

I Have An Infinite Cultivation Resource

Chapter 122: Unafraid of the Hardships of the Road, Never Abandoning the Aspirations of the Verdant Clouds

An extraordinary sight appeared on Mount Shu's Trial Path.

A thousand-meter-long iron chain linked every disciple of the Verdant Cloud Sect together, forming what looked like an endless dragon winding its way up the mountain.

The Golden Core disciples, whose physiques were the strongest and who excelled in combat, took positions at the front of the chain, straining with all their might to pull it forward.

Meanwhile, the Foundation Establishment disciples—those with lower cultivation whose strength had long since been exhausted—wrapped the chain tightly around their waists.

The moment they slackened even slightly, the chain would bite painfully into their bodies, threatening to cut off their breath.

To avoid falling behind, they forced themselves onward, using the pain as a reminder to keep moving—staking their very lives on taking one step after another.

At the very front stood Lu You.

Each time he took a step toward the summit, a deep footprint was left in the stone beneath his feet.

At the same time, the entire team felt the burden on their legs lighten, allowing everyone to climb another large step together.

Standing closest to him, Zeng Yan felt this mysterious force more clearly than anyone else.

She looked at Lu You in surprise and quietly asked,

"Junior Brother... have you been cultivating a body-refining technique?"

Before Lu You could answer, she continued, "Even if you have, there's no way you should be able to sustain this level of exertion."

"And even if you somehow can... once we reach the summit, will you still have the strength left to participate in the tournament?"

Her eyes were filled with concern.

She admired Han Tian's leadership immensely.

But if the entire Verdant Cloud Sect could only compete by exhausting Lu You's strength, she found herself completely unwilling to accept it.

Lu You briefly extended his spiritual sense behind him.

Everyone had their heads lowered, panting as they climbed.

No one had noticed the strength he had just exerted.

Only then did he answer softly.

"Senior Sister... there's something strange about this Mount Shu trial."

"We're all cultivators."

"Since we've stepped onto the path of cultivation, none of us would normally seal away our spiritual energy just to pretend to be ordinary mortals."

"So why would Mount Shu specifically choose physical mountain climbing as its examination?"

He glanced toward the teams from the other sects.

"There are plenty of body cultivators participating in this tournament."

"If the trial were truly nothing more than seeing who could climb Mount Shu first, then this competition would be absurd."

"There wouldn't be the slightest hint of fairness."

"That would only make sense if Mount Shu itself specialized in body cultivation."

"But Mount Shu is famous for sword cultivation."

"Body cultivation has very little to do with their inheritance."

"You mean..."

Hearing his explanation, Zeng Yan immediately understood.

"Junior Brother... you're brilliant."

"You actually managed to step outside the examination itself and think about what Mount Shu is truly trying to accomplish."

She looked at Lu You with newfound admiration.

For the first time, she realized just how sharp and flexible his mind was.

"So... Mount Shu doesn't actually care who reaches the summit first."

"What they care about is the character... the temperament... and the moral quality of the cultivators while they're climbing."

Having understood what this trial was really testing, she instinctively looked toward Han Tian.

"Junior Brother..."

"Did Senior Brother Han Tian realize this as well?"

What Lu You had said sounded simple.

Yet reaching that conclusion was extraordinarily difficult.

Everyone participating in the trial naturally focused on one thing:

How do I win?

Their thinking became confined within the framework of the examination itself.

Very few people could step outside that framework and consider the examiner's true intentions.

Lu You's ability to think from the perspective of an outside observer was something most participants simply couldn't achieve.

Lu You shook his head.

"I'm not as good as Senior Brother Han Tian."

"My actions, at their core, are still motivated by wanting to win."

"But Senior Brother Han Tian... he truly did everything for everyone else."

Lu You let out a quiet sigh.

At that very moment, Han Tian had clenched the iron chain between his teeth.

On all fours, he clawed his way up the mountain, pouring every ounce of strength into dragging the chain forward.

Han Tian had also undergone one round of bone tempering using the bone-tempering powder.

Although his body wasn't nearly as powerful as Lu You's, it was still considerably stronger than that of an ordinary Golden Core cultivator.

Under Han Tian's relentless pulling, the entire Verdant Cloud Sect advanced several more large steps up the mountain.

. . .

"I made it!"

"I've climbed Mount Shu!"

One cultivator after another finally reached the summit, shouting excitedly in celebration.

However, the moment they tried to continue forward, they were stopped by an invisible barrier.

A Mount Shu elder stood upon a flying sword, blocking the way of every disciple who had reached the summit.

He gazed calmly into the distance, silently watching those who were still climbing the mountain.

Finally, he spoke a single word.

"Wait."

That was all.

After saying that one word, the elder stood motionless, as though he no longer existed, paying no attention whatsoever to the cultivators who had already reached the top.

"Looks like we won't be allowed into Mount Shu until the trial is completely over."

Taking the opportunity to rest, someone sat down to catch their breath before looking down the mountainside.

As his gaze swept over the climbers, it landed on the Verdant Cloud Sect's procession.

"Which sect is that?"

"They're all complete idiots, aren't they?"

"Climbing like that, how many of them do they honestly think will make it to the top?"

Another person pointed toward the mountain.

"Look! Someone's actually biting down on the iron chain and crawling on all fours!"

He clicked his tongue.

"Judging from his identity token, he's even a Golden Core elder."

"Is he here to compete or to make people laugh?"

Someone else scoffed.

"How boring."

"Some sects know they have no hope in the tournament, so they resort to these ridiculous stunts just to attract attention."

"If they can't even climb Mount Shu, why waste time caring about a bunch of losers?"

Those gathered on the summit were mostly disciples from second-rate and third-rate sects.

The truly elite sects—Ghost Valley Sect, Jade Pool Sect, Blissful Buddhist Sect, and the other foremost powers of the cultivation world—had not even participated in this mountain-climbing trial.

Everyone seemed to accept this as perfectly natural.

On one hand, they acknowledged that the great sects were simply stronger than themselves.

On the other, they mocked the Verdant Cloud Sect for slowly making its way up the mountain.

Lu You overheard the discussions coming from the summit.

The next moment, he casually glanced toward the Mount Shu elder.

Although the elder stood there like a lifeless statue, almost devoid of any presence, Lu You noticed something important.

The elder's attention had been fixed on the Verdant Cloud Sect's formation the entire time.

'Looks like my guess was right.'

Lu You finally relaxed.

As he continued sharing Han Tian's burden, he deliberately restrained most of his strength.

If he went all out, pulling the entire Verdant Cloud Sect to the summit would have been effortless.

But while he might be able to hide his true strength from his fellow disciples, there was no way he could deceive a Mount Shu elder.

Even after suppressing the majority of his power, however, the climb became noticeably easier for everyone.

Day turned to night.

Night gradually gave way to the pale light of dawn.

"We made it!"

"We're here!"

Seeing that the trial was about to end, Han Tian stood on the summit and desperately hauled on the iron chain with every ounce of strength he had left.

Finally, the last disciple of the Verdant Cloud Sect was pulled onto the summit.

Only then did everyone finally breathe a sigh of relief.

Though every one of them was utterly exhausted, seeing Mount Shu now beneath their feet filled them with indescribable joy.

The entire Verdant Cloud Sect erupted into cheers.

As their jubilant cries echoed across the mountain, the sun rose above the sea of clouds.

The Mount Shu elder, who had been resting with his eyes closed the entire time, finally opened them.

He waved his sleeve toward those still climbing below.

In the next instant, every cultivator who had failed to reach the summit was transported back to the foot of the mountain.

"This trial has concluded."

"Those who did not qualify, please return to your respective encampments and await the conclusion of the tournament."

As soon as the elder finished speaking, dense clouds enveloped Mount Shu once more.

The cultivators sent back to the mountain's base could no longer see anything happening above.

"Elder, I object!"

One cultivator, seeing that most of his sect's disciples had been eliminated while the Verdant Cloud Sect had every member present, immediately shouted.

"That sect cheated during the climb!"

Another quickly joined in.

"That's right!"

"We all climbed using our own strength."

"Most of them were dragged up the mountain by their fellow disciples."

"That's unfair!"

"Half of them are useless weaklings."

"Why should they be allowed to compete alongside us?"

Someone else shouted even louder.

"Elder, that entire sect should be disqualified!"

"Otherwise, what was the point of climbing Mount Shu at all?"

"Wasn't this trial supposed to determine who was capable of climbing the mountain?"

"Wasn't it meant to select the strongest cultivators?"

The jubilant Verdant Cloud Sect instantly fell silent.

Every disciple turned in unison toward those who had spoken.

This group, despite being completely exhausted, suddenly radiated an invisible pressure that caused everyone present to instinctively fall quiet.

Sensing this unusual atmosphere, the Mount Shu elder slowly shifted his gaze toward the Verdant Cloud Sect.

His eyes swept across the group before stopping on Han Tian's elder's identity token.

He spoke calmly.

"Do you have anything to say for yourselves?"

Han Tian stepped forward and cupped his fists respectfully.

"I am Han Tian of the Verdant Cloud Sect."

He spoke neither arrogantly nor humbly.

"During this Mount Shu trial, there was never any rule forbidding disciples of the same sect from helping one another."

"Therefore, we do not believe we have done anything wrong."

He paused before continuing.

"No matter what decision Elder chooses to make..."

"In my heart, the Verdant Cloud Sect has already won."

"What we conquered today was not merely the Mount Shu beneath our feet, but the selfishness within our own hearts—an obstacle even harder to overcome than Mount Shu itself."

Before Han Tian could even finish speaking, sneers of contempt rang out from the cultivators who had reached the summit earlier.

"Elder, they've already admitted it! Hurry up and disqualify them!"

Another chimed in, "Exactly! If helping each other is allowed, then can I go back down now and pull up my fellow disciples too?"

Voices rose from every direction, each arguing their own point.

The Mount Shu elder merely swept his cold gaze across the crowd before calmly saying, "You can."

You can?

The cultivators who had been loudly criticizing the Verdant Cloud Sect stared blankly at the elder, unsure if they had heard him correctly.

The elder repeated himself.

"You can go and pull up the members of your own sect."

He continued,

"Go back down the mountain now."

"If you can bring any of your sect's disciples to the summit, just as the Verdant Cloud Sect did, then I will also consider anyone you brought up to have passed."

"..."

The cultivators exchanged awkward glances.

Only moments ago they had spoken so confidently, yet now that the Mount Shu elder had actually agreed, every one of them fell silent.

Not a single person showed the slightest intention of going back down to help their fellow disciples.

The elder said nothing more.

He merely waved gently toward the barrier.

In the next instant, the translucent barrier folded inward.

The disciples of the Verdant Cloud Sect suddenly vanished from sight.

Only those who had originally been standing on the summit remained.

The elder spoke calmly.

"Congratulations."

"You have climbed Mount Shu."

"This is Mount Shu's Blessed Realm."

"You may cultivate here for thirty days."

"When the time is up, I will return all of you to the foot of the mountain."

Before the cultivators stretched a paradise unlike anything they had ever seen.

The spiritual energy here was astonishingly dense.

The scenery was breathtaking.

In smaller sects, only the private cultivation grounds of Nascent Soul elders could compare.

"We can cultivate here for thirty days?"

Someone suddenly froze.

"Wait..."

"Does that mean... there aren't any matches?"

At first everyone was delighted.

Then realization dawned.

If they were simply staying here for thirty days, didn't that mean the tournament was already over for them?

The elder nodded.

"That's correct."

"You successfully climbed Mount Shu."

"Mount Shu will reward you for accomplishing that."

"But..."

"You lost the competition."

"Naturally, there are no further matches for you."

He glanced at them with unconcealed disdain before continuing.

"Have you ever wondered why disciples from Mount Shu, Jade Pool, and the other great sects never participated in this climbing trial?"

"The opportunity to win was placed right before you."

"Yet none of you passed."

"The reason spiritual energy was forbidden during the climb was to make you understand one truth."

"If Mount Shu judged people solely by strength, not a single one of you would be worthy of standing alongside the world's great sects."

"What this trial examined was something even more important than spiritual energy."

"Your Dao Heart."

The elder's voice grew heavier.

"When Mount Shu's Patriarch ascended and became an immortal, why did he leave behind his teachings?"

"Why did he leave a path to immortality for later generations?"

"According to your way of thinking, wouldn't it have been better if he alone became immortal and left everyone else behind?"

He looked coldly at the crowd.

"Wake up."

"Do not become petty, self-serving people."

"Do not sever your own path to immortality."

Meanwhile...

The disciples of the Verdant Cloud Sect suddenly felt the scenery blur before their eyes.

The next moment, they found themselves standing on an enormous square arena.

Orderly formations had already assembled across the platform.

One side consisted of Mount Shu's sword cultivators.

Another was occupied by Ghost Valley Sect's formation masters.

Every other formation belonged to one of the great sects renowned throughout the cultivation world.

Someone couldn't help exclaiming,

"Amazing..."

"A minor sect actually passed Mount Shu's trial."

Another sighed.

"Heart trials are the ones I fear the most."

"I'd rather challenge someone above my cultivation realm than go through another test of the Dao Heart."

"Silence."

A radiant lotus platform floated high in the sky.

Seated upon it was an elderly monk with long white eyebrows.

He looked approvingly toward the Verdant Cloud Sect before speaking in a resonant voice.

"The Sect Tournament has existed for three thousand years."

"This is the very first time a minor sect has successfully passed the Trial of the Dao Heart."

He smiled.

"Verdant Cloud Sect..."

"A fine name indeed."

"Unafraid of the hardships of the Shu Road."

"Never abandoning the aspirations of the verdant clouds."

"You have truly lived up to that name."

"Therefore, this share of Heaven's Opportunity shall also belong to you."

The monk continued his explanation.

"Every minor sect believes that the Sect Tournament is a competition."

"But none of you realized that its true purpose is distribution."

"The Heavenly Opportunity Realm opens only once every hundred years."

"That is why the Sect Tournament is likewise held once every century."

As his words fell, a gigantic phantom appeared in the heavens.

The monk immediately bowed his head.

"Greetings, Sword Ancestor."

The figure in the sky smiled gently.

"Master Changmei, you are too courteous."

Picking up where the monk had left off, he continued,

"The Heavenly Opportunity Realm is, above all else, about fate."

"There have been Foundation Establishment cultivators who entered it and obtained the inheritance of a True Immortal."

"There have also been Tribulation Transcendence cultivators who entered... only to perish, body and soul utterly annihilated."

"This is the true path to immortality."

The Sword Ancestor's phantom looked over everyone present as he continued,

"That is why Mount Shu's trial has always focused on tempering the Dao Heart, and why the Sect Tournament has never been about warriors taking turns fighting one another."

"Its true purpose has always been to share."

He smiled faintly.

"Fate... affinity..."

"Since the founding of Mount Shu, our inheritance has always been shared with those who possess the proper affinity."

"That is also why the Verdant Cloud Sect passed today's trial."

"Only those whose Dao resonates with the Heavenly Opportunity Realm, those willing to share opportunities with others, can give birth to a true immortal opportunity."

The phantom of the Sword Ancestor raised a hand and drew it gently through the air.

Immediately, an enormous gate appeared between heaven and earth.

As the morning sun slowly rose, the colossal gate gradually began to open.

The Sword Ancestor announced, "Very well."

"The Heavenly Opportunity Realm is now open."

"This is your next choice."

"Whether you enter or not..."

"Whether you live or die..."

"Whether you attain the Dao or lose everything..."

"...all depends upon your own fate."

"Those who wish to participate may step through this gate."

Within the Ghost Valley Sect's formation, Pang Zichuan's eyes widened.

"So that brat is from the Verdant Cloud Sect."

His expression darkened.

"Last time, spiritual energy was sealed away, and my abilities happened to be countered by his."

"But this time, If he dares enter the secret realm, I'll make sure he learns just how terrifying a living magical artifact really is."

Over in the Jade Pool Sect formation, Xiao Yue also stamped her foot angrily.

"You?"

"You actually think you're worthy of entering the Heavenly Opportunity Realm alongside me?"

A cold smile appeared on her face.

"Perfect."

"You walked right into this yourself."

"Originally, I only wanted everyone to see your true colors."

"But now..."

"...I'm going to make sure your path to immortality ends here."