

DAILY LIFE OF A CULTIVATION JUDGE

Chapter 12 12: Last Week As A Superior Core Court Judge (12)

Cheng Yuan could only shake his head with worry at Wen Chang's question.

"All you ever think about is food. Can't you use your head a little bit? All this while haven't you ever noticed anything different in the sect? The massive changes that have been happening?"

Wen Chang could only snort in reply as she silently wondered

"What does Cheng Yuan expect? I'm a cow if I didn't think of food I'd be letting down my lineage not like I can start putting on a sage solemn look and start walking around the sect observing people and giving random advice on cultivation with high-sounding words. Especially when using that trashy transmission bead that distorts my voice."

Seeing her look Cheng Yuan could only give up and slowly explain things. Though he would have had to so the court could get a clearer picture.

"Ever since I took up the post of sect master of green fog swamp, it has been my dream to push it even further and not let it stay stuck at the position I got it in. Up until today, I thought we shared that dream with Elder Peng Zhen. The previous sect master had 3 disciples. Peng Zhen, me and Zou Wen. However, Zou Wen passed away during one of our sect missions.

When we were younger Peng Zhen was sure in for the sect master position. His talent far outmatched mine. The only thing I had going on for me was hard work. During those earlier years, he was always ahead of me in terms of cultivation.

He even broke through to the foundation stage when I was just in the 7th level of qi refinement despite starting cultivating at almost similar times. I was lucky that despite the gap, our master never neglected in guiding and assisting me

in my training. It was thanks to his continual guidance that I was able to break through to the foundation stage. At that time Peng Zhen was in the 3rd level.

But the pace at which he was proceeding started slowing down whereas mine seemed to be picking the higher up the levels I moved. In less than 5 years I had fully caught up with him and we were both at the 5th level of the foundation stage. Then the gap between our cultivation levels reversed from what it was during our younger days. I was in the lead this time. It only grew more and more with time. I soon reached the peak level of the foundation stage realm while he was stuck at the 8th level. I was a whole 4 realms above him. But in all this, not once did I see him disgruntled or show hints of envy or jealousy. He always seemed cordial and focused on his cultivation and the matters of the sect plus our master gave him the same attention and resources as I got. He had always tried to be impartial in his treatment of both of us.

It was only when I was firmly at the peak stage of foundation establishment that our master started grooming me to take over his position as the sect master of the sect. He was getting along in years and he didn't have much time left. He was a core formation expert but he ended up with a grave injury that left him with a cracked core.

If his core had been intact he was guaranteed to have a life expectancy of 3,500-5,000 years. However, due to the cracked core, he only had a life expectancy of at most 1,000 years and that time was almost up. With the capabilities of the sect, it was hard to search for or even afford a way to cure him. Thus the previous sect master decided rather than focus on something impossible he would use his remaining time and effort to ensure that either I or Peng Zhen would be able to reach the core formation realm and succeed him as the next sect master.

His tireless efforts in us finally paid off because I was eventually able to break through to the core formation stage. This was a relief to him and the burdens he had been carrying seemed to have left as he soon passed days later with a smile on his face leaving me to continue on.

I was young when I took over and was conscious enough to know I needed a lot of help. It was with that attitude that I sort my senior brother Peng Zhen. We grew up together and shared the same master. If there was anyone I trusted, it was him. He gladly agreed to share the burdens of the sect with me.

Together and along with others who joined along the way we managed to raise the sect to what it is today. We shared joys, sorrows, defeats, and have saved each other's lives countless times over in that period. I even spared no resources at the expense of the expansion of the sect to help Peng Zhen mend his foundation after he got gravely injured when attempting to break through to the core formation stage.

I remember how ecstatic I was when he showed me he had found a luminous star flower which is one of the 2 major ingredients for making a breakthrough potion for the core formation stage. That's why I was surprised at seeing it in the image of the treasure vault. I know how important it has been for Peng Zhen to break through to the next stage and how devastated he was when he failed the first time. He may pretend he moved on but I've known him since we were kids, he is not one to give up. His passion for cultivation is greater even than mine.

Now as for the other high-grade earth rank herbs you were asking about Wen Chang, they are all for pushing the sect forward. The previous sect master had banked all his hopes on me and Peng Zhen, even though well-meaning it was too risky to just push your bets on 2 people. You may succeed but the foundation of the sect will always be brittle.

This is why I promised myself when the sect was stable enough I would pour all the resources into a wider net. I've been focusing my efforts on the core disciples for this very reason.

I loosened the requirements for promotion to be a core disciple to get both those who were talented and those who are average but good enough to stand out a little. This is to ensure that even as we are focusing on the talents, the base strength of the sect will not be lacking.

This drew a lot of pushback within the sect. Because for my plan to work I had to reduce the quota of resources the elders and also what some of the halls used to get. Then you came along things didn't get any easier we had to pinch some more. But after the struggles, the harvests are already starting to show and there is still room for more and those high-grade earth rank herbs will help with that.

We now have 50 foundation stage members having only had 16 before and hundreds of qi and body refining experts. Of the 50 there are already some promising talents who I feel have the capacity to successfully break through to the core formation realm.

Some elders felt their position threatened with the rise of this many foundation-level disciples and also because I've been trying more and more to get these 34 members to have key positions within the running of the sect. Some have even reached the 7th level of the foundation realm which is the basic requirement to qualify as an elder in our sect. I gladly promoted them once their character and strength proved satisfactory. Therefore for the past few years, all the new elders of the sect have been young.

This drew further dissatisfaction from a group of elders however, the loudest were the ones you just mentioned. Elder Gui Bingwen had issues because I reduced his duties as the vice head of the disciplinary hall in favor of a newly promoted elder. Elder Jia Tingfeng had an issue because I took over all his

training of the core disciples which had been a source of people to bring into his faction. I reduced the number of herbs allocated for Elder Hao Ye's alchemy experiments in favor of other elders whose research was in line with my goals. As for Elder Dong Yanlin, he handles the external affairs of the sect. As far as I can tell we didn't have any feuds. But I'm not surprised to hear him mentioned as he became an elder from Peng Zhen's recommendation even though his strength at the time didn't qualify him to be one. Peng Zhen advocated that he was good with people and he could help the sect in forming connections with other sects or cultivation organizations.

A number of the beast-taming sects we were consulting with, we managed to invite them due to his efforts.

Lastly for the sky rank herbs well 3 of them are for use by anyone who will reach the peak of formation first to help refine their foundation more to increase their chances of a breakthrough to the core formation realm. As for the remaining 3 I managed to make a deal with the Golden bamboo treasure pavilion to trade them the 3 sky rank herbs for a 10-meter length leafy branch of the rainbow cloud tree that is at least 5,000 years old.

The leaves and the branch of that tree are better at awakening some of your bloodline talents better than the Tupelo leaves could.

The beast tamer sects may know more about spirit beast cultivation than I do but when it comes to the Tupelo no one in the sect can match me. They did say the Tupelo leaves can help but they were not certain of it but only conjecturing based on some of the effects they have heard of the tree.

But I've been around the tree longer than they have and so has Peng Zhen. And here is what he failed to mention to you as he was busy saying how I hid that truth from you. Over the years the sect has tried to use the leaves from the Tupelo tree. Through that use, we discovered the leaves from that tree have a bizarre allelopathic quality. To one person it may offer beneficial

properties like healing their wounds despite how severe, refining their bodies, help increase their talent at qi sensing and refining among others however to another person those same leaves result in qi poisoning, sealing meridians, or in worse cases, it may cripple your foundation.

We don't know how and why it is beneficial to others while a detrimental danger to others. That's why we decided it was risky to give you the leaves and you end up triggering the detrimental effects.

All the effort we put in would go down the drain. Peng Zhen was also in agreement as did the other elders present in the discussion. It was a unanimous decision to not feed you the Tupelo leaves.

But all this doesn't matter now as I suspect Peng Zhen has cleaned out the sect treasury and even robbed us of the Tupelo tree. I can only hope he hasn't damaged our foundation by killing off the core disciples. If he has then Green fog swamp will truly be finished." Cheng Yuan couldn't help but lament towards the end.

In the meanwhile, Wen Chang had a dull look on her face. She couldn't believe all she had heard. Everything she had known and believed to be true had just been upended. If what Sect Master Chen Yuan said was true then she'd end up the biggest sinner of the sect. No amount of emerald leaf milk could undo the damage she would have caused to the sect because of her naivety.

Her mental state seemed to be unstable at this moment with violent qi fluctuations surrounding her massive body.