Mo Hua began to hunt Monster Beasts using the Earth Fire Formation.

After some thought, Mo Hua decided not to call for Elder Yu and the others.

Hunting Second-grade Monster Beasts is still very dangerous.

Even if Elder Yu is at the Foundation Establishment level, facing a Second-grade Monster Beast head-on can easily lead to mishaps.

Big Tiger is different, though.

It is a Second-grade Monster Beast, and as a tiger, its flesh is incredibly tough, capable of both taking and dealing hits.

Mo Hua would first sweep the mountain with his strong Divine Sense to spot Second-grade Monster Beasts, then observe their habits, and choose a suitable ambush site on their inevitable path.

Then, with Divine Consciousness Control Ink, he would draw a Second-grade Earth Fire Formation on the ground.

Next, Mo Hua and Big Tiger would find a place to hide covertly, sticking out their heads, one large and one small, focusing on the trap on the ground and attentive to the surroundings.

Outside the Earth Fire Formation, Mo Hua also set up a Second-order Thorn Formation.

Once a Second-grade Monster Beast entered, it would be ensnared by the Thorns Formation, and after a few moments, swallowed by the Earth Fire Formation.

The Second-grade Earth Fire Formation was very powerful.

Once triggered, explosive noises would erupt, and flames would billow.

Within the Earth Fire Formation, the flames of Spiritual Power surged like waves, bright red as magma.

Upon seeing this, Big Tiger would still get a bit startled, but after seeing it many times, it gradually got used to it.

After the explosion of the Earth Fire Formation, the Second-grade Monster Beast inside would generally be injured.

The physical bodies of Monster Beasts are much stronger than those of Cultivators, so even if they are engulfed by the Second-grade Earth Fire Formation, they wouldn't be killed outright but would suffer varying degrees of injury.

The severity of these injuries depends on the type of Monster Beast.

If it excels in defense, like those of the Earth Series or Golden Series, the injuries are usually minor to moderate.

For Monster Beasts with average defense, the injuries are usually moderate.

Only those with weak physical bodies would be critically injured.

Being able to inflict such injuries on Second-grade Monster Beasts was already quite formidable.

After that, it was Big Tiger's turn to take action.

In battles between Monster Beasts, one who has fallen into ambush and is already injured versus one who is fully rested and full of Blood Qi—there is not much suspense in the outcome.

Moreover, Mo Hua was there to deplete the enemy's strength and deliver the final blow with the Fireball Technique.

A man and a tiger, well-coordinated.

Usually, the battle would come to an end in less than an hour.

Then Mo Hua would collect the blood, and Big Tiger would feast on the flesh.

After resting and preparing for a few days, they would repeat the process.

No matter how strong the Second-grade Monster Beasts were, they couldn't withstand the killing set-up combining both Cultivator and Monster Beast, formations and spells, traps, and ambushes.

Mo Hua's Spiritual Ink, bottle after bottle, kept accumulating more and more...

Big Tiger consumed one inner core after another, amassing more and more...

Mo Hua's Earth Fire Formation became increasingly proficient, and Big Tiger's strength also clearly grew.

But Mo Hua's Spirit Stones were also being consumed rapidly.

Mo Hua began to worry.

"I need to find a way to earn some Spirit Stones..."

The Spiritual Ink I've mixed is a bit crude; it's alright for my own use, but if I were to sell it, I probably wouldn't get much for it.

Moreover, in places like Tongxian City, no, perhaps not just in Tongxian City but throughout the whole Big Black Mountain State Boundary, there might not be any Second Rank Formation Masters.



I doubt anyone would buy it.

Furthermore, I'm using ink like water, and this Spiritual Ink, while seeming plentiful now, may not withstand my own consumption...

Drawing Formations for others to earn Spirit Stones...

I'm very busy right now and don't have the time for that.

Unless absolutely necessary, I'd rather not ask my parents for Spirit Stones.

Chapter 746:

He also wanted his parents to keep more Spirit Stones, so that they, too, could successfully reach Foundation Establishment...

Mo Hua frowned in contemplation, then suddenly paused, glancing toward Big Tiger's cave and the scattered Monster Beast bones within...

Big Tiger had swallowed the inner core and eaten the monster meat, but the bones of these Second Grade Monster Beasts remained.

Not just bones, but also some claws and fur.

Pointing at these Monster Beast materials, Mo Hua asked Big Tiger, "Do you still want these?"

Having filled its belly, Big Tiger lay lazily on the ground, its round belly facing the sky, completely content.

Hearing Mo Hua speak, Big Tiger lifted its head, glanced at Mo Hua, then at the leftover bones, and got up to pick up a large bone with its mouth, placing it in Mo Hua's arms.

It seemed to mean, "I don't want it anymore, it's all yours."

Overjoyed, Mo Hua then took out several Storage Bags and began packing away the various bits and pieces, the Second Grade Monster Beast materials like broken bones and claws, into them.

Still, he left a few large bones for Big Tiger to gnaw on.

Afterward, Mo Hua, with bags great and small slung across his shoulder, headed home.

...

Meanwhile, in Big Black Mountain, the Monster Hunters were feeling uneasy.

It wasn't just the Monster Hunters; travelling merchants and wandering Cultivators also felt unsettled.

Recently, within the deep mountains, strange disturbances had been occurring frequently.

There were startling explosions and powerful, scorching waves of Spiritual Power constantly being emitted.

The roars of Second Grade Monster Beasts shook the forest.

Occasionally, overpowering demonic power and surging Blood Qi would whirl and thrash about before finally settling down after a long time...

It was as if Second Grade Monster Beasts were engaged in a fight to the death.

And not just once...

Inside Tongxian City, Elder Yu's expression was grave.

Yu Chengyi, Yu Chengyong, and Mo Shan, among others, also furrowed their brows.

"Second Grade Monster Beasts fighting to the death?"

"The surge of demonic power is terrifying..."

"Could it be that a rare treasure has appeared?"

"What kind of rare treasure could there be in the poor and treacherous Big Black Mountain?"

"...Why has this sudden change happened?"

"Everything was fine before..."

Yu Chengyi pondered, "It's not just the Monster Beasts, there has also been an extremely strong wave of Spiritual Power. Could it be... other high-level Foundation Establishment experts have come to Big Black Mountain to hunt for Second Grade Monster Beasts?"

"To hunt Second Grade Monster Beasts, you'd need at least seven or eight Foundation Establishers, right...?"

Elder Yu shook his head, "With so many Foundations, and such a large formation, it's impossible for us not to know..."

Mo Shan also nodded, "That's right, and lately, there haven't been any foreign Foundation Builders in Tongxian City..."

"Foreign Foundation Builders..."

Yu Chengyong thought for a moment, "If we really had to say, there was one..."

Mo Shan blinked, frowning, "Who?"

Everyone paused, then silently looked at Mo Shan:

"Your son..."

Mo Shan looked bewildered.

Oh right, Huar has reached Foundation Establishment...

This was something he had been happy about for quite a while.

But since Mo Hua had reached Foundation Establishment and yet seemed no different from before, still like a child, enjoying good food every day, studying formations daily, he subconsciously overlooked it...

He had forgotten that his son was now a "Foundation Building" Cultivator.

And indeed, Mo Hua had just recently returned from outside...

"Mo Hua... what has he been doing lately?" Elder Yu asked tentatively.

Mo Shan shook his head.

He really didn't know.

His only hope was for Mo Hua to do what he wanted, whether it was Cultivation or Drawing Formations. As long as it wasn't against the Righteous Dao and Mo Hua liked it, he would not interfere.

All he wanted was for him to be safe and happy.

And Mo Hua was a First Grade Formation Master...

He didn't understand formations at all, so even if he asked, he'd be lost.

Moreover, with his own Foundation Establishment imminent and his work at the Monster Hunting Guild keeping him quite busy, he really was quite occupied.

After pondering for a moment, Elder Yu still felt it unlikely but decided to ask:

"Did Mo Hua... go into the deep mountains during this time?"

Mo Shan thought for a moment and nodded, "Occasionally, he would, bringing a bunch of dried fish, saying he was going to feed a cat..."

"Feed a cat..."

Everyone was somewhat stunned.

What cat is there to feed?

What kind of cat could you feed in the deep mountains?

The atmosphere became slightly awkward.

"The disturbances in the deep mountains, they couldn't have been caused by that kid Mo Hua..." someone timidly suggested.

Mo Shan chuckled, "How could that be..." but then he paused, and his smile faded.

The other Monster Hunters fell silent.

It seemed impossible...

But when it came to Mo Hua, somehow, nothing seemed impossible...

After all, Mo Hua had once exploded a Large Formation in the depths of Big Black Mountain, altering the entire landscape...

But this was not a matter to be concluded lightly, so Elder Yu simply asked Mo Shan to go back and ask Mo Hua, and everyone dispersed.

Mo Shan returned home, filled with doubts. Liu Ruhua was cooking.

Mo Hua was following his mother around, saying, "Mom, I want this..." "Beef is delicious..." "Make this one a bit spicier..."

Then, like a little glutton, he took a bite here and a taste there.

It was impossible to tell that he was a Foundation Building Cultivator...

Mo Shan looked at him with affection yet felt helpless, unsure of how to start the conversation.

At dinner, there was a table full of delicious dishes.

Mo Hua ate with great delight.

Suddenly he remembered something, pulled out a Storage Bag, and asked, "Dad, do you think I could sell these for Spirit Stones?"

Mo Shan was taken aback, thinking it was a formation and was about to say he couldn't understand it, but when he took it and looked inside, he realized it was Monster Beast materials.

Monster Beast materials were something he was very familiar with.

Mo Shan reached in, took out a few Monster bones, and after examining them, his brow furrowed.

"I've never seen these before..."

There were Monster Beast materials in Big Black Mountain that he had never seen?

Chapter 747: The Mysterious Robe (3)

Mo Shan examined it closely for a moment, then suddenly his eyes widened, his mouth agape in disbelief.

"Is this... the bone of a Second Grade Monster Beast?"

"Hmm." Mo Hua, nibbling on a chicken leg, nodded and said, "Dad, you really do have good eyesight!"

Mo Shan didn't know what to say.

Was it really a matter of good eyesight...

Remembering the strange events in the deep mountains, he asked:

...

"How... where did you get this from?"

After some thought, Mo Hua decided not to hide the truth, "I needed Spiritual Ink for my Formation Painting, so I bribed a Big Tiger with some dried fish. Then we teamed up to kill a Second Grade Monster Beast; it ate the meat, and I collected the blood

"These bones, these teeth, were all left over after the Big Tiger had its fill

"I thought they might sell for Spirit Stones, so I brought them back

What Mo Shan heard sounded like a fantasy.

Bribing a tiger with dried fish?

Hunting a Second Grade Monster Beast?

This tale sounded like something a child would concoct; who would believe it if he told others...

But Mo Shan couldn't help but believe it...

Mo Shan fell silent for a moment, then couldn't help asking, "How many... how many Second Grade Monster Beasts have you killed?"

Worried that his parents would be anxious, Mo Hua said, "It wasn't me who killed them, it was the Big Tiger. I just helped out a tiny bit

"I didn't keep count of how many were killed

"It seems there were at least eight or nine

"And there are a lot more bones that I've left in the yard

Mo Shan and Liu Ruhua looked at each other, momentarily lost for words...

Second Grade Monster Beasts...

Once upon a time, Second Grade Monster Beasts roamed unchecked in Big Black Mountain.

It was possible that not one would die over the course of a hundred or two hundred years...

Yet since Mo Hua's return, in just a short span of one or two months, eight or nine had died...

Mo Shan sighed and looked at Mo Hua helplessly.

Well, it might be for the best to go to Qian State for study...

He was only fifteen after all; if he grew up a bit more, and his knowledge of formations improved even further, Tongxian City, the entirety of Big Black Mountain, even the entire Big Black Mountain State boundary might not be able to withstand his antics...

...

Later, Mo Shan helped Mo Hua sell the materials from these Second Grade Monster Beasts.



The fur was damaged by the Big Tiger's claws, the bones had all been gnawed on, and the claws and teeth had some damage from the combat, all considered "substandard goods."

But as they were indeed materials from Second Grade Monster Beasts, the price was still quite good.

In Big Black Mountain State boundary, there were no Second Grade Formation Masters.

But there were a few Second Grade Artifact Refiners.

These materials could be used to craft Second Grade Spiritual Artifacts.

Having estimated their value, Mo Shan figured that selling all of them would bring in approximately five to six thousand Spirit Stones, though they had to be sold in batches since other stores or passing merchants couldn't take in so much at once.

Mo Hua was overjoyed.

This way, the problem of the Spirit Stones needed for the Second-grade Earth Fire Formation was also solved.

Learning formations, painting formations, using formations...

Not only would he not be at a loss, but he would also earn some Spirit Stones, as well as accumulate a large amount of Spiritual Ink.

However, Mo Hua's happiness didn't last long before he noticed something was amiss...

The Second Grade Monster Beasts in the deep mountains had suddenly become much scarcer, as if they were all hiding, afraid to show their faces...

In the past, Second Grade Monster Beasts would stroll through the deep mountains, swaggering fearlessly.

But now, when they saw the Big Tiger or Mo Hua, they would flee as if they'd seen a ghost, early on...

Even their movements became cautious; they were afraid of stepping into an Earth Fire Formation.

During their hunting, they also preferred to make it quick, a hit-and-run.

After being seven or eight parts full, they would immediately return to their dens to hunker down, hiding deep within, terrified of being detected by Mo Hua's Divine Sense...

Mo Hua was somewhat helpless and a little angry.

"To think that Second Grade Monster Beasts have no backbone at all!"

But with things as they were, he had no choice but to carefully store the already prepared Spiritual Ink and use it sparingly.

The timidity of the Second Grade Monster Beasts was also a good thing, in its way.

At least from now on, the Monster Hunters heading into the mountains would have a much safer time.

When Elder Yu learned about Mo Hua's deep mountain hunts of Second Grade Monster Beasts, he was both shocked and, after thinking about it, not so surprised.

Hunting Second Grade Monster Beasts...

Such a thing, he himself wouldn't have dared to even contemplate before.

But over these four or five years, all the things he hadn't dared to dream of had come true one by one...

Elder Yu felt a touch sentimental, then regained a determined look.

"The pursuit of Tao Cultivation is endless. I'm not old yet and must continue to cultivate. The Golden Core may be far, but there's nothing I can't dare to dream of

The deep mountains became quiet.

The Monster Hunter of Big Black Mountain, too, returned to his routine days.

Mo Hua squatted in the deep mountains for several days, but since he hadn't seen any traces of Second Grade Monster Beasts, he had to give up temporarily and turn to studying the Earth Fire Formation again...

He was about to leave Tongxian City, yet the speed at which he laid out Formations with his Divine Sense was still not fast enough...

He wanted to paint faster.

"But how can I paint any faster?"

Mo Hua had already tried his best.

His Divine Sense had fourteen patterns, which were already incredibly profound, and after being restructured by the Heaven Yan Jue, it was as condensed as mercury. His control over it was already very strong.

He had learned the Spiritual Pivot Formation, and his control over Spiritual Power with Divine Sense was also meticulous.

Heavenly secret Calculation deepened his understanding of formations.

At his level, it was not possible for anyone to paint faster than him...

But it was still not enough...

Grandpa Gui once said, "In all spells, only speed is unbeatable."

The same principle applies to laying out Formations with Divine Sense.

Mo Hua furrowed his handsome brows, his eyes reflecting deep thought.

He had tried every method he could think of, except for...

"Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation

Mo Hua had never seen his master paint Formations; to date, the fastest person he had seen lay out a Formation was his own master's senior, Gui Tao's person.

And the formations of Gui Tao's people were based on "Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation".

If he learned it, could he lay out the Earth Fire Formation faster with Divine Consciousness Control Ink?

Mo Hua always felt that his understanding of Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation was not profound enough.

The Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation he had mastered was still very far from his master's senior...

"Learn from Master's senior?"

A thought flickered through Mo Hua's mind.

In the Sea of Consciousness, the scene where Gui Tao's person sealed the Ten Thousand Demons Hall with "Gui Tao's Heaven Sealing Formation" and massacred the Feather Transformation and Golden Core Demon Cultivators reemerged.

The scene where Gui Tao's person broke the Mysterious Heaven Great Formation in a short time with "Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation" also replayed over and over.

"Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation

Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation, Demonic Thought Differentiation, can quickly solve formations.

Naturally, it can also quickly lay down Gui Tao's Heaven Sealing Formation...

After thinking for a moment and finding no clue, Mo Hua suddenly had a burst of inspiration.

Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation and Planting Devil in Taoist Heart are opposites of each other.

If his understanding of Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation was insufficient, should he reflect on the principle of Planting Devil in Taoist Heart in reverse to contemplate that of Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation?

"Planting Devil in Taoist Heart

Planting Devil in Taoist Heart, based on Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation, transformed one's body into a demon, differentiating one's Demon Thought, forming a Demon Seed, and planting it in someone else's Taoist Heart.

Being a Serious Cultivator, he couldn't perform "Planting Devil in Taoist Heart" or differentiate Demon Thought...

So, if one does not differentiate Demon Thought but instead one's Divine Thought, could that also work?

The method should be the same.

Not turning to demon, it naturally wouldn't count as "Planting Devil in Taoist Heart

"Differentiating Divine Sense

"Let's give it a try

Mo Hua started to close his eyes, imitating Gui Tao's person, using the method of Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation, based on the logic of Gui Tao, to differentiate a portion of his own Divine Thought.

This differentiation, rooted in Tricky Calculation, was intricate and mystical.

Mo Hua could only "draw a gourd based on the scoop", recalling over and over his master's senior's scenes of laying out and solving formations.

After an unknown period, Mo Hua had an epiphany.

As Gui Tao's ways opened up to him, his Divine Thought began to differentiate...

Within the Sea of Consciousness, on the Incarnation of Divine Sense of Mo Hua, suddenly there appeared fine, pitch-black patterns.

These patterns seemed like Divine Thought peeling off Mo Hua himself, and yet, they also resembled the extension of Mo Hua's Divine Thought based on certain Dao Laws.

The Gui Tao differentiation of Divine Sense...

It was similar to the previous reconstruction of Divine Sense, yet different.

This differentiation seemed like recompiling and evolving one's Divine Sense through Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation.

Mo Hua felt both pain and wonder.

In a state of confusion, he seemed to feel his Divine Thought fitting with Gui Tao's ways bit by bit...

Only after a long time had passed did the process of Demon Thought Differentiation come to an end.

When Mo Hua opened his eyes, he found that his body was shrouded in a misty layer of Gui-colored ink shadows, producing afterimages with every movement.

This layer of ink shadow, draped over his body, seemed like an illusion.

And also like a piece of...

Pure, pitch-black, Ink Taoist Robe!

Chapter 748: Departure

Contrary to what Mo Hua expected, the Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation does not produce a “clone” but a “shadow of ink.”

Simultaneously illusory and real, layers of shadows piled upon one another, they draped over Mo Hua like a Taoist robe.

This “Taoist Robe” appeared similar to that of Gui Tao’s people, yet different.

Pitch black but still very clean.

Free of filth, free of bloodshed, it exuded a trace of eeriness that seemed untainted by the secular world.

The eyes of Mo Hua had also become more profound, emitting a somber shadow of Gui Tao’s path, yet it did not feel empty or terrifying; instead, his Divine Sense was brilliant and vibrant within.

...

His pupils were pitch black, filled with splendor.

He dominated the people of Gui Tao, rather than being enslaved by the Gui Tao.

"This is... Uncle’s Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation..."

"And this is... the true form of the Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation?"

Mo Hua looked around at himself.

The "Taoist Robe" on his body was just a thin layer, far from Uncle's, yet he seemed to have... truly entered the door?

He entered the door of the Gui Tao?

Mo Hua was shocked again and began to worry.

Would he really become a "Little Devious Path Person" in the future...

As Mo Hua pondered for a moment, he breathed a sigh of relief.

That shouldn't be the case...

The Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation and the Heavenly secret Calculation come from the same root, both originating from an orthodox, unique Divine Consciousness Calculation Technique.

The reason Uncle's Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation was so evil and frightening was that he had fallen to the Demon Path, turned bad, and mixed the Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation with demonic practices and various tortured spirits and souls...

As long as one does not let one's Divine Sense descend into demons, does not transform one's Divine Sense into Demon Thought, does not use Demon Thought as a seed to parasitize in others' Taoist Heart,

To simply use Tricky Calculation to split one's Divine Sense does not constitute "Planting Devil in Taoist Heart."

Mo Hua set his mind at ease.

His Uncle had become demonized, a Demon Head.



But he was different...

He cultivated through a formal Cultivation Technique and nurtured the Righteous Divine Thought.

Still, he would have to be more careful in the future to avoid falling to the Demon Path and to prevent himself from becoming a “little Demon Head”...

Mo Hua exhaled in relief, then his expression turned excited.

With the Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation creating ink shadows and donning the “Taoist Robe,” would his speed in Drawing Formations improve?

Eager to find out, Mo Hua immediately tried activating the Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation.

His eyes started showing signs of Gui Tao, revealing a deep ash-black color.

Within his Sea of Consciousness, the Divine Sense Incarnation clothed in a “Taoist Robe,” splitting into ink shadows.

Meanwhile, his Divine Sense circulated swiftly, more than doubling its speed, and the speed of setting up a Formation soared as if aided by divine help, with Formation Patterns flowing smoothly like water...

On the ground, the Spiritual Ink meandered quickly, connecting rapidly to form an array.

While Mo Hua himself was Drawing Formation, the separated ink shadow, as an external embodiment sharing the same origin and mind, also assisted in Drawing Formation.

However, the consumption of Divine Sense also intensified, like rivers breaking their banks and gushing miles away.

The rate at which Divine Sense was drained was exceedingly alarming.

Fortunately, Mo Hua's Divine Sense was incredibly profound and condensed, so he was still able to withstand it.

Mo Hua clenched his teeth and persevered, ink shadows overlapping and Formation Patterns moving like swift horses...

This process, though painful, was brief.

In just over a dozen breaths, the Second-grade Earth Fire Formation had been fully drawn!

However, Mo Hua's Divine Sense had been exhausted, his Sea of Consciousness ached, his scalp tingled, and cold sweat broke out on his forehead.

The Heavenly secret Tricky Calculation, dividing the Divine Sense.

This way of Drawing Formation was extremely fast, but the consumption of Divine Sense was also incredibly great.

Mo Hua's fourteen-pattern Divine Sense, which was more than sufficient for Drawing Thirteen Stripes Formation, now felt extremely taxing after using Gui Tao's splitting technique.

But Mo Hua was still very happy.

To him, the large consumption of Divine Sense and the mild pain in the Sea of Consciousness were actually trivial.

Compared to that, the formation completion time of just over a dozen breaths was already much faster than before.

Although it still wasn't quick enough to be deployed suddenly in combat,

If there was a way to buy some time, to get just over a dozen breaths to covertly employ Divine Consciousness Control Ink and lay down a Formation, it was still possible.

And this was just the beginning...

He only split one ink shadow, only draped a single, thin layer of the Taoist Robe.

If in the future, he could split thousands of ink shadows and the Taoist Robe could cover the skies and earth, wouldn't he be able to...

Create a Large Formation with a single thought?

This idea startled Mo Hua himself.

He then quickly dismissed it.

"I must not aspire for too much too soon..."

He must focus steadfastly on gradually enhancing his Divine Sense, studying the Divine Sense Calculation Technique, practicing Divine Consciousness Control Ink, constructing Second-Grade Formations, and then gradually Draw better, faster...

Continuously reducing the time for Drawing Ground into Formation...

Until, in the heat of battle, at the critical moment, he could instantly create a Formation and turn the tide of battle...

This was what he needed to do at present.

The extravagant thought of instantly Creating a Large Formation could only be buried deep in his heart for now...

This concluded the planning phase for Mo Hua.

He already had the Spiritual Ink, and he had also learned the Formations.

If he continued to stay, he wouldn't learn much else...

Mo Hua sighed.

Although reluctant, he knew it was time for him to leave...

He was to go to Qian State to continue his studies.

Otherwise, without advancement in cultivation, sticking to old Formation ways, and lacking Tao Cultivation resources...

He might never be able to cultivate the Supreme Divine Sense and reach the pinnacle of the Dao of Formation in his lifetime.

Let alone save his mentor...

...

Two months later, there would be a Cloud Ferry setting sail from the neighboring Second-Grade Qingyuan state boundary, traveling from south to north, passing through Kun, Dui, and Qian states, before finally reaching Kan State in the north.

Mo Hua planned to catch the Cloud Ferry from Li State, disembark in Qian State he traveled through.

Court Leader Zhou informed Mo Hua of this.

Court Leader Zhou, who was in charge of Tongxian City, knew the information about these Cloud Ferries better than Mo Hua.

At the same time, he gave Mo Hua a Cloud Crossing Order, made of white jade, exquisite and luxurious.

Chapter 749: Departure (2)

The Cloud Crossing Order, equivalent to a ferry ticket for crossing clouds.

Mo Hua couldn't help but ask, "Court Leader, this must be quite expensive..."

Court Leader Zhou nodded, "It's not cheap..."

The main issue is that it's difficult to obtain.

This kind of cross-state Cloud Crossing requires connections, otherwise, it's impossible to get.

Not to mention, a lot of Spirit Stones would be spent on it, both directly and indirectly.

...

"However, it doesn't matter..." Court Leader Zhou sipped his tea, "It can be reimbursed..."

Mo Hua was taken aback, "This can be reimbursed?"

"What's this..." Court Leader Zhou shook his head, "In a place like the Taoist Court, all sorts of messy, irregular matters can be reimbursed. Why wouldn't sending you to Qian State for studies—a proper matter—be reimbursed?"

"But I'm not really a person from the Taoist Court, am I?"

"How are you not?" Court Leader Zhou said discontentedly, "You have a Bronze Waist Token from the Immortal City. Although you're not officially on the roster, you can still be considered one of us."

Only then did Mo Hua remember.

His Uncle Zhang Lan had given him a Bronze Waist Token before.

That token was more for show; he hadn't used it for a long time, so it had slipped his mind.

"There should be quite a few Merit Points in that token of yours. If you find yourself short on funds in Qian State, you could exchange some for Spirit Stones or Spiritual Objects in an emergency..."

"But if it's not necessary, try not to use them."

"Once your Cultivation has improved and you get to know higher-ranked Cultivators from the Taoist Court, those Merit Points will be very useful..."

Court Leader Zhou advised.

"What can they be used for?" asked Mo Hua.

Court Leader Zhou candidly replied, "I'm not in the higher echelons of the Taoist Court, so I don't know."

Mo Hua was taken aback, then nodded, "Alright..."

After some thought, Court Leader Zhou lowered his voice and said,

"That being said, you can use that Bronze Waist Token, but don't rely on it too much. After all, you're an unofficial member. If something goes wrong, no one will cover for you..."

Mo Hua was stunned, then nodded to show he understood.

With the Bronze Waist Token, he would barely be considered "one of their own" by the Taoist Court...

But on the other hand, when it's useful, he's "one of their own," and when it's not, he's just an "unofficial member"...

Court Leader Zhou was clearly on Mo Hua's side, having advised him on what he should and shouldn't do.

Then, after taking another sip of his tea, he leisurely continued,

"You're going to the Qian Learning State Boundary to study, to enhance your Cultivation, broaden your knowledge, and advance in Formation..."

"The Qian Learning State Boundary gathers the Proud Sons of Heaven from various states. If you happen to make a name for yourself, it would be a matter of pride for our Big Black Mountain State Boundary."

"So, you are fully deserving of this Cloud Crossing Order."

Mo Hua felt moved, but also the weight of "great responsibility," so he asked in a low voice,

"But what if... I don't make a name for myself?"

Court Leader Zhou gave Mo Hua a stern look, "What do you think the 'Proud Sons of Heaven' from various states are? Cabbages?"

"The Proud Sons of Heaven, the favored by the heavens, are not ones to be easily surpassed, are they?"

"In Qian State, filled with Sects and Proud Sons of Heaven, it's normal not to make a name for oneself. Actually making a name would be extraordinary..."

"Besides, 'making a name' can be big or small..."

"You're at the Foundation Establishment Initial Stage now; if you go to Qian State and come back at the Foundation Establishment Late Stage, or even just the Qi Foundation Middle Stage, won't that also be termed 'making a name' for yourself?"

"Or, if you're currently a First Grade Formation Master and you reach Second Grade upon returning from Qian State, wouldn't that be 'making a name' for yourself, and a significant one at that!"

"So, don't feel pressured..." continued Court Leader Zhou, "What does it matter to us how many geniuses Qian State has?"

"No matter how high their Cultivation, they won't protect us, nor will their superior Formations be drawn in our stead..."

"Similarly, no matter how well you learn, they might not treat you as a 'treasure'..."

"So, you just focus on learning. As long as you learn something, regardless of the renown, that's bringing honor to our state boundary, and we will all be happy for you!"

Mo Hua felt much relieved and couldn't help but smile, "Thank you, Court Leader!"

Court Leader Zhou nodded slightly, clearly pleased, and continued to enjoy his tea.

When Mo Hua heard Court Leader Zhou mention "Second Grade Formation Master," he asked, "Court Leader, can one be certified as a Second Rank Formation Master here in Immortal City?"

"Second Rank Formation Master?" Court Leader Zhou was startled, then shook his head, "No."

"A Second-Grade Prefecture Border doesn't have the credentials to certify a Second Rank Formation Master; at least a Third-Grade State Boundary or above is required..."

"Oh," Mo Hua nodded in acknowledgment.

Court Leader Zhou lifted his teacup, about to take a sip, when he suddenly paused, the cup trembling, "You... became a Second Rank Formation Master?"

Mo Hua thought for a moment, then shook his head.

A Second-grade Junior Formation Master required mastery of the Second-grade Thirteen Patterns Formation.

Although Mo felt it wouldn't be difficult, he had only learned one Second-grade Earth Fire Formation so far, still some way off from becoming a true Second Grade Initial Stage Formation Master.



So, he couldn't be counted as a Second Rank Formation Master.

"Not yet, I was just asking," Mo Hua said.

Court Leader Zhou nodded slightly, calming his emotions.

Just asking, and he had given himself a scare...

He thought as much, a Second Rank Formation Master would be too outrageous...

Fifteen years old and a First Rank Formation Master was already impressive. If he became a Second Rank Formation Master, that would be somewhat...inhuman...

Afterward, Court Leader Zhou handed the Cloud Crossing Order to Mo Hua, instructing him to take good care of it. The crossing would start on the first day of the month two months later, and he must not miss it.

Mo Hua held the cool Cloud Crossing Order, feeling both the weight and an unavoidable sense of solitude.

"I'm really going to... leave, huh..."

He was about to bid farewell to Immortal City, to his parents, to his relatives and friends, and set off for an unfamiliar state boundary, embarking on an unknown journey...

Mo Hua felt a sense of guilt.

Especially towards his own parents.

But he had to go to Qian State...

Chapter 750: Departure (3)

Mo Hua sighed.

In the following days, Mo Hua mostly stayed at home, spending time with his parents.

Mo Shan and Liu Ruhua were reluctant for Mo Hua to leave, but for cultivators seeking the Dao, encountering such an opportunity was too precious to pass up, no matter the reluctance.

But still, concern and aching hearts were inevitable.

Mo Shan reduced his monster hunting expeditions and stayed home more to keep Mo Hua company.

Liu Ruhua also made many delicious dishes for Mo Hua.

...

At the same time, she packed Mo Hua's luggage, organizing his belongings in a storage bag, stuffing it with lots of jerked meat, candied fruits, and rice wine.

There were also quite a few spirit stones.

Mo Hua refused them, but could not escape her insistence and ended up taking only half.

He wanted his parents to keep some spirit stones to cultivate properly, so they could reach the Foundation Establishment Realm or even form a Golden Core, living happily and contentedly.

When the packing was nearly done, Liu Ruhua suddenly remembered something and handed Mo Hua a wooden box.

"This belongs to Court Leader Zhang; he left it on the table at the tavern that day, forgot to take it, and the next day, I heard he had left Tongxian City to return to the Zhang Family. There's no way to return this box to him now..."

"Court Leader Zhang probably won't come back. You keep it, and if you meet him in the future, you can give it back to him."

Mo Hua was startled, "A wooden box?"

He took it and saw it was just an ordinary wooden box, but made of sturdy material and sealed by a formation. He wondered what was inside.

"Okay, Mom, I'll keep it for now and return it to Uncle Zhang when I see him."

But he still felt a bit puzzled.

Uncle Zhang Lan, although known for being idly carefree and a work-shirker who liked to slack off, was actually meticulous and wasn't the type to lose things...

Why would he leave a wooden box at a tavern?

Mo Hua looked at the box and suddenly paused.

The box was sealed with a formation.

This type of formation was an entry-level compound formation, simple and straightforward—the very foundation formation he first learned from the "Initial Understanding of Compound Formation."

When Mo Hua first met Zhang Lan, he had asked him about this compound formation...

This matter should only be known to him and Uncle Zhang Lan.

"Was this wooden box left for me by Uncle Zhang?"

Mo Hua pondered.

He examined the formation again and couldn't help thinking...

It was terribly drawn...

Mo Hua could tell that the person who drew the formation had tried hard, but their understanding of formations was just too poor...

Mo Hua roughly confirmed it.

It was Uncle Zhang Lan's handiwork.

"Uncle Zhang intentionally used this compound formation to seal the box. Was he trying to hide something?"

Mo Hua was curious. After some thought, he decided to open it.

With a tap of his finger and a slight movement of his divine sense, the Mo patterns emerged, and he instantly unlocked the formation on the box, which opened.

Inside the box, there was a scroll.

The scroll was old, seemingly handwritten.

Nothing was written on the title page.

But inside were arcane meridian charts and detailed text. Others might be confused, but Mo Hua recognized at once that this was...

The Second Grade Water Passing Step Secret Manual!

This was left to him by... Uncle Zhang Lan...

Mo Hua was stunned, then deeply moved.

He flipped to the end of the secret manual and found a line of small characters. Although the writing was deliberately obscured, Mo Hua, proficient in formations and familiar with penmanship, could still tell it was Zhang Lan's writing:

"Do not disgrace the esteemed family spell point."

"Left by a passing, unnamed, kind-hearted uncle."

Warmth bloomed in Mo Hua's heart as he smiled brightly.

He etched Zhang Lan's kind gesture in his memory, planning to repay him with a great gift if they met again in the future.

Then Mo Hua's eyes lit up.

This movement technique had helped him immensely; it had resolved his pressing need.

Without a movement technique, a spiritual cultivator is like a steamed bun without legs—everyone can take a bite, and it can't run away.

Choosing a new movement technique to learn would be more troublesome, and certainly not as effective.

Like formations, whether it's cultivation techniques, spells, or movement techniques, all follow the principle of lineage continuity.

First Grade, Second Grade, Third Grade—starting from the basics, it's a gradual process.

Learning in this manner is twice as effective with a solid foundation, deeper understanding, and stronger effects.

With the Second Grade Water Passing Step, even if he went to Qian State, he would have enough capability to protect himself against Foundation Establishment Realm prodigies!

Mo Hua breathed a sigh of relief.

Afterwards, he began to learn the Second Grade Water Passing Step.

He was extremely proficient in the First Grade Water Passing Step, so it wasn't too difficult for him to pick up the Second Grade.

As time passed, Mo Hua's Water Passing Step improved towards the standard of Second Grade Foundation Establishment.

And the Second Grade Water Passing Step, compared to the First Grade, had many more changes and complexities.

But just as Mo Hua had yet to grasp the many intricacies of the Second Grade Water Passing Step, he learned of something that made his jaw drop...

Instructor Yan was getting married!

This was what Instructor Yan had told him.

Manager Mo, seeing Mo Hua's expression, nodded and said, "When I heard the news, I had the same look as you..."

"Instructor Yan... who is he marrying?" Mo Hua couldn't help but ask.

"It's that woman we saw the other day, the one with her hair tied up and plain face, not particularly striking in looks, but with an intelligent and dignified air..." Manager Mo explained at length.

Mo Hua remembered.

It was that graceful and serene female Formation Master...

Speaking of which, she did seem quite a match for Instructor Yan.

"But..." Mo Hua frowned, genuinely baffled, "How did Instructor Yan meet that woman, and how did it come to marriage?"

Manager Mo wore an expression that said, "You wouldn't believe it if I told you..."

