

## The Quest 79

Chapter 79: Earth Fire Array

Mo Hua couldn't sleep as he lay in bed that night.

Firstly, he was worried about Da Hu and the others; secondly, he considered that although he was a cultivator, he seemed to lack any means of attack or self-defense.

The cultivators in Tongxian City were simple and honest, and he had grown up without facing any real dangers. However, the absence of danger did not mean it would never come.

When real danger did present itself, one needed a way to defend oneself—it was not an option to just sit and wait for death.

Since Mo Hua wasn't a body cultivator and lacked strong vital energy, he couldn't learn martial arts related to cultivation. Thus, he could only consider learning magic. However, his spiritual power wasn't very strong, especially since he was only at the fourth level of Qi cultivation, which made it somewhat premature to learn spells...

After much thought, the only option available seemed to be using arrays...

"Is there any attack array I could use?"

Mo Hua got out of bed and took out Mr. Zhuang's "Thousand Arrays Compendium" to search:

"The 'Ice Spike Array' requires seven array patterns, but I haven't learned the ice series patterns, and the spirit ink required is also quite rare..."

"The 'Thunder Fire Array' seems powerful... Nine array patterns, better not..."

"The 'Wooden Prison Array' isn't meant for attacking..."

"The 'Fire Breath Array' has only three array patterns and seems a bit weak..."

...

After flipping through the book, Mo Hua finally settled on the "Earth Fire Array".

With seven array patterns, it used inexpensive ink, was simple to arrange, and he was quite familiar with the fire series patterns. Once activated, the array would self-destruct, seemingly with considerable power.

Mo Hua was satisfied with his choice, and after the midnight hour, he began practicing the "Earth Fire Array" on the stele in his sea of consciousness.

The array was not complicated; after practicing a few times overnight, he became quite familiar with it. The next morning, he tried drawing it on paper, and after a few successful attempts, he tried to activate the array.

Suddenly, he realized something:

What if the array activated and exploded as soon as he channeled his spiritual power into it? Would his house be destroyed, and might he end up severely injured or worse?

Mo Hua broke out in a cold sweat.

He then flipped through the "Thousand Arrays Compendium" for notes on the "Earth Fire Array," which stated: "Upon injecting spiritual power, the array explodes after three breaths, causing fire-type spiritual damage."

"So, you inject spiritual power, and after about three seconds... the array self-destructs, with an explosive force similar to the magical power of a fire cultivator."

It was essentially a landmine...

Mo Hua muttered to himself.

Regardless, it was not feasible to test this array at home.

Taking advantage of the morning free time, Mo Hua drew two more copies of the "Earth Fire Array" and in the afternoon, he left home for a secluded grove on the outskirts of the city. He placed the array under a tree and tried injecting a bit of spiritual power.

The array lit up but did not explode.

Mo Hua crouched down, resting his chin in his hands, "It lit up, so the array is fine. It didn't explode, which means the spiritual power I injected wasn't enough?"

If he injected enough spiritual power, would the array instantly explode?

Mo Hua felt a bit guilty; as he wasn't a body cultivator, he probably couldn't withstand the explosive force of the "Earth Fire Array".

He pulled out the "Thousand Arrays Compendium" again and read it word by word, making sure it would only explode after three breaths before he felt relieved, "Array masters don't deceive each other, especially since this book was given by Mr. Zhuang; it couldn't be wrong."

Mo Hua then channeled a large amount of spiritual power from his Qi sea directly into the "Earth Fire Array". The array patterns suddenly emitted a blinding red light.

Mo Hua covered his head and ran, then jumped into a pit a few yards away, hiding his entire body inside.

He had chosen this location specifically for this pit, even practicing several times to ensure that with his short arms and legs, he could successfully hide within three breaths.

The "Earth Fire Array" exploded, living up to Mo Hua's expectations; he was very satisfied.

However, although it exploded, it only blew a large hole in the tree with some scorch marks—loud noise, minimal effect, which Mo Hua found somewhat disappointing.

Looking at it, setting off the "Earth Fire Array" was less like detonating a landmine and more like setting off fireworks.

"A seven-patterned array should have been stronger..."

Mo Hua

felt the issue shouldn't be with the array itself but perhaps with himself, "Could it be because my cultivation level is low, so the spiritual power I injected wasn't enough?" If that was the case, he would need to use spirit stones.

Mo Hua took out another "Earth Fire Array", placed it under another tree, and then, wincing in pain, crushed a spirit stone, channeling the spiritual power from the stone into the array.

This time, the array's patterns shone even more dazzlingly.

Mo Hua quickly ran back to the pit, and with a loud "bang" that made his ears hurt, followed by the sound of rumbling and snapping branches, the tree targeted by the "Earth Fire Array" crashed down.

When Mo Hua went over to look, his mouth fell open.

The tree had withstood the self-destruction of the "Earth Fire Array"; its trunk was blown open with clear ash marks, as if scorched by fierce fire.

"Is a single spirit stone really this powerful? Or is my own spiritual power truly that weak..."

Mo Hua felt a bit disheartened.

However, pleased with the power of the "Earth Fire Array" driven by a single spirit stone, Mo Hua decided to draw a few more to keep on hand, just in case.

After ensuring there were no signs of fire on the blasted trees, Mo Hua happily returned home.

Only the blasted tree was left standing lonely in its original spot.

The next day, as Elder Yu of the Demon Hunter Team passed by, he saw the marks on the trees and angrily declared:

"Go check which idiot from the Demon Hunter Team did this. If they have the energy to blast trees instead of hunting demons, do they think they're showing off their cultivation?"

The big men of the Demon Hunter Team shrank back, not daring to utter a word.

Elder Yu had a fierce temper and was not one to be contradicted; they dared not even say "no".

After attending the Demon Hunting Ceremony, the three brothers, Da Hu, became busy. They either practiced martial arts and Dao techniques at home or followed senior demon hunters into the mountains to learn about demon hunting.

The evening of the second day of the Demon Hunting Festival, Mo Hua had to wander alone without his friends. Even amidst the bustle, he felt somewhat lonely.

Unbeknownst to him, the third day after visiting Mr. Zhuang and after asking him some questions, Bai Zisheng grabbed him tightly.

"Take me with you!"

Bai Zisheng's handsome eyes stared intently at Mo Hua.

"What..."

"The Demon Hunting Festival!" Bai Zisheng said, "I've heard it lasts three days, and today is the last day. If we don't go now, it'll be too late."

"It's only once a year."

"Who knows about next year? What if Zi Xi and I have to go somewhere else? Then I might never see it... No, you have to take me!"

"But... I'd like to take you, but it's no use, Aunt Xue won't agree," Mo Hua said.

"I've thought it through," Bai Zisheng's eyes lit up, "We'll go secretly, without letting Aunt Xue know. If worse comes to worst, I'll take a beating. A man should stand tall and not be afraid of getting beaten. It's worth getting beaten for!"

"Then think about how you're going to deceive Aunt Xue."

Bai Zisheng thought for a moment then slumped down dejectedly, "Yeah, it's impossible. I've never been able to deceive her, not once since I was a kid."

Seeing him like a frostbitten eggplant, Mo Hua felt a bit sympathetic and suggested, "Why don't you negotiate with Aunt Xue? Finish your studies during the day and take a walk on the streets in the evening?"

"That might be the only way..." Bai Zisheng nodded.

"Then you'd better do your studies now. If you don't finish, you won't even have the right to speak to Aunt Xue," Mo Hua said.

Bai Zisheng suddenly perked up, opened his books on the table, glanced at them, then asked Mo Hua, "If Aunt Xue agrees, how will I find you?"

"Today, at the time of You, I'll wait for you under the big tree on the street. If Aunt Xue agrees, I'll take you around. If she doesn't, I'll have to go alone."

"Agreed!" Bai Zisheng brightened up.

"Agreed."