

The Quest 98

Chapter 98: Request

Yesterday, Mo Shan hunted down a demonic beast. After skinning it and removing its bones, he collected its demonic core and was about to head home from the mountain when a somewhat acquainted Demon Hunter approached him, his demeanor exceedingly polite.

"Brother Mo, there's something I'd like to ask for your help with..."

This Demon Hunter, named Zhou Cheng, was of average height and rather slender.

Mo Shan, ever generous, responded, "Go ahead, I'll help if I can."

Zhou Cheng seemed a bit embarrassed, "It's not that I need you to take action yourself, but there's a small favor I'd like to ask of your son..."

Mo Shan was taken aback, "My son, Mo Hua?"

"That's right," Zhou Cheng confirmed. "Though I'm somewhat acquainted with you, I've never met your son, so it seemed inappropriate to approach him directly. That's why I've come to you..."

Mo Shan looked at him skeptically, "My son, Mo Hua, is only at the fourth level of Qi cultivation. What could he help you with?"

"He can!" Zhou Cheng hurriedly explained. "You see, my youngest son, who is about fifteen or sixteen and recently became a Demon Hunter, is at the sixth level of Qi cultivation. But his talent is average, and he hasn't mastered his martial cultivation well. I'm worried about him encountering a tough demonic beast on the mountain and... if something happens..."

Zhou Cheng sighed, "He's been lucky so far, not running into any troublesome demonic beasts and staying safe. But as fathers and fellow Demon Hunters, we both understand the risks once you enter the Dahei Mountain. I can't sleep well just thinking about it."

Mo Shan nodded empathetically.

"A few days ago, I heard that there's a young Array Master in your area who can fortify vine armor with arrays that could save a life in critical moments. Later, I found out that the young Array Master is surnamed Mo, with a father named Mo Shan. I thought that was quite a coincidence, so I came to ask for your help."

Zhou Cheng looked earnestly at Mo Shan, afraid of being refused.

Mo Shan hesitated, then said, "It's not that I don't want to help you, but... I only know that Mo Hua is studying array formations. I don't understand much about them and don't know how well he's learned. The array you need doesn't sound simple, and he might not be able to draw it."

"He can draw it, he can," Zhou Cheng assured quickly.

"How do you know he can?" Mo Shan questioned.

"I heard it from Old Xu, who hunts demons with me. He used to be rude to you, wanting to challenge you, but you knocked him down with a single punch," Zhou Cheng chuckled, then continued, "He said the Meng family's son, Da Hu, was recently stabbed in the chest by a scorpion demon. It was because the vine armor was arrayed that it didn't reach his vitals, saving his life. He also said you're lucky to have such a capable son, though he was a bit sarcastic. But don't mind him; after all, you did hit him..."

"Oh, Old Xu..." Mo Shan recalled.

He had heard about Da Hu's injury, but since he was also in the mountains at that time and learned Da Hu was alright when he came down, he didn't pay much attention.

It's common for Demon Hunters to get injured as long as they don't lose limbs or damage their meridians, or lose their lives, given the nature of their work.

If it was Da Hu, then it was likely, as Mo Hua and the Meng brothers had grown up playing together. Drawing an array on Da Hu's vine armor was nothing unusual.

Mo Shan thought to himself.

Zhou Cheng gripped Mo Shan's hand, "Brother Mo, you must help me with this. Otherwise, I really can't be at ease about my young son!"

Mo Shan considered, then said, "I'll ask and see. If Mo Hua really can draw the array you need, he will certainly help you. But if he can't, there's nothing I can do..."

Zhou Cheng was overjoyed and quickly thanked him, "Thank you, Brother Mo! If he can really do it, any amount of spirit stones will do."

Then his expression turned apologetic, "But recently... I'm short on spirit stones. If it's not enough, could I owe you until next month when I go demon hunting and split the stones?"

Mo Shan waved his hand, "It's a small matter; we'll talk about it later."

If he was helping, whether to collect spirit stones or not was fine, but since it involved Mo Hua, he needed to go back and consult his son's opinion.

But then, could Mo

Hua really draw the array in question?

Mo Shan returned home with this doubt and directly asked Mo Hua, "Can you do it?"

"Yes," Mo Hua nodded.

"Do you have time these days?" Mo Shan asked.

"I do."

"Can you help him draw it?"

"Sure."

Mo Shan hadn't expected it to go so smoothly.

When others had sought his help yesterday, their earnest attitudes made it seem like a difficult task. Yet here with Mo Hua, it seemed like a trivial matter.

"How long will it take?"

"Very quick, half a day maybe," Mo Hua responded.

In reality, it wouldn't even take an hour since Mo Hua's spiritual sense was strong, and he had a solid grasp of the Iron Armor Array, making it practically effortless to draw. However, it was always good to allow for some extra time.

Mo Shan nodded, then asked, "What's the usual compensation for drawing an array?"

Mo Hua saw his father hesitating to speak and asked, "Dad, is there something else you want to say?"

Mo Shan thought for a moment, then said, "Their family isn't well-off, and the son being a Demon Hunter has many expenses. I guess they don't have much in terms of spirit stones, so maybe charge less if possible. But it's still your decision since you're the one drawing the array."

Previously, Mo Shan thought since Mo Hua's cultivation wasn't high, the arrays he learned wouldn't be very profound. He could help the neighbors with simple array fixes, and it didn't matter whether he charged spirit stones or not. A little loss was bearable.

But now Mo Shan realized it was different. The arrays useful to Demon Hunters were far from being merely a couple of array patterns strung together.

Mo Hua could draw such arrays, almost comparable to those ordinary Array Masters in the city.

Becoming an Array Master was difficult; even the most basic Array Master would spend a decade or two in diligent study.

And Mo Hua was only about eleven or twelve years old, evidently spending almost all his available time on studying array formations. While other children complained about their cultivation practices and thought about where to play, Mo Hua studied arrays day and night.

Mo Shan remembered, every time he went hunting in the mountains and came home, Mo Hua was almost always drawing arrays. Sometimes, when he returned late, the light in Mo Hua's room was still on.

Mo Shan felt a twinge of sadness and didn't want his son to be at a disadvantage.

Unaware of his father's thoughts, Mo Hua considered for a moment and then said, "Just bring over the vine armor and prepare a bottle of metallic elemental spirit ink. Better quality ink would enhance the effectiveness of the array, but if they can't afford the best, ordinary ink will do. As for the payment, Dad, how much do you hunters earn per day in spirit stones?"

"About five stones per person."

"Five stones a day, but you can't be in the mountains every day, and you won't encounter demonic beasts daily. Even if you do, you might not always kill them. If you get injured by a difficult beast, you'd also have to spend some on medicinal pills. So, those spirit stones really aren't much, especially considering how dangerous demon hunting is."

"Then let's charge five spirit stones," Mo Hua suggested.

Mo Shan nodded, then couldn't help but ask, "Five spirit stones... aren't you at a loss?"

Hiring an Array Master to draw arrays typically costs a lot of spirit stones. Although Mo Shan had never hired one and didn't have the stones to do so, having lived in Tongxian City for so long, he knew somewhat about these matters.

Mo Hua explained, "I'm still learning array formations. Earning more or less doesn't matter as long as I have the opportunity to practice more. Besides, Dad, you always tell me that among independent cultivators, we should look out for one another. When our family was in trouble, these uncles and aunts helped us out too. Now that we have the means, it's only right to help them in return."

Mo Hua smiled and added, "It helps others, gives me practice, and earns some spirit stones. It's a win-win-win situation, isn't it good?"

"Good," Mo Shan agreed, unable to resist patting Mo Hua's head. "Then I'll have him prepare the materials tomorrow, and you can draw the array."

After dinner, Mo Hua returned to his room to rest.

Mo Shan sat alone, feeling increasingly gratified. Thinking about his son's words and realizing that his son was already an Array Master, the usually composed Mo Shan couldn't hide the smile on his face.