

Immortality 1221

Chapter 1221: Xie Ling

"Junior Brother, Elder Brother Cheng said you could help me and told me to ask for your assistance,"

The disciple said very politely.

Cheng Mo stood tall and proud, nodding his head:

"This kid's name is Xie Ling; like me, he comes from Gen State."

"Although Gen State is vast, my Cheng Family and his Xie family don't have much interaction, but since we're from the same state and both studying in Qian State, we're essentially fellow townsfolk, so naturally, I have to help when he's in trouble..."

Cheng Mo patted Xie Ling's shoulder.

Xie Ling smiled gratefully.

He was much shorter than Cheng Mo, and standing beside him, he looked like Cheng Mo's little follower.

Mo Hua curiously asked:

"What's the matter?"

Xie Ling replied, "I've accepted a few rewards to capture a Sin Cultivator, but this Sin Cultivator practices Superior Fire Spells, which are extremely powerful, and all of us are no match for him."

"To defend against Fire Spells, naturally, the 'Water Armor Skill' would be preferable, but none of us have a Water-series Spiritual Root, so we can't learn it."

"Even if we learned it, hastily trying to master it, if the spell cultivation isn't profound, it might not necessarily hold up against an attack."

"Going to purchase some fireproof Spiritual Artifacts instead, either the grade is poor, the quality isn't sufficient, the fire resistance is inadequate, or they're just too expensive and not worth it..."

Xie Ling was somewhat troubled and looked toward Mo Hua, asking softly:

"Junior Brother, you..."

Mo Hua understood, took a sip of the sweet and refreshing sour plum juice, and slowly nodded:

"I got it. Come back in three days."

Cheng Mo patted Xie Ling's shoulder again, "Quick, thank your Junior Brother."

Xie Ling's expression brightened, and he nodded his head hastily, "Thank you, Junior Brother!"

After Xie Ling left, Mo Hua pondered for a moment.

Defending against Fire Spells...

If it were about attacking and killing on a battlefield, one could rely on an Array Plate to lay Formation Diagrams, channeling water to extinguish fire, or using earth to block the flames.

However, what Xie Ling and the others mainly feared was being injured by Fire Spells, so using Spiritual Artifacts designed for personal defense against fire would be best.

Mo Hua had an idea in mind and went to discuss it with Master Gu.

Master Gu gave Mo Hua several options:

"The Green Water Armor has a higher cost but can defend against both strength-based attacks and spell-induced injuries, primarily guarding against burns from Fire-series spells."

"The Water Armor Robe is a bit less expensive and more lightweight, primarily defending against Fire-series spells, but its other defensive capabilities are much worse than the Green Water Armor."

"After all, one is Armor, and the other is a cloth garment."

"These two are the most commonly used and are also the two types of Spiritual Armor that our Gushan Refining Workshop has crafted before."

"There are also some accessories that are lighter, more elegant, and easier to carry, but these kinds of Spiritual Artifacts are fine for everyday use, but in real combat, they are far less effective at protecting the body than armor."

"And these accessories are not cheap, like the Cold Water Jade, Fireproof Pendant, Fire-Resistant Hairpin..."

Mo Hua was taken aback at these words.

Fire-Resistant Hairpin.

He couldn't help but remember his first gift to his mother when he was at Tongxian Gate; earning Spirit Stones through Drawing Formation for his sect members, he bought a Fire-Resistant Hairpin that wasn't even First Grade.

Such Spiritual Artifacts, ordinary Loose Cultivators couldn't afford them.

Mo Hua sighed in his heart, but then he thought:

"I wonder how mother is doing in Tongxian City, whether she's working too hard at the Food Building... whether she's comfortable..."

"Whether she's cultivating properly, whether she's achieved Foundation Establishment..."

Mo Hua was momentarily distracted.

"Young Master?"

Seeing this, Master Gu gently called out.

Mo Hua started, coming back to his senses, and said with a smile: "Suddenly remembered some things, please continue, Master Gu..."

Master Gu nodded and continued:

"Such Spiritual Artifacts are tricky to refine, and if they're custom-made, the process is even more complicated, costs more, and the price is estimated to be..."

"No problem," Mo Hua said, "they have plenty of Spirit Stones."

Xie Ling may look like a little follower, but coming from a family, he definitely isn't short on money.

In the whole of Taixu Gate, no one is lacking in funds.

Of course, except for Mo Hua...

Master Gu was then reassured.

But Mo Hua had one doubt, "Does the Green Water Armor protect against everything, and then on top of that, has extremely high fire resistance?"

Master Gu nodded, "Armor as Spiritual Artifacts needs to be 'armor' first, and then consider other functions."

"This is the basic approach to the refining of Standard Spiritual Weapons."

"First, perfect the universal functionality, then consider specific effects."

"Otherwise, if you buy a 'Green Water Armor' that only defends against fire and nothing else, it would be too useless."

"Such extremely specialized Spiritual Artifacts have been refined by some Refinery Shops in the past, but these Artifacts inevitably don't cater to the majority of Cultivators, have few buyers, and the sales don't pick up, leading to severe losses for the Refinery Shops, and gradually, no shops would refine them anymore..."

Master Gu glanced at Mo Hua, "Young Master, are you planning to..."

"Hmm," Mo Hua nodded, "let's make these specialized Spiritual Artifacts."

"This way, the process will definitely be simpler, the costs lower, and the refining time shorter."

"Moreover, as these are customized Spiritual Artifacts, we don't need them to excel in every aspect, just to achieve excellence in one particular function."

Master Gu thought for a moment, then had an idea, and said with a nod:

"That would be best, we'll follow Young Master's wishes."

Afterwards, Mo Hua took some time to design the Refinement Array Map based on Formation Diagrams, combined with some old refining diagrams that Master Gu had provided.

The two discussed for half a day and perfected the details.

Master Gu then went back to start on the work.

Three days later, Xie Ling came looking for Mo Hua again.

Mo Hua told him that everything had been arranged, but that the Spiritual Artifacts would take some time to refine.

Receiving Mo Hua's confirmation, Xie Ling felt a weight lifted off his shoulders.

About eight days later, Master Gu refined five Fireproof Taoist Robes according to Mo Hua's specifications, which were then inscribed with Formation by Mo Hua.

These Taoist Robes had no other use but to repel fire.

However, their fire-repelling effect was nearly pushed to the extreme.

Chapter 1222: Xie Ling (2)

Mo Hua handed over the five Daoist Robes of Fire Mastery to Xie Ling.

Xie Ling solemnly accepted them and, when the rest period arrived, went to apprehend the Sin Cultivator skilled in Fire Spells.

Two days later, the rest period ended.

Xie Ling came to see Mo Hua, bringing four others with him.

As they approached Mo Hua, they all paid their respects and said in unison:

"Thank you, Junior Brother!"

Xie Ling was immensely excited, "Wearing the Daoist Robes of Fire Mastery you gave us, we clashed with that Sin Cultivator. No matter how he unleashed his Fire Spells on us, we were undeterred, feeling only a slight burning sensation. It's like heaven and earth compared to before..."

"Finally, after one last exchange, we managed to capture that villain."

The others were also visibly excited.

Although they were in the same cohort as Mo Hua, their talents and abilities were actually not too outstanding—at least not when compared to the many Heavenly Prides within Taixu Gate.

In fact, they each were geniuses from major families across the Nine State.

But when gathered in Qian State, a place swarming with geniuses, their 'genius' status wasn't as pronounced.

While they didn't quite blend into the masses, they were relatively more 'mediocre'.

Their pressure was immense.

Unlike Mo Hua, who could remain calm regardless of his A-grade or C-grade, they couldn't be so indifferent.

These genius disciples had to be ambitious.

They carried the expectations of their parents and clans on their shoulders, needing to learn everything and to excel in it, not allowing any area to be too lacking.

The Tao Cultivation curriculum of Taixu Gate was extensive and time-consuming.

Amidst their heavy coursework, the progress they could make in earning rewards was quite slow.

Especially for some geniuses who grew up sheltered within their clans, possessing great talent but disliking conflict and unfamiliar with slaughter; they rarely ventured out to undertake such reward quests to apprehend criminals.

Like Xie Ling and his peers, although they had entered the Sect for three years, their experiences in capturing Sin Cultivators were still limited, and their methods crude.

Furthermore, they were facing Sin Cultivators who were battle-hardened and cunning.

Initial stumbles were to be expected.

Now with the help of the Daoist Robes of Fire Mastery, having overcome a "powerful foe" and captured a Sin Cultivator, accomplished the mission, accumulated experience, and earned Merit Points, all of them couldn't help feeling a bit elated.

As a token of gratitude, Xie Ling and his fellows treated Mo Hua to chicken legs.

According to Elder Brother Cheng Mo, one of Junior Brother's favorite foods was chicken legs; if you wanted a favor from Junior Brother, you must "present" a chicken leg.

Mo Hua, while eating chicken legs, had a casual chat with Xie Ling and the others.

During the conversation, Mo Hua suddenly asked curiously:

"Does your Xie family from Gen State have any ancestral teachings?"

Situ Jian inherited the Li Fire Sword Technique, Yang Qianjun inherited the Yang Family Spear Technique, and Cheng Mo, from Gen State like Xie Ling, inherited the Mountain Splitting Axe Technique.

But Xie Ling...

Mo Hua really couldn't see anything particularly unique about him...

Xie Ling nodded and replied, "There are many mountains in Gen State. Our Xie family of Gen State has inherited the Kanyu Skill, able to discern the energy of mountains and rivers, establish life and death in tombs, pass down the Yin Yang Feng Shui Secret Formation..."

"Yin Yang Feng Shui Secret Formation?!"

Mo Hua was surprised, "You know this Formation?"

Xie Ling replied with embarrassment, "My talent for Formation is modest, and I didn't learn it. I only learned some basics like discerning energy, mountain-escaping, determining tombs, and suppressing ghosts and evils."

Mo Hua, puzzled, asked, "Discerning energy, mountain-escaping, determining tombs, suppressing evils?"

Xie Ling explained, "It's about discerning the Earth Qi Mechanism, concealing oneself using mountains and rivers, scrutinizing geomancy, establishing tombs, preventing Corpse Transformation, expelling ghosts, and the more profound abilities, like cutting off life with death, reversing and altering the Heavenly secret..."

Mo Hua's pupils dilated, aghast in his heart.

Cutting off life with death, reversing the Heavenly secret...

Scratching his head with a hint of apology, Xie Ling said, "But my knowledge is superficial as I only have a cursory understanding of these arts, and furthermore, they're secretive family teachings. My grandfather has instructed me not to speak of them..."

Mo Hua's gaze became contemplative, his thoughts ebbing and flowing.

Seeing Mo Hua's reaction, Xie Ling, worried he might have upset him, quickly added:

"However, Junior Brother, if you have time, you can visit the Xie family at the Qiong Yin Mountain Provincial Border of Gen State. I'm not in a position to teach some of the secret techniques, but if my grandfather allows, there might be a chance to pass them on..."

Mo Hua looked resolute, nodding deeply:

"Good!"

Gen State, Qiong Yin Mountain Provincial Border...

Mo Hua firmly etched this place in his memory.

...

In the time that followed, whenever Xie Ling was uncertain about a reward quest or lacked confidence, he would go to the dining hall at the Disciple's Residence during meal times, present a chicken leg, and seek Mo Hua's advice.

When it came to reward quests, Mo Hua had an abundance of experience.

Even the Fire Buddha fell into his hands, let alone these "small fry" Sin Cultivators.

So every time Xie Ling asked, Mo Hua had an accurate answer.

With Mo Hua's guidance, complemented by the right Formations and Spiritual Artifacts, Xie Ling's subsequent reward quests went smoothly, with great efficiency.

Because of this, Xie Ling held Mo Hua in high regard.

Although young, he was knowledgeable, skilled in Formations, proactive, thoroughly strategic, and amiable.

No wonder Elder Master Xun chose him to be the "Junior Brother."

Moreover, no matter how difficult the reward quest, as long as one followed Junior Brother's instructions diligently and meticulously, the likelihood of failure was low, and the risks were greatly reduced.

This wasn't just a "Junior Brother," he was akin to a venerable "Grandfather" within the Sect, guiding those who lost their way.

Thereafter, Xie Ling would brag about Mo Hua to everyone he met.

Thus, during meals in the dining hall, not long after Mo Hua sat down, numerous disciples would come over, pay their respects respectfully, and politely say, "Junior Brother!"

"I have a favor to ask."

"I wish to purchase a Spiritual Artifact..."

"I can't seem to capture a Sin Cultivator..."

"Please, Junior Brother, grant me your guidance..."

These disciples, some familiar and some not, were all treated equally by Mo Hua, who did his utmost to provide answers.

The Spiritual Artifacts occasionally needed were of various kinds.

Chapter 1223: Xie Ling (3)

There are Si Nan for scouting, Spiritual Mirrors for unveiling hidden things, armor for defending against spells, swords, and hand-to-hand combat, as well as weapons causing armor-breaking, bleeding, and carrying Magic Damage of the Five Elements.

For these demands, Mo Hua also designed individual Refinement Array Maps according to the Formation, and with Master Gu's refining, turned them into finished Spiritual Artifacts.

But following this, a problem arose.

Mo Hua was overwhelmed with work.

Designing Refinement Array Maps was manageable, after all it was related to Formation, and Mo Hua learned from it.

But trivial matters, especially selling spiritual tools, pricing, accounting, and delivering goods were really a waste of time.

He pondered for a while and came up with a solution.

During his day off, Mo Hua went to find Master Gu and asked:

"Master Gu, does the Gu Family have stores, Market Towns or storefronts in Tai Xu City?"

Master Gu was taken aback, surprised:

"Does the young master mean..."

Mo Hua said: "The customized spiritual tools, just take them all to the store for sale, you figure out the profits."

While earning Spirit Stones is a good thing, he has more important things to do now.

And these Spirit Stones, he intended to subsidize Master Gu and the others with them.

Especially those impoverished Artifact Refiners at the Gushan Refining Workshop.

For Mo Hua himself, practicing the Formation's application in real situations, unifying knowledge with action, and deepening the understanding of Formation, that sufficed.

He personally wasn't interested in earning too many Spirit Stones in this aspect.

The reason he did not seek Wenren Wan is because Mo Hua knew that Aunt Wan had her own difficulties and such trivial matters weren't worth bothering her with.

Master Gu's heart trembled slightly, and he immediately said:

"I will go inquire."

Although he is a Golden Core of the Gu Family and oversees the Refinery Shop, he is not particularly familiar with the specifics of its operations.

But he also knows that this might really be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Master Gu used some of his network to find out the specific situation and then told Mo Hua:

"In Tai Xu City near Taixu Gate, the Gu Family's properties are not many, only a store.

This store makes modest profits, so it sells a bit of everything such as Pills, Spiritual Artifacts, and Formation items to earn whatever it can."

"I have some network within the clan, so I arranged to have the customized Spiritual Artifacts sold at our store."

"The store will take a ten percent cut of the Spirit Stones earned."

Mo Hua nodded.

But in reality, he didn't understand much about these business matters.

He just left it to Master Gu to handle.

That's probably how the matter was settled.

And even though Mo Hua didn't say anything, Wenren Wan still found out.

In the area around Qianxue State Boundary, most of the Tao Cultivation enterprises that the Gu Family and Wenren Family cooperated on were overseen by Wenren Wan.

Previously, there were also some Refinery Shops and stores from Shangguan Family.

But those had been taken back by the Shangguan Family and sublet to the Shen Family.

This was a decision made by Shang Che, and Wenren Wan could do nothing about it.

However, apart from that, some of the Tao Cultivation enterprises between the Wenren Family and the Gu Family were still under Wenren Wan's control.

When Master Gu inquired about the store within the Gu Family clan, the rustlings couldn't escape her notice.

Even the ability of Master Gu to use his network and arrange for the sale of customized Spiritual Artifacts at the store was with the nod of Wenren Wan's head.

Wenren Wan agreed to it purely for Mo Hua's sake.

Otherwise, in a place like Tai Xu City, which adjoins a Great Sect, just the cost of renting the store would be incredibly expensive.

This cost might not even be affordable for Master Gu.

The decision on the commission was also made by Wenren Wan.

This commission was set aside for Mo Hua by her.

Wenren Wan was concerned about Mo Hua being taken advantage of when doing business with Master Gu, so she directly took a ten percent cut from the store, thinking that if the Spiritual Artifacts didn't sell and the business failed, at least she retained some Spirit Stones for Mo Hua to prevent total loss.

Thus the matter was settled, and afterwards, all customized Spiritual Artifacts were sold at the Gu Family store.

Mo Hua acted as a hands-off shopkeeper, completely at ease.

And as the number of fellow disciples he "advised" increased, so did the number of people buying Spiritual Artifacts, and his network among Taixu disciples grew as well.

Mo Hua's network within Taixu Gate also continued to expand.

From the Grand Ancestors of the Taixu Gate down to the lecturing Elders, then to the higher-level Junior Brothers and Sisters, and finally to his fellow Disciples, Mo Hua knew them all.

Especially among his fellow disciples, Mo Hua had considerable prestige.

When in doubt, everyone would ask Junior Brother. It almost became a custom.

And in the dining hall, more and more disciples "bowed at the hall entrance" to him.

...the chicken legs in the dining hall were almost sold out...

Chapter 1224: Array Instrument System

Mo Hua's "suggestions" were being sought by more and more fellow sect members.

The number of customized spiritual tools they refined grew steadily.

And the collection of Refinement Array Maps designed by him accumulated over time.

After giving it some thought, Mo Hua simply decided to compile these Formation Diagrams, gradually forming a system for customized spiritual tools.

This system for spiritual tools was quite comprehensive.

Included were functions for scouting, surveillance, and early warnings to gain an advantage over the enemy;

Included were Array Plates designed for trapping enemies, such as Quicksand, Earth Prison, Golden Lock, Wood Binding, etc.;

Included were Armor designed for defenses against Body Cultivation Strength, like sword slashes, spear stabs, and fist strikes;

Also included were Taoist Robes with Magic Defense against fire, water, wood, poison, etc...

The only thing lacking was the variety of offensive spiritual tools.

Because the sons of noble families often used hereditary spiritual tools passed down within their families for attack.

The power of customized weapons made by Mo Hua certainly couldn't compare with these inherited spiritual artifacts.

The spiritual tools he customized were mostly for specific functions.

Such as Armor-breaking blades, designed to breach the enemy's heavy armor.

Or the Fire Sword, Water Sword, Golden Sword, and others, used to provide disciples lacking in certain Spiritual Root attributes with the means of attribute attacks.

But the sons of noble families still adhere to the concept of "one strength breaks All Techniques."

With Top-Grade Spiritual Roots, profound foundations, practicing Superior Cultivation Techniques and Daoist Skills, relying on sheer strength, they suppress their enemies with power.

They don't focus too much on finesse like attributes and their counters.

So they don't use these kinds of offensive spiritual tools much, and Mo Hua didn't design many either.

However, despite this, the entire set of customized spiritual tools was beginning to take shape.

The system of formations and spiritual tools had already established a basic framework and prototype.

Combining early warning, trapping enemies, assault, and protection into one.

Just keep improving the Grade of spiritual tools and formations continuously, iterating, complementing, and perfecting the system to let it shine.

But after much deliberation, Mo Hua realized the system seemed to lack one thing:

Spiritual Power enhancement.

In other words...

"Five Elements Source Formation!"

Mo Hua's eyes lit up, and then he frowned slightly.

The Five Elements Source Formation was the Sect Protecting Ultimate Formation of the ancient Five Elements Sect, capable of strengthening the Five Elements and amplifying Spiritual Power.

This was indeed a very powerful formation, but since Mo Hua came to the Qianxue State Boundary, it was rarely used in practice.

One reason was because it wasn't necessary.

At first, he was just following his Senior Brothers and Sisters around.

They had profound Cultivation and were strong.

Enemies they could overcome did not require the enhancement of the Five Elements Source Formation.

There was only one occasion, during the capture of the Bald Eagle, when Senior Sister Murong, under the enhancement of the Five Elements Gold Source Formation, used a Superior Daoist Magic spell condensed with five-colored radiance to obliterate the Bald Eagle.

But that was the only time.

As for the enemies they couldn't defeat, it's best not to engage with them at all.

The wise do not stand under a crumbling wall. Unless absolutely necessary, there is no need to risk a life-and-death struggle with a powerful adversary.

Using the Five Elements Source Formation to enhance Spiritual Power and determine victory or death is a matter where life and death hinges on a thread; a slight carelessness, and one would be the one to die.

So, it's best not to engage if you can avoid it.

Another reason is the exacting requirements of the Five Elements Source Formation.

Cultivators must stand within the formation to receive its strengthening effects, and once outside the formation, the enhancement of Spiritual Power is lost.

This is equivalent to being a sitting duck.

Especially for Spiritual Cultivators who rely on high offense, low defense, and live off their spells, they dread close combat with Body Cultivators most in life-and-death battles.

Though their spell power is increased by the Five Elements Source Formation, their movements are even more restricted, effectively becoming a stationary "glass cannon."

It's a double-edged sword with significant advantages and disadvantages.

Too arcane for use, and the drawbacks outweigh the benefits.

For Body Cultivators, the Five Elements Source Formation seems somewhat redundant as well.

The Five Elements Source Formation strengthens the Five Elements and amplifies Spiritual Power.

Body Cultivators rely on their rich Blood Qi and immense strength for melee combat, but they also possess Spiritual Root attributes, and Blood Qi also comes from Spiritual Power transformed through meridians.

So, even though Body Cultivators are not adept at spells, they too can benefit from the amplification of the Five Elements Source Formation.

However, due to the transformation from Spiritual Power to Blood Qi, Body Cultivators' enhancement from the Five Elements is nowhere as effective as the direct use of spells by Spiritual Cultivators.

The biggest issue for Body Cultivators is also the restriction of movement.

Melee combat requires flexibility in advancing and retreating, with even greater reliance on movement techniques.

In real battle, with rapid exchanges and strikes, it's even less likely to remain within the range of the Five Elements Source Formation, as this would be self-limiting.

Otherwise, you're not only a target but also a fool.

So the Five Elements Source Formation, while looking very strong, is in fact very restrictive in use, hindered by various factors.

Unless...

Mo Hua pondered for a moment.

Engraving the Five Elements Source Formation onto Armor, Taoist Robes, and such spiritual tools.

Wearing them all the time makes movement convenient, without any restrictions.

This is the best solution.

It's just that previously there were no conditions, Mo Hua couldn't find anyone to refine such special Armor or Taoist Robes.

Busy with Cultivation, learning formations, and undertaking rewards tasks, he didn't have the time to consider this.

But now...

Mo Hua mulled it over carefully.

He was "confined" to the Sect, and it happened that he was studying the development of customized spiritual tools; Plus, there was Third Grade Artifact Refiner Master Gu helping.

The timing, setting, and people were all in his favor.

It was the perfect opportunity to study the practical application of the Five Elements Source Formation.

If researched successfully, this once revered and now nearly extinct Sect Protecting Ultimate Formation of the ancient Five Elements Sect could "return to the rivers and lakes."

And this Ultimate Formation could perfectly make up for the final piece in the system of formations and spiritual tools that he had constructed:

Spiritual Power enhancement!

Mo Hua's eyes sparkled as his thoughts became clearer.

The integration of Tao Cultivation industry.

Combining Artifact Refining with formations to be ultimately applied to Cultivators.

Chapter 1225: Formation Device System (2)

Constructing a complete Formation Instrument Assistance System that integrates detection, trapping enemies, attacking, defending, and amplification all in one!

This system, initially applied to Sect Disciples, earns some Spirit Stones.

Then, with the support of Spirit Stones, it continues to be improved.

Someday, once this Formation process and Artifact Refining procedures mature, and my own experience is enriched, I can attempt to extend it to the lower levels of the Cultivation World, developing relatively economical Spiritual Artifacts for cultivating production and easy-to-learn accompanying Formations.

From the Cultivators' slaughter, to Tao Cultivation production.

From customized to standardized.

From expensive to affordable.

In this way, gradually popularize...

"Comprehend the Heavenly Dao, benefiting all beings."

True Formations should not only serve the few, but truly benefit all under heaven.

Mo Hua was startled, his mind clarified, and his understanding of Formation and the ways of the world deepened...

Afterward, Mo Hua could hardly wait to start researching Armor and Taoist Robes suitable for the "Five Elements Source Formation."

However, such armor is quite special.

The heritage of the Five Element Ultimate Formation was on the brink of extinction, with hardly any records of compatible Spiritual Artifacts or Formation media left behind.

Even if there were, Mo Hua would not be able to find them.

He could only feel his way forward gradually, then discuss it with Master Gu.

This would take some time.

About a month later, Master Gu personally visited Taixu Gate, talked with Mo Hua, and then drafted a prototype of the armor.

Master Gu planned to go back and give it a try at refining it.

As for the result, he wasn't certain since Mo Hua's requirements were peculiar, and he had never refined such a type of Spiritual Artifact before.

But Master Gu didn't ask too much.

After all, the issue of Formations was too intricate and obscure, and he didn't understand them. He only needed to take care of the Artifact Refining aspect.

After the discussion, Master Gu left Taixu Gate and then made a trip to the stores within the city.

He had sold a customized Spiritual Artifact and was going to collect Spirit Stones.

And in this month, Spiritual Artifacts sold very well, generating a substantial amount of Spirit Stones.

Inside Tai Xu City, within Gu Family's store.

The clerk in the store couldn't help but marvel as he handed over the Storage Bag filled with Spirit Stones to Master Gu.

"Inside Taixu Gate, I wonder where all these rich suckers come from, willing to spend so many Spirit Stones on your strange and curious Spiritual Artifacts."

He had a good relationship with Master Gu on ordinary days, so he spoke more casually.

Master Gu chuckled: "That's because you don't understand..."

The intricacies within... Artifact Refining techniques, workflow optimization, Formation Diagram design, Formation inscription, along with the demand and market for Spiritual Artifacts.

It seems simple on the surface, but Master Gu knows that by himself, a Third Grade Artifact Refiner, can only achieve so much.

A vast majority of the credit should be attributed to Young Master Mo.

Master Gu also couldn't understand where Young Master Mo got such an extensive network within the Sect.

He shook his head, turning to the clerk, and said with a smile:

"I'll treat you to a drink at noon."

The clerk happily agreed and said, "Great, I'll share in your good fortune."

The two had a spiritual meal and good wine in Tai Xu City at noon.

As the store's matters would still need the clerk's help in the future, Master Gu was quite generous.

The clerk was very happy.

With a bit of an alcohol buzz, both the host and guest enjoyed themselves.

After the drinks, they each went their separate ways back to their residences.

Master Gu had to return to Solitary Mountain City to continue preparing the next batch of Spiritual Artifacts.

On the carriage to Solitary Mountain City, Master Gu felt the numerous heavy Storage Bags at his waist, filled with mixed feelings, yet still somewhat incredulous.

Five hundred thousand Spirit Stones!

The smaller Spiritual Artifacts were cheaper, the larger ones more expensive, the average price of about five thousand Spirit Stones each; a hundred pieces were sold within a month.

After deducting costs, this was an exceedingly considerable income.

Moreover, this was just the beginning.

Master Gu's disciple, Da Chuan, was also shocked.

Growing up in hardship, he had never seen so many Spirit Stones before.

After some thought, Master Gu instructed: "Stop at the next Immortal City, let's buy some wine and meat to treat everyone when we return."

Da Chuan was thrilled and quickly responded with a laugh:

"Yes, Master!"

Life at Gushan Refining Workshop had always been frugal, and it had been a long time since they could enjoy a hearty drink and meal.

Immediately he couldn't help but exclaim: "Master, how should we spend all these Spirit Stones? I feel like they can never be all spent... "

Master Gu chuckled.

This naive young man, so used to poverty, had only known what it tasted like since birth and had no idea what to do with an abundance of Spirit Stones.

Even if he thought about it, he wouldn't come up with anything.

Then Master Gu thought again and felt a bit of heartache.

Five hundred thousand Spirit Stones...

Quite a lot.

With these Spirit Stones, the Refining Workshop could acquire excellent Refining Furnaces, purchase many top-grade Refining Materials, and buy some rare Refining Diagrams.

The remaining Spirit Stones could allow them to live without worry about food and drink for a good while.

This amount of Spirit Stones could be described as bountiful.

But...

Master Gu sighed internally.

But these Spirit Stones were actually very few.

They might merely be the cost of a single banquet for some families.

Or perhaps just the price of a mount, a carriage, a feast, a fine wine, or a beauty...

Such is the unfairness of the world.

Master Gu glanced at Da Chuan again.

This simple and suffering child, who knew nothing.

But perhaps it was better he didn't...

A plain life is true life.

Once exposed to the glamor of the world, swept up in earthly desires, and without a strong Taoist Heart, one is bound to become warped and eventually destroyed.

Looking at Da Chuan, Master Gu smiled and said:

"There's much that can be done; we'll talk more when we get back. Let's do things one by one, but first, let everyone have a good meal, and yet..."

Chapter 1226: Formation Device System (3)

Master Gu frowned and after a moment of deep thought, he said, "We have to leave a share for Young Master Mo."

Dachuan was startled and nodded.

They were able to make this deal and earn so many Spirit Stones thanks mostly to that youthful and tender Young Master Mo.

One should truly not judge a book by its cover.

When he first met him, he thought this young master was just a kid from some noble family, yet he didn't expect him to be so capable.

Dachuan marveled inwardly.

"However," Dachuan was a bit puzzled, "would Young Master Mo even want it?"

He always felt that despite Young Master Mo's young age, he already possessed an air of transcendency typical of immortal Daoists.

Such a person might not even covet these Spirit Stones.

Master Gu shook his head, "This is what the young master rightfully deserves. Whether he wants it or not, we must offer it to him, as that is the principle of being a human. For a drop of kindness, one should reciprocate with a spring. "

"Moreover, for us, Young Master Mo as a person is worth much more than these Spirit Stones," he continued.

"We must not lose sight of the important for the trivial."

"Yet there's no need to mention this explicitly now, otherwise, it will seem as if we are deliberately repaying a favor, which might make things awkward. It's better to just quietly keep a share for Young Master Mo."

Dachuan nodded repeatedly, "Master, you've given this considerable thought."

Master Gu patted his storage bag on his waist, and even his resolute face revealed a smile...

...

Within the Taixu Gate.

At this moment, Mo Hua was unaware that there were two people secretly "saving" Spirit Stones for him.

Without realizing it, he now had two "small Spirit Stone vaults."

Mo Hua continued to study the art of Formation.

His armor still required refining, and before that, he would, as always, diligently study Formation.

Mo Hua lay sprawled out on the desk, slowly drawing out a Second Grade Seventeen Patterns Formation, stroke by stroke.

After finishing one, he then proceeded to draw a second.

All these were homework assigned to him by Elder Master Xun.

"Learn as much as you can, the more the better, the more solid the better. If you need more Formation Diagrams, come to me..."

Elder Master Xun's words were music to Mo Hua's ears.

But he felt somewhat puzzled in his heart.

Initially, Elder Master Xun used to say that he shouldn't ignore the sect's system and that he must earn Merit Points himself in exchange for Formation Diagrams.

Yet now, Elder Master Xun didn't seem to care about those anymore.

He kept urging him to study and was force-feeding him Formation knowledge.

Though Mo Hua had a big 'appetite' and digested quickly, eating whatever Elder Master Xun fed him, he still had some doubts in his mind.

Was Elder Master Xun in a hurry?

But what could he be in a hurry for?

Could it be that Elder Master Xun had other plans?

Mo Hua was somewhat perplexed.

He had also covertly observed Elder Master Xun, but the elder had thoughts as deep as the ocean and a demeanor as undisturbed as an ancient well, so no clues could be discerned.

Mo Hua tentatively asked:

"Elder Master Xun, do I still need to go for an assessment?"

He could already draw entry-level High-Rank Second Grade Formations, and his experience and foundations in Formation were broad and solid. He had learned an extremely wide array of Formations.

To attend the Formation assessment and be classified as a Middle Stage Second Grade Formation Master should not be a problem.

Upon hearing this, Elder Master Xun's eyes lifted slightly, and he simply said:

"There's no rush."

"Oh."

Mo Hua was certain in his heart that Elder Master Xun must have some plan.

But since Elder Master Xun said there was no rush, he wasn't in a hurry either.

After all, as long as he had Formation studies, that was good enough.

The more he learned about Formation, the deeper his understanding, the higher his achievements, and the firmer his foundation would be.

Mo Hua's Divine Sense was strong and recovered quickly, plus he had the Taoist Stele for support.

.....

Studying formations day and night, although he could only learn those with Seventeen Patterns, Mo Hua's foundation in Second-grade High-level Formation was already more solid than many real Second-grade High-level Array Masters.

Gather Sand into a Tower.

What he needed to do now, or rather, what Elder Master Xun had asked him to do now, was to continuously expand, consolidate, and deepen the foundation of formations...

Several days had passed, and his armor was still not refined.

While Mo Hua was having a meal in the dining hall, Cheng Mo suddenly found him and asked:

"Junior Brother, do you know any methods to ward off demonic power or Demonic Qi?"

Mo Hua was puzzled, "Are you dealing with Demon Cultivators?"

Cheng Mo thought for a moment and said: "Not really, it's a reward mission issued by the Taoist Court, saying to capture a few Sin Cultivators. It's just that these people have practiced some Evil Demon Skills, but they are not orthodox, like halfway into demonhood..."

"To prevent trouble before it happens, so I came to ask you."

Mo Hua furrowed his brows.

Practicing Evil Demon Skills, halfway into demonhood?

A mission issued by the Taoist Court?

Mo Hua was startled, suddenly remembering something Uncle Gu had told him before:

"There's a group of Demon Cultivators of unknown origin, pouring into the outskirts of the Qianxue State Boundary..."

"Their origins have not been clarified, it's unclear how many there are or what their cultivation is like."

"Their activity range is limited to the outskirts of the small state boundaries of Second and Third Grade near Qianxue State, with unknown schemes, but certainly nothing good..."

The people Cheng Mo is going to capture, are they from this group of "Demon Cultivators"?

The Taoist Court does not have enough hands, so they have to issue the bounty for capturing Demon Cultivators to the Sects?

After thinking about it, Mo Hua felt it was very likely.

Moreover, after Cheng Mo mentioned it, he remembered that the fellow Sect members who had come to consult him recently, the rewards they took, the questions they asked, all seemed more perilous.

Previously, it was about capturing sky thieves, apprehending a few Sin Cultivators.

Now the opponents they had to deal with were clearly desperados with blood on their hands.

Looking at it now, the rewards they took were very likely aimed at dealing with that group of "Demon Cultivators" Uncle Gu had mentioned.

After considering it for a while, Mo Hua carefully said:

"Evil Demon Skills are diverse, for instance some use Evil Qi to snatch away people's sanity, some's blood carries poison, some habitually use sinister Evil Artifacts, and some cultivate Replenishing from others..."

"If you encounter those who cultivate Evil Qi, you must keep your distance and not look into their eyes."

"Blood carrying poison should be countered with Fire Spells or formations."

"For sinister Evil Artifacts, do not clash directly with Spiritual Artifacts, especially inherited ones, lest they be contaminated."

"Those who cultivate Replenishing from others, generally have exceptional movement techniques, so once captured, break three of their legs to prevent them from doing evil again..."

Mo Hua shared all the techniques used by the Demon Cultivators that he had seen in the Bi Mountain Demon Cavern, as well as the various Demon Skills he had witnessed, like listing treasures from his own home, with Cheng Mo.

Cheng Mo was shocked.

He hesitated for a long time, looked around furtively, and then lowered his voice nervously and said:

"Junior Brother, how are you so familiar with this...? You aren't..."

Mo Hua glanced at him indifferently, "Know yourself and your enemy, and you will never be defeated in a hundred battles. How can one eliminate demons and exorcise evil without knowing the methods of the Evil Demon?"

Cheng Mo was taken aback, pondered for a moment, and then nodded, saying:

"You have a point!"

However, Mo Hua was also very curious.

He wanted to know why this group of Demon Cultivators had suddenly emerged and what their motives were.

Could it be related to the Evil God?

If that was the case, he could not ignore it.

But he was trapped in the Sect and could not leave the Qianxue State boundary to investigate personally.

Mo Hua pondered silently, then a flash of inspiration struck him.

He had Cheng Mo call over a group of disciples who were on good terms with him and often called him "Junior Brother", and then he said to them:

"When you accept rewards, carry out missions, arrest Sin Cultivators or Demon Cultivators, if you come across some strange and odd objects that you can't identify, remember to bring them back to let me take a look."

Situ Jian raised his eyebrows, "Like what?"

"For example," Mo Hua thought for a moment and said hesitantly, "statues, broken swords, ram horns, bones... those kinds of eerie items..."

"Or maybe..." Mo Hua's gaze hardened a bit as he slowly said: "Encrypted letters, blank Jade Slips, Letter Tokens with erased messages, and also..."

"Certain types of Sect Tokens!"

Chapter 1227: Disaster Strikes

Cheng Mo and the others were very puzzled, "Junior Brother, what do you need these things for?"

Mo Hua replied seriously, "This matter is related to the top-secret affairs of the Taoist Court, so I cannot tell you yet, and without acquiring these items to research, I'm not very certain..."

Taoist Court's top secret!

A chill ran through the hearts of the disciples.

As expected of Junior Brother, he even knows about the Taoist Court's top secrets.

"But," a disciple asked doubtfully, "encrypted letters are still good, but blank jade slips, letter tokens with messages erased... Aren't these useless?"

"It's fine, I have my methods," Mo Hua said calmly.

"Oh, okay."

The disciples nodded somewhat blankly.

The Yuan Magnetic Formation method is considered an alternative branch of the Eight Trigrams Thunder Formation, but it stands apart from the orthodox and universally taught Five Elements Eight Trigrams Formation method.

The Taixu Gate does not teach it, and these disciples, typically, have very limited exposure to it and know very little about it.

After thinking for a while, Mo Hua added, "If clues are found, we can offer a reward through the Taoist Court and everybody can join in and make some merit points."

Offer rewards through the Taoist Court!

Everyone was shocked.

Cheng Mo was still fine, he knew that Mo Hua had some connections with the Taoist Court.

Beyond their shock, the other disciples were pleasantly surprised, and when they looked at Mo Hua again, their eyes held a different light, even a touch of respect.

Having the backing of a noble family, seeking help from family elders to do something with the Taoist Court isn't much.

But within the Sect, being able to get the Taoist Court to issue a reward on one's own means something entirely different.

Moreover, good rewards are highly valuable and must be competed for.

Not only must they compete with fellow disciples, but also with those in higher years.

Often times, the least experienced disciples like them can only take on simple tasks or those left over by others.

Naturally, the merit points earned are also very modest.

"Don't worry, Junior Brother, we've got this!"

The group of disciples promised one after another.

Thus, in the following period, fellow disciples approached Mo Hua every now and then, offering up "treasures":

"Junior Brother, Junior Brother, I used the method you taught, caught a thief who is very good in water, found a demon bone on him that looks like a water demon's bone, can you have a look and see if there's any trickery..."

"Junior Brother, your Eight Trigrams Mountain Stone Armor really works well. Those evil cultivators who practiced demon techniques and were extremely strong couldn't hurt us with their

punches and kicks at all. These are some jade slips found on them, the Taoist Court checked them but discovered nothing, can you take a look..."

"Junior Brother, I found a broken sword, not sure if it's of any use..."

"I caught a rapist and got a jade slip, please take a look, Junior Brother..."

...

In less than half a month, Mo Hua had collected a pile of stuff.

All sorts of things.

Some of them are indeed Evil Artifacts used by demon cultivators, but after the demon cultivators are caught, most of their storage bags are confiscated by the Taoist Court.

Anything with an obvious Demonic Qi cannot be brought into the Taixu Gate.

So what Mo Hua got were just bits and pieces, marginal artifacts.

These artifacts were of no significant use.

However, through Calculation, Mo Hua could vaguely perceive that these artifacts carried blood-colored karmic ties attached to them.

It seemed that recently there was a cruel demon cultivator using these evil artifacts, cold-bloodedly slaughtering cultivators.

Also, there were some sheep horns.

But they were truly just ordinary sheep demon horns, and had nothing to do with the Great Wilderness Evil God.

There were no Sect tokens either...

In Mo Hua's estimation, since these demon cultivators could gather together, it was definitely not spontaneous; at the very least, there was a small organization, or possibly a branch of a Demon Sect.

If so, there would likely be Demon Sect Tokens.

Demon Sect Tokens, in principle, should be similar to Taixu Gate's or other Sect Tokens, built on the foundation of the Yuan Magnetic Formation and expanded in function.

The basic ones would have communication functionality.

If more high-end, there would be something akin to the "Merit Pavilion" in Taixu Gate which holds many of the Sect's treasures...

If he could get one of these tokens, there would be a lot more "research" to be done.

Mo Hua was very eager in his heart.

It's just that such Sect Tokens had not been found yet.

Instead, Mo Hua obtained a Letter Token.

A few days later, Yang Qianjun handed a Letter Token to Mo Hua and said:

"Cheng Mo and the others were doing a task in a Second Grade Little Immortal City called Qingping City near the Qianxue State Boundary. After the task was completed and we were on our way back, we saw a cultivator sneaking around, clearly not resembling one from Qingping City, so we casually asked him a few questions."

"The cultivator's answers were watertight, but his eyes occasionally dodged, as if he was hiding something."

"I found it strange, so pretended to leave but actually returned and secretly followed him, and discovered that this cultivator was using a human skin as a mask to disguise himself, with unknown motives."

"Cheng Mo and a few of us joined forces to subdue him and sent him to the Taoist Court. Everything else was confiscated by the Taoist Court, but this Letter Token had everything wiped from it, so I brought it back for you..."

Mo Hua took the Letter Token and examined it for a moment.

This was a light green Letter Token, soaked with the scent of medicinal Pills and blood.

Divine Sense probed into the Letter Token, and indeed, it was blank inside, everything had been erased.

At first glance, it certainly appeared so.

But with a contemplative look in his eyes, Mo Hua's profound gaze swept over it, and he could see beneath the appearance of blankness were chaotic Unfixed Magnetic Patterns, regular Fixed Magnetic Patterns, and the subtle and indestructible Secondary Thunder Patterns.

Traces remain after the rain; echoes linger after the geese have flown.

Beneath all appearances, there are traces, it's just that some people can't see them.

Chapter 1228: Calamity Arises (2)

"Is this Letter Token really useful?" Yang Qianjun asked as he saw Mo Hua with a focused expression.

"Yes." Mo Hua nodded, "Thank you, Brother Yang."

Yang Qianjun smiled, "Glad to help, Junior Brother, no need for formalities."

Yang Qianjun was a few years older than Mo Hua, and they addressed each other accordingly.

Mo Hua called him "Big Brother," while he addressed Mo Hua as "Junior Brother."

After returning to the Disciple's Residence, Mo Hua started working on restoring the Letter Token.

He was already well-practiced in the entire process.

On the brightly lit desk, an Array Plate, Formation Paper, and ink were placed.

Mo Hua first disassembled the Letter Token, transcribed the Fixed Magnetic Patterns, recorded the Secondary Thunder Patterns, and then simulated them on another Array Plate.

He had obtained a book on "Fixed Magnetic Pattern Annotations" from Elder Master Xun, knowing that the seemingly abstract and complex Fixed Magnetic Patterns were essentially a form of "ideographic characters" in the style of Formation Patterns.

Although "Fixed Magnetic Pattern Annotations" wasn't extensive, covering only some common annotations, it was barely enough for Mo Hua's current use.

With the help of these annotations, Mo Hua could almost completely comprehend the meanings of these Fixed Magnetic Patterns.

He first replicated the Fixed Magnetic Patterns on the Array Plate.

Then, on that basis, he simulated the Secondary Thunder Patterns, thereby reconstructing the erased text within the Letter Token by himself.

As the Magnetic Patterns were restored, the Formation flowed, and one by one, the vanished texts gradually reappeared.

"April... Fourteenth..."

"Fellow Sect Taoists, gather at Qingping City..."

There were some missing words afterwards, not sure if it was a mistake in replicating the Fixed Magnetic Pattern or if there was an error in the Secondary Thunder Patterns.

Mo Hua continued the deduction.

"Gather at Qingping City... to destroy..."

Destroy?

Mo Hua was taken aback, his eyes slightly stern, feeling something ominous.

He continued the deduction, and the last two words slowly revealed themselves.

"The entire... family/clan?"

Mo Hua was startled, connecting all the words:

April Fourteenth, Fellow Sect Taoists, gather at Qingping City, to destroy... the entire family/clan?

Mo Hua took a deep cold breath.

Annihilation!

The Xie family of Bishan City being slaughtered by Cultivators amidst fire, dismemberment, screams, struggles, painful scenes, all surfaced again in Mo Hua's mind.

Mo Hua found it hard to believe.

These Demon Cultivators, they are still planning an annihilation!

But... whose entire family/clan?

The crucial word hadn't been restored on the Letter Token.

Mo Hua looked it over again and again, then double-checked the Fixed Magnetic Patterns and inspected the Secondary Thunder Patterns again. Despite all the efforts, it was futile.

He only knew that the target of this annihilation by the Demon Cultivators was in Qingping City, but exactly which family or clan, he had no clue.

Mo Hua frowned.

Annihilation...

Could these Demon Cultivators also be minions of the Evil God?

What's the meaning behind their annihilation?

Mo Hua recalled the events of Qianxue State Boundary one by one, gradually linking things together.

Second Grade Bishan City, the Xie family was annihilated.

Near Bishan City, a Demon Palace was constructed, within it, there lay an altar.

On the banks of Mistwater River, the former fishing village was likewise considered annihilated.

The village directly turned into a preaching ground of the Evil God, where nightmares merged with reality, containing a River God Temple with an altar deep inside.

So, could "annihilation" be a precursor to building a Demon Sect's temple and Evil God's altar?

Why?

Mo Hua pondered the experiences in the small fishing village again and speculated.

To establish an altar, there needs nurturing Demon Monsters.

Following the annihilation, the Cultivators' flesh and blood are used to craft flesh and blood Demon Monsters.

The residual Divine Souls of the Cultivators are used to create Evil Spirits.

And within the Demon Palace, some Formations, a river of blood, a wall of bones... also all require "people" as "building materials."

It was so in the village.

The construction of Bi Mountain Demon Cavern hadn't been completed, and before Dao Court attacked, Fire Buddha destroyed most of the Demon Palace's secrets, leaving few clues.

But Mo Hua guessed it couldn't be far off.

Everything follows rules, the preaching and sacrifices by the Evil God, the construction of altars, surely adhere to certain procedures.

"Using all things as sacrificial offerings, treating the populace as 'livestock,' this is the way of the Evil God..."

Mo Hua's gaze was cold, he sighed deeply.

Then he felt puzzled anew.

Carrying out such acts under the watch of the Dao Court, there must be an insider within the Dao Court.

Also, leading these unbridled and frantic Demon Cultivators to secretly annihilate families/clans must require a Demon Head of the same Realm, with immense Cultivation strength and ruthless methods.

Previously, it was Fire Buddha, who practiced Forbidden Techniques at the peak of Foundation Establishment.

But now that Fire Buddha is dead, who else could be doing this?

Mo Hua couldn't figure it out.

"April Fourteenth, just four days away..."

Four days later, who knows which family will be annihilated by the Demon Cultivators.

Mo Hua felt a chill in his heart.

But now he was already "confined"...

After a moment's thought, Mo Hua immediately sent a message to Uncle Gu:

"Uncle Gu, Qingping City, four days from now, the Demon Cultivators will annihilate a family/clan..."

From Uncle Gu's side, there was silence for a long while before he replied:

"How did you know?"

Mo Hua was just about to respond when he suddenly paused.

Uncle Gu had asked: "How did you know?" rather than: "How do you know?"

This indicated that he already knew about this matter beforehand.

Mo Hua was somewhat surprised:

"Uncle Gu, you already knew?"

Uncle Gu sounded somewhat resigned, "We captured several Sin Cultivators, subjected them to harsh interrogations, and obtained some clues..."

Then Uncle Gu asked again: "How did you know?"

As a Court Official of the Dao Court, responsible for local security and capturing Sin Cultivators and Demon Cultivators, it was not strange for him to know this. But Mo Hua, a Sect Disciple who never leaves home, how could he know of the Demon Cultivators' plot?

This piece of news, he had only learned it himself a couple of days ago.

Chapter 1229: Trouble Begins (3)

Gu Changhuai's brows furrowed slightly.

Mo Hua said candidly, "I restored a Letter Token, and what I saw on it was..."

A Letter Token...

Gu Changhuai thought to himself that it was indeed the case.

The Formation Master's methods were truly preposterous.

These Taoist Court Cultivators under his command had tired themselves out tailing suspects, diligently gathering information, and even interrogating with torture day and night, only to finally pry out this bit of news from the mouths of a few Demon Cultivators.

Yet this child Mo Hua got his hands on a Letter Token, deciphered it a bit, restored it, and then knew everything...

Comparing oneself with others will only make one frustrated.

Of course, Gu Changhuai was also clear in his heart.

The work done by the Taoist Court was "grueling," while what Mo Hua did was "technical."

Especially when such technical work involved intricate and profound Formations, the actual difficulty level was far greater than their stakeouts and interrogations.

Gu Changhuai sighed again.

He didn't even dare to imagine, once this child Mo Hua grew up, to what unfathomable extents his mastery of Formations could reach.

"Don't tell anyone else, to avoid any leaks that could startle the snakes in the grass," Gu Changhuai cautioned.

"Mm-hmm, I understand," Mo Hua nodded in agreement, then asked, "Uncle Gu, do you know which family the Demon Cultivators want to wipe out?"

Gu Changhuai hesitated slightly before answering, "Haven't found out yet."

"Then what does the Taoist Court plan to do?" Mo Hua asked.

Gu Changhuai fell silent.

Mo Hua then said, "Don't say too much, just reveal a little bit that you can."

Gu Changhuai paused for a moment, then sighed:

"Which family they aim to destroy doesn't matter..."

Mo Hua understood, "Lay a sky net on earth, trapping turtles in a jar; as long as the Demon Cultivators enter the city with the intent to kill and exterminate, we can then turn around and besiege them."

"So whether we know which family they want to annihilate doesn't really matter after all."

"Is that right, Uncle Gu?"

Gu Changhuai: "..."

You've said it all, what else is there for me to say?

"More or less," Gu Changhuai said vaguely.

Mo Hua thought for a moment, then suddenly said, "Uncle Gu, Qingping City is a Second Grade Immortal City, not small by any means, the Taoist Court's manpower isn't enough, right?"

Gu Changhuai asked warily, "What are you trying to do?"

Mo Hua quietly said, "Want me to find you some help?"

Gu Changhuai disdainfully said, "You needn't worry about this matter, just stay put in the Sect, properly cultivate, learn more about Formations, and don't think about these unnecessary things."

"Although the Taoist Court may not have abundant manpower, we haven't reached a point to ask for your assistance..."

Mo Hua muttered, "In the vicinity of the Qianxue State Boundary, a Second Grade Immortal City, Demon Cultivators gathering, plotting to wipe out a family, they dare to do such things..."

"There must be a mole inside the Taoist Court, right?"

"Uncle Gu, do you really trust the Taoist Court's people?"

Gu Changhuai fell silent when asked by Mo Hua.

The matter of a mole was something everyone tacitly understood.

And if they were to set an ambush in Qingping City, trapping the turtles in a jar, it would certainly require a large number of people.

Apart from the cultivators of the Gu Family, there would definitely be other Taoist Court Cultivators involved.

The Gu Family cultivators were acceptable, as he knew their foundation, but as for the other Taoist Court Cultivators, whether they were good or bad, and what they were hiding in their hearts, was hard to say for sure.

After pondering for a moment, Gu Changhuai asked Mo Hua:

"Where did you get the manpower from?"

He was indeed curious.

Mo Hua proudly said, "They are all fellow disciples from my Taixu Gate, very familiar with me, and their background is very clear, at least much cleaner than the Taoist Court's."

And they all call me "Junior Brother."

Gu Changhuai looked stunned, somewhat surprised.

Mo Hua's connections and network within Taixu Gate are becoming more and more inscrutable.

However, Gu Changhuai still voiced his concerns: "No, it's too dangerous, those Demon Cultivators are at least at the middle or late stage of Foundation Establishment."

Mo Hua said: "It's fine, they won't engage directly, they just need to help form the net and hold the perimeter, picking up the leftovers is enough."

It's certainly the experienced Enforcement Leaders of the Daoist Court who are fit for such dangerous tasks.

Gu Changhuai nodded slightly.

This solution is also passable...

After pondering for a while, Gu Changhuai asked: "Are you trying to earn them Merit Points?"

"Of course!" Mo Hua said righteously, "There's no such thing as a free lunch in the world!"

Mo Hua continued: "...Besides, I'm quite familiar with you, Uncle Gu, it's okay to do some unpaid work now and then, taking a bit of a loss is fine. "

"But it's different for them, they are sons of noble families who care about their Face, going out on such a mission, how can they not earn some Merit Points? Wouldn't it be embarrassing?"

Gu Changhuai curled his lip.

This little rascal, spouting nonsense.

He's never really done unpaid work before, let alone taken any loss, most of the time it's he who makes others suffer a loss.

"Alright then." Gu Changhuai sighed.

Mo Hua cautiously asked: "So, how many Merit Points can you give?"

Gu Changhuai answered: "Two hundred."

Mo Hua shook his head, "At least four hundred."

Gu Changhuai felt a bit of a headache.

After some reluctant bargaining, the final sum of Merit Points was set at three hundred.

Mo Hua had tried his best.

As a "Junior Brother," this was all he could do.

But for the average disciples, three hundred Merit Points was not a small amount.

The next day, during lunch in the dining hall, Mo Hua quietly said to Cheng Mo: "There's a big task that needs about fifty people, three hundred Merit Points per person upon success."

Cheng Mo's heart skipped a beat.

Fifty people, each with three hundred Merit Points, this was indeed a big task!

"Junior Brother, where did this task come from?" Cheng Mo also lowered his voice and asked softly.

Mo Hua replied: "I can't reveal the specifics just yet, you'll find out when the time comes, but this task is quite risky, we definitely need experienced hands."

Cheng Mo nodded, "Naturally."

"Also," Mo Hua thought for a moment before adding: "We need familiar faces, those we know well inside out, so the news doesn't leak."

"Furthermore, try to find sons of noble families from outside Qian State who don't have significant ties with the local families in Qian State."

"If it's someone from a Qian State local family, it must be a good relationship, like that of Hao Xuan."

Cheng Mo was puzzled, but he always trusted Mo Hua.

What Mo Hua said was always right, and there's no need to ask more than necessary.

"Don't worry, Junior Brother," Cheng Mo patted his chest, "leave it to me!"

After that, Cheng Mo began to secretly recruit, eventually finding fifty disciples.

Apart from familiar ones like Situ Jian, Yang Qianjun, Hao Xuan, and Yi Li, the majority were also ones with whom he'd had past contact, reliable disciples known for their integrity.

And with the promise of three hundred Merit Points, there was hardly any reason to refuse.

They agreed without a second thought.

Mo Hua's Divine Sense moved, quickly scanning over everyone, and nodded with satisfaction.

With enough hands on deck.

Then, as in his old tricks, Mo Hua colluded "inside and out" with Gu Changhuai from the Daoist Court, and with his extremely sharp Divine Sense, he managed to "snatch" a vaguely described, ambiguous, but substantial Merit Point reward at the agreed time in front of all his fellow brothers and sisters.

Just like snatching a big piece of Fat Meat in front of a pack of starving wolves...

Chapter 1230: Annihilation of the Clan

Mo Hua accepted the bounty, but he was unable to leave the Qianxue State Boundary, so he handed the mission over to Cheng Mo to lead the team.

However, Mo Hua didn't disclose the content of the bounty.

It was not until the night before departure that Mo Hua gathered everyone and mentioned some precautions related to the bounty.

"This bounty involves assisting the Taoist Court in exterminating a large number of Demon Cultivators in Qingping City!"

A large number of Demon Cultivators!

Upon hearing this, everyone's hearts chilled.

It indeed was a significant matter, no wonder it offered such high Merit Points.

All disciples couldn't help but feel nervous, yet they couldn't hide their excitement either.

Though they were born into noble families and were young with little worldly experience, they had always been dedicated to their cultivation without being entangled in familial interests, and in their hearts lingered the aspiration of "brandishing swords in the world, eliminating demons and evil."

With justice in their hearts, they were naturally repulsed by heretical demons.

In previous bounty missions, they had encountered some Evil Cultivators as well, but those cultivators, with their petty and lowly inheritances, were nefarious yet only caused minor disturbances.

Unlike now, facing off against "a large number of Demon Cultivators."

Mo Hua continued, "One thing to remember in this extermination is..."

"To eradicate evil thoroughly?" Cheng Mo asked.

"No, it's to preserve your lives!"

All disciples were taken aback.

"Don't underestimate Demon Cultivators!" Mo Hua said with a solemn expression, "Demon Cultivators are malevolent, but not foolish. Even if they aren't as intelligent or talented as you, they have rich experience in cultivation, stop at nothing to achieve their goals, and are lowly and shameless in character..."

"When you clash with Demon Cultivators, if you are careless for a moment, you could suffer a great loss, even endangering your own life!"

"While it is good to eradicate evil, you have to judge the situation and act within your capacity. I want you to earn merit, not to lose your lives." Mo Hua sighed, "If anything were to happen to you, the Sect Elders will blame me, and I won't be able to assign you any tasks from the Taoist Court in the future..."

The disciples nodded and assured, "Senior Brother is truly considerate."

Their hearts felt warm.

"Therefore," Mo Hua concluded, "when you act later, stick together in groups of five, watch out and support each other, with survival as the priority."

"Leave the direct confrontation with the Demon Cultivators to the Taoist Court."

"You all are only responsible for supporting from the periphery, dealing with any that slipped through the net."

"Remember, do not seek glory, do not be reckless, do not be reluctant to withdraw, avoid strong enemies, and do not pursue desperate foes to the end."

"Everyone should go safely and return safely."

Mo Hua sighed again, saying: "If anything happens to you, the Sect Elders will surely blame me, and I won't be able to let you undertake any missions from the Taoist Court in the future..."

Upon hearing this, the disciples immediately gave their assurance with a salute:

"We will definitely be cautious in our actions, please rest assured, Junior Brother!"

Mo Hua nodded and then advised them on some trivial matters, such as "bring your protective Spiritual Artifacts, wear your Armor and Taoist Robe properly, and also bring more Pills for healing and saving lives..." and so on.

After finishing, taking advantage of the cover of night, Cheng Mo led the team of fifty people and set off on their journey.

Mo Hua waved goodbye at the Mountain Gate, watching them depart into the distance.

The moon shone bright with sparse stars, the mountain colors dark and obscure.

Taixu Mountain was enshrouded in the thick night.

A group of Taixu disciples followed the mountain path, leaving Taixu Gate, embarking on their first large-scale operation against Demon Cultivators.

Mo Hua let out a soft sigh, with some worry in his heart.

He wondered if this mission to Qingping City, in which they were to eradicate the Demon Cultivators that intended to destroy their Sect, would go without issues.

But with Uncle Gu overseeing the operations, there shouldn't be any major problems.

Moreover, Mo Hua had already made his Calculations.

Although his Calculation Method was still immature and couldn't foresee a clear cause and effect, at least he did not sense any omens that would make his heart leap with fear.

So it seemed that this extermination should not be fraught with great peril.

Mo Hua breathed a slight sigh of relief.

In any case, he couldn't go beyond the state boundary, so all he could do was wait for Cheng Mo and the others to return with news, no point in worrying.

And he had other matters to attend to.

During Mo Hua's break, Master Gu sent him a suit of Armor.

This was a suit of Armor custom-made according to Mo Hua's requirements, compatible with the Five Elements Source Formation.

Mo Hua named it:

Five Elements Source Armor.

Formations that strengthen the Five Elements like the Ultimate Formation are extremely rare.

And Spiritual Artifacts that can match it are also extremely scarce, lacking references for designs.

Mo Hua could only go step by step, experimenting with refining it based on his understanding of the Formation and taking Master Gu's Artifact Refining suggestions into account, like feeling his way across a river by stepping on stones.

This suit of Source Armor was only the first version, and whether it could be used or not, Mo Hua wasn't sure.

It would likely require continuous testing and improvement.

This was also within Mo Hua's expectations.

With some spare time during his break, Mo Hua took some time to test the functionality of this set of Five Elements Source Armor.

He first drew the Five Elements Fire Source Formation inside the Armor.

Then he rented a Dao Room for testing the might of the spell.

In the Dao Room.

Mo Hua, wearing the Armor that was clearly a size too big, appeared somewhat comical despite his serious expression.

There was no choice; the Armor was made for an adult's build, so it was bound to look oversized on him.

But since the Dao Room was enclosed and no one would see, it didn't matter.

Wearing the Armor, Mo Hua began to practice his Fireball Technique on a spell Puppet in the distance.

A flash of red light from the Armor enveloped Mo Hua.

With a flick of his finger, a Fireball Technique whooshed out, tracing a fierce line of fire that struck the distant spell Puppet.

An explosion followed, and flames raged.

The spell Puppet was scorched black by the Fire-series Spiritual Power, but gradually restored to its original state under the effects of the Formation.

The Fireball Technique was not weak.

But Mo Hua gradually furrowed his eyebrows.

"Something's not right..."

The Armor was useless.

He took off the Armor again, disassembled it, and inspected the Formation carefully.

Mo Hua was thoroughly familiar with the First Grade Thirteen Patterns Five Elements Fire Source Formation, each stroke and line was precise and accurate.