

I Have An Infinite Cultivation Resource

Chapter 108: Nascent Soul Enters the Fray, Hero Han Tian

After watching the few cultivators leave, Lu You had not even closed the door when he saw Zeng Yan walking gracefully toward him.

After glancing suspiciously at the departing cultivators, Zeng Yan stepped into Lu You's room and took out the listening device.

"Did you get one of these too? I remember you said Wu Tong gave you an ancient map. Could this incident drag you into it as well?"

"I did get one. I don't know which Nascent Soul Venerable was behind it, but somehow everyone received one of these listening devices." Lu You nodded. "Fortunately, Elder Ma Yuan made things difficult for me that day, forcing me to hand over the ancient map ahead of time. I'm just a minor Foundation Establishment cultivator. If anyone wants the map, they can go ask Elder Ma. There's no reason to trouble me."

Zeng Yan still looked worried.

"You obtained quite a few opportunities inside the secret realm. It's inevitable that some people will suspect you secretly cultivated the technique recorded on the ancient map. Have you thought about how you'll explain yourself when that happens?"

Lu You looked out the window. At some point, dark clouds had blanketed the skies above the Verdant Cloud Sect. It was obvious that a heavy storm was about to arrive.

"Senior Sister, there's no need to worry. The most important thing for us right now is to cultivate diligently and prepare for the upcoming sect tournament. This matter has already involved Nascent Soul cultivators, so it won't be resolved anytime soon. By the time everyone remembers me, we'll probably already be back from the tournament."

Seeing Zeng Yan raise an eyebrow, Lu You smiled.

"If I achieve a good result in the tournament, then my true abilities will be on full display. People will be able to tell at a glance whether they came from the ancient map or not. If I perform poorly and remain unnoticed, then naturally no one will pay attention to me either. Besides, you heard it yourself through the listening device, the cultivation technique from the ancient map isn't something that can be practiced quietly without attracting attention."

Hearing his explanation, Zeng Yan relaxed somewhat.

She then flicked the ordinary iron sword hanging from her waist. The sword immediately leaped into the air, controlled entirely by her spiritual energy. It danced gracefully above and below, even flying out of Lu You's courtyard to circle through the sky before returning.

"If someone gives you trouble after we come back from the tournament," she said, "then this Senior Sister will settle the score for you."

Watching her control the flying sword, Lu You stared in surprise.

"Senior Sister... you've reached the Golden Core realm?"

Unlike Han Tian, Zeng Yan had never cultivated the secret technique recorded on the ancient map. She had entered the Dao through sword cultivation. Although sword cultivators were stronger than ordinary cultivators at the same realm, their breakthroughs were also considerably more difficult.

She had only attempted her breakthrough at the Sword Tomb a month ago. Had she really cultivated even faster than him, despite all his cheats?

"Not yet. I haven't broken through to Golden Core. I'm hoping to find an opportunity during this sect tournament."

Zeng Yan recalled her sword.

This was her family's unique secret technique. Upon reaching the late Foundation Establishment stage, one could imitate the Golden Core realm's ability to control a flying sword.

After refining one of Lu You's serpent eggs, she had advanced directly from early Foundation Establishment to late Foundation Establishment. At the same time, she had gained an even deeper appreciation of just how precious Lu You's serpent eggs truly were.

"Once I reach the Golden Core realm," she declared, "even if a Nascent Soul Venerable comes looking for trouble, I'll still dare to use them to test my sword."

Lu You had never doubted Zeng Yan's courage, but her cultivation speed made him feel more than a little envious.

"Senior Sister... how many serpent eggs did you refine?"

"One."

Zeng Yan answered honestly. She quickly understood what Lu You was asking and explained.

"The Five Elements Qi-Nourishing Technique isn't merely the most common cultivation technique in the Verdant Cloud Sect. Even throughout the entire cultivation world, it's practically something everyone has access to."

"Even if two cultivators possess the same resources and the same spiritual roots, the cultivation techniques they practice determine how quickly they progress."

"But the Five Elements Qi-Nourishing Technique has one major advantage. It is balanced and harmonious, connecting with the five elements of heaven and earth. No matter what cultivation method you choose in the future, it can serve as the foundation that supports it."

"Your situation is different from mine."

"I've already found my path."

"My sword is my second life."

Her gaze fell upon the talisman papers scattered casually across Lu You's desk as she continued seriously,

"I've observed you for quite some time, Junior Brother. I'm afraid the Dao of Talismans has never truly held a place in your heart."

"I also tried teaching you the Dao of Sword before, but instead, you forged yourself a giant hammer."

Seeing Lu You fall silent, Zeng Yan comforted him.

"Without establishing a Dao Heart, how can one ever attain the Dao?"

"Your cultivation speed isn't slow at all."

"Once you've found your true direction and mastered a cultivation technique that genuinely suits you, your progress will surely advance by leaps and bounds."

Dao Heart.

Lu You felt as if he had suddenly understood something.

Seeking the Dao and attaining immortality was the goal shared by every cultivator, but that alone could not be called a Dao Heart.

For Senior Sister Zeng Yan, her sword was her second life. Her Dao was to become the greatest sword cultivator.

Han Tian's Dao was to bring justice to the world, even if it meant sacrificing himself.

Even the mischievous Lu Xiao'e had her own Dao—to recover her family's inheritance and gather all of the ancient maps.

Only he was different.

He had transmigrated into this world with no attachments. Having come from a modern society overflowing with entertainment and instant access to

information, he felt no real sense of belonging in the cultivation world. In his mind, there was only the abstract idea of immortality. He had never possessed any deep conviction about *why* he wished to become a long-lived being.

"Senior Sister, hearing you explain it like this... it seems the road ahead of me is unimaginably long."

Lu You smiled bitterly.

After hearing his words, Zeng Yan did something she had never done before—she reached out and gently held Lu You's hand.

"It doesn't matter. The road lies beneath our feet."

"We'll search for it together."

"...You know, you could comfort me like that more often."

Just as Lu You was about to joke with her, his heart suddenly skipped a beat.

Zeng Yan sensed the same overwhelming pressure.

Without exchanging a word, the two rushed into the courtyard.

. . .

The main peak of the Deep Literary Pavilion suddenly erupted with dazzling golden light.

An enormous phantom appeared high in the heavens, its gaze sweeping across the entire Deep Literary Pavilion before finally settling upon the residence of the Golden Core elders.

Moments later, the heavenly projection vanished, transforming into a streak of light that descended toward the Golden Core residence.

"It's Venerable Wu Hao."

"He's come out of seclusion."

Watching the spiritual energy slowly disperse from the sky, Zeng Yan finally let out a sigh of relief.

'So this... is the power of a Nascent Soul cultivator...'

She silently admitted to herself that Zeng Kehan hadn't been exaggerating.

'I'd better treat him a little more politely in the future.'

Lu You stared silently into the sky.

He quietly abandoned another plan he had been considering.

He had intended that, if Venerable Wu Hao were forced out of the Water-Cloud Realm, he would use the jade key to enter it and secretly lay a trap—hiding tens of thousands of Mount Tai Talismans inside to see whether they could injure a Nascent Soul cultivator.

Now he realized how foolish that idea had been.

Nascent Soul Venerables existed on an entirely different level of life.

He absolutely could not take such a risk.

. . .

Wu Hao had remained in secluded cultivation all this time.

He could already sense that only an impossibly thin barrier separated him from the Divine Transformation realm.

All he needed was a single opportunity.

Then, a pitch-black artifact suddenly slammed squarely into his face.

The impact instantly shattered his moment of enlightenment.

His cultivation state collapsed, pushing him back before the bottleneck.

All of the progress he had painstakingly accumulated during his long seclusion was ruined in an instant.

Opening his eyes, Wu Hao was about to fly into a rage.

Yet there wasn't a single person before him.

The strange artifact that had struck him seemed to have appeared out of thin air inside the Water-Cloud Realm.

Picking up the listening device and injecting spiritual energy into it, he immediately heard Huo Chuan confessing to using the cultivation technique from the ancient map to refine Foundation Establishment cultivators into human pills.

Immediately afterward came the testimony of his own nephew, Wu Tong, and finally, Wu Tong being pierced through the heart by Han Tian's sword.

'Who delivered this listening device to me?'

Wu Hao mentally went through everyone he knew.

Only to realize that after living for so many years, he no longer had any friends.

Everyone he knew was either his disciple or his enemy.

'Could someone be trying to cooperate with me? Is this an advance warning... a gesture of goodwill?'

His mood improved slightly.

He had been a Nascent Soul cultivator for many years.

Even the Sect Master treated him with courtesy.

There was no way the Law Enforcement Hall would dare openly provoke him by throwing a listening device at his face.

As he pondered this, Wu Hao slowly rose to his feet.

The next instant—

His expression exploded with fury.

His entire secluded cultivation cave was completely covered with listening devices.

Thousands of them.

Every inch of the room was carpeted with the black artifacts.

"Excellent!"

"Excellent indeed, Law Enforcement Hall!"

"And you too, Bai Yongzheng, you little brat!"

"How dare you humiliate me like this!"

If someone had used a divine ability to send a single listening device into his cave, that could still be interpreted as delivering a message.

But filling an entire room with them...

That was an unmistakable provocation.

Wu Hao was just about to storm over to the Law Enforcement Hall to demand an explanation when he suddenly stopped.

He noticed a message Wu Tong had left for him through the Water-Cloud Realm communication artifact.

The message detailed Wu Tong's plan:

He had identified Lu Xiao'e as Dongfang Bubai and intended to use the outer-sect disciple Lu You to monitor her.

Suppressing the fury in his heart, Wu Hao left his cultivation cave.

He summoned the disciple attending him and questioned him thoroughly about everything that had happened during his seclusion.

"So..."

"After returning from the secret realm, Lu You acted under Wu Tong's instructions and tried to hand over the ancient map."

"But Elder Ma Yuan made things difficult for him, so the map ended up in Ma Yuan's possession instead?"

Wu Hao raised an eyebrow.

The information he had just received perfectly matched the information Wu Tong had left behind.

"That useless fool... at least he managed to do one thing right."

Wu Hao showed no concern whatsoever over Wu Tong's death.

Instead, his thoughts were completely occupied by the ancient map.

Now that he had reached the Nascent Soul realm, even possessing the map's technique for devouring people, consuming Foundation Establishment cultivators would be of little benefit.

After entering the Nascent Soul realm, one's very level of existence had fundamentally changed.

If he wanted to advance further by devouring Golden Core cultivators, even tens of thousands of them might not be enough to satisfy the enormous demand.

As for devouring Nascent Soul cultivators...

Every Nascent Soul expert was a Venerable who ruled over their own domain, each possessing unique divine abilities. Hunting one down was extraordinarily difficult.

Therefore, what truly occupied Wu Hao's mind was the new ancient map that had surfaced.

Glancing back at the countless listening devices covering his secluded cave, Wu Hao's anger flared once more.

"Once I learn the cultivation technique recorded on that new ancient map, I'll break through the Nascent Soul realm in a single stroke and enter the Divine Transformation realm."

"When that time comes, I'll hunt down every last one of these insignificant insects and make them pay."

Having made up his mind, Wu Hao decided to retrieve the ancient map from Ma Yuan first.

His spiritual sense instantly spread throughout the entire Verdant Cloud Sect.

A colossal Dharma Avatar materialized high above the heavens, its spiritual perception sweeping across the entire Deep Literary Pavilion.

The next moment, it condensed into a streak of light that descended directly into Ma Yuan's residence.

"V-Venerable!"

The moment Ma Yuan saw Wu Hao, he dropped to his knees with a loud thud.

He was already caught in an impossible dilemma, still unable to think of any solution.

Yet the Venerable, who had been in secluded cultivation, had already come looking for him.

"Stand up."

Wu Hao appeared unusually approachable.

"There's no need for such formalities."

"You've rendered a great service by safeguarding the ancient map."

"I'll reward you afterward."

"For now, hand the ancient map over to me."

Seeing that Ma Yuan—a Golden Core elder normally burdened with countless responsibilities—had remained inside his residence the entire time, Wu Hao's mood improved.

In his mind, Ma Yuan must have realized how precious the ancient map was and feared something might happen to it.

That was why he had hidden himself inside his residence, relying upon the sect's protective formations to guard the treasure until it could safely be delivered to him.

After losing both Huo Chuan and Wu Tong, Wu Hao hadn't expected such a sensible subordinate to remain by his side.

A faint smile appeared in his eyes.

He was already considering promoting Ma Yuan.

The more Ma Yuan sensed that Wu Hao was in a good mood, the more he realized just how important the ancient map truly was.

Now that every cultivator possessed one of those listening devices, Wu Hao had obviously learned the truth before emerging from seclusion.

Yet instead of going to the Law Enforcement Hall, his very first stop had been here.

That alone showed how enormous the trouble Ma Yuan had fallen into really was.

Having no other choice, Ma Yuan collapsed to the ground and burst into tears.

"Venerable!"

"Your disciple has failed!"

"The ancient map was stolen!"

"Stolen?"

The tiny bit of good mood Wu Hao had managed to recover instantly vanished.

"Are you joking with me?"

"The ancient map was stolen... then why aren't you dead?!"

He raised one hand.

In an instant, Ma Yuan's body was pulled helplessly toward him.

Wu Hao pressed his palm onto the top of Ma Yuan's head without the slightest hesitation.

Soul Search.

The exact same technique displayed incomparably greater power when wielded by a Nascent Soul Venerable.

Every fragment of Ma Yuan's memories was forcibly extracted.

The next instant, Wu Hao relived everything Ma Yuan had experienced as though it had happened to himself.

"So it really was stolen..."

"Damn you!"

"Wu Tong gave his life to bring back that information and you ruined everything!"

"If you hadn't tried currying favor with Bai Zihua, how could anyone have discovered the ancient map in Lu You's possession?!"

Wu Hao's rage became uncontrollable.

The suction force in his palm suddenly changed.

Ma Yuan's life force and spiritual energy rapidly drained away.

It was the devouring technique recorded on the ancient map.

Wu Hao intended to refine Ma Yuan into a Human Pill.

"Mercy, Venerable! Please spare me!"

Ma Yuan struggled desperately.

But before a Nascent Soul cultivator, a Golden Core expert was no different from an infant.

His body went limp.

His eyes filled with absolute despair.

'Why...'

'Why...'

'All I did was make things difficult for a single outer-sect disciple...'

'How did I end up like this?'

After completely absorbing Ma Yuan, Wu Hao slowly closed his eyes and exhaled.

"So..."

"Why did the Law Enforcement Hall distribute the evidence to everyone?"

"Could it be that the ancient map has fallen into Bai Yongzheng's hands?"

"Is that old fox trying so desperately to shift all the blame onto me, so he can suppress me and monopolize the ancient map for himself?"

Wu Hao sneered.

"Dream on."

"Even with these listening devices, all they can prove is that Wu Tong knew Huo Chuan possessed an evil cultivation technique."

"With evidence like that, what right does Bai Yongzheng have to fight me?"

Wu Hao slowly released his hand.

Ma Yuan's corpse instantly crumbled into ashes.

The next moment, Wu Hao vanished from the room.

With a single flash, he had already appeared inside the main hall of the Law Enforcement Hall.

At that moment, the Law Enforcement Hall was a sea of people.

Nearly ten thousand disciples had surrounded the hall, their voices shaking the entire sect.

"Release Han Tian! Free our hero!"

"Investigate the Deep Literary Pavilion! Investigate the Nascent Soul Venerables!"

"Today it's our fellow cultivators who died—tomorrow it could be any one of us! Stand together! The Law Enforcement Hall must give us an explanation!"

Outside the main hall, the chants grew louder and louder with each passing wave.

The great doors remained tightly shut.

Inside the hall, every Golden Core elder in the sect who was not otherwise occupied had been summoned. Elder Wen was among them as well.

The moment Venerable Wu Hao suddenly appeared, every Golden Core elder immediately bowed.

"Greetings, Venerable."

Almost simultaneously, another streak of light flashed into the hall.

Bai Yongzheng had also arrived.

His own Water-Cloud Realm had likewise been inexplicably filled with listening devices.

At first, he had assumed it was Bai Zihua refusing to give up.

But after sweeping the realm with his spiritual sense, he discovered that his Water-Cloud Realm had practically become a garbage dump.

Listening devices were piled up everywhere.

Unlike the furious Wu Hao, Bai Yongzheng felt only a chill running down his spine.

These listening devices had *not* been planted by the Law Enforcement Hall.

Who exactly possessed such miraculous abilities?

Who was willing to pay such an enormous price to scheme against the Deep Literary Pavilion while dragging him into the affair as well?

Could one of the other Peak Masters be secretly making a move?

No.

I can't allow myself to become someone else's pawn.

I have to explain everything to Venerable Wu Hao.

Turning toward Wu Hao, Bai Yongzheng spoke immediately.

"Fellow Daoist Wu, please don't be angry."

"None of this was my doing."

"As for what exactly happened... the two of us can join forces."

"If we investigate this matter together, we'll surely uncover the mastermind behind it."