

My Master 83

Chapter 83: We Cultivators_1

Ling Xi was oblivious to Bei Yan's inner ridicule, and quickly continued her moral lecturing, "How could such a person of noble character accept the benefits we offer him? That would be an insult to the gentleman's pure integrity! You! Now! Immediately apologize to the gentleman!"

Chen Shizhi almost spat out a mouthful of old blood when he heard this, growing increasingly suspicious that Cao Zhen wasn't actually here to deal with Yi Sheng at all! It was likely that the entire Four Treasures Peak knew they would get nothing from Yi Sheng! So they did the exact opposite, intentionally coming here to disgust others, taking the moral high ground to morally blackmail!

"Yes, yes, Senior Sister is right," the chubby Little Bei Yan bowed to Chen Shizhi with his fists clasped, speaking perfunctorily, "Mr. Chen is of noble character, and I, your disciple, have been petty-minded. Please, Mr. Chen, forgive and pardon me."

Chen Shizhi felt like he was about to burst from anger; these disciples from Four Treasures Peak were infuriating—one pretending to be indifferent with a book, one stabbing him with words without speaking, and the last seemingly respectful but every word sounded like moral blackmail!

Four Treasures Peak! Not a single good thing!

Chen Shizhi regretted why he had to seek benefits from Four Treasures Peak at all. It would have been better to send them away right then and accept the benefits from the seventy-third Peak Master instead.

"Little Bei Yan, out you go!" Ling Xi pointed toward the courtyard gate and said, "Don't gabble here."

Bei Yan shrugged indifferently and turned to leave, while Xiang Ziyu, who was standing by reading a book, said, "Senior Sister, you don't have to be so worried. I am the protagonist, under my influence, any genius will become my follower. If anyone is foolish enough to stand against me, their outcome will surely be tragic. Just relax..."

"You too, get out!" Ling Xi's chest heaved with anger. If it weren't for being in Returning Heart Taoist Hall, she would have already executed the family law on behalf of their absent master!

Xiang Ziyu rarely took his eyes off the book, giving Ling Xi a disappointed look. Finally, he shook his head and moved to the courtyard entrance, muttering, "Lucky you're my dear Senior Sister, otherwise, with the way you treat the protagonist, even if I didn't mind, the Heavenly Dao would dislike you. But alas, who lets you be my dear Senior Sister..."

Seeing that her two junior brothers had left the yard, Ling Xi quickly bowed with her hands clasped, "Sir, my two junior brothers were out of line just now..."

Chen Shizhi held back his anger, thinking to himself that she was actually the worst when it came to moral blackmail. "I can't just let you disgust me for nothing. This time, even if you are steel-clad roosters, I'll pluck a feather from you."

"I heard the gentleman mention earlier that Yi Sheng is also interested in our Four Treasures Peak?" Ling Xi continued with her hands clasped, "Could the gentleman please put in a good word for us?"

Put in a good word? Why should I? Chen Shizhi sneered inwardly, but outwardly he said, "That's difficult, Yi Sheng said he hopes to be fair to every peak. If I brought you to meet him, that wouldn't be fair to the others. However, I can try to leave a better impression of you in front of Yi Sheng."

"Thank you so much, sir!" Ling Xi bowed again and again.

At that moment, Chen Shizhi abruptly changed the subject, "My dear junior, as a schoolmate of your master, I won't hide things from you. Yi Sheng's family is poor, lacking sufficient resources for immortal cultivation. Many Peak Masters have asked me to give him some Spiritual Stones and Spiritual Medicine, but I have refused them all. I fear that accepting these items would reduce his fondness for Four Treasures Peak. But if you can show that you would like him to accept the benefits, how do you think he would view Four Treasures Peak?"

"He would consider our Four Treasures Peak to be a despicable mountain that relies on bribery!"

Just as Ling Xi was persuaded and about to offer money, Cao Zhen's voice rang out from outside the courtyard gate.

Hearing the voice of his master, Xiang Ziyu said without looking up, "As expected of the protagonist's master."

Bei Yan, who was frustrated that his senior sister had sent him out, couldn't help but ask, "What do you mean by 'as expected'?"

"You just don't get it, huh?" Xiang Ziyu put down the book in his hand, showing a face full of smugness, "You should read more books and you'd understand. Side characters always find themselves in life-or-death situations, on the verge of disaster when the protagonist will make a grand entrance, as if timed perfectly. Just as senior sister was about to be conned into giving money, master appeared. Having spent so much time with me, he has absorbed a bit of my protagonist's aura."

"Makes sense!" Bei Yan raised his thumb and said, "No wonder master said he'd take you to see a doctor once he's less busy. I'll suggest to master that he should take you sooner rather than later... if not, I'm afraid you might be beyond help."

"Heh... side character..." Xiang Ziyu shook his head with a resigned expression and went back to his script.

"Master..."

When Cao Zhen noticed Ling Xi, he immediately activated all of his mana for a burst of speed and stretched out his hand.

"Disciple pays respects to master!"

Ling Xi stepped back and then knelt down with both knees, bowing her head to Cao Zhen.

Cao Zhen's outstretched hand froze in mid-air. Both of his realms were at the Great Perfection of Perfect Visions, and his third realm also showcased Visions. He was an existence that could squash his eldest disciple with a single finger, yet even with all his might, he failed to help his disciple up.

"You first get up," Cao Zhen felt a wave of frustration rise within him, turning around to stride towards Chen Shizhi and gave him a big hug.

This hug confused Chen Shizhi; he even sensed a hint of sincerity from the other party during that brief embrace.

"Good brother!" Cao Zhen released Chen Shizhi, placing his hands on his shoulders and said, "I know you're looking out for me, wanting to increase the strength of our Four Treasures Peak, but it's really not necessary! We have enough talent at Four Treasures Peak already."

Chen Shizhi felt increasingly unable to read Cao Zhen. Wasn't the disciple sent out just before what he had wanted? Why did he suddenly change his stance when he showed up in person? Was this some new scheme to get me to recruit for him for free?

At that moment, Cao Zhen slung his arm around Chen Shizhi's shoulder and whispered close to him, "Brother, sorry about that. Those dirty words I said just now... I was actually saying them for the disciples to hear..."

A smile of understanding broke across Chen Shizhi's face. As expected! Cao Zhen was just putting on an act here; he still wanted Yi Sheng.

Cao Zhen continued to whisper, "Actually, by saying that, it was mainly for the sake of our Four Treasures Peak..."

"I know, I know..." Chen Shizhi revealed a tacit, knowing smile.

Cao Zhen happily said, "Good to know you understand! By saying that, I've cut off the possibility of our Four Treasures Peak paying money. In this way, if Yi Sheng finds out, he'll definitely feel scorned by us, and naturally, he won't join Four Treasures Peak..."

"What!" Chen Shizhi found himself once again unable to read Cao Zhen.

"Think about it," Cao Zhen tightened his arm around Chen Shizhi's shoulder, bringing them even closer before continuing quietly, "with me bellowing like that, wouldn't people from the other peaks hear it? I'm giving them a heads up to bring you gifts! And hey! Don't be so stubborn... You should accept gifts! Give a part to Yi Sheng and keep the majority for yourself! It's not easy being a teacher, is it?"

"Cao Zhen, how can you think of me like that?" Chen Shizhi extended his hand to push against Cao Zhen's chest, trying to push him away, while looking at him with dissatisfaction.

Seeing Chen Shizhi's reaction, Cao Zhen also heaved a heavy sigh, thinking to himself that Chen Shizhi was indeed as inflexible as the memories he had received suggested! Stuck in his ways! A stickler for propriety! Such a great money-making opportunity and he wasn't taking advantage of it. Instead, he was always thinking of helping his peers!

For a time, the residual memories that Cao Zhen had received once again surfaced in his mind.

"Cao Zhen, we cultivators should seek integrity in straightforwardness, not gain through crooked means!"

"Cao Zhen, we cultivators can be poor, but we must have integrity! I admire you! You didn't take advantage of that situation earlier, and you didn't seek the small benefit of those few Spirit Stones. You've got backbone! Since I know about it, wait here for me! I'll give that person a piece of my mind too!"

"Cao Zhen, I gave that person a piece of my mind, and it felt great! Come on! I'll treat you to a pancake! I'll pay! Where did I get the money? I did some work for the teachers a few days ago, and they gave me some Spiritual Money! No need to save it, let's enjoy it together!"

"Congratulations on becoming a disciple of Four Treasures Peak! Go ahead, and don't worry about me. I will surely become a teacher at the Taoist Institution, and when I do, I'll recommend the best disciples to you!"

Reminded of all this, Cao Zhen pulled Chen Shizhi, who was trying to wriggle out of his embrace, even closer and whispered softly, "Old Chen, I really don't see you like that. I just hope you can be a bit more flexible. Take advantage of this opportunity, strike a deal with a more prestigious peak, help them secure Yi Sheng, and get them to take you in as an official member too..."

Chen Shizhi's cheeks burned with heat, suspecting that Cao Zhen might have heard some rumor, knowing that he had no chance of recruiting Yi Sheng, and had therefore deliberately come to irk him! After all, the other was a Peak Master too, and it wasn't beyond possibility for masters to boast over drinks when they've had too much.

"Old Chen, just take my advice this once!" Cao Zhen said earnestly, "Absolutely, absolutely! Do not say a single good thing about Four Treasures Peak in front of Yi Sheng! If you've already praised us before, find a way to slander our Four Treasures Peak, you must slander us!"

"I can't do that! I absolutely won't slander!" Chen Shizhi shook his head firmly, his expression resolute, "I must speak well of you! Old Cao, Four Treasures Peak is too weak! This is such a great opportunity, I must help you seize it. As for whether it can be done, it's hard to say. But I'll do my best!"

"That's not up to you, I've come here to drop out of this disciple recruitment conference," Cao Zhen said with a smile.

Chen Shizhi felt he finally understood Cao Zhen's motive. Was it because Four Treasures Peak had been getting a lot of attention lately, and it would be a loss of face if they didn't select a disciple this time? So he came to test me, and hearing that I could only try for Yi Sheng and not necessarily get him, he decided to opt out to save face?

Do you think you can just preserve face as you please? After mentally sneering, Chen Shizhi said, "Old Cao, didn't you know? The rules of the Hundred Peaks Sect state, once you register, you can't withdraw."

Cao Zhen wanted to turn his head and give Ling Xi a glare, to chastise her, but then he thought of her kowtowing skills and decided to let it be.