

The Quest 95

Chapter 95: Spirit Ink

"Spiritual awareness is limited."

Mr. Zhuang's words seemed profoundly reasonable to Mo Hua.

Given that, Mo Hua stopped worrying about it. As his cultivation improved, so would his spiritual awareness; everything would come naturally with focused cultivation.

The most important thing at the moment was to learn more about arrays.

The bottleneck of the Heavenly Proliferation Technique was the Riddle Array. To solve the Riddle Array, one must master complex array techniques. Mr. Zhuang had given him the "Thousand Arrays Compendium," but Mo Hua had only learned a small part of it. His current experience with arrays was far from sufficient.

Failing to solve the Riddle Array meant a halt in his progress, and if his progress halted, his cultivation journey would end.

Thus, Mo Hua devoted all his thoughts to arrays apart from his routine cultivation.

At night, he would practice arrays on the remnants of a stele in his sea of consciousness; by day, he would draw arrays on paper; occasionally, when someone's array failed, they would ask Mo Hua for help.

Master Chen from Chen's Artifact Crafting Shop would also need him, like for repairs to the crafting furnace or adding arrays to spiritual tools, and occasionally Elder Feng would refer cultivators to Mo Hua to have arrays drawn.

Some would give Mo Hua spirit stones as a reward, while those with modest means could only offer apologies along with vegetables and fruits from their gardens, or sugar figures and toys sold in the marketplaces.

Mo Hua knew the life of an independent cultivator was not easy, so he only symbolically accepted a few spirit stones. Occasionally getting something to eat, drink, or play with also made him quite happy.

Mo Hua's intention was to apply what he learned; hence, he wasn't particular about these matters.

This led to Mo Hua, whenever he went shopping, being stuffed with items by uncles, aunts, and elderly neighbors he had helped—wild fruits from the mountains, home-steamed rice cakes, bamboo-crafted grasshoppers, calming herbal sachets, and even rouge and handkerchiefs used by female cultivators...

Mo Hua tried to pay with spirit stones, but they wouldn't accept them. If Mo Hua didn't take the items, they would be upset.

In this way, Mo Hua walked from one end of the street to the other without spending a single spirit stone, his storage bag stuffed to the brim, feeling a bit like a freeloader, which made him both laugh and cry.

After some time, Mo Hua realized a severe problem:

He had no spirit stones to buy spirit ink!

Ever since Liu Ruhua opened a restaurant, Mo Hua's family situation had improved significantly.

The spirit stones Mo Hua used for daily cultivation were provided by his parents. Mo Hua originally didn't want them, but Mo Shan and Liu Ruhua insisted. They said Mo Hua was still young and not yet at the age to be self-sufficient.

Mo Hua himself earned some spirit stones by drawing arrays, which he spent on buying ink and paper to practice arrays, and occasionally, he could afford some treats.

Overall, his income and expenses of spirit stones were relatively balanced, with a little surplus.

Although the surplus was not much...

But as Mo Hua's cultivation improved and his spiritual awareness grew stronger, the arrays he drew became more intricate. Due to the effects of the Heavenly Proliferation Technique, his control over spiritual awareness became stronger, and he could draw arrays faster.

The faster he drew the arrays, the more he drew each day, the stronger his spiritual awareness became, and the more complex the arrays he could draw, though he could still draw them faster, leading to even more arrays being drawn...

Dao Stele, Heavenly Proliferation Technique, Meditation Techniques...

This originally benign cycle led to a malignant outcome:

Mo Hua's spirit ink was used up like water, and naturally, his spirit stones were spent like flowing water.

Until one day, Mo Hua realized he had run out of both spirit ink and spirit stones. That was when he grasped the severity of the situation.

"Whatever shall I do?"

Ask his parents?

Mo Hua shook his head. He wanted his parents to spend more spirit stones on their cultivation so that they could reach higher realms and live longer. If he asked, they would definitely give him all their spirit stones.

Charge more for drawing arrays?

Mo Hua felt that was not right either. His neighbors were all independent cultivators, already stretched thin financially, and he had indeed received much kindness from them, so charging more was not an option.

Mix his own spirit ink?

Mo Hua did not know the formula or technique for mixing spirit ink, and even if he did, he would still need the raw materials, which he had no way of obtaining.

Mo Hua thought about this problem for two days but

still had no good solutions.

That afternoon, Liu Ruhua, frowning, said, "Little Tiger was injured while hunting demons in the mountains, and I heard it's serious. Take these things over to see how Little Tiger's injury is."

Mo Hua's heart skipped a beat, and he quickly replied, "Yes, mother, I'll go right away!"

When Mo Hua arrived at the Meng family's house, Da Hu and Shuang Hu were taking care of Xiao Hu.

Xiao Hu was lying on the bed, eyes closed, his face pale, with a fresh and bloody claw mark on his back, the blood continuously seeping out.

Seeing Mo Hua, Da Hu and Shuang Hu's eyes lit up, then their expressions fell again.

It was the first time Mo Hua had seen Da Hu and the others in two months.

Being a Demon Hunter was not an easy profession. A demonic beast of the same realm was far stronger than a cultivator, due to their inherently powerful physical bodies, robust vitality, keen reactions, and agile movements. The demonic energy of the beasts, carrying either the power of the Five Elements or innate deadly toxins, was particularly troublesome.

Once one became a Demon Hunter, it meant relentless hard work and life-or-death dangers.

Many powerful Demon Hunters had been devoured by demonic beasts due to a moment of carelessness. Even the strongest of Demon Hunters needed to hunt in groups, taking care of each other without any negligence.

Da Hu and the others were novices, just starting to hunt demons, with much to learn and naturally facing greater dangers.

Despite being among the best of their age group in terms of cultivation and techniques, once they actually began hunting demonic beasts, it was impossible to adapt quickly.

Over the past two months, they had stayed in the mountains, learning to familiarize themselves with the environment, understanding the beasts, and attempting to fight them. In these battles, one had to be fully focused, as the slightest carelessness could lead to injury or even death.

A 17-year-old young cultivator had panicked upon encountering a demonic beast and was bitten on the neck, bleeding out and dying.

This was something Da Hu had previously told Mo Hua, and it deeply impressed upon him the significance of the title "Demon Hunter." Now, seeing Xiao Hu, who had played with him since childhood, with a blood-drenched back, Mo Hua felt saddened.

"Has Elder Feng looked at him?"

Mo Hua asked, looking at the pale-faced Xiao Hu, feeling distressed.

"Elder Feng has looked at him, applied herbal medicine to the wound, and Xiao Hu has taken the medicinal pills," Shuang Hu replied, his eyes red.

"What happened?" Mo Hua couldn't help but ask.