



The Mountain Seeker

A Full English translation is available.

尋山人

Author: Tsaosu **Illustrator:** Tsaosu **Publisher:** KADOKAWA TAIWAN CORPORATION

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BFT2.0 Translator: Chris MacDonald

After graduating from university, Sung-ting Chi drifts through a series of short-lived jobs. Directionless, he's unsure of what to do with his life. Then a recruitment advertisement for forest rangers catches his eye. Sung-ting takes the test, submits the application, and, almost before he knows it, finds himself sworn in as a newly appointed forest ranger.

Soon, the novice ranger plunges into the realities of the job: mountain rescues, wildfire control, and high-stakes battles against poaching. Gradually, the work begins to change him. Standing amid Taiwan's lush, breathing forests, Sung-ting gradually understands what it means to protect the land.

A hopeful thought takes root: maybe this is the vocation he's been searching for all along.



Author Tsaosu

A graduate of the National Taiwan University of Arts, Tsaosu is a comic and illustration artist active in both independent publishing and collaborations with major publishers. Marked by her distinctive visual style and compelling narrative voice, her works span original zines, long-form comics, and digital serializations. Tsaosu is best known for *The Mountain Seeker*, published by KADOKAWA as part of the Creative Comic Collection (CCC), and for the ongoing webcomic *The Taoist's Apprentice and the Zombie Master*, which has garnered a devoted fan base.

A Novice Ranger Discovers His Calling Among the Trees and Mountains

by Eiger Hong

(originally published on [OUTSIDERS.COM.TW](https://outsiders.com.tw))

In Taiwan, where mountains are covered in forests, readers are invited to follow novice ranger Sung-ting Chi into the lush green forests.

Unlike most comics, which draw from fantasy, *The Mountain Seeker* is firmly grounded in reality. From daily tasks to equipment, almost everything reflects actual ranger life. “Since this is a real profession, I wanted to portray it respectfully,” the creator Tsaosu has explained.

With this book, readers step into the deep mountains, where bamboo grass and wild weeds rise to knee height. There are no trail markers, and one misstep could send you off-course—or even over a cliff. On his very first day as a forest

ranger, Chi cautiously follows his senior colleague across a narrow, fragile wooden plank bridge that seems ready to snap at any moment. Filled with anxiety, he lowers his voice and posture, joining the experienced rangers as they track signs of illegal loggers known as “mountain rats.”

When asked why she chose to depict the life of forest rangers, Tsaosu laughs. “Even though I’m an otaku-type comic artist, I actually enjoy hiking,” she says. “I often go on suburban trails with other comic artist friends. Because I love nature, I wanted to understand forest rangers better—and help more people learn about them through this comic.” She admits that before conducting research, her understanding of rangers was limited.

Tsaosu’s research greatly enriched her storytelling and sparked myriad ideas. One scene that deeply affected her was the damage caused by illegal logging. In a chapter titled “Tears of the Trees,” the protagonist stands before a severely scarred Taiwan incense cedar and reflects on its suffering. Tsaosu recalls, “When I followed the rangers to an illegal logging site, I saw massive trees disfigured in brutal ways. Poachers carve out valuable parts—especially burls—and carry them away. The trees are left mangled and scarred. To me, it looked like torture.”

In the book, Sung-ting struggles with past career failures and a lack of support from his family. By chance, he passes the exam to become a forest ranger. As he patrols the mountains—observing every plant and every shift in the landscape—he is not only protecting the forest. He realizes he has been searching for this all along: a mountain to anchor his life, a mountain he now wishes to protect forever. His uncertainty has gradually transformed into passion and purpose. “Isn’t this what so many people go through?” Tsaosu says. “You graduate, start a job you’re not sure suits you, and hesitate to quit. You feel lost about the future. But no matter how lost you are,

I believe everyone can eventually find a goal—just like Sung-ting.”

While *The Mountain Seeker* is a comic about forest rangers, it is also a story about life, purpose, and self-discovery. As readers follow Sung-ting’s growth and the challenges he overcomes, they may find themselves growing alongside him. The comic must eventually end, but this novice ranger’s journey will not. And in the real world, forest rangers will continue guarding the mountains, quietly inspiring more people to join this noble and deeply meaningful profession.

This essay has been edited for the purposes of this booklet.

Eiger Hong, whose full name is Meng-Fan Hong, is a Taiwan-based writer and content strategist with over a decade of experience in feature writing, interviewing, and editorial planning. His work spans magazines, books, digital media, and brand storytelling. As a dedicated freelancer, he collaborates with major platforms such as OUTSIDERS and Yahoo News, bringing thoughtful, well-crafted narratives to diverse audiences.





RRRA-AHI!

SPLIT UP!!

TWO OF THEM ARE MAKING A RUN FOR IT!!

GO AFTER THEM!!

STOP!!

THOSE TWO HAVE BOLTED!!

QUICK!!



WHAT DO I DO?

IT'S TOO STEEP!
WHAT DO I DO?

NO WAY?
DO I HAVE TO?

SHOULD I KEEP CHASING?

WHAT DO I DO?

SHIT!
JUMPING STRAIGHT DOWN FROM HERE?



SHIT!
HE'S RIGHT BEHIND ME!

