

Three Realms 1461

[Sovereign of the Three Realms \(WN\)](#)

Chapter 1461: Three Years Seclusion

Jiang Chen had already obtained three of the four legendary beasts. Even though the True Dragon and Astral White Tiger were still younglings, he was more than aware of their potential. The speed of their growth was no less than amazing.

Unfortunately, the environment of the human domain was a far cry from that of the ancient times. Many spirit veins had been destroyed in the ancient demonic war, causing energy levels in the environment to dwindle.

It was the main reason why various factions in the human domain could no longer produce worthy successors. The land was no longer fertile enough to develop such talents.

To put it into simpler terms, the human domain was living through an era of great decline. The amount of available qi had dwindled greatly, while various resources were running out. The human race was at its lowest of lows.

This was an unavoidable issue faced by every living being on the land. Thus, Jiang Chen desperately wanted to increase his cultivation levels to head for Myriad Abyss Island.

According to Huang'er's descriptions, the island should be filled with abundant qi and powerful experts, mirroring the Divine Abyss Continent of ancient times.

A man should always aim for greater heights.

Jiang Chen's roots were firmly planted in the human domain, but it'd long since become a bottleneck. Breakthroughs would only grow more difficult and infrequent if he didn't seek greener pastures. A place devoid of qi would ground him from his pursuit of the heavenly dao.

He had to leave!

However, he had to achieve a certain level of strength before leaving, or death would only await him on the path ahead. His foes wouldn't show him mercy just because he was the Celestial Emperor's son, nor would his journey be uneventful just because of his past knowledge.

All kinds of danger lay in wait on the path ahead. They would appear without warning or reason and be impossible to avoid.

The events of Agarwood Valley were an excellent example. There was nothing Jiang Chen had been able to do against the empyrean experts or the demon lord. Facing them head on would've only caused immeasurable hardship or death.

"The Divine Abyss Continent is vast beyond measure. The world map has experienced countless alterations since the ancient times. Perhaps the human domain is the size of a pea. The Southern Celestial tribe was far weaker than us in the ancient era, but now they can easily send three empyrean experts to us. The grimness of our situation has far exceeded my imagination."

After the ancient war, Boundary Steles isolated the human race from the outside world. Thus, humans knew very little about the situation beyond their territory.

Jiang Chen was blessed with boundless knowledge from his previous life, but as the young lord of Veluriyam Capital, the fate of the human race was in his hands. He couldn't help but feel like a frog at the bottom of a well.

He had to become stronger! Much stronger!

Strength was his greatest desire!

His closed door cultivation lasted for three years, longer than any of his previous stints. Three years in the palace was on par with ten years in the outside world.

"Time flies." Jiang Chen sighed gently. "Three years have gone by in a blink of an eye, but they haven't gone to waste."

He could feel the changes in his body. A powerful energy was circulating inside of him, filling his body with vitality. He seemed to have grown much stronger.

Sixth level! Still a hair's breadth away from advanced emperor realm...

He had grown immensely stronger in these three years, rising to sixth level emperor realm in one fell swoop. Unfortunately, he'd fell slightly short of his goal. The seventh level was just a tiny step away.

Momentum was a very important factor in cultivation. If one failed to reach one's goals the first time around, the second attempt would be less effective than the first.

However, Jiang Chen didn't take his frustration out on himself. Overzealousness was often counterproductive. It was better to slow down his pace to search for inspiration and consolidate his cultivation. The next breakthrough might arrive sooner than expected.

Seventh level emperor realm was an enormous hurdle. It wasn't impossible for Jiang Chen at the moment as he'd already reached the limits of his current momentum. However willing he might be, he no longer had the requisite stamina.

Any continued effort would only be a waste of time and energy.

Three years was a very brief amount of time in the martial dao world, but to Jiang Chen, it was far too long. Many were waiting for him in the outside world.

After consolidating his level, he began honing his foundation and martial techniques. His treasures and methods also had to be sharpened in accordance to his increase in strength.

"My arsenal of killing devices grows larger and larger. The Heavenly Chalice Sword Formation, an ancient divine bow, the True Spirit Post, the Divine Five Thunderclap Sword..."

They were all tricks up his sleeve, and the more the merrier.

He didn't forget to refine the golden magnetic mountain, Bewitching Lotus of Fire and Ice, or the Earth Bodhisattva Orb either.

They were treasures that grew stronger with their user. For the magnetic golden mountain and the Bewitching Lotus of Fire and Ice, all he did was consolidate their growth as he already knew them from the inside-out after constant usage throughout the years.

The Earth Bodhisattva Orb however, he never had uncovered its true might. In other words, it was being squandered in his hands.

The Orb is a peerless earth attribute treasure only being used for child's play. There was simply too many good items in his possession. The orb was an unrivalled treasure, but he hadn't had the time to study and fully utilize it.

I'll have to look for some powerful earth attribute arts to better utilize the Orb. He was actually very fond of it. This was a treasure that could summon earth pulses!

It was the same case when looking at the Primosanct Sect; neither the divine bow or True Spirit Post was anything less than amazing. There was no way that a supreme treasure from an ancient sect unrivalled in certain aspects could be useless.

Jiang Chen wasn't overzealous. He had a vast repertoire of earth attribute techniques from his previous life, but there were various factors to consider before he could select the most suitable one.

After all, he could only extract a tiny sliver of the orb's potential. The Earth Bodhisattva Sect primarily used it to power formations, but Jiang Chen was reluctant to do the same. He didn't want to squander this precious item for such a niche use. If possible, it should be utilized during battle.

"I can now control twenty-five of the flying swords. I have officially begun my grasp of the formation. I can take on even an ordinary great emperor in battle now!"

Jiang Chen's grasp of the Heavenly Chalice Sword Formation had improved by leaps and bounds. He was greatly attuned with it and had practiced it ceaselessly from the very beginning.

Upon his breakthrough to seventh emperor realm, the formation would finally reach the realm of perfection. He'd be able to control thirty-six swords then, vastly increasing his power output.

This was the formation's greatest appeal. Every elevation in proficiency allowed one to control even more swords. The mysteries of the formation would grow more complex with increased sword count, vastly increasing its strength and lethality.

Of course, the realm of perfection was merely the halfway point. The great perfection, supreme, and legendary realms would take the formation to the next level.

Unfortunately, these realms were extremely difficult to attain. It was impossible for Jiang Chen at his current cultivation level. Even the realm of perfection was already proving to be a great hurdle.

He was confident that upon his breakthrough to seventh emperor realm, he could easily slay great emperors with the formation if they were caught off guard.

What was proving even more unruly than the formation was the Primosanct Sect's divine bow. Even at sixth emperor realm, Jiang Chen could only extract a tiny fraction of the bow's strength. He estimated that he hadn't even extracted a tenth of its true potential.

He held the bow in his hand and gently caressed his fingers over the simple yet impeccably shaped bow. Its ancient aura left him flabbergasted.

He could feel the bow's might through his consciousness. It felt like he'd gone back in time and personally witnessed the bow's dominance and slaughter of countless experts in the ancient era. Such might and killing intent could only be honed from the baptism of countless slaughters.

The bow had definitely been an unparalleled treasure in the ancient era. As he caressed the bow, he suddenly noticed that there were words etched onto the inner side of the bow. They couldn't be discerned through touch alone. By using his Evil Golden Eye in tandem with the God's Eye, Jiang Chen could finally make out what was etched onto the bow.

They were ancient characters.

"Property of Ling Dan. A divine dragon in the north sea passed away and left its remains behind. Its bones and tendons were used to create this bow, thus the bow shall be named the Holy Dragon Bow..."

Ling Dan?

Jiang Chen suddenly recalled that the founding forefather of the Primosanct Sect, also the person who saved the eight Primordial Stone Golems, was called Saint Dan.

Perhaps Saint Dan and Ling Dan were the same person?

[Sovereign of the Three Realms \(WN\)](#)

Chapter 1462: The Order of Wind and Cloud?

Jiang Chen was a bit confused. If Ling Dan was the very same Saint Dan of the Primosanct Sect, how come the 'dan' characters were written differently?

Both were pronounced the same as the character for 'pill'. Did he have something to do with pills, then?

Perhaps the primordial era was too far in the distant past. A founder's name could easily get muddled by the swirls of time. Was it possible that this had been an honest mistake?

Jiang Chen laughed despite himself. "There's not much point in being too serious about this. Whether or not Ling Dan is Saint Dan, this legendary ancient bow is definitely a treasure of the Primosanct Sect. So its true name is the Holy Dragon Bow, huh? A weapon forged from the forgotten corpse of a divine dragon of the northern sea, a relic of the primordial era. No wonder this bow is so naturally and effortlessly regal.

"Even in the heavenly planes, this bow would be quite a respectable weapon. It must have accompanied Ling Dan in countless battles and slain that many foes." Jiang Chen could tangibly feel the bow's killing aura. There had to be some kind of reason for its developing, and the most likely was its repeated usage in warfare, reaping, and conquest.

He liked the bow very much so. It was an extremely powerful weapon of mass destruction. Though he could only access about a tenth of its full strength, that didn't dampen his excitement to refine it.

Jiang Chen had always had a remarkable talent for archery. He'd used the Da Yu bow and Sunpiercer in the past. Both weapons had accompanied him for a long time.

The Holy Dragon Bow, carrying destructive potential that was hundreds or thousands of times his past weapons, was going to be even more potent.

“Maintaining fine control over one’s shots requires perfect harmony with both bow and arrow. All martial arts under heaven are imbued with dao. Sword techniques involve sword dao, blade techniques require blade dao, and the bow has its own dao as well. In fact, the dao of weaponry is commutative to a certain extent...”

Jiang Chen used his consciousness to feel every inch of the bow’s detail. Each bit of space upon the weapon’s surface was filled with the intense presence of the primordial era. It was as if the bow carried incredible stories within every fiber of its being.

His understanding of the primordial era itself deepened through communing with the bow. Subconsciously, he’d almost returned to that antiquated time; one that was filled with brutal, exhilarating battle and primal, frenzied conquest.

.....

Three months passed.

Jiang Chen awoke with a start. He snatched at the air for a message glyph.

Something must’ve happened outside. There was no reason for a disturbance during closed door cultivation otherwise. He activated the glyph, allowing the message within to flicker into his mind.

“The Order of Wind and Cloud?” Jiang Chen blinked. The message mentioned that this peculiar faction had bizarrely risen within the very short span of the past four years.

It had garnered so much momentum as to overtake most of the first rank sects. Its headquarters was located to the west of the Upper Eight Regions, in a place called Unbounded Mid Region.

This region was located very close to the Heavenly Dragon Sect, which made it reasonably close to the Ninesuns Sky Sect as well. It was almost wedged in between the two sects. It had another neighbor: Phoenix Cry Lower Region, the region that contained Agarwood Valley.

The glyph mentioned a large-scale conflict between the Order and the Heavenly Dragon Sect half a year ago over ownership of a mine.

It had concluded with the total defeat of the latter. Heavenly Dragon’s sect head, Long Zhe, had suffered a grievous injury to the degree of his cultivation being completely crippled. Terrified, the sect had sent out requests for assistance to its peers.

Unfortunately, because of its customary arrogance, the sect’s relationship with the other first rank sects of the Upper Eight was lukewarm at best. Its requests fell on deaf ears.

The Heavenly Dragon Sect then resorted to self-preservation via turtling within the sect itself. Its territory had largely been taken over by the Order, so much so that the majority of its holdings were no longer its own.

Because of this devastating blow to its forces and finances, the Heavenly Dragon Sect had little ability to actively oppose the Order of Wind and Cloud. There were even rumors that Long Zhe had died of his injuries.

Long Zhe's cultivation level was very close to both Emperor Peafowl and Pillzenith's. Aside from the generally acknowledged hegemon of Veluriyam, there were essentially no existing factions that could hope to rival the Heavenly Dragon Sect.

After all, it was originally ranked at the top of the first rank sects. At its high point, it had stood alongside the Ninesuns Sky Sect and the Great Yu Skysword Sect as the strongest among its peers.

It was astonishing for it to have suffered such a devastating loss now that Pillfire was gone. The entire human domain shared in the shock. The Order of Wind and Cloud had drawn the collective attention of the human domain.

Moreover, there were rumors on the wind that the Order was planning on making a move against the Ninesuns Sky Sect. Ninesuns and Heavenly Dragon were the two jaws of a pincer. If they closed around the Order's headquarters, they could surely deal an incredible amount of damage.

Alas, relations between the two sects had never been particularly harmonious. Because both parties desired the title of foremost among the first rank sects, they had a tradition of private squabbling.

In fact, the Ninesuns Sky Sect had felt some schadenfreude when they saw the Heavenly Dragon Sect suffer. Only when the Order set their sights on the sect did the latter realize that the two neighboring sects shared a common lot. This understanding came a little late, however.

The Heavenly Dragon Sect no longer had the strength to fight, much less ally with the Ninesuns Sky Sect in a struggle to the death. This meant that Ninesuns had to face the Order's blade alone.

The Ninesuns Sky Sect was forced to the edge of desperation. Originally, it neighbored both the Heavenly Dragon Sect and the Eternal Celestial Capital.

Jiang Chen had quashed the Eternal Celestial Capital and the Heavenly Dragon Sect was now out of commission. With that, the Order's territories spanned multiple upper regions.

Because of the urgency of the situation, the Ninesuns Sky Sect sorely felt the absence of any close allies. It was forced to request help from Veluriyam Capital.

Jiang Chen frowned when he finished perusing the glyph's contents. "Where did this Order of Wind and Cloud come from? Is this the mastermind behind those imposters a couple years back?"

He had a few guesses of his own brewing. It was impossible for the rise of such a colossus to have been anything other than premeditated. It was much more likely that the Order of Wind and Cloud had begun planning and preparation far earlier.

Perhaps it had already laid down decades of hidden groundwork and it was simply this recent opportunity that allowed the sect to come into the light. How could a budding sect like that overwhelm an experienced first rank sect like the Heavenly Dragon Sect otherwise?

Jiang Chen went over the glyph a few more times, making sure he hadn't missed anything.

“The Ninesuns Sky Sect seems pretty useless in this situation. Why is it showing weakness before even a preliminary skirmish? How is it supposed to fight after throwing away its spirit?” He could see the sect’s timidity through its decisions.

Still, the sect’s attitude was understandable in the end. If the Heavenly Dragon Sect had lost so badly, there wasn’t much reason to think the Ninesuns Sky Sect – very nearly its equal – was going to fare much better. It had been wise of them to request aid beforehand.

In any case, it was much better than the Heavenly Dragon Sect’s attempted gambit. What use was asking for help when trouble was already at one’s door? There was no time for any interested helpers to gather information or prepare.

“It seems I must stop cultivating for now.” The message glyph changed Jiang Chen’s plans for the immediate future. Without his intervention, the chaos in the outside world would only multiply.

.....

Within the Empyrean River Palace, the palace head held a secret letter in his hands. His expression was serious, clearly at a difficult crossroads.

“What does the letter say, Palace Head?” Standing nearby, a venerated elder of the palace asked eagerly.

“Ah, where did this Order of Wind and Cloud come from?” The Empyrean River Palace head sighed softly. “In this letter, there’s a demand for us to make a decision within three months whether or not to surrender to them.”

“Surrender to the Order?” The venerated elder frowned. “Ridiculous! What are they thinking? How dare a four-year-old upstart speak to us so!”

“Well, that’s what they did,” the palace head smiled wryly. “After defeating the Heavenly Dragon Sect, they’re qualified to a certain extent to do so.”

“Hmph! Is Veluriyam going to ignore all this?” The venerated elder had finally remembered a helping hand in this time of trouble.

“Veluriyam... hasn’t made their opinion known yet. They did nothing when the Heavenly Dragon Sect was crushed, and they haven’t announced anything yet regarding the coming battle between the Order and the Ninesuns Sky Sect... I’m worried that the city still may not care very much about us northern sects. A lingering grudge may exist still because of what the northern coalition did a few years ago.”

The Heavenly Dragon Sect and the Empyrean River Palace had both belonged to that alliance. Even though Jiang Chen hadn’t ended up destroying these sects in the end, this didn’t mean he had forgiven them. In particular, he wasn’t necessarily going to help them out of sticky situations.

And though Ninesuns hadn’t participated in the northern coalition, Emperor Newsun had partially done so in its stead. He’d proven an imposter in the end, but who knew what Jiang Chen really thought?

There was no indication of an olive branch from Veluriyam despite Ninesuns’s current danger.

“Palace Head,” the venerated elder intoned in a low voice, “Pillfire City used to coerce us into many things for countless years. Are we going to let the Order do the same? How can we possibly suffer the same injustice twice without resistance?”

Its experience with Pillfire alone had been shameful enough in the past. Was it going to make a repeat performance after receiving Veluriyam’s clemency?

What if the Order went to fight Veluriyam in the end? Were they going to serve as hapless peons once more?

That kind of shame was deadly enough on its own.

[Sovereign of the Three Realms \(WN\)](#)

Chapter 1463: The Ninesuns Sky Sect Requests Backup

Deep down, the palace head didn’t want something so miserable to happen to the Empyrean River Palace. They had followed Pillfire City out of necessity; because it was the city’s closest neighbor. Pillfire had plenty of ways to subjugate them unwillingly.

Even if that kind of effort wouldn’t have destroyed them completely, it would have weakened and sidelined them out of the ranks of the first rank sects. Without Pillfire, they would be intentionally degrading themselves if they voluntarily joined the Order of Wind and Cloud.

Jiang Chen hadn’t overrun them last time, but that didn’t mean he would hesitate to do so this time. After thinking about it for a long while, the palace head rubbed the letter between his fingers, reducing it to dust.

“Forget it all. The Empyrean River Palace has erred once, and we will not do that again. The Order’s rapid rise must have a hidden faction and agenda behind it. Perhaps tempests are looming on the horizon again. It may be wise for the Empyrean River Palace to take shelter...”

“Palace Head, self-preservation is the worst strategy.” The venerated elder shook his head. “I think we must look instead to Veluriyam’s attitude. Young lord Jiang Chen has ambition, acumen, and ability. He isn’t going to idly stand by and allow the Order to rampage freely. It’s impossible that the new faction isn’t rousing Veluriyam’s ire. I think that Veluriyam hasn’t made its thoughts known yet because it might be observing everyone in secret. Testing our reactions, maybe?”

These words were a sharp reminder to the palace head. The elder was right. Veluriyam was the publicly acknowledged leading faction of the entire human domain. It should have been the most sensitive and reactionary to a faction as ravenous as the Order.

Why hadn’t it reacted yet, given that information?

Could anyone guarantee this wasn’t a test of loyalty?

.....

The Sublime Chord Temple and the Moon God Sect received similar missives at almost the same time. The Order’s ambitions were blatantly on show within.

The Great Yu Skysword Sect and the Celestial Cicada Court, however, didn't. It seemed that the Order was still mildly wary of Veluriyam.

There was no panic on Veluriyam's side. Its high-level leadership had experienced plenty of winds and waves before now.

Having seen the ease with which young lord Jiang Chen had smashed the originally arrogant Pillfire City, the momentum of the current Order didn't intimidate the city.

In the Veluriyam of today, Emperor Peafowl was seldom mentioned anymore. Young lord Jiang Chen's status and prestige these days had surpassed even their erstwhile ruler for three thousand years.

It wasn't that the city was particularly forgetful or ungrateful, mind you. Jiang Chen's accomplishments were simply too remarkable to ignore. In the last ten thousand years at least, there hadn't been a young genius that could pull off anything remotely similar to him.

Not everyone could be so calm about the Order though. One such impatient man was Shangguan Yanqing, the inspector of the Ninesuns Sky Sect. He'd participated in the Dragon and Tiger Meet, impressing Jiang Chen with his upright attitude. His existence was a lubricant between the young man and his sect.

Now that Ninesuns was under threat from the Order, he was the man for the tough job of requesting help from Veluriyam Capital. The reason was very simple: he was the one who hit it off best with Jiang Chen.

The Ninesuns Sky Sect had steered clear of the northern coalition affair a few years ago. 'Emperor Newsun' hadn't managed to fool them into participating. This decision meant that there was no enmity at all between Veluriyam and the sect.

The revelation of the imposter's deceit hadn't revealed the whereabouts of the real man. It was precisely because of the lack of stiffness between Ninesuns and Jiang Chen that the sect thought it prudent to request his assistance.

The two venerated elders most embittered against the youth, Wu Gong and Chen Lei, had no opposition to the motion.

The Order's hard attitude had quite isolated the Ninesuns Sky Sect. Without relying on Veluriyam's strength, they could very well become the second Heavenly Dragon Sect. Just recalling that sect's near-destruction in such a short time frame terrified the entire Ninesuns Sky Sect. There was no schadenfreude left, only a strange sadness for a comparable rival.

It'd been almost three months since Shangguan Yanqing's arrival at Veluriyam. Unfortunately, everyone told him that Jiang Chen was in closed door cultivation.

In the world of martial dao, closed door cultivation was only slightly less important than matters of true life and death.

In other words, people behind closed doors weren't usually to be disturbed without exceptional emergency. It was easy to create a cultivation deviation with the interruption.

“Daoist Coiling Dragon, when is young lord Jiang Chen coming out of cultivation? Do you have a timeframe of some sort?” Shangguan Yanqing was extremely anxious.

“How would I know when the young lord finishes his seclusion?” Emperor Coiling Dragon smiled wryly. “I daresay the young lord himself wouldn’t be able to give you a specific date.”

Shangguan Yanqing was about to burst into flame. “The enemy is at the gate. The Order is extremely ambitious. Unsatisfied with the Heavenly Dragon Sect alone, it now moves against the Ninesuns Sky Sect. If we can’t stop it in its tracks, the human domain will suffer more than it ever did under Pillfire City!”

This wasn’t entirely exaggeration. The Order’s recent actions had indeed sent the human domain into a panic.

Pillfire was once quite fierce, but never so overtly as the Order was now being. To put it bluntly, it hadn’t had the gall. The Heavenly Dragon Sect and the Ninesuns Sky Sect had been wary of Pillfire, but never particularly afraid. The Order, on the other hand, had inspired plenty of fear into Ninesuns.

Suddenly, Emperor Coiling Dragon’s face brightened. He looked down the hall. “Young lord!”

The other great emperors collectively stood up as well. Jiang Chen’s reappearance had given them back their confidence. Their eyes lit up with enthusiasm.

Jiang Chen swept his eyes across the room. Almost every expert in the city was congregated here. There was an additional guest as well: Shangguan Yanqing.

“Inspector Shangguan, how are you doing?” Jiang Chen smiled at the man in greeting.

For Shangguan Yanqing, the sight of Jiang Chen was like a parched man in the desert catching sight of an oasis. He rushed up to the youth. “Young lord Jiang Chen, you’re finally available again.”

“Don’t be in such a hurry, Shangguan Yanqing. I know about the Order. But since I’m so freshly out of seclusion, I haven’t finished many of my considerations. If any of you have any specific tidbits about the Order, please do let me know.”

“The Order is lording it over absolutely everyone. It’s already taken over most of the Heavenly Dragon Sect’s former holdings. I suspect that even the sect itself may have bowed down secretly to their enemy. Many of the Upper Eight Regions’ sects may find themselves embroiled in indecision once again.”

“I’m glad that Pillfire’s been quelled already. If the Order and the old Pillfire had banded together, the combination of their interests would prove disastrous.”

“Young lord, the Order is very mysterious. We believe that it will come for Veluriyam Capital sooner or later.”

“Yes, the Order carries a lot of momentum right now. It seems to want to rule the entire human domain.”

“Young lord, the Order may be harder to deal with than Pillfire.”

A lot of information was fed to the young leader, giving him a better grasp of the situation.

“My friends, the Order is indeed concerningly strong. Do you know who their sect head and executives are?” Jiang Chen was curious about some things not yet revealed.

There were only two possibilities: either the executives were human experts who’d hid themselves from the world, or aliens altogether.

The former was fine enough, but the latter had to be carefully guarded against.

Jiang Chen consoled Shangguan Yanqing a bit. “Inspector Shangguan, go back to the Ninesuns Sky Sect for now. If the Order wishes to rise as a human faction, I see no reason to stop it. However, if that rise involves the conquest and destruction of other sects, that is another matter altogether! Veluriyam will certainly intervene in that case.”

He made no promises about actively assisting, but his attitude was clear.

Shangguan Yanqing was very pleased. “You are a chivalrous man, young lord Jiang Chen. With Veluriyam’s backing, we Ninesuns can stand tall once more.”

The inspector clearly harbored a healthy respect for the youth.

There was a good deal of discussion among Veluriyam’s great emperors after Shangguan Yanqing was sent off. The conservative ones didn’t support aiding the sect, with Emperor Petalpluck at the forefront.

“Young lord Jiang Chen, the relationship between Ninesuns and us is lukewarm at best. They are courteous because they have something to ask of us...” The emperor was the first to voice his concerns.

“That’s right, young lord. It may not entirely fit with what is most profitable to Veluriyam.” Emperor Skysplitter offered similar advice.

Jiang Chen’s eyes were filled with wisdom. “Settle down, everyone. The Order means ill, and it would be foolish to judge things so transiently. Its enormous appetite forebodes its ultimate goal. It’s sure to be our enemy one day in the future.”

There was no question about that.

Any faction wishing to rise to prominence in the human domain couldn’t bypass the presence of Veluriyam Capital.

The Order was practicing the art of dividing and conquering. It was sure to point its spear at Veluriyam eventually. Rather than fighting alone at that time, it was more advantageous to interfere early on. For this reason, Jiang Chen possessed more poise than Petalpluck and the rest.

“Coiling Dragon, send out the news to every sect under the heavens. Veluriyam is planning to hold a meeting that encompasses the entire human domain, at which we will discuss matters of import. Any sect third rank or above is eligible to participate.”

Jiang Chen was never hesitant about the important things. His command was decisive and clear-cut. Though he didn’t know where the Order had come from, the human domain could not presently permit any delay. He had to resolve the crisis immediately!

Sovereign of the Three Realms (WN)

Chapter 1464: More Bad News

The human domain whirred into action at Jiang Chen's command. Even though the Order of Wind and Cloud had stifled the atmosphere throughout the land, this newest development filled it with new life.

Veluriyam's stance had finally been made clear. The young lord's statement carried with it tremendous consequences. No one in the world doubted that Jiang Chen had the right to call a general meeting of every faction beneath the heavens. In fact, he was the only one with that right.

The news excited every third rank sect and above. They all highly anticipated the event. Some of the ones in more of a hurry immediately gathered a team together, heading for Veluriyam.

The Dragon and Tiger Meet prior had already proven a more than pleasant surprise for the world at large; this general meeting could only hold even greater things in store. Perhaps even more wondrous things awaited?

Even without that, this meeting was clearly targeted at the Order of Wind and Cloud. The entire human domain had lived beneath the Order's shadow for the past four years. If the young lord's appearance could clear the air, that alone would be more than enough.

Therefore, there was universal enthusiasm at Jiang Chen's call. Things in the human domain were about to change once again.

Jiang Chen was very surprised to see how things had developed in his absence. He had only closed his doors for three years and some change, yet the Order of Wind and Cloud had stirred up a storm within that time. Their actions had deeply affected the human domain's circumstances.

"What is with that Order?" He was full of questions. If not for his lack of intel, he would have gone to their headquarters straight away and eradicated every single person there.

Old Brother Mo and the Jiao brothers' disappearances... could they be related to this Order? This was a serious topic of consideration.

Jiang Chen's eyes peered incisively at Veluriyam's emperors. "Friends," he asked, "do you have any clues as to the origins of this Order of Wind and Cloud? Or a more nuanced perspective, maybe?"

"Young lord, the experts of the human domain are typically known individually by name. The Order is definitely not founded by human hands. Still, it's hard to say for absolutely certain... there are many ancient hermits who refuse to communicate with the rest of the world. It could be that one of them has taken a sudden interest in starting his own faction...?"

"I don't mind if a human expert is responsible for this. Experts of other races, however..."

Jiang Chen didn't know why, but his heart wasn't at ease despite having defeated Pillfire three years prior. Things weren't resolved in the human domain yet.

"Friends, there are no outsiders here. I'd like to hear your opinions about a few things." Jiang Chen's tone was serious.

Everyone braced at this. The young lord was going to talk about something really important.

Jiang Chen made straight for the point. “These past three years, I’ve achieved some breakthroughs in my martial cultivation behind closed doors. However, I’ve also spent that time considering humanity’s prospects for the future. Don’t you feel that we’ve been trapped by the Boundary Steles? Like frogs at the bottom of a well, we see only peace in the little patch of sky directly above us rather than the storm brewing all around us. Our fate is not firmly grasped within our own hands.”

It was exactly as he had said. Ever since ancient times, humanity had been trapped within this land, devoid of knowledge of the outside world. No human had any idea whatsoever how the rest of the continent was doing.

The frog comparison was harsh but accurate. Still, these great emperors had lived for millennia already. Their minds and thoughts were stuck in the old ways, finding no fault with staying the course.

Therefore, Emperor Petalpluck was a bit surprised by Jiang Chen’s shocking statements. “Young lord Jiang Chen, after the ancient demon-sealing war, the Boundary Steles were established to keep the races peacefully separate. There are advantages and disadvantages to everything. Without the Boundary Steles, how would humanity have had these hundred thousand years of peace? How would it have received the rest it sorely needed?”

Petalpluck wasn’t entirely wrong.

Under the protection of the Boundary Steles, the mandated peace wasn’t necessarily a bad thing. Perhaps it was even the right order of things. After the ancient war, the races had required peace between them to recover and recuperate. Therefore, the steles had done what was essentially a public service.

However, times had changed. Not by much, but changed they had. As time went on, self-isolation wasn’t a good enough strategy anymore.

Jiang Chen took in a deep breath before continuing coolly, “Emperor Petalpluck has a point. The Boundary Steles had a purpose from the ancient era to the present. However... have you considered that humanity’s very ignorance about the outside world makes it extremely vulnerable?”

This wasn’t an exaggeration. The Southern Celestial Tribe’s three empyrean experts were a warning for the human race. It was a notification that the Boundary Steles’ uneasy peace was no longer reliable.

The passage of time was weakening the steles’ sealing power.

“I’m not doomsaying for no reason. At Agarwood, there were three empyrean experts of the Southern Celestial Tribe who destroyed the stele there without any trouble. If not for their lust for achievement and accidental release of the celestial demon lord from his binds, terrible things would’ve taken place in the human domain already.”

Though the three empyrean experts wouldn’t have destroyed the entire human domain, they would also have done significant damage to it. As long as they maintained patience and the intent to seriously set up operations here, it wasn’t that hard to take over the human domain.

What did this mean?

The peace that the Boundary Steles had mandated was becoming increasingly unreliable. The situation in the human domain required drastic change.

“Young lord Jiang Chen,” Emperor Coiling Dragon asked in a low voice. “After experiencing the breaking and repair of the Boundary Steles, you are the most authoritative voice to speak on this matter. Do you have any ideas to inspire the rest of us?”

The emperor’s proximity to Jiang Chen was revealed in this statement. The young lord’s words instantly seemed less authoritarian.

Jiang Chen nodded slightly. “I’ve been mulling that over for the past three years. I feel that the human domain needs to shatter its old conventions before it can be built up again. If we turtle up within the bounds of our Boundary Steles and pretend to be asleep, we won’t have peace for very much longer.”

“Why do you say that?” Everyone grew serious.

“The Southern Celestial Tribe is most certainly only the first of many. Aren’t there many Boundary Steles within the human domain? When the east falls, we must repair the east, and the same is true for the west. But have you considered the possibility that the steles can fall in every direction at once? Where are we supposed to repair then?”

The human domain was a run-down shack. There was no problem in fair weather, but when rain and storm came, anyone who lived within instantly felt the negative effects.

Emperor Petalpluck’s tone was grave. “Young lord Jiang Chen, the Boundary Steles have existed since the ancient times. Perhaps Agarwood’s stele being broken was only an isolated, random event. Why should it be representative? I think that the Boundary Steles don’t need to be touched if they’re still just fine, right?”

Jiang Chen didn’t actually want to touch the steles. He merely wanted to use them to make cracks in these people’s heavily limited mindsets.

To put it bluntly, these old codgers had lost their youthful keenness. The only thing they had on their minds was maintaining their current lands and holdings. It was extremely difficult to force their minds to actively roam outside that conservative goal.

Aside from Emperor Coiling Dragon’s relative readiness, even Emperor Void preferred caution on this matter. The latter simply didn’t want to voice his opinion publicly.

Not that Emperor Petalpluck intended to openly oppose Jiang Chen either. It was understandable for him to have such thoughts. Old men lose their ambitions. Moreover, Emperor Petalpluck was naturally the harmonious sort, preferring tranquility and placidity.

As they spoke, someone hurried in from outside. It was a pretty, slender girl; Jiang Chen’s dear sister, Xu Qingxuan.

Because she was nominally a disciple of the Moon God Sect, Xu Qingxuan theoretically had no right to enter this exclusive meeting. However, she was in a humorless hurry today.

“Brother, the Moon God Sect’s Holy Maiden Xu Shan is here. She says...” Xu Qingxuan was hesitant here, looking worriedly at the great emperors congregated here.

“Don’t worry. We’re among good company here. Go ahead and say what you have to say.”

Xu Qingxuan nodded. “Holy Maiden Xu Shan has arrived with news that the Moon God Sect’s northwestern Boundary Stele has shown signs of cracking. The three sectmasters and all available elites have gone to investigate. The holy maiden is here to inform you of this sudden development.”

There was absolute silence at the news. The northwest was a broad and desolate place, a veritable wasteland devoid of life. In that wasteland, ancient experts built a Boundary Stele to defend against the barbaric tribes of that direction.

This Boundary Stele was far more important than the rest. In ancient times, a terrifying race lived in that direction – the Embittered Savage Tribe.

The Embittered Savage Tribe was true to its name: extremely savage and barbaric. The place it lived had harsh and bitter living conditions. It was precisely because of the difficulty of those conditions that the tribe had a naturally resilient and primitive nature!

That was why they carried their name.

The Embittered Savage Tribe had ever been the mortal enemy of humanity in ancient times. Every time they mounted an invasion, humanity suffered a correspondingly devastating loss. It could be fairly said that before the demonic invasion, the Embittered Savage Tribe was the humans’ number one enemy and nightmare!

[Sovereign of the Three Realms \(WN\)](#)

Chapter 1465: A Dilemma

The unexpected news instantly soured the atmosphere. In particular, Emperor Petapluck’s easy poise turned into a gloomy frown.

Moments ago, he’d argued that the Agarwood Boundary Stele’s woes had been mere coincidence. But now, a crack had also appeared on the Northwestern Stele. When it rains it truly pours.

The Southern Celestial Tribe lay in wait beyond Agarwood’s Boundary Stele, a tribe weaker than mankind during antiquity. And they’d sent three empyrean experts? Petapluck found that hard to believe.

However, the Northwestern Stele was a bona fide defensive wall. Its fall would trigger certain invasion from the Embittered Savage Tribe. All that accumulated resentment and frustration waiting to be unleashed upon mankind... The prospect was too dire to imagine.

Trivial issues would never bother a bright and optimistic girl like Xu Qingxuan, but the faint panic on her face said it all too clearly. The situation was far graver than anyone had imagined.

Growing up in the Moon God Sect, she’d learned long ago of the fearsome tribe living beyond the northwestern wasteland. No one was allowed to approach the Stele for no good reason. Worse, to destroy it would be a crime against humanity. These teachings had deeply impressed upon her ever since her childhood.

All sects near the Stele thus warned their disciples.

It was precisely the Stele's formidable importance that had triggered Petalpluck's opposition. Usually, the great emperor was a goody two shoes who never offended anyone. But the Steles weren't to be touched. His out-of-character protest had been born from this deeply-rooted notion.

Jiang Chen hadn't said it in so many words, but he'd implied he wanted to head outside. To merely suggest it clashed with Petalpluck's beliefs.

Head outside?

Did that mean voluntarily breaking the Boundary Steles? That would be an unforgivable sin against humanity!

Jiang Chen was Veluriyam's young lord, and his word was law among mankind, but Petalpluck couldn't condone such conduct. Like a box of mysteries, no one could foretell what calamities could occur once the Steles were broken.

Jiang Chen sighed to himself. He could see the bone-deep fear and panic the news had caused in everyone present. Even his tigress of a sister wasn't immune. But he hadn't been indoctrinated like them. Perhaps he was the only man in the entire human domain that didn't hold the Steles in such religious reverence.

The former Jiang Chen had been at too low a level to even know what the Steles represented. He himself had learned of them some time after his reincarnation, but he'd taken it in stride thanks to his character and experience.

To him, the Steles meant little, and certainly not objects of dread.

In his previous life, there had been many restrictions between the different planes. Such barriers weren't easily breached, but once they were, terrible planar wars would ensue. He'd seen them too many times to count.

Sometimes, the more one feared something, the more likely it was to happen. But if one accepted it, then all of a sudden it wasn't so frightening after all. For example, these Boundary Steles.

No Steles had existed before the ancient demon-sealing war. The different races on the continent had waged incessant wars of conquest upon each other. Mankind had been no stranger to such conflicts, yet hadn't it survived fine and dandy to this day?

Why had the humans attracted the demons' attention? Why had their domain become the war's main battle zone? Hadn't it been because of their prosperity?

Naturally, special historical circumstances had warranted the Steles' existence. But times had changed and they were no longer be so significant. So why fear them?

"Everyone, Agarwood's Stele broke, while the one to the northwest might not hold on for much longer. Perhaps we'll soon hear similar news from the northeast. Ask yourselves this, why?" One by one, Jiang Chen's clear gaze swept through the crowd.

"When Pillzenith established the northern alliance, he accused me of breaking the Stele and colluding with foreign races. Why? Simple. The Steles are too sensible a subject. Such a taboo was sure to arouse everyone's hostility."

He let rational arguments do the talking.

“There must be a reason for their collective collapse. It can’t be a joint attack from other races, because it’s impossible for them to coordinate their efforts. In the end, it boils down to the Steles themselves losing their effectiveness.”

Three minor empyrean powerhouses, no matter how strong, would never have breached a brand new Boundary Stele. Where there’s smoke, there’s fire.

Jiang Chen believed this was an opportunity for mankind.

Petalpluck turned grave. After careful thought, the young lord’s words made too much sense to refute, no matter how much he wanted to.

“Young lord, the Embittered Savage’s territory seems to lie beyond the northwestern wasteland. Mankind can ill afford an invasion from them,” Void interjected. Thanks to Emperor Peafowl’s influence, he was given to lament the fate of humanity.

“Young lord, is there any solution? Agarwood’s Stele could be repaired, so why don’t we do the same for the other ones?” Coiling Dragon’s thinking was very simple.

Jiang Chen sighed with a wry smile. “The one in Agarwood was fused with the Primosanct Sect’s formations. I couldn’t have mended it without the resources and secret arts left by the ancient sect otherwise. Even so, the repaired formations are still some way from the original, so the Stele’s power might be less than sixty percent compared to antiquity. As for the Northwestern Stele, it’s hard to comment before I see it with my own eyes.”

Xu Qingxuan implored, “Brother, the northwestern wasteland is the only thing that stands between us and an invasion from the Savages. You have to think of a way.”

Jiang Chen stayed silent. He lacked the most basic knowledge about the Northwestern Stele. What was he to do?

More importantly, he’d sent a call for a grand alliance not long ago. What of the gathering if he were to run to the northwest? What would the whole world think of Veluriyam then? Or of him?

There was also the Order of Wind and Cloud sharpening its blades and eyeing the Ninesuns Sky Sect like a tiger drooling over its prey. A trip far away would play right into the Order’s hands.

Emperor Mountaincrush suddenly slapped his thigh. “Young lord, could the Order be behind the troubles in the northwest? Aren’t they located very close to Agarwood? They might even have a hand in that Stele’s breaking.”

Abuzz with ideas, this sudden hypothesis had suddenly dawned on him.

Jiang Chen shook. He’d never considered this line of thought. It sounded outlandish, but after some reflection, it was a real possibility!

“Can the Order be this despicable? If so, they’re the scum of the earth!” Coiling Dragon shouted with indignation.

Everyone looked at Jiang Chen. In this mist of confusion, the young man was their only ray of light. They all waited for his conclusion.

Jiang Chen heaved a soft sigh. "There are too many possibilities. I have to say, Emperor Mountaincrush's idea does have some merit."

The Order of Wind and Cloud was becoming more and more suspicious. No one had heard of this faction previously, yet it had suddenly appeared out of nowhere and risen to prominence in four short years.

It wasn't particularly powerful, yet no other sect could rival its frighteningly strict and secret structure. It had no flaws, no rumors. That sounded simple, but it was almost impossible to achieve.

A dilemma now lay ahead of him.

If he chose the grand alliance, then a potential gap in the Northwestern Stele would be prelude to a catastrophic invasion from the Savages. But if he were to head there instead, then what if the Order launched a swift attack on the Ninesuns Sky Sect?

Even if he were to grow wings, the northern wasteland was too far for him to return in time. Such a difficult choice would decide mankind's next step, or even its entire future.

"First things first," Emperor Skysplitter finally opined. "Young lord, the Stele is merely weakening. It hasn't reached the point of non-return yet."

Petalpluck nodded. "Agreed. It won't break so easily. In fact, are we positive the Embittered Savage Tribe survived the harsh conditions beyond the barrier? Even if they did, are they as strong as they used to be? And even if they are, the wasteland isn't so easy to cross."

It was no exaggeration to describe the wasteland as a desolate place where no creature could survive. Indeed, the wasteland would prove a difficult barrier for the Savages on their way to mankind's heartlands.

[Sovereign of the Three Realms \(WN\)](#)

Chapter 1466: The True Strength Of The Order Of Wind And Cloud

Including Emperors Void and Coiling Dragon, Veluriyam's great emperors all favored settling the most pressing issue first.

The Order of Wind and Cloud was the greatest threat.

They needed to excise this tumor and get their own affairs in Order before eventually tackling the Embittered Savages.

Though Xu Qingxuan desperately wished for her brother to head northwest, she was mature enough to know she couldn't pester him, lest others mocked the siblings.

She waited for all the great emperors to disperse before pouting. "Smelly brother, you're the only one who can repair Boundary Steles. If you don't go, it'll definitely break! Pillfire or whatever Order, those are internal issues. How can they compare to the Embittered Savages?"

Jiang Chen nodded. "You're right, it would be a disaster to allow the Embittered Savages into our territory. But don't look down on the Order. In fact, I wonder if they're as internal an issue as you say."

"What do you mean?" His sister blinked. "Could there be foreign influences left in the human domain?"

The young man shook his head. It was mere conjecture, so he didn't have a leg to stand on.

But he couldn't be blamed for this nagging suspicion. The Order had risen far too fast. For that to happen, one or two powerhouses were far from enough. Many powerful experts had to stand behind the faction.

The human domain boasted of many cultivators, but there were only so many peak masters, each of them well-known and accounted for. If the Order was a local force, then where did its experts come from?

"Qingxuan, the Order might also have a hand in the troubles in the northwest, so I need to conclude this meeting before heading there. Before that, I can only ask the Moon Good Sect to hold strong."

It was a difficult decision to reach, but the Order had to be rooted out for the safety of the entire territory.

Slightly disappointed, his sister nonetheless accepted his decision with equanimity. She couldn't blame him. Someone of his status had to carefully weigh up each decision. He couldn't be as rash as her.

.....

The Unbounded Region.

The Order of Wind and Cloud's headquarters were located inside the mysterious Unbounded Range.

In a short four years, this mysterious force had swept almost everything in its path. Wherever it set its sights, local factions surrendered. All of the surrounding mid and lower regions were now firmly in its sphere of influence. It had even swallowed two-thirds of the Heavenly Dragon Upper Region.

In a certain residence inside the Order, a cultivator stretched out his hand and plucked an encrypted glyph from the air. Unfolding it, he murmured, "A Supreme Order Writ? Is the supreme lord ready to make another big move?"

The man's tone sounded a little strange. His attire marked him as an exalted figure in the sect's upper echelons. A summons from the supreme lord couldn't be ignored, so he left his residence without hesitation.

Outside, he saw many figures greeting each other as they hopped out of their own residences.

"A Supreme Order Writ. Are we really going to attack the Ninesuns Sky Sect?"

"Great, hahaha! The Heavenly Dragon Sect wasn't even a proper warm-up, so why stop there? Let's thrash Ninesuns as well!"

"Good idea! With these two so-called first rank sects in our hands, nothing can stop us from going straight after Veluriyam!"

“Veluriyam? Our supreme lord has his sights set much farther away. We’ll unify the human domain and face the entire continent!”

“Alright, save your saliva, we can’t make the supreme lord wait.” These seemingly important fellows flew towards the main hall.

The first cultivator remained silent. Despite a flicker of emotion at his companions’ words, he let none of it show on his face and merely followed them thoughtfully.

Not too far away, two other figures seemingly on good terms with him shared a tacit look, then set off without a word or even a greeting.

A man sat in a majestic throne inside the main hall, his true features hazy as if covered by a mysterious light. Instead, his face was a whirlpool of stars, giving off an immeasurably abstruse and opaque air.

He simply sat there, yet the pressure of his mere aura seemed to oppress all living beings, stifling their very breath. Naturally, he was the Order’s unfathomable leader.

Below his seat, four chairs were arrayed on each side, for a total of eight. They were reserved for the Eight Overlords of Wind and Cloud, whose status were second only to the sect’s supreme leader.

These were the Order’s eight great protector kings, their cultivation reaching at least advanced great emperor. Their names were as follow: Ardentwind, Gentlewind, Galewind, Stormwind, Shockcloud, Howlcloud, Devourcloud, and Scourcloud.

Below them were thirty six Celestial Stars and seventy two Earthly Fiends, for a total of one hundred and eight elders.

Each Celestial Star was a formal elder, while the Earthly Fiends were probationary elders. So-called probationary elders enjoyed the same treatment. Their status was a little lower, but any of them could be promoted to a formal elder.

These people formed the sect’s core. Many Celestial Stars were also great emperors, while Earthly Fiends were at least at emperor realm.

Such a force would stupefy any faction of Upper Eight Regions. The Order dwarfed all of them when it came to the number of powerhouses. Even the former Pillfire and the current Veluriyam were no exceptions.

It was no wonder they’d so easily overwhelmed the haughty Heavenly Dragon Sect! The latter was a formidable force in the Upper Eight Regions, but it had been eclipsed by the Order’s vast host.

The upper echelons made due haste, gathering in the hall at the supreme order writ’s behest.

The supreme lord’s voice echoed faintly from his lofty position. “Everyone, some seemingly can’t accept our sudden rise and intend to oppose us. Many of you were eminent figures of the human domain and know it better than I do. What do you think? Can any faction slow our inexorable momentum?” There was a certain magic to his voice.

The crowd below shouted, “No one can!”

“Supreme Lord, we’ve been too self-restrained thus far. In my opinion, we should bare our fangs and let these ignorant fools know the meaning of despair!”

“I agree. The Empyrean River Palace and the Sublime Chord Temple were nothing but Pillfire’s dogs. How dare they put on airs now? How can a measly Pillfire compare to us?”

“Supreme Lord, we’re at your orders. We’ll forcibly subdue any sects that fail to appreciate our generosity!” The Order’s fast expansion these years had attracted many powerhouses to its ranks, increasing its confidence and its arrogance by the same token.

The supreme lord pressed his hands down, calming the crowd.

“Gentlemen, the likes of the Empyrean River Palace or the Sublime Chord Temple are putting on airs, and the Ninesuns Sky Sect refuses our magnanimous offer to surrender, all because they think Veluriyam will back them up. Today, I’ve obtained news that Veluriyam’s young lord’s called all factions above third rank to unite in a worldwide alliance. Hmph. It seems Veluriyam’s becoming angsty!”

The previously noisy crowd instantly fell silent. If they absolutely had to name a human faction that could withstand them, then it would be Veluriyam.

It wasn’t that the city could match the Order’s absolute power, but Veluriyam had Jiang Chen, a young genius who’d created miracles time and time again. He was the most inscrutable and fearsome existence for their sect.

“Supreme Lord, are they declaring war on us?”

“Veluriyam could have unified mankind after destroying Pillfire. But the kid’s still wet behind the ears and missed the chance to make all the factions submit. Hehe, how else could we have gobbled up these scattered factions and risen so fast?”

“Hmph, you’re underestimating the brat. He was simply wary of a collective backlash. His ultimate goal is certainly to have every faction at his beck and call! One must cast a long line to catch a big fish. He’s being patient, that’s all.”

“You’re right, this kid plans far ahead. He’s had Emperor Wellspring stay on Pillfire territory to organize the city and incorporate the wandering cultivators. He’s clearly intent on creating his own great faction there and dominate the entire human domain by controlling both the north and the south!”

“What a crafty kid. We can’t let him prevail!” The crowd started shouting pell-mell.

[Sovereign of the Three Realms \(WN\)](#)

Chapter 1467: The Supreme Lord of the Order of Wind And Cloud

The supreme lord smiled at their reaction. He’d deliberately stoked the crowd’s anger and hostility towards their common enemy.

When he’d first established the sect, he’d been worried Veluriyam would be too intimidating a threat for him to gather enough powerhouses. But things had gone much smoother than he’d anticipated, and he’d successfully roped in a group of experts thanks to underhanded tactics.

Afterwards, the order's ambitious creed had gradually spread through word of mouth, attracting equally ambitious masters to its doors.

Wandering cultivators, sect figures, remnants of Pillfire and of the Eternal Celestial Capital, or even some old monsters hidden from the world for many years — an assortment of people from all walks of life had joined the rising faction.

The supreme lord had even lured most of the Eight Overlords with a promise: an opportunity to break through to empyrean realm. No great emperor could resist such a temptation.

Even the most famous of wandering cultivators such Sabledeep and Everviolet of the six titans had succumbed to the siren call and joined the Order. Of course, their strength and status had granted them both one of the Eight Overlord seats.

Any of the eight was either a wandering titan, a hidden sect heavyweight, or a master of mysterious origins. But eight wasn't the limit. If more cultivators of their caliber were to join, they might become the Ten Overlords, or the Twelve Overlords...

In short, other than the supreme lord, these were unrivalled existences.

"Jiang Chen is like no other, this seat has to admit. A few years ago, I snuck into Agarwood Valley and saw him in person. This kid is blessed by the heavens. Many among you have a higher cultivation, but I wonder how many could overcome him in a real fight. Maybe... not a single one." The supreme lord couldn't prevent admiration from seeping into his leisurely tone at the mention of Jiang Chen, vexing his subordinates.

"My lord. He's alright, but he's merely savvy at using the circumstances to his advantage. His personal strength is nothing to speak of."

The speaker was Emperor Everviolet, one of the exalted overlords. He'd been close to Pillzenith in the past and the two had plotted together against the young man. As a result, he'd personally experienced the young lord's tactics.

True enough, the kid had some skill, but it was nothing but unorthodox tricks. The wandering emperor didn't feel that Jiang Chen really was invincible. At least, he was confident he could subdue the young man with ease. Well, in a fair duel; it would be a different story if Jiang Chen were to summon the fearsome empyrean golems.

"Supreme Lord, the kid does have notable achievements to his name, but as Daoist Everviolet said, he's simply an opportunist. He first borrowed Emperor Peafowl's might, then Emperor Wellspring, Emperor Peerless, and others... And now, he has the golems."

"Alas, isn't he a lucky one. The human domain hasn't seen an empyrean powerhouse in ages. How did he..."

But the kid's successes was all due to sheer luck. There was nothing exceptional about his abilities at all.

True, the Pinecrane Pill or the Emperor Supremacy Pill were landmarks in pill dao, but in the world of cultivation, martial power was the foremost way to gain recognition.

Jiang Chen's triumphs should have allowed him to unify mankind long ago. Yet, because of their nature, many dubious, dissenting voices remained. Few first rank sects in particular wholeheartedly admired him, no matter the caution Veluriyam inspired.

In other words, only overwhelming strength would allow him to be generally acknowledged as mankind's leader.

Why had the Order's supreme lord received widespread acceptance in four short years? Why had many surrendered to him?

Because in front of him, great emperors were mere buffoons dancing in his palm. He'd demonstrated a power far exceeding theirs. This absolute strength on top of the sect's militantism offered many eager experts a way to assuage their ambitions.

Strength trumped everything else.

Who was the supreme lord, where did he come from, what powers stood behind him? None of it mattered.

The only thing that did was that he was an empyrean master, standing far above great emperors!

The supreme lord smiled faintly. "Gentlemen, you seem biased against Jiang Chen. He is indeed our enemy, but for that very reason, we ought to remain fair and lucid. Blind arrogance will only harm us. To be frank, he's the only one I'm somewhat wary of in the human domain. As for the others..."

He didn't continue, but the implication was clear. No one else was worth mentioning.

"Supreme Lord, since you think so highly of him, why don't you head directly to Sacred Peafowl Mountain, suppress the kid with your peerless power, and force him to surrender?"

"That's right! Once we cut off the head of the snake, who else in the entire domain can oppose us?"

"Supreme Lord, didn't he call for a grand alliance? We should hack our way into the venue. You can capture the kid and replace him at the head!" This suggestion was met with widespread support.

A faint smile appeared on the supreme lord's impassive face. "Not a bad idea, but a little premature. First of all, Veluriyam is a land of ancient inheritances. They have hidden cards you can't even imagine. A brash attack could trigger one that might stump even me."

"Oh? Ancient inheritances?" the crowd puzzled.

"Indeed. Veluriyam was born in the age of the ancient demon-sealing war. Its pagoda founder was one of the ancient leaders of mankind. Tell me, is that worthy enough an enemy for you?" His words instantly silenced the loudest and most zealous members. No wonder Veluriyam had always thrived so. Its origin were this immeasurably deep!

"What should we do then?"

"Indeed. Apart from violence, what other option do we have?"

The supreme lord smiled faintly. "Veluriyam only has its ancient glory to its name. It was on a long downward slope before Jiang Chen's emergence. Even Emperor Peafowl's reign was a mere stopgap."

The opinion sent the crowd abuzz.

Even the unruliest members of the Order couldn't but acknowledge Emperor Peafowl as one of this era's leaders. His character was acknowledged by all. At the very least, he'd never used Veluriyam's strength to tyrannize others. On that front, he'd showed a morals a hundred times greater than Pillzenith.

"You look unconvinced. You might wonder, why do I disregard someone you hold in such high esteem? I don't actually despise him, but his rule was too conservative. Or perhaps hegemony was never his goal.

"Idealistic, given to excessive commiseration, perhaps even possessing a savior complex. But he forgot something critical. Without power, what can a hero hope to achieve? Under his rule, Veluriyam didn't even rank first among mankind's factions. How would he ever realized his grand dreams? Even a fool like Pillzenith made him suffer time and time again."

The crowd fell silent. They couldn't refute his arguments. "But Emperor Peafowl was one of the strongest men of his time. He merely lacked the ambition to rule the world."

"Strongest?" The supreme lord chuckled. "Don't be so short-sighted. Mankind's decline isn't as steep as you think. There are empyrean masters in the human domain, and not only one or two. You can take my word for it. These old fellows have simply become so selfish they refuse to move, deathly afraid it might shorten their lifespans. After all, the energy in the human domain is far too lacking to sustain empyrean powerhouses."

Everyone blanched.

Empyrean masters? More than one at that?

This was shocking, no, incredibly momentous news that overturned everything they knew of mankind's hierarchy...

"Supreme Lord, is it true?" Sabledeep suddenly looked pensive, his eyes shining bright.

Everviolet's violet eyes also twinkled, his face inscrutable.

[Sovereign of the Three Realms \(WN\)](#)

Chapter 1468: The Heavenly Dragon Sect Teetering on the Edge of Disaster

The supreme lord's revelation had indeed upended the crowd's beliefs.

They'd once thought great emperors like Pillzenith or Peafowl to be mankind's apex. They'd never heard of anything stronger. Only after the emergence of the supreme lord and Jiang Chen's golems did mankind slowly become acclimated to the notion of empyrean masters.

But at best, the golems ranked somewhere between half-step empyrean and minor empyrean realm. Compared to the primordial age, they'd regained less than one fifth of the strength.

Total recovery seemed impossible given the human domain's current resources. The consumption that would require far exceeded what was available.

The supreme lord smiled calmly. "I guarantee empyrean masters exist. The ancient wars have brought so much destruction that mankind's come to think of them as a thing of the past. But that's a mistake..."

"Ah? A mistake?" Sabledeep exclaimed softly. "I once heard that Emperor Peafowl comprehended the heavenly dao multiple times, but he always chose not to break through to empyrean realm. Some say the lack of resources would have caused him to fail, or perhaps he would have been forced to leave afterward and he had too many goals not yet achieved..."

The supreme lord frowned. It was the first he'd heard of it. "Is there a problem with his brain? It's a sin to refuse a gift from the heavens."

"Indeed. Rejecting the heavens is a sure recipe for future disaster. His is a classic case. Why else would his own faction's Emperor Shura join hands with Emperor Pillzenith in causing his downfall?" a great emperor familiar with the classics asked.

Rejecting the heavens would naturally anger them and bring about retribution.

The supreme lord waved his hand. "No matter. In any case, you can disregard Veluriyam's people but not the city itself. Even Pillfire can't compare with its ancient inheritance. Its three pagodas in particular are ancient mysteries."

The Veluriyam Pagodas? Everyone looked at him in puzzlement.

He chuckled. "Don't look at me. You know as much as me when it comes to Veluriyam. But my research into the ancient era tells me they must hide many secrets. If Jiang Chen's obtained the pagoda's inheritances, even I would be wary of him!"

No one knew where the supreme lord came from, but his knowledge far surpassed the locals. He knew many happenings like the back of his hand, especially those concerning antiquity. Many of the things he spoke of were shocking revelations for others.

"Supreme Lord, what's our next step?"

His warnings were a pail of cold water on the crowd's ardor. They finally understood why he was so cautious of a mere young man in charge of Veluriyam when he looked down on many sects.

"Supreme Lord, it's true Veluriyam is strong, but Jiang Chen is only a young man when all is said and done. We should use his youth to our advantage."

"Agreed. His youth is detrimental to his prestige. He has to work ten times as hard to be acknowledged."

"Shh, be quiet. Wait for the supreme lord's decision."

"Right. No matter how strong, Veluriyam is nothing for our Supreme Lord."

Their liege chuckled before turning grave. "It would be a mighty blow for us if Veluriyam were to complete its grand alliance. Our sect is on the rise, our momentum on the upswing. We can't let them impede our expansion plans.

"There's only one reason why many factions refuse to acknowledge us. They worry we can't contend with Veluriyam. You could say they aren't optimistic about our prospects.

“Of course, perhaps they think no one can oppose Jiang Chen or Veluriyam.

“But is that truly so?” he laughed, his voice leisurely yet strange. “Attend to me. Send an ultimatum to the Heavenly Dragon Clan. They have one day to capitulate, or else we’ll eradicate their sect from the continent and exterminate every last of them!”

It was a domineering order.

An ordinary sectmaster would never dare use such a tone against a colossus like the Heavenly Dragon Sect. The Order’s supreme lord was probably the only one in the entire human domain.

.....

Gloom reigned in the Heavenly Dragon Sect, as if the end of days had come.

The mortal blows it had suffered had made every member anxious. In another sect, rats would have already left the sinking ship. Who would dare remain behind?

But the Heavenly Dragon Sect was more than a simple sect. Its members were staunchly united by its inheritances, firm beliefs, and a common bloodline. Even wan and routed, its disciples would fight to the death. There would be no deserters.

Despite its many outlandish flaws, the sect was far superior to most human factions in that regard. But like cats on a hot tin roof, everyone was on tenterhooks.

They’d just received the ultimatum. Surrender within a day or be destroyed! It seemed the Order had run out of patience.

Despite the rumors, Sectmaster Long Zhe wasn’t dead yet. But he was at the end of his tether, any breath might be his last. And Long Baxiang, once number two, had died in Agarwood Valley.

The sect currently lacked a leader.

Surrender? The Heavenly Dragon Sect was too proud a sect to submit willingly to a faction no one had heard of a mere four years ago.

It would be even worse than losing to Veluriyam. At least, Jiang Chen wouldn’t humiliate them so.

“Maybe we should ask the sectmaster for instructions?” one elder suggested.

“We can’t. His life hangs in the balance. Let’s first see if he can overcome this critical juncture and find a new lease on life. We can’t disturb him, or we’ll end up hurting him.”

“What should we do then? No one else can make this decision.”

“Only one day! The Order of Wind and Cloud has really crossed the line!”

“Hmph, it seems that they’re anxious after Veluriyam’s call for a grand alliance. That’s why they’re in such a hurry. They’re afraid of Veluriyam after all!”

“Is there still time to ask Veluriyam for help?”

Ask Veluriyam for help?

The crowd fell into an awkward silence. When had their sect fallen so low as to look for help from a faction they couldn't see eye-to-eye with?

They had given Veluriyam no face even when during the latter's height. Both sides were on bad terms, or even hostile to each other. Wouldn't it be a slap to the face to ask them for help now?

More importantly, would Veluriyam agree?

Their sect had been part of the northern alliance. Jiang Chen hadn't suppressed them after the war, but to ask him to repay enmity with a rescue seemed too tall an order. The odds were slim, no matter how alluring the idea.

They were too short on time in any case. The Order was knocking on their doors, while Veluriyam was far away.

Someone suddenly looked up from the lively discussion, embarrassment flashing through their eyes as they fixed their gaze to the left. A figure walked out of a corner.

"Sectmaster!"

"Sectmaster, why are you here?"

Indeed, the figure in question was Long Zhe. He was still pale, but his complexion was much improved for someone previously at death's door. His life force seemed to be returning. The crowd beamed with delight.

His sturdy frame stood like a mountain. Even riddled with wounds, he exuded an aura that inspired fear and awe in his subordinates.

"What are you talking about?" he calmly asked.

How would they dare hide anything? They hurriedly apprised him of the ultimatum.

Anger flashed in Long Zhe's eyes. "Despicable bullies! They want our surrender?"

"Sectmaster, don't be angry. Your health comes first."

"That's right. There's hope as long as we have you with us, Sectmaster."

Long Zhe commanded great respect from his senior executives.

No one would call him weak for losing against the Order. The enemy had been too strong. No matter how strong the sectmaster was, he couldn't overcome four great emperors all by himself.

How could the Order have so many great emperors? Moreover, its ranks were swelling even as they spoke! That was the most fearsome part.

What magic spell had the Order cast upon these cultivators to make them so eager to join?

[Sovereign of the Three Realms \(WN\)](#)

Chapter 1469: Swollen With Arrogance

The sectmaster's presence somewhat eased the crowd's anxiety. To fight or to capitulate, everything was now in his hands.

Long Zhe heaved a soft sigh. "Everyone, we've all witnessed their strength. We are no cowards, but the situation is simply too dire to overcome."

His words filled the crowd with sorrow. Had the sectmaster decided to surrender?

It might be their only chance to survive, but the prospect filled them with rage and disgust nevertheless.

The Heavenly Dragon Sect surrenders!

Like the plague, the news instantly spread throughout the entire human domain. The overweeningly arrogant and despotic Heavenly Dragon Sect had been beaten into submission!

Jiang Chen also stayed silent for a long while when he received the news.

Seeing his dark expression, Coiling Dragon urged, "Young lord, don't be upset. We didn't expect much from the so-called first rank sects to begin with."

Jiang Chen hadn't put much hope in the Heavenly Dragon Sect. To be frank, there had been little love lost between them, and quite some enmity. But the sudden capitulation filled him with disappointment in the human factions. An inexplicable sorrow welled in his chest. What was he trying so hard for?

To protect mankind?

He'd never been given to such grand aspirations. If not for Emperor Peafowl's urgings, he wouldn't even have taken on this heavy burden. Yet he'd conscientiously done his utmost ever since, rushing here and there, planning for an uncertain tomorrow. What had he gained in exchange?

An invasion from a northern alliance?

One disappointment after another?

The Heavenly Dragon Sect had been part of the northern alliance, yet instead of taking out his anger on them afterward, he'd let them leave safe and sound, hoping they might repent one day. But like cowards, they'd surrendered to an upstart. Were they following in Pillfire's footsteps?

How ironic.

The Heavenly Dragon Sect had been renowned for its unyielding pride. However, when push came to shove, they'd laid down their weapons instead of fighting to the last breath.

Jiang Chen was indeed a little discouraged.

"Coiling Dragon, both your clan and the Heavenly Dragon Sect share dragon ancestry. Dragons are the proudest of ancient tribes. They would die rather than face humiliation. Tell me, what would your choice have been?"

Coiling Dragon smiled wryly. "Young lord, that's too difficult a question. What I can say is that men of my clan are born of Veluriyam and will die ghosts of Veluriyam. We will never surrender. This I swear!"

Jiang Chen nodded. "It's too bad there are so few like you. Even in our city, not everyone is as determined."

Coiling Dragon sighed. "Don't I know it."

Such was the state mankind was currently in. Many ancient beliefs and convictions had been lost. Unlike their forebears, factions could no longer face death with courage and equanimity. Fortunately, only Coiling Dragon and Void were currently present beside Jiang Chen.

Void comforted, "Young lord, don't feel down. The Order is merely trying to intimidate us before the great assembly."

Jiang Chen nodded. "You're right. Tell everyone to stay on their toes. To be forewarned is forearmed."

"Indeed, the Order won't take the formation of the alliance lying down."

"The assembly might be the first direct confrontation between us." Anticipation flashed in Coiling Dragon's eyes.

After receiving Veluriyam's summons, every faction made due haste, rushing to join the gathering.

.....

News continuously trickled into Veluriyam over the next couple of days. It was an unusually grave atmosphere within the city.

"Young lord Jiang Chen, the second rank Water Mirror Sect was ambushed and exterminated on its way here."

"Young lord, the Celestial Capital Upper Region's second rank Butterfly Sect has also been attacked by an unknown enemy. Only a single cultivator managed to flee alive."

"Young lord..."

Seven factions were waylaid over the course of a few days. Almost no one survived the attacks.

The string of bad news terrified many would-be participants. Quite a few second or third rank sects sounded the retreat midway. Some sects even received words after barely stepping outside their doors. They then thought better of their actions and returned home.

The Order of Wind and Cloud had begun its revenge. Want to unite the world? We won't let you!

It was a low blow to be certain, but the results spoke for themselves. Out of the several hundred sects above third rank, more than half waved the white flag.

These factions had been hesitant from the start. They'd merely answered Veluriyam's call to curry favor and avoid the city's ire.

But now, these fence-sitters could feel death breathing down on their necks and had naturally decided to withdraw. They weren't devoted enough to give up their lives for Veluriyam's sake.

One could imagine Jiang Chen's gloom. There was nothing he could do, other than wait and see. The entire city seethed with rage. The Order was too despicable!

But Veluriyam had no answer to their contemptible methods.

The Order had vast manpower at its disposal and countless powerhouses. By hook or by crook, they would stop at nothing until they achieved their goal. The cruelty of the wanton slaughter and destruction had gone beyond the former Pillfire City.

In a few short days, the Order had made a ruthless and cruel example out of a dozen sects. Their strategy bore evident results.

Half a month later, only one-fifth of the factions had safely reached Veluriyam. The assembly had lost much of its luster.

Fortunately, all of the first rank sects had arrived. The Eternal Celestial Capital had been destroyed and the Heavenly Dragon Sect had capitulated, but no one else was missing. Its hands full with the northwestern wasteland, the Moon God Sect had sent representatives nonetheless. This allowed the assembly to retain its last shred of dignity.

But the Order of Wind and Cloud immediately issued a statement. Every faction participating in the assembly was an enemy, next in line to suffer the Order's ire.

It was a naked threat!

"Young lord, we can't just let them run rampant like this! Everyone is on tenterhooks."

"Indeed, the Order's already proved its ruthlessness. Add to that the Heavenly Dragon Sect's surrender... the entire human domain is now afraid of them."

Jiang Chen wracked his brains for many days.

"Attend to me. Coiling Dragon, tell the Order that this young lord is waiting for them at the grand assembly in Veluriyam. Rather than cheap tricks behind our backs, let's have a showdown if they dare. Real cultivators step forward and fight in broad daylight. Wretched murder in the dark won't gain them any respect!"

Sensible arguments would be wasted on the Order. It had already demonstrated the depths of its unscrupulous and outrageous nature. Hence, he could only resort to an even more outrageous approach.

A direct showdown wasn't the ideal solution, but it wasn't a bad choice in the current situation.

An attack on the Order would be fraught with danger; but in his own domain, he could use the advantage of terrain to teach them a lesson.

However, would the Order be so accommodating?

Nothing was less certain. The worst case scenario would be for them to ignore his challenge and intimidate more factions into surrender.

If so, they would be even harder to deal with.

If they agreed to an honorable duel, he would welcome them with open arms. But as expected, his plan failed. The Order replied that a brawl against Veluriyam was beneath its dignity.

Veluriyam ought to wisen up and surrender sooner rather than later. Otherwise, the Order would next set its sights on the city itself! Veluriyam wouldn't be as lucky as the Heavenly Dragon Sect. Once mobilized, the Order would butcher anyone who dared resist!

The entire city simmered with anger at such arrogance. But no matter how much they despised the upstart, there was little they could do.

Strength wasn't the most frightening thing here. No, what made the Order the most troublesome type of opponent was that, despite its blatant power, it never thought twice about resorting to shameless, underhanded methods.

Compared to the Order, Pillzenith's petty tricks were like a twelve months old baby who'd barely learned to walk.

A deathly stillness descended upon the Veluriyam, the lull before the storm. To think a faction that'd emerged a mere four years ago would gain enough momentum to back Veluriyam into such a corner!

[Sovereign of the Three Realms \(WN\)](#)

Chapter 1470: The Grand Assembly

More and more factions arrived in Veluriyam, filling its streets with unusual bustle. And yet, the noise didn't obscure the unusual atmosphere.

Everyone had originally come with full confidence in Veluriyam to participate in the assembly. But since then, the Order of Wind and Cloud had made quite an impression, seizing the initiative at Veluriyam's expense.

Some of the surviving members from the destroyed sects secretly blamed Veluriyam for their sects' ruin. Those who'd scrambled fearfully back into their strongholds also whined that Veluriyam hadn't ensured their safety, making them vulnerable to the Order.

"Bastards, they're shifting all the blame to us! Damn them!" Coiling Dragon swore roundly at the recent developments.

Veluriyam had called for an alliance for the greater good, to alleviate mankind's situation and stop the Order of Wind and Cloud before it was too late. But the city's goodwill and effort had been repaid with criticism and rancor.

The great emperor couldn't stomach such utter unfairness.

"Young lord, aren't we being too accommodating?" Coiling Dragon huffed.

Jiang Chen was angry as well, but he quickly calmed down. Did he feel wronged? Of course. But since he wanted to become humanity's leader, he had to shoulder the weight of this position.

The title wasn't all applause and glory. It came with its share of responsibilities as well. Now wasn't the time to lose his cool. He would be playing right into his enemies' hands. So he simply chose to turn a deaf ear to the acclaim and censure of the world.

"Coiling Dragon, stay calm. Do you want the Order to see you irritated? It's probably exactly what they're going for."

Coiling Dragon took a deep breath and nodded. "You're right, I'm being too hot-headed. They're truly disgusting, much more than Pillfire ever was. We've met a fearsome opponent this time."

Jiang Chen grunted noncommittally, then ordered, "The last of the sects will soon be here. All of you get ready. The ceremony must proceed without a hitch."

Humanity's safety and very survival depended on the gathering. No matter how frustrated and aggrieved he was, he was committed to the alliance's success.

.....

The ceremony formally started three days later in the great plaza at the city's gates.

Great sects and factions had come from every corner of the human domain. The Order had spoiled the festivities and reduced the magnitude of the assembly, but one would have been hard-pressed to tell by the scene's liveliness.

Veluriyam itself boasted of many factions under its banner. Great neighboring factions had all come as well. For example, the Skysword Sect and the Celestial Cicada Court had bought their own allies, as well as many sects from surrounding mid and lower regions, swelling the gathering's ranks.

Jiang Chen arrived at the scene, escorted by Veluriyam's great emperors. His presence caused an uproarious commotion. It was a rare opportunity to see him in person. Many third rank sect disciples in particular were beside themselves with excitement. They waved their arms and shouted, "Young lord Jiang Chen, young lord Jiang Chen!"

A smile on his lips, the young lord returned their waves in an expression of sincerity. His congenial attitude with the masses earned him even more fevered applause.

Behind him, the great emperors sighed with emotion. The young lord truly possessed a unique charm. Wherever he went, he became the star of the show, an object of acclaim and adulation. Despite their age, these old fellows had never enjoyed such treatment. Even Emperor Peafowl hadn't been so wildly popular in his youth.

Cool, calm, and collected, Jiang Chen took in the entire scene, a hint of power exuding from his God's Eyes. Like an invisible blade, his sharp stare carried a strange, awe-inspiring aura that shook even powerful great emperors.

"Ladies and gentlemen, you've braved untold dangers to come here. I salute you," he started. "Many things have happened in the last few years. The layout of our world is ever-changing. But there's a hard truth that some of you might be reluctant to face. The tranquility of our lives has been shattered. Peace, safety, those are things of the past. Willing or not, present today or not, the river of history will churn everyone into its wake. No one can resist it."

He immediately sounded the alarm bell without preamble, freezing the atmosphere.

Many young people understood him only partially, or maybe not at all. But some older cultivators read between the lines, vaguely grasping the young lord's implications. Bluntly put, mankind had entered a troubled era.

It wasn't alarmism. First, Pillfire had been destroyed. Next, a celestial demon lord had escaped his prison in Agarwood Valley, a Boundary Stele had been broken, Southern Celestial empyrean powerhouses had appeared... And now, a so-called Order of Wind and Cloud had emerged in the human domain...

One thing occurred after another, a prelude to turmoil.

"But I haven't lost hope. I only had one goal in mind in convening this assembly. Let us address the Order of Wind and Cloud.

"No one should meddle in the rise of a faction. Only, the trajectory of this Order is different from all others. They've attacked the Heavenly Dragon Sect and swallowed its surrounding territory... Their actions have violated some unspoken rules. I daresay they even threaten the fabric of our society."

"Most of you must have heard by now. The Order's ambushed many sects on their way to our assembly, massacring them to the last. uch actions have crossed humanity's bottom line. Even yesteryear's Pillfire never showed such arrogance.

"The Order very existence is a tumor. Sooner or later, you'll realize it's a threat to our entire domain. Some of you might be tempted to bury your heads in the sand today and pretend none of it is your business. But think of their ambitions. Will you still be safe tomorrow? What about indefinitely the future?"

Jiang Chen's words brimmed with magnetism, inflaming the crowd with each passing syllable. In fact, many factions had joined the assembly to assuage their unease, hoping to find safety in numbers.

As to the waylaid factions' misfortune, they couldn't fault Veluriyam for the Order's savagery. After all, the young lord hadn't called for an alliance out of selfish desire. He was acting for humanity's greater good.

"Young lord Jiang Chen, men and gods abhor the Order of Wind and Cloud's depravity. Please, form an alliance and lead us to exterminate them. We must excise this tumor!"

"Agreed. Young lord, Veluriyam is the only one who can unite us all."

"Young lord, we're at your service!"

"That's right, these prancing clowns will soon become ash! How many have prospered after opposing the young lord?"

Jiang Chen's reputation resounded far and loud. He still lacked some seniority, but it didn't weaken the crowd's veneration. Shouts and appeals sounded from every corner.

The young lord pressed his hands downwards. "Ladies and gentlemen, we can't tolerate their senseless slaughter any longer. Such a dire time calls for solidarity between human cultivators."

"Young lord, where on earth does this Order come from? I hear that many masters have joined its ranks in the past years."

"The Order aspires to dominate the entire human domain. There's no end to their appetite. If our sects don't unite, they'll swallow us one by one."

Each sect had its own rumors to share about the Order. In less than four years, it'd already left its mark on the human domain.

Jiang Chen was inwardly solemn. During his seclusion, it seemed the Order had spared no effort to expand. It now rivaled Veluriyam in influence. In fact, the fear and awe it inspired was even greater.

After all, Veluriyam had always kept a low profile, careful to preserve its virtuous image. Its conduct was poles apart from the Order.

A sudden, long whistle interrupted the crowd's lively discussion.

"An assembly of the lands? How can you call it that if our Order of Wind and Cloud isn't invited?" The voice rumbled in the air.

In that instant, more than a dozen figures landed in front of them.

Their attire marked them as important figures of the Order of Wind and Cloud. Impressively, the party included four protector kings. The rest were Celestial Star elders.

More than a dozen in total had come, none of them lower than great emperor. They seemed all the more threatening for their sudden entrance. Their leader sported violet hair. Even his eyes were violet. He was one of the six wandering titans, Emperor Everviolet.

Among the six, he'd been ranked second at worst. After joining the Order, he'd been inducted as one of the eight protector kings. He lorded over the Order's vast host, answering only to the supreme lord. His boisterous laugh revealed his confidence and high spirits. "Haha, young lord, do you remember me?"