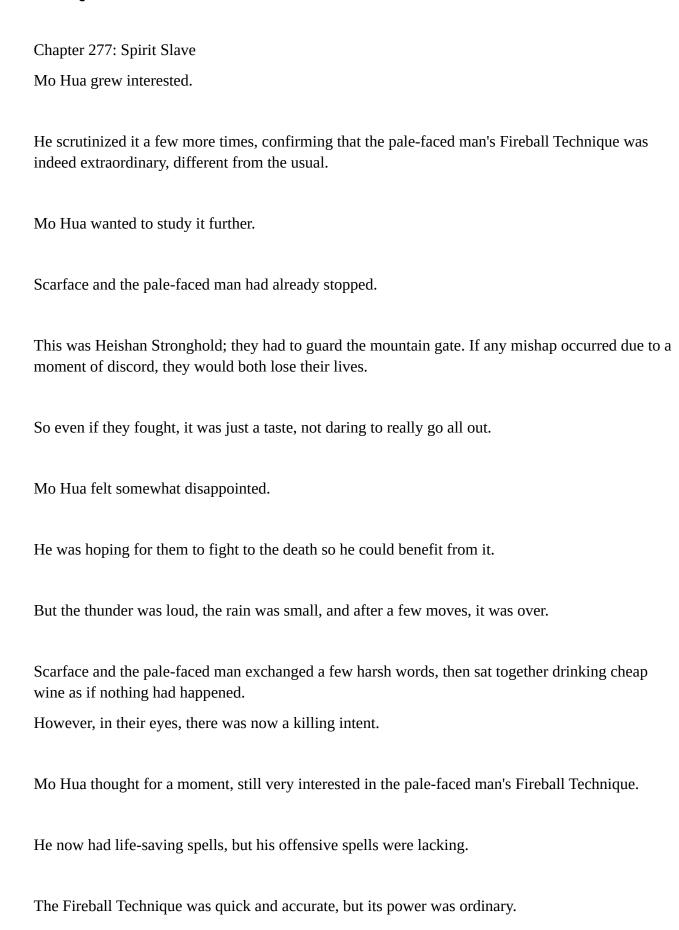
## The Quest 277



If he could learn the secrets of the pale-faced man's Fireball Technique, he wouldn't need to learn other spells to enhance his attack methods.

Mo Hua decided to keep an eye on it, so after the day, he began to follow the pale-faced man.

He saw the pale-faced man finish his night watch and go straight back to his room.

The pale-faced man was just an ordinary demonic cultivator; his room was no different from other demonic cultivators, fairly spacious but cluttered, not particularly bloody, with only a large chest in the corner.

After a night of staying up, the pale-faced man looked exhausted. He rested for a while, then got up to meditate.

Mo Hua found it strange.

The pale-faced man seemed to be meditating without using spirit stones.

Without spirit stones, how could he cultivate? Meditate on air?

After a while, the pale-faced man opened his eyes, a trace of irritation flashing in them.

He walked directly to the corner and opened the large chest.

Mo Hua, lying on the beam, turned his head to look and saw that the chest contained a living cultivator!

The cultivator was pale and emaciated, cowering in the chest, not daring to make a sound.

The pale-faced man ordered, "Come out."

The cultivator, hearing this, looked dazedly around before coming out.

"Kneel!" The cultivator did not resist, obediently kneeling. The pale-faced man, seeing the person kneeling before him, looked excited and placed his palm on the cultivator's forehead. The cultivator's spiritual power began to reverse, flowing from the pale-faced man's palm into his Qi sea. The cultivator seemed accustomed to this, expressionless, not resisting or making a sound, like a piece of wood, enduring the fate of having his spiritual power extracted. After a short while, the pale-faced man had absorbed enough spiritual power, his previously pale face now showing some color. He patted the cultivator's face, speaking in a condescending tone: "I taught you the cultivation technique. You must cultivate diligently." "Remember, I saved your life. Making you a 'spirit slave' is a mercy. Otherwise, you would have been drained dry by other demonic cultivators long ago." "You should be grateful you are still alive because of me!" After speaking, the pale-faced man pointed to the chest, "Go back, and don't make a sound." The cultivator, treated as a 'spirit slave,' returned to the chest, curling up silently inside without making a sound. Mo Hua watched with a chill in his heart.

He now understood that so-called spirit slaves were cultivators used as slaves to be drained of their spiritual power.

These cultivators were more like walking 'spirit stones' than people.

Mo Hua's small eyebrows furrowed.

As Elder Yu had said, the cultivators here were indeed beasts.

After absorbing the spirit slave's spiritual power, the pale-faced man began to meditate and refine it.

Spirit stone energy is pure, but a cultivator's spiritual power varies.

Refining another cultivator's spiritual power, though easier and more convenient, could conflict with one's own, causing aberrations, making it easy to deviate and go mad.

Therefore, techniques that absorb spiritual power were universally considered evil and forbidden by the Dao Court.

This was what Zhang Lan had told Mo Hua.

The pale-faced man, after absorbing the spirit slave's spiritual power, meditated, his expression constantly changing.

One moment ferocious, another ecstatic, sometimes mad, sometimes a mix of pain and pleasure.

After a while, the pale-faced man finished meditating, returning to his pale and frail appearance, though his cultivation level had indeed increased.

The pale-faced man, in a good mood, took out a book from his storage bag and began to read.

Mo Hua stole a glance, his heart skipping a beat.

The book's cover was partially blocked by the pale-faced man, but the exposed characters read "Fireball."
The Fireball Technique!
As expected, this pale-faced man practiced a special Fireball Technique!
If it were just an ordinary Fireball Technique, he wouldn't treasure it so much, carrying it with him and studying it often.
However, he kept the Fireball Technique's manual with him, making it difficult for Mo Hua to steal.
It seemed he had to wait for another opportunity.
Before leaving, Mo Hua glanced again at the corner chest, containing the spirit slave.
The spirit slave didn't seem very old, just pale and emaciated from having his spiritual power drained, looking much older.
Though now expressionless and dazed, he might once have been a bright and kind youth.
Mo Hua wondered if his parents knew he was trapped in Heishan Stronghold.
With this thought, Mo Hua sighed.
Currently, his cultivation was limited, and he couldn't save him.
If he ever reached higher cultivation, he would surely kill these evil cultivators one by one!
Mo Hua angrily thought.
For the next few days, Mo Hua continued to focus on drawing maps.

One day, feeling hungry, he went to Heishan Stronghold's kitchen to find something to eat.
The kitchen was large and somewhat secluded.
It was dirty and bloody inside, with all sorts of meat chunks on the tables.
Mo Hua didn't know what kind of meat it was, so he didn't dare eat it.
He could only steal some wild fruits and pastries to fill his stomach.
He hadn't expected to stay in Heishan Stronghold for so long, so he didn't bring much food in his storage bag.
Now, with all his supplies gone, he had to make do with the demonic cultivators' food.
The wild fruits were sour and astringent, tasting terrible.
Probably due to the dense poisonous miasma in the mountains and poor soil and water, they couldn't produce good fruits.
The pastries were even worse.
Mo Hua took a bite and nearly spat it out.
Far worse than what his mother made.
He missed his mother's cooking, suddenly realizing he'd been in Heishan Stronghold for several days, worrying his parents with no news.
Mo Hua thought, "I should have told my parents first to prevent them from worrying."
But now it was too late to regret.

He should finish drawing the map, gather information, and return as soon as possible to ease his parents' worries.
Mo Hua nodded to himself, enduring the strange taste, swallowing the pastry.
Though it tasted awful, it at least filled his stomach.
At this time, he couldn't be picky.
While eating, he suddenly heard someone talking.
One was the old man cooking in the kitchen; the other voice sounded familiar to Mo Hua.
Mo Hua peeked from under the table and saw that the other person was the fat cultivator.
The fat cultivator, who had killed the skinny cultivator and used his head to ask for directions to enter Heishan Stronghold, had only gotten a job delivering meals.
The old man instructed the fat cultivator, "Take this meal to the young master. Don't let him starve."
The fat cultivator nodded.
Mo Hua, chewing the pastry, suddenly paused.
"Young master? What young master?"
Mo Hua frowned.
"Could it be the young master from the Kong family?"