

The Quest 193

Chapter 193: Refining Grades

Mo Hua nodded proudly.

Master Chen was shocked, "How long has it been, and you can already draw a First Grade array?"

"This is just a small matter." Mo Hua waved his small hand and continued:

"With a First Grade refining furnace and a First Grade magma array, it should attract quite a few refiners."

Drawing a First Grade array can be a small matter...

Master Chen felt a mix of emotions and sighed, "Rest assured, with a First Grade refining furnace and a First Grade array, no refiner can refuse."

The skill of a refiner largely depends on the refining furnace. There aren't many First Grade refining furnaces in the entire Tongxian City, let alone one with a First Grade array drawn on it.

If someone were to refuse, what kind of fool would they be?

"That's good." Mo Hua was relieved.

Then he remembered a question, "Master Chen, how are refining grades determined?"

"Grades?"

"Yes," Mo Hua nodded, "Just like an Array Master, a First Grade array is one with nine patterns. What standards define a First Grade spiritual artifact?"

A refining furnace is actually a type of spiritual artifact, just one used for cultivation production, unlike those used by cultivators for attack or defense.

The wandering cultivators in Tongxian City couldn't forge a First Grade refining furnace. The one Elder Yu promised was also bought from outside.

But there should be First Grade refiners among the wandering cultivators, so why can't they forge a First Grade spiritual artifact?

"This is a long story..." Master Chen said.

Mo Hua sat on a small stool, ready to listen.

Master Chen took a sip of wine, organized his thoughts, and began:

"First of all, determining the grade of an Array Master is the hardest. Only a Qi Refining Stage cultivator at the ninth level can become a First Grade Array Master..."

Master Chen glanced at Mo Hua, coughed, "Generally, only those at the ninth level of Qi Refining can become a First Grade Array Master."

Then he continued, "Compared to Array Masters, the grading standards for refiners, pill refiners, and talisman makers are much more relaxed. As long as they reach the late stage of Qi Refining, through practice and experience accumulation, if their refining skills reach a certain level and they can forge a First Grade spiritual artifact, they can basically become a First Grade refiner."

"Then why can wandering cultivators rarely forge a First Grade spiritual artifact?" Mo Hua asked.

"There are many reasons. For instance, the cost of a First Grade spiritual artifact is high, and materials are rare, so ordinary wandering cultivators can't afford it. Or they lack inheritance, many refining manuals are not available to wandering cultivators, and some refining techniques can't be learned..."

Master Chen sighed, "Of course, the most important reason is that we don't have a good refining furnace."

Mo Hua's eyes lit up, "Is the refining furnace that important?"

"Of course," Master Chen sighed, "The refining furnace is the weapon of the refiner. It's like a sword in the hands of a sword cultivator. How can you practice sword techniques without a sword? How can you refine spiritual artifacts without a refining furnace?"

Mo Hua nodded frequently, finding it very reasonable.

Master Chen pointed to his refining furnace, "Don't look down on my refining furnace, even though it's old and small. Among the refining shops run by wandering cultivators in Tongxian City, it's considered quite good."

Master Chen was a bit proud, "Many people are envious of my refining furnace and want to borrow it to refine spiritual artifacts, but I haven't agreed. How can I lend out my tool for making a living?"

"So, many wandering cultivators can't become First Grade refiners because they don't have a good refining furnace and can't forge First Grade spiritual artifacts?"

"That's right," Master Chen said, "Without a refining furnace, there's no chance to refine a First Grade spiritual artifact, so how can one become a First Grade refiner?"

Mo Hua was curious, "Is the refining furnace really that crucial?"

Master Chen said, "The iron ore in the cultivation world, even the bones of demonic beasts, are extremely tough. They must first be smelted in the furnace before being forged. During the Qi Refining stage, there's no pill fire, so we can only rely on furnace fire. If the grade of the furnace is low and the firepower weak, the materials can't be smelted, so naturally, they can't be forged..."

Mo Hua understood, then asked, "So if we have a good refining furnace with strong firepower, how can we forge a First Grade spiritual artifact?"

Master Chen sighed, "This is a bit complicated to explain."

Mo Hua poured him a glass of wine, "Take your time."

Master Chen looked at Mo Hua's curious eyes and felt a bit helpless, "Since you want to know, I'll briefly explain."

"The grades of spiritual artifacts are determined by the standards set by the Dao Court. A First Grade spiritual artifact must include a certain amount of refined iron or equivalent materials, undergo a specific number of processes, and be forged a certain number of times. These are all measurement standards."

"The most important is the number of times it's forged. Generally, a First Grade spiritual artifact must be forged a hundred times. Then, based on whether the materials are hard, the shape is special, or the techniques are complex, adjustments are made. After being recognized by most refiners, it becomes a convention and is then officially stipulated by the Dao Court and recorded in the grading regulations."

"Sounds complicated..."

"That's because you're not a refiner. If you were, after swinging a hammer for a few days and forging refined iron according to the refining manual, you'd naturally understand everything."

Mo Hua looked at his small arms and legs and thought it best to forget about it.

Master Chen laughed, "To put it simply, it's about how many times you can forge iron. The more times a spiritual artifact is forged, the higher its grade. As the saying goes, 'Forged a thousand times, tempered into a tool.' That's the principle."

"So it's similar to drawing arrays. The more patterns an array has, the higher its grade. It seems that the principles of this world are interconnected." Mo Hua nodded.

Master Chen laughed, "I don't understand arrays, but based on your explanation, it does seem to be the case."

Mo Hua then asked, "What about pill refining and talisman making? Are they similar?"

"Pill refining and talisman making... I guess they are similar, but I haven't learned them, so I don't know the details. After all, different fields are like separate mountains, it's hard to make assumptions."

Mo Hua nodded, understanding this truth.

Although he was quite proficient in arrays, when it came to refining, pill making, and the like, he only knew a little. There were many nuances he hadn't personally studied or practiced, so he was often confused.

Not only refining and pill making, even in arrays, there's a big difference between composite arrays and basic arrays. He's quite familiar with the Five Elements arrays, but when it comes to other structures or attribute types of arrays, he's not very clear.

For example, the Tripartite Array, and other arrays like the Two Elements Array, Four Symbols Array, Seven Stars Array, Eight Trigrams Array that Mr. Zhuang mentioned.

If he really learned and used them, they would probably be very different from the Five Elements arrays.

Not to mention, Mo Hua had heard of some cruel and forbidden arrays like demonic arrays, evil arrays, ghost arrays, and corpse arrays, which were explicitly prohibited by the Dao Court.

Mo Hua then had another doubt, asking, "Master Chen, are you familiar with talisman making?"

"Not very familiar." Master Chen replied honestly.

"You must know a little."

Master Chen was puzzled, "What do you want to know?"

"What's the difference between talisman making and array drawing?"

When Mo Hua was cultivating at Tongxian Sect, he also learned some introductory courses on talisman making, but they were too basic and theoretical, somewhat detached from the actual cultivation practice.

While studying arrays, Mo Hua always felt that the arrays he drew on paper were very similar to the "talismans" in his past memories.

He was never quite sure about the difference between the two.