

Three Realms 1501

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

Chapter 1501: The Gunuo Village

The young man's eyes were sharp and savage, like hawk or a falcon's. He gave off a predatory aura of dominance. The three sectmasters of the Moon God Sect were shaken by his very look. It was as if he'd taken a full look at their bodies, and there were no secrets to be hidden from him.

"Wami, wami!" The Embittered Savages shouted in unison. This was evidently a gesture of respect. No one from the Moon God Sect knew what the word meant, but the expressions of the Savages showed that it was an honored title of some sort.

The young man smiled slightly, obviously used to this kind of treatment. He raised both hands a few degrees into the air and waved them about a little. The Savages' cultivators began to shriek, dancing about in frenzied response. Some whistled, others shrieked, some stomped, clapped, and still others did all kinds of strange acts.

The Embittered Savage Tribe is as crude as they say, flashed across the hearts of all those from the Moon God Sect. They were surrounded by a group of these barbarians. To be captured and manhandled by them was a fate worse than death. Many of the younger female disciples resolved to commit suicide if they were captured.

However, the young nobleman among the Savages loosened the attitude of a few of the disciples.

If it was just him... The girls that thought this involuntarily blushed. It was a life and death situation, and yet they were thinking such strange things... How embarrassing!

The young nobleman strode slowly closer with a light step, bringing his features into focus.

Aside from the trademark large nose, he was significantly more handsome than the rest of his tribesmen. His keen eyes especially held something intrepid and daring to them, giving off an overpoweringly masculine aura.

The fact that he was an enemy aside, that kind of look was enough to capture the hearts of countless inexperienced little girls.

"I didn't expect that my Embittered Savage Tribe would be able to step foot on human territory again after the ancient times. How surprising," the young man suddenly spoke. His voice was deep and rich, and he conversed in the human tongue. However, it did carry an unmistakably alien accent that made it sound much rougher and more exotic.

Most importantly, his tone was so magnetic that it instantly lowered the guard of many of the younger female disciples. It was as if a man with such a resonant, charming voice couldn't possibly be evil.

The young man's eyes were full of conquest as he swept them across the Moon God Sect faces. His expression was colored with some humor to it. At least a third of it was flirtatious, another third admiring.

Clearly, he was astounded by these women's appearances. As an aristocrat of the Embittered Savage Tribe, he enjoyed its best resources and prettiest women. That was an obvious, foregone conclusion.

However, only after seeing these female cultivators did he realize that all his previous women were complete trash!

"I finally understand why my forebears always had the human domain on their minds. My darlings, if I may ask, are all the women of the human domain as splendidly beautiful as you? Your radiance is almost heavenly." The young man's words bordered on the flippant. He gestured in attempted stylishness.

Holy Maiden Xi Yuan was apparently so charmed by his mannerisms that she was brave enough to reply. "No way! You're lucky, running into the Moon God Sect..."

"Shut up, Xi Yuan!" The sectmaster found the girl's response unbearable. This wasn't the time to be a ditz! This young man obviously had malicious intentions!

The main sectmaster was somewhat forlorn. Though these disciples were reasonably talented, the Moon God Sect didn't allow its students to experience much of the world in general. Thus, they were disadvantaged when social situations came to bear, and became ignorant to the point of not realizing the danger behind this young man's apparent politeness.

Holy Maiden Xi Yuan was truthfully extremely unhappy about being scolded by the sectmaster multiple times. She didn't dare to act out of line in front though. Instead, she pursed her lips sullenly.

The young nobleman was sensitive enough to notice this. "Adorable little girl," he smiled gently, "don't worry. Feel free to keep talking. I guarantee that as long as you're polite with me, I will be the same. I've always been like that, you know."

Holy Maiden Xi Yuan was at a bit of an impasse. She was naturally drawn toward the barbarous nobleman, but the sectmaster's rebukes loomed over her menacingly. She pressed her lips, her eyes aglow with thoughtful animation. She was obviously raring to go.

The young nobleman suddenly glowered at the main sectmaster. "You, shut up!"

He turned to an old man nearby. "Gu Qi, if she talks any more, seize her and strip her, then hand her to the Gunuo warriors!" His prior affability had turned into a demonic countenance.

"Yes, Prince Gu Tianqing." The old man named Gu Qi replied with a cupped fist salute. He grinned devilishly at the Moon God Sect's head as he said this, emanating his aura into the air all around. Panicked, she felt a potent despair creep up on and control her. She was helpless before it.

This invisible aura filled her with hopelessness. "Empyrean, this must be an empyrean expert..."

The sectmaster felt like she had fallen into a frozen abyss. She'd had some delusions about putting everything behind her and hacking a way out before, but when the barbarian leader came onto the scene, she realized that it wasn't so easy to break free of the encirclement.

Gu Qi's display of power caused her spirits to plummet. The enemy clearly had people on their side with sufficient strength to overwhelm them. The Moon God Sect was outclassed here.

If they'd been limited to great emperors, the main sectmaster was confident enough to stand even against the likes of the late Emperor Pillzenith. But to her despair, an empyrean expert led their attack!

Such a cultivator wasn't someone she could stand against even if she threw away her own life. To put it bluntly, he stood on a completely different level than her. How could a great emperor compare to an empyrean expert? The difference was as vast as heaven and earth.

"Alright." The young man – the prince of the Gunuo Village of the Embittered Savage Tribe – spoke once again. His voice was back to its old, magnetic self. He beckoned at Holy Maiden Xi Yuan. "Come out and talk a bit more, little girl. I promise that no one will be allowed to get mad at or scold you."

The holy maiden was a bit hesitant at first, but the come-hither wave had an indescribable allure to it. She couldn't help herself. Her brain paths were fried. She walked with eyes glazed over towards the youth.

"What are you doing, Xi Yuan?" A young fellow disciple of hers instinctively reminded.

The prince of the Gunuo Clan glowered. He casually grasped at the air, sending an invisible force across space that elevated her into an invisible hand. A moderate rip was enough to tear all her garments clean off. Every inch of her body was exposed to the air.

This exciting scene ripped through the tens of thousands of other Savages. They yelled and shrieked with various strange sounds.

"You may have her. She's all yours." Prince Gu Tianqing tossed her nonchalantly into the crowd.

Her shrieks of suffering soon began to sound after the Savages swarmed in.

"You better not move. I don't mind sending more to join her. Our warriors are quite thirsty, I assure you." Gu Tianqing seemed to have two masks he could freely swap between.

The main sectmaster looked mournful, but she restrained her other disciples' impulses. She wasn't cold-blooded. Rather, she knew that any resistance at the present moment would only bring more pain to them.

"You can talk now, little girl." The savage prince was back to his previous tone and expression. A somehow mesmerizing sense of captivation seeped back into his speech.

The blush on Holy Maiden Xi Yuan's face extended all the way to the nape of her neck. Gu Tianqing was fatally attractive, enough to make her mind to lose focus and her heart tremble in desire.

With a light wave of the prince's hand, the holy maiden snuggled right up to his broad chest. His manly musk only plunged her deeper into the pit of passion.

"Tell me what you just said in more detail, little girl. What's with the Moon God Sect? How about humanity as a whole, hmm?" Gu Tianqing's sizable hands groped the holy maiden like it was the most natural thing in the world. Electricity sizzled through the girl's skin wherever he touched. She softened all over, ecstatic with pleasure.

Her eyes were as dazed as her mind. "We're all from the Moon God Sect. Those three are the sectmasters. I'm one of the sect's holy maidens, and there are a few others. The rest are the sect's elite disciples. The Moon God Sect is one of the strongest sects in the human domain, full of beautiful girls. The Upper Eight Regions form the core of the human domain, and it holds eight first rank sects. The

Moon God Sect is one of them, but there's another one with similarly beautiful girls in the southeast... the Celestial Cicada Court..."

Holy Maiden Xi Yuan was paralyzed with bliss. Her heart was high in the clouds, and her inhibitions had been cast aside. Hints of a lustful nature was being summoned from her very bones. She desperately wanted Gu Tianqing to take her right now!

The hints of a self-satisfied smile played at Gu Tianqing's lips when he saw the holy maiden's cooperation. He was quite happy with his abilities of conquest.

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Chapter 1502: A Precarious Situation

Holy Maiden Xi Yuan was one of the Moon God Sect's weakest-willed disciples. Prince Gu Tianqing on the other hand, evidently practiced some sort of seductive art. It was unlikely that the main sectmaster herself would be able to resist his wiles, much less the irresolute young holy maiden.

Moreover, the prince had a sharp eye for people. He could see from a single glance that Holy Maiden Xi Yuan had the most indecisive dao heart of her peers. Even better was the fact that she was ruinously pretty. That was the primary motivator for Gu Tianqing's choice.

It was as he'd expected. A little bit of trickery was enough to make her completely loyal to him. Holy Maiden Xi Yuan's continuous disclosures about the human domain were passed onto the barbarous prince. The several experts beside him shifted from surprised to joyful to brimming with cheer.

They'd never dreamed that the human domain of their ancestors' dreams was so weak. Their strongest experts were only peak great emperors? Emphyrean experts were essentially legendary?

This caused a great deal of excitement. Though their tribe didn't have it easy in their daily lives, cultivation was nevertheless one of their favorite pastimes. The Embittered Savage Tribe didn't have a ton of emphyrean experts, but it did have a few. In comparison, the human race was virtually useless!

They'd never thought that this would be the case. The sole reason for their attack on the Boundary Stele and invasion was because their ancestors had yearned for this territory so much. The picture they had painted of it had simply been too enticing.

The sheer amount of resources, spirit veins, pretty women, method tomes, weapons, pills... the list went on and on. The Embittered Savages couldn't match a tenth of that wealth. In the description of their ancestors, the human domain was like heaven. It was a place where all of their dreams would all be fulfilled!

Alas, the Boundary Stele realm had stopped them ever since ancient times. Even the strongest of Savages had no way of breaking through.

Until...

The Stele loosened itself with the passage of time! The strongest of seals and the most sturdy of fortresses couldn't last against the inexorable march of time and the turning of the seasons.

Thus, the Gunuo Village that lived closest to the border was the first to discover this fact. This was why they had managed to enter ahead of their competition; they'd been the closest to this superbly attractive paradise.

Gu Tianqing was no simple brute. Though he enjoyed fondling Holy Maiden Xi Yuan's body, he also paid a lot of attention to the content of her words, gleaning whatever useful information he could out of them.

"Aah!" The holy maiden yelped in pain. Gu Tianqing had squeezed her with too much force just now, almost enough to make her flesh burst.

"You said that the human race has someplace called Veluriyam Capital. That's the leading faction here? There's a kid named Jiang Chen who's hard to deal with?" The prince had overreacted because he'd heard something important.

Holy Maiden Xi Yuan's face was pale at the sensation. She could only muster up the energy to nod after a while. "Yes. Jiang Chen is both wily and annoying. If you want to deal with him, Your Highness... I have an idea."

"What's your idea?" Gu Tianqing was back to his charismatic self. He caressed the holy maiden lightly, apparently quite tender.

The holy maiden was lost in the depths of passion. "If I tell you, you have to promise to protect me all of my life. You can't let other people be mean to me!"

"Haha, of course. Do you take me for some unkind buffoon? Tell me your idea. As long as it's good, you will be handsomely rewarded."

Holy Maiden Xi Yuan giggled, having made up her mind. She pointed at the second sectmaster. "This old woman is Jiang Chen's sister's master. Last time, one of Jiang Chen's enemies captured her and threatened him with her. A hostage swap was made to save that old woman. If you want to deal with Jiang Chen, you can do the same thing. I'm sure Jiang Chen will have trouble with this!"

The holy maiden's words stunned everyone from the sect. They'd never thought Xi Yuan to be so shameless as to publicly betray the Moon God Sect and plunge the second sectmaster into trouble!

The second sectmaster glowered. "Despicable bitch! Absolutely despicable!" she couldn't resist cursing. "If I knew you were going to do something so shameful, I would've killed you myself. The Moon God Sect wouldn't have suffered your indignity then!"

The main sectmaster's face was bloodless. "The only thing we can do is to destroy ourselves. I hope that the remnants of the sect will not forget their heritage, and there will eventually be descendants of our inheritance."

Her tone was filled with pessimism. She knew that it was impossible to escape misfortune today. Her greatest wish was that those still at headquarters could distinguish themselves through this troubling time, creating a new, stronger Moon God Sect in the future that ensured the continuation of their heritage.

Gu Tianqing saw the other women of the Moon God Sect color at the suggestion. It seemed that this Holy Maiden Xi Yuan had hit the mark. He tilted the holy maiden's chin upwards and gave a hearty pat to her rear. "Not bad, not bad. I like you quite a bit. I will certainly grace you with my splendor later. You may look forward to it. Hahaha..."

His tone darkened as he said this. "Gu Qi, I must bother you with this next task. These women are too pretty to be wasted in death. If you and the other experts can work together, you should be able to take most of them alive. Remember, your prime objective is to prevent them from committing suicide!"

Now that he knew the human domain's strength, there were no inhibitions to his lust.

If the Gunuo Village didn't take advantage of the weakness of these humans by raiding their lands in advance of everyone else, that would have been a real shame. They wouldn't be able to prevent the other village from doing the same, once they noticed the human domain being open to the Savages.

They say that the early bird deserves the worm, and the late receives the dredges.

As the earliest bird on the scene, the Gunuo Village had an insurmountable advantage. The prince would be a fool if he didn't use that to the fullest. These women were undoubtedly the biggest spoils of their first foray into the human domain.

They were even more expectant of what this place held now. If there were women like this everywhere – slightly lower quality was acceptable too! – that was more than enough to drive them all into a renewed frenzy.

These savage warriors of the Gunuo Village were incredible fighters. Their primal needs were as developed as their muscles. Therefore, they were extremely enthusiastic about the prospect of pretty women.

Old Gu Qi nodded, chuckling as he perused the sectmasters and others. "A piece of advice: you'd best forget about resisting. With your beauty and charm, I guarantee you won't be passed around or discarded. You'll be given appropriate roles. But if you do foolishly resist and the prince gets angry... then it's harder to say where you'll end up. Best take to mind what happened to that little girl, hmm?"

The young disciple had been carried off by several dozen warriors. There was not a peep from her now. It was obvious how miserable of a fate she'd suffered.

Everyone from the Moon God Sect was terrified. The aura that old man Gu Qi invisibly exuded was simply too potent. Its strength was overwhelming.

The second sectmaster suddenly shouted. She produced a blue, frosted blade in her hand. "Don't listen to their lies! The Embittered Savage Tribe is a race of uncivilized barbarians. They haven't evolved much further than mindless beasts. Their promises are untrustworthy!"

"How can the holy cultivators of the Moon God Sect be tainted by these savage animals? I swear on my position as a sectmaster that we will only fight to the death today. I would rather die than let myself be sullied!" She swept her weapon at the Savages near her as she said this.

This unexpected attack from a great emperor cultivator produced formidable results. Four Savages were decapitated in a single flash, having not reacted in time.

The second sectmaster's act kindled the hot-bloodedness of the other female cultivators. The main and third sectmasters drew their weapons as well. "Disciples of the Moon God Sect, hear our command. Today, we fight to the death for our dignity! Whoever turns tail and run is a traitor to the sect and eternally damned!"

"To hell with them!"

"We won't let savages dirty our purity!" Indeed, they would've preferred to marry completely ordinary human male cultivators than be violated by these uncultured brutes. Dirty and base gestures as well as immensely ugly appearances had elicited a psychological disgust on the subconscious level.

Their zeal angered Gu Tianqing. As the prince of the Gunuo Village, he naturally didn't want anyone to defame his tribe. "Gu Qi, take down these tramps. I'd like to see how much resistance remains when they're all moaning beneath me!"

The old man nodded, creating a stream of spatial fissures via a series of overhead grabs.

Radiant brilliance swirled in the fissures, creating tornados of dimensional chaos that stirred up the fabric of space. They whirled towards the Moon God Sect's contingent, sowing immediate disarray among their ranks.

The weaker female cultivators were instantly incapacitated when touched by the attack. They had no strength left to commit suicide, much less fight back.

Thankfully, the three sectmasters staunchly held on. They formed a triangular defense matrix, protecting the majority of their disciples from the invaders. However, that Gu Qi's first strike had been enough to force them into a precarious situation. They were candles in a storm, liable to be snuffed out at any moment!

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Chapter 1503: A Miraculous Arrow

Gu Qi's expression was frigid as he watched the final struggles of the three sectmasters. He sneered at their stubbornness to resist unto death. "Our ancestors were absolutely right. The humans are a weak race." A man of his cultivation had the absolute right to treat the three women with disdain.

"I'm not interested in bullying women. Surrender yourselves, or you'll be subjected to a far worse fate once the prince becomes angry."

The second sectmaster was livid. "A barbarian isn't worthy of asking us to surrender!"

Gu Qi snickered. "You're certainly the most stubborn of everyone here. Very good. I'll make an example out of you first."

Saying this, he unreservedly transformed into a burst of wind, hurtling toward the Moon God Sect's setup. He was completely unafraid of the defensive matrix. He was very confident in his abilities and also had a crushing cultivation advantage.

Seeing that Gu Qi was heading for them directly, the sectmasters panicked. They focused on their teamwork, striking in unison with their weapons. They were great emperors used to fighting alongside one another. In fact, this was a regular area of practice for them.

Combining their strengths allowed them to hold their own against even the likes of Emperors Pillzenith or Peafowl. Unfortunately, that was still insufficient before Gu Qi.

There was a strange air current around the old man that made their attacks slide right off him. Gu Qi cackled menacingly, his bony palm almost touching the second sectmaster's chest.

It was in that instant that something came out of the blue –

As Gu Qi's palm was about to make contact with the second sectmaster's breast, his ears twitched in anticipation of something. His face colored. His heart palpitated at the undeniable sense of danger. His instincts brought him in a sudden leap backwards.

In the next moment, a fearsome arrow shot out from nowhere. Its trajectory had ignored all principles of space, but it'd only managed to graze him thanks to his timely dodge.

A terrifying killing intent brought cold sweat beading down Gu Qi's back. He was sure that if he hadn't jumped back, the arrow had more than enough power to kill him on the spot. Despite his expertise, his proud expression was replaced with one of jittery astonishment.

The arrow grazed Gu Qi's body, but wasn't content to stop there. Residual force propelled it to pierce through a series of further targets. A row of Gunuo warriors were slain almost defenselessly by the arrow's propulsion. It only began to subside after reaping more than a dozen lives.

The arrow disappeared in another flash. This bolt out of the blue awed every tribesman bearing witness.

"Protect the prince!" Gu Qi shouted. He jumped in front of Gu Tianqing to shield him with his body before everyone else. The other bodyguards originally involved in attacking the Moon God Sect ignored that task in favor of defending their master as well. Gu Tianqing was well-protected by bulwarks of flesh and blood.

These Embittered Savages respected Gu Tianqing a great deal. They didn't care about any potential personal harm, forming a wall with their own bodies around their prince.

The Moon God Sect was ignored for the time being. The head sectmaster was decisive enough to notice this. "Look for an opportunity to retreat!" she transmitted.

She led the pack in cutting a way through, tasking the second and third sectmasters with bring up the rear.

"Everyone, follow closely!" she called out. As a first rank sect, the Moon God Sect's disciples were disciplined enough not to be overwhelmed by joy. A retreat was organized in a very orderly way.

But Gu Tianqing wasn't going to let these female cultivators escape under his nose. "Stop them!" he shouted furiously.

Because the Savages had the advantage in numbers, another batch of several tens of thousands pounced at the Moon God Sect at the prince's command. As the sect was in the center of the things, there were many layers of savages surrounding them. It wasn't going to be easy to break free from the encirclement.

Without an opponent that tipped the scales as heavily as Gu Qi though, the head sectmaster saw a sliver of opportunity despite the fearsome crowd. She wove a net of snow-white blade auras, dancing like a coiling serpent. Everywhere she went, swathes of savages were cut down.

Though the Embittered Savage Tribe was fierce, its normal cultivators had a long way to go compared to a great emperor like the head sectmaster. Only a small minority of the Gunuo experts had the ability to utterly overpower her.

If not for the throng of savages, the three sectmasters' unified effort would have been more than enough to carve a path out.

However, these Gunuo cultivators were incredibly audacious. The high casualty rate didn't faze them, nor did it throw their ranks into disarray. The ones who died were immediately replaced by their peers.

At this time, another arrow flashed forth from empty space.

Thump, thump, thump!

It stole away lives like a deity of death, bringing carnage and blood wherever it travelled. The lives of the savage warriors were snuffed out in droves. Furthermore, these arrows always struck in the most crowded places. The head sectmaster received a multitude of opportunities and openings because of this.

Even the usually brave and fierce Embittered Savages began to express some confusion. This two-pronged attack was rather difficult to deal with. If they were allowed to focus on fighting the Moon God Sect women, their numbers and courage could crush their adversaries through brute force. But they couldn't manage the deadly arrows that came from outside.

These arrows were no common ambushes. Each missile carried immense might behind it. A single arrow was enough to kill a large group of Savages. Because these aliens enjoyed tempering their own bodies, their defensive ability was quite robust.

Alas, it was no help at all against these arrows. Their bodies were as fragile as pieces of paper when matched against the missiles, and a single wound from an arrow ripped a victim right open.

Gu Tianqing was supremely upset when he saw this as well.

"Who's launching these sneaky attacks and interfering with my business?" the savage prince was completely upset. "Gu Qi, leave me. Seek out this deceitful bastard!"

As someone deeply loyal to Gu Tianqing, Gu Qi could do little other than incoherently mutter and hesitate. He wouldn't comply with the prince's demands.

"Your Highness, your safety is more important. These arrows are very scary. They'll pound even the slightest sliver of weakness. I absolutely cannot leave you." Gu Qi was very stubborn. No matter how much Gu Tianqing pestered him about fighting, he would only agree to remain as the prince's most faithful guard and protector. The old man's hawkish eyes sought the source of the arrow.

Gu Tianqing's fury was manifest in his reaction. "A capable man should show himself. What courage does it take to ambush people from the unseen? Humans are a base and reviled race alright!!" His anger had been thoroughly kindled.

Whoosh!

There was no answering voice from the aether. Instead, another arrow shot forth.

The arrow seemed to be able to accurately lock on to him. No matter how well the other cultivators surrounded him, its killing intent was not in any way diminished by their defense.

“Protect the prince!” Gu Qi and a few other bodyguards activated their defensive treasures, forming several bastions around Gu Tianqing.

Boom!

This combined effort from multiple experts was barely enough to block the arrow. Upon failing to reach its mark, it disappeared in the breeze.

“Moving an object through the cracks of space with mere mental effort... this opponent must be knowledgeable with spatial techniques!” Gu Qi was rather astonished at this wondrous sight. If not for the potency of their defense, the results would have been catastrophic.

Gu Tianqing’s own strength was perfectly sufficient, but this lethal arrow was the closest he’d come to mortal peril. Cold sweat formed all over his body.

He’d thought he could roam uncontested in the human domain, especially after Xi Yuan had related certain information. He had been almost certain of the Embittered Savage Tribe’s advantage over the human race. But it seemed that his prior optimism had been a bit too blind.

“Stand fast. Each arrow must cost a lot of energy. I don’t believe that he can keep firing!” Gu Tianqing shouted loudly to his subjects.

Gu Qi echoed this sentiment. “The arrows are weakening already. Stay in formation and don’t panic!”

“Anyone who captures a cultivator from the Moon God Sect will be rewarded eighty million spirit stones. Anyone who captures a sectmaster, three hundred million!”

The sizable bounties were more than enough motivation for some. There were always those who valued money more than their lives. Moreover, the arrows’ kill counts had been minuscule at best compared to the size of the Embittered Savage’s army.

The head sectmaster was gradually opening a way up out of the encirclement. Unfortunately, she discovered upon getting about halfway that these savages had become more ferocious due to the price on their heads. No matter which way they charged, more swarmed forward to replace the cultivators they killed.

“Head Sectmaster, we can’t kill enough people to get out of here.” The third sectmaster was slightly depressed. “Does the arrow just now mean reinforcements are here?”

She desperately wanted that to be true. She found the density of the savages before them a painful thing to contemplate.

“Get them, get them!”

Savages welled like an inexorable tide. The ones that did this time weren't ordinary cultivators of the tribe, but captains and leaders as well. Many were half-step great emperors. Coupled with their numbers advantage, this meant that the three sectmasters were matched to a certain extent.

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Chapter 1504: A Hair Away from Disaster, Reinforcements Arrive

The head sectmaster's chest tightened. The onslaught of Embittered Savages had increased in number and ferocity.

"Give it your all! We can almost break through, just a little more!" She shuddered at the fate awaiting her if she were to be captured.

"Buahaha, these wenches are pretty spirited. I like that type! Brothers, charge! If you can take one alive, the prince might give her to you!" A commander viciously slashed his saber at the head sectmaster as eight half-step great emperors charged out and swarmed the third sectmaster.

Not even the prospect of death could stop the Embittered Savages. These barbarians' ferocity on the battlefield was their most defining trait. This reckless style was also the Moon God Sect's greatest nemesis.

After all, the sect was comprised of women who took great pains to maintain their poise and elegance. They couldn't match the enemy in brutish savagery. Hence, despite a clear advantage in cultivation, the three sectmasters became flustered once surrounded, enabling the barbarians to fill the previous breach and tighten the encirclement.

The head sectmaster bit her lip, full of bitterness. "Is there truly no way out today? Shan'er, get ready. We'll put our lives down on the line in a moment to cover for you all. Rush into the gap the moment you see it, understood? You'll need to try your hardest whether you successfully flee or not," the head sectmaster transmitted to Xu Shan.

She was searching for an escape route.

Holy Maiden Xu Shan sent back anxiously, "Master, I haven't been your disciple for long, but a teacher for a day is a parent for life. We'll die together at worst. Don't worry, the Moon God Sect won't perish today!"

"Fool! Who will rebuild the sect if all of you die here? Shan'er, you're blessed with a unique constitution even young lord Jiang Chen admires. Don't you know the responsibility you carry on your shoulders?" The head sectmaster usually possessed extraordinary poise, but she now shook with anger. Their sacrifice would be for naught if Shan'er didn't understand.

Naturally, her fighting suffered when conversation diverted her attention. An enemy blade slashed an inch away from her shoulder. Despite her fast reaction, the tip cut a long bloody trail on her arm, dyeing her clothes red.

"Master!"

"Head Sectmaster!"

But her clear eyes became firmer instead. She shouted crisply, "Number two, number three, today is the day we sacrifice ourselves for our sect! Are you ready?"

The second sectmaster replied, her tone steadfast, "More than ready! As long as I can kill a few more of these bastards, it'll be all worth it!"

"Awooo, awooo!" Seeing the sect on its last legs, the Embittered Savages roared like beasts, trying to intimidate the women and destroy the last shred of their fighting spirit.

Several half-step great emperors charged forward madly, backing the head sectmaster into a tight corner with their increasingly frenzied attacks.

"Shan'er, prepare yourself. My final move will be your only chance to escape. Remember, don't let my efforts be wasted!" Her staunch voice brimmed with unyielding resolve.

Xu Shan couldn't hold back her tears. Her master had chosen self detonation in order to create a path for them!

A serene, enlightened smile appeared on the head sectmaster's lips, as if finally relieved of all mortal burdens once her decision was set. It was at this moment of life and death when intense shaking travelled from the sky. On the verge of her ultimate attack, the sectmaster looked into the distance.

She saw four enormous figures as tall as several men rumbling their way like miniature mountains. They crashed into the crowd like tigers, killing everything in their path. No one and nothing could stand in the way of their destructive power.

A speck of hope suddenly rippled through the sectmaster's utter despair. "Reinforcements? Has someone really come to our rescue?"

"Friends from the Moon God Sect, hurry and make your escape." A familiar voice, deep and masculine, giving off an instant sense of security.

Jiang Chen!

Everyone shook with uncontrollable joy. His voice was the most blissful melody to their ears.

Many had had reservations about him in the past. The second sectmaster in particular had been deeply hostile. To her, he'd stolen her disciple from her. And today, she'd been ready to face death with equanimity, but hope and joy now bloomed again!

For some reason, all felt they really would survive the day when they heard his voice!

A true dragon danced in the sky, wreathed in chaotic currents of wind. It approached on the tops of clouds, its momentum seeming to swallow the earth and heavens. A man perched majestically its back, bow and arrow at the ready, radiating the awe-inspiring aura of a god descended from the heavens.

The mere sight of someone resting his butt on a dragon was enough to strike the Moon God Sect dumb. Even the Embittered Savages stared in disbelief, their eyeballs almost popping out.

Like unstoppable machines, the golems mowed through all of the cultivators below as they moved closer to the Moon God Sect group.

Though far short from their full strength, the four brothers made short work of the Savages. The half-step emperors who'd been so threatening against the sectmasters crumpled like paper.

The brothers squashed them dead with a singular slap, crushed them with one stomp, grabbed the invaders and tore them in half, or simply cleaved them squarely in the middle with axes.

No one could withstand their onslaught.

These giants were surely subordinates that Jiang Chen had sent to help them! The scene delighted the Moon God Sect and reignited their fighting spirit. With a fierce desire to live, they erupted with a fighting strength hard to imagine.

An opening finally appeared in the Embittered Savages' siege. Drenched in blood, the head sectmaster sent her disciples to safety while she waved her weapon and brought up the rear.

Big Stone stretched out his enormous hand and grabbed her like a small doll. "You leave too!"

As if bound in tight chains, she couldn't move an inch in his hand, only recovering her freedom after he threw her outside the encirclement. She flipped in the air before landing, caught by a group of disciples.

"Head Sectmaster..."

"Master!"

After their narrow escape, the sect members' faces were a mixture of happiness and lingering fear. Seeing them still of a mind to prattle, Jiang Chen couldn't resist shouting, "What are you waiting for? Dinner?"

His irritation jolted the head sectmaster back to reality. She saluted him from afar. "Young lord, my sect owes you yet another favor."

Then, well aware they would be a hindrance, she waved her hand without tarrying. "We leave!" The Moon God Sect fell back at lightning speed.

Flustered, Gu Tianqing shouted, "Stop them!"

The fatty meat had been so close he could almost taste it. What a pity it was to let them get away! How could he allow it??

"Your Highness, these four giants aren't so easy to deal with." Gu Qi observed the four golems brothers with his brow creasing in worry.

Gu Tianqing blinked. "What do you mean?"

"Judging by their aura and their fighting prowess, they aren't great emperors but empyrean masters. And my gut tell me they aren't going all out yet!"

Seeing the four giants as free as tigers amidst a herd of sheep, disquiet gnawed at Gu Qi.

But they weren't the most frightening threat. Rather, it was the young man riding the dragon high in the sky, and his divine bow, and his arrows...

Without a doubt, it was the same person who'd ambushed them earlier. His cultivation was nothing to write home about, but the bow exuded an aura impossible to ignore. Gu Qi had the intense premonition that with that bow and those arrows, the young man was fully capable of killing them no matter his cultivation. In fact, he might be the four giants' masters!

Therefore, the old servant stayed cool-headed despite Gu Tianqing's impatience. He could catch up to the Moon God Sect if he were to act now. He might even capture all of them alive in one fell swoop.

But he didn't dare leave. His first duty was the prince's safety. If something were to happen to his master, everything would become meaningless.

The women became smaller and smaller in their eyes, turning into black dots that finally vanished from their sight. The golems continued their rampage unabated, visiting disastrous losses upon the Gunuo Village's ranks.

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

Chapter 1505: A Stern Warning

Gu Tianqing was furious. In his arms, all color had drained from Xi Yuan's face and she trembled like a leaf when she saw his expression.

"Bitch! Didn't you say that the strongest warrior in the human domain is only great emperor? Who are the golems? And who's the youth riding the dragon?" Gu Tianqing bellowed harshly with smoldering eyes. Clearly, he believed that he'd been duped by Xi Yuan.

The holy maiden was pale and frightened. "Y-your Highness, t-that's Jiang Chen, the leader of the human race..." she stuttered.

She'd just betrayed the Moon God Sect, so it was only natural that she'd feel some guilt when she saw Jiang Chen. She was afraid that he'd target her. With her current abilities, there was no way she'd survive an arrow. Moreover, Gu Tianqing's men would never be so gallant as to protect her.

Xi Yuan was fraught with worry as she didn't have an affiliation with either side. She could easily end up as Jiang Chen's target for revenge or Gu Tianqing's punching bag. A sense of dread flooded her heart. She would've made a safe retreat by now if she'd just obediently stuck to the sect.

For some reason, she'd always been afraid when seeing Jiang Chen. It seemed like he was capable of anything and everything.

Gu Tianqing was taken aback when he heard Jiang Chen's name, but quickly regained his composure. Even though he was hot-tempered, a Gunuo prince like him was no idiot.

"Gu Qi, which of you will take his head off for me?"

Gu Tianqing was accompanied by five personal guards, the strongest of which was Gu Qi. The other four were only half-step empyrean, but they were much stronger than the common great emperor.

The five personal guards were extremely conflicted when they saw the meandering true dragon in the sky. Their defense would absolutely weaken if they went after Jiang Chen. What if the attacker was trying to lure them away? If they went after him, he could turn around and put an arrow through the prince's head!

"Your Highness, Jiang Chen has come prepared. It's better that we don't make any careless moves until we understand what he's up to. His abilities have yet to reach the stage of perfection, but the bow in his hands is nothing to scoff at." Gu Qi was rather confused. He'd never been in such a peculiar situation until he met Jiang Chen.

The youth wasn't yet a great emperor, but he somehow had the strength to threaten an empyrean expert's life. This was highly baffling. As a personal guard, his primary task was to ensure the prince's safety. Fame and glory were only a second thought.

Gu Tianqing also understood that his command put the guards in a difficult spot. He was aggrieved. As someone who'd just transcended to the great emperor, he was the most respected figure among the youths in the village. Yet despite his stature and cultivation level, his life was being threatened by someone even younger than him! It was a great blow and challenge to his pride.

Even though it was the opponent's bow that threatened his life, he couldn't help but feel exasperated.

Jiang Chen didn't plan to fight to the death with the Embittered Savages. When the Moon God Sect retreated to a safe distance, he sounded the signal. The four golems instantly recognized the sign for retreat.

The brothers were already at the end of their ropes; this was the northwestern wastes after all. The ambient energy here was practically nonexistent. Fighting in this environment was actually torture. Feeling the anguish, they immediately ended their rampage and retreated to the outskirts.

They weren't the only ones feeling the pain. The barbarians were also greatly affected by the lack of spirit qi, but it didn't take as big of a toll on their bodies as many of them had yet to reach empyrean realm.

Gu Tianqing instantly recognized what was going on. "Gu Qi, they seem to be retreating?"

Gu Qi nodded. "This is a wasteland with very low qi density. Even normal humans would find it difficult to live here, let alone cultivators with high energy demand. Those large beings probably don't want to exhaust themselves!"

Despite his findings, Gu Qi was still reluctant to make a move.

Gu Tianqing was aching to leap into action, but Gu Qi didn't fan the flames and dumped a bucket of cold water over his liege's head. "Your Highness, Jiang Chen absolutely has a number of trump cards hidden up his sleeves since he's the leader of the human race. Perhaps now is not the best time to have a life or death battle."

The prince was annoyed, but there was nothing he could do about it.

"Listen to me, Embittered Savages! If you don't wish to die in a foreign land, now is the time for you to scamper back to your territory! Death awaits all invaders!" High up in the air, Jiang Chen emitted a dragon roar so powerful that it shook the sun and moon.

The mountains and rivers trembled as the sun and moon quivered. It rather sounded like the combined bellows of numerous dragons.

All of the barbarians, Gu Tianqing included, suddenly felt inferior and small. The sight of Jiang Chen riding a true dragon was simply too stunning.

Dragons were highly venerated beings in Embittered Savage culture. Prayers were offered to dragon totems as dragons were an integral pillar that'd kept the race going forward all these years. Thus, they were equally frightened as they were perplexed.

Did the humans possess dragon taming arts? How could a legendary beast, their target of worship, be reduced to a mere mount?

The invaders secretly heaved a sigh of relief after Jiang Chen disappeared from sight. The divine bow was a guillotine hovering over their heads. This terrifying threat was finally gone for now.

Gu Tianqing smashed an ill-tempered blow at the ground. Jiang Chen had played the prince's entire army like a fiddle with a party of only five. He'd even had to watch his prey flee before his very eyes! Never before in his life had he been so humiliated.

"Gu Qi, that bastard truly deserves to die a thousand times over! How dare he make a fool out of me?! I will never let this go! How dare a peasant like him threaten our warriors? He's just an opportunist that hides behind his legendary bow! How is he even worthy to be the leader of the human race?!"

Thanks to the human, Gu Tianqing had lost a lot of face. He needed to vent his frustrations to regain some balance. The sight of Xi Yuan hiding at a corner made his blood boil even more.

"Bitch! Come here!"

He beckoned the holy maiden over with his finger and slapped her viciously on the butt. "The information you gave us was wrong! How will I face my men if I don't punish you?"

He grabbed her, set up an isolating formation to block off all eyes and ears, and did the unspeakable right then and there.

His rough handling scared Xi Yuan, yet also excited her a little.

She'd often fantasized about sexual relations while in the sect, but had been restrained by strict rules. Her fantasies could only ever remain as fantasies. Thus, she actually somewhat anticipated being violated by the foreign prince.

...

Spurred by an innate desire to live, the Moon God Sect party ran away from the northwestern wastes in one breath, the incident still fresh in their minds.

The head sectmaster made a sweeping gesture. "Alright, we're safe now. No need to panic, we'll wait here for young lord Jiang Chen and his companions."

Even though she'd crossed paths with death and was covered in her own blood, she remained as calm and collected as ever.

"Honored Master, let Shan'er tend to your wounds." Xu Shan came over to treat the wounds.

"It's only a flesh wound. No matter." The head sectmaster didn't seem concerned about her injuries. Instead, her concerned gaze was constantly set towards the northwest.

"Head Sectmaster, the army will not reach us in such a short amount of time. There's no need to worry," an elder comforted.

The head sectmaster sighed. "I'm not worried about the Embittered Savage Tribe. I'm worried about young lord Jiang Chen. My heart won't be at peace if anything happens to our savior..."

"The human domain can do without the Moon God Sect, but it can't afford to lose Jiang Chen," she added after a short pause. These were genuine words from the bottom of her heart, not mere pleasantries.

If it wasn't for Jiang Chen, the human domain would still be a pile of loose sand. The current state of affairs was the result of his blood and sweat.

The second sectmaster nodded thoughtfully without saying anything negative. Her prejudice against Jiang Chen had finally vanished after this incident. Those who repaid evil with kindness were few and far between. Jiang Chen had already shown the Moon God Sect far more benevolence than he had to.

"He's back!" Joy filled the head sectmaster's beautiful eyes. Moments later, a clear dragon roar was heard from the skies.

Jiang Chen was still riding Long Xiaoxuan while the four golem brothers were running on foot.

The Embittered Savages weren't after them. It was obvious that the barbarians had been backed against a wall. Now wasn't a good time for risky chases.

Xu Shan's heart pounded when she saw Jiang Chen, her eyes filled admiration. The head sectmaster sighed gently. How could she not see Xu Shan's blossoming feelings?

Unfortunately, Jiang Chen was unlikely to ever be interested in any of their disciples. The sectmaster approved of Jiang Chen greatly. If he took a liking to any of the holy maidens, she'd be more than happy to betroth her to him.

Unfortunately, that was very unlikely to happen. He already had a wife and a dao partner from Myriad Abyss Island. Why would a person of his stature be interested in anyone from her sect?

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

Chapter 1506: A Hesitant Moon God Sec

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"Young lord, we owe you yet another favor!" the head sectmaster exclaimed.

Descending, Jiang Chen saluted back with a cupped fist salute. "Honored sectmasters, now isn't the time for pleasantries. The Boundary Stele is broken and the Embittered Savages are invading. The northwest will be embroiled in the fires war sooner or later. You must decide what the Moon God Sect is going to do sooner rather than later."

The immediate danger had passed, but the Moon God Sect wasn't out of the woods yet. The real difficulties were yet to come.

The head sectmaster sighed softly, glancing at the northwestern wastes. Her eyes were filled with a heartfelt wariness. She and her peers were quite grateful for their recent escape from the jaws of death.

After all, they had been fighting with the understanding of certain death. Only Jiang Chen's timely reinforcement had saved them. It was difficult for them to take much of a hardline stance before him.

"I would like to return to the Moon God Sect proper before we discuss it further. Shall we speak there, young lord?"

"Please." Jiang Chen nodded.

The Moon God Sect as a whole had sunk into a strange sort of panic. The three sectmasters' return relieved that to a certain degree.

There'd been all sorts of rumors circulating during their absence. The people's concerns and fears were numerous. These details were clearly visible to the sectmasters.

"Excuse the embarrassment, young lord." The head sectmaster was none too proud of her people's performance.

Jiang Chen waved a hand. "Not at all, sectmaster. Most sects in the human domain wouldn't have been able to do what you all did. Some sects can't even maintain an upright attitude before the likes of the Order, much less the Embittered Savage Tribe."

It was true. The Moon God Sect had already displayed remarkable responsibility in this trying time. Perhaps another sect would've fled wholesale.

The head sectmaster was thoroughly despondent. Clearly, the results of the northwestern trip had let her down a great deal. As one of the eight first rank sects of the Upper Eight Regions, it had posed no resistance to the Embittered Savage Tribe. This was a big blow to her pride.

"Young lord Jiang Chen, how are things with the Order? The human domain has had many years of peace until now. Why are things changing so quickly recently? Is it just a sign of the times?" The head sectmaster was none too eager about this.

"Sectmaster, the human domain's situation is fated to change. The Moon God Sect should make plans for itself sooner rather than later." Jiang Chen knew it was hard for the woman to accept all of this at once. However, he wasn't going to sugarcoat anything.

"Young lord Jiang Chen," the second sectmaster frowned. "Veluriyam Capital is the leader of the human domain. As such, isn't it your duty to lead all human experts in resistance to the bitter end? What do you mean by 'plans'?" Her rationale was more palatable than her tone.

The head sectmaster looked expectant as well. "Yes, young lord. Veluriyam Capital has the strength. If other human heroes are called together under its banner, it's quite possible to defeat the Embittered Savage Tribe. The Moon God Sect is willing to bleed to the last by your side."

Jiang Chen sighed with a helpless smile. "I would like as much as all of you to station troops in the northwest and engage the Embittered Savages in a decisive battle. However, your remoteness may have prevented you from gaining an understanding of the situation in the rest of the human domain.

"The human domain is a straw hut that has leaks everywhere these days, allowing in the elements. The northwest is only one of these leaks. If my estimates are correct, the other Boundary Steles will be in danger as well. One can compare the human domain to a beat-up drum that anyone will eagerly thump. It's quite likely that the Order could launch an alpha strike on Veluriyam Capital itself while I am busy with the Embittered Savages."

The head sectmaster's face colored. "The other Boundary Steles..."

Jiang Chen nodded. "Agarwood Valley's has already been broken once. If not for my whole-hearted efforts to repair it, the Southern Celestial empyrean experts would've charged into the human domain already. The Boundary Stele in the northwestern wastes looks to be impossible to repair for the moment, so large-scale invasion from the Embittered Savages is only a matter of time. From what I know, there are a few other places in the human domain where Boundary Stele realms are situated as well. Of course, that's not the scariest part... do you know where the Order's supreme lord comes from?"

"Where?" The head sectmaster looked confused.

"Myriad Abyss Island." Jiang Chen laid it out straight.

Every executive of the Moon God Sect drew a sharp breath. Myriad Abyss Island? Was it interfering in the situation here as well?

That meant the human domain was teetering on the brink of the abyss – at least, it was much more precarious than they'd first expected.

The head sectmaster couldn't do much more than stand with eyes and mouth agape for a while. Finally, she sighed with some wryness. "So, the Embittered Savage Tribe's invasion is unstoppable then?"

"That's why I asked you to make a choice, sectmasters." Jiang Chen couldn't possibly put everything he had into the northwest just to assist the Moon God Sect.

"What are Veluriyam's plans, young lord Jiang Chen?" The head sectmaster asked.

"To be honest, we're planning on fortifying our holdings and gathering resources. Only with a well-defended base of operations can we come out of this mess alive. If we are forced to run all over the place, we will only be led by the nose by our enemies." Jiang Chen was staunch in this perspective and attitude. Asking him to stake everything on the northwest was impossible.

The second sectmaster couldn't accept this. "Do you mean that you're going to ignore the human domain's troubles, young lord Jiang Chen? Is defending Veluriyam Capital to be your sole objective for a while?"

Jiang Chen sneered. "What do you think Veluriyam should do then? Act like a firefighter and head wherever we're needed?"

His tone turned frosty. "To tell you the truth, I wouldn't have come here today if not for two reasons. One, because of Qingxuan's heartfelt request; and two, because I respect your sense of responsibility. Talking is much easier than doing, but saving the world cannot be the sole responsibility of Veluriyam Capital."

Jiang Chen was more than a bit put out.

The human domain's factions hadn't been exactly the height of friendliness towards Veluriyam. When Pillfire had still been around, it had been targeted several times.

"Please quell your anger, young lord Jiang Chen. The Moon God Sect respects Veluriyam's actions a great deal as well." The head sectmaster hastened smooth things over when she noted Jiang Chen's unhappiness.

The young man's reply was cool. "Head Sectmaster, both I and Veluriyam have done much for the human domain in recent years. We didn't do it for credit or praise, but I haven't been impressed with the behavior of the other factions either. Despite Emperor Peafowl's and my own contributions, what have we been repaid with? Inciting civil unrest, attacking the capital, and open warfare and hostility in general. The rise of the Order of Wind and Cloud was instantly supported by a multitude of experts, who then turned their spears toward Veluriyam Capital... I can say that my city has never let the human domain down even once over the years. But what have you done for us in return apart from drag us down?"

"Is a human domain like this worth my Veluriyam Capital protecting? Is it worth me risking my life time and again?" At least of half of Jiang Chen's speech was frustrated venting.

The head sectmaster and the others looked mildly disconcerted. He wasn't entirely wrong. Under Pillfire's influence, most factions in the human domain had leaned towards antagonism towards Veluriyam. Some could even have been called outright belligerent. It was unreasonable to ask Veluriyam to do more, given this.

"There's a saying, young lord Jiang Chen, that goes something like this," the head sectmaster sighed softly. "Only in times of unrest can a hero's true character be proven. Veluriyam is pure gold that should not fear the refiner's fire. The human domain's other factions should agree that you are the only leader fit for them now, no?"

"Agree?" Jiang Chen snickered. "Only because they have no other choice. I have no desire to argue with you about this. Veluriyam Capital will fulfill its responsibility as the leader of humanity the best it can. However, present circumstances deserve a piece of advice. Don't fall prey to naïve delusions, but understand the whole of the situation. The human domain from now on will only be worse off than it appears, never better. The slightest misstep can mean death from now on."

The head sectmaster remained wordless.

The second sectmaster frowned. "Young lord Jiang Chen, aren't you exaggerating? Even if the Embittered Savages invade, as long as everyone works together..."

"If it were only the Embittered Savage Tribe, then there would be no problem. The Southern Celestial Tribe and other unknown forces outside the other Boundary Steles however, make things a lot more

uncertain. None of these factions are inferior to human forces. You've seen the Embittered Savage's strength firsthand. The Southern Celestials have empyrean experts all over. The Order of Wind and Cloud comes from Myriad Abyss Island. And yet, all of these pale to the awakening demons."

Jiang Chen had no reason to exaggerate. The human domain had no room for optimism right now.

"The demons?" The head sectmaster's phoenix eyes narrowed. "Are the demons stirring?"

"I haven't been in the world for long, but I've already encountered a demon lord and a demon emperor. This doesn't include the demons I met in the desolate wildlands either. I just want to say that if the seal over the desolate wildlands is broken and the demons return to the world, the human domain will become an infernal carnival. It's quite possible that all humans will be wiped out."

The second sectmaster wanted to say something more, but the head sectmaster stopped her with a look. The latter was more clear-minded than the former.

"Young lord Jiang Chen, we've never known very much about the situation elsewhere because of our remoteness in the northwest. Please, enlighten us on what we should do from now on." The head sectmaster's tone was very humble.

There was no other way. Their short exchange with the Embittered Savage Tribe had illustrated her the gaping difference between them. To put it bluntly, the Moon God Sect's chances of survival were minuscule without Veluriyam Capital's protection. Unless they were willing to become slaves of an alien race, of course!

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

Chapter 1507: A Most Difficult Decision

Compared to the single-minded second sectmaster, the head sectmaster hadn't been thrown into total disarray by the fight just now. She knew that the Moon God Sect had to hear Jiang Chen's ideas to ensure its survival. Respect and dignity had no place here. Without life, what dignity was there to speak of?

"Sectmasters, it's not my place to advise the Moon God Sect. However, if you find these northwestern lands too indefensible to stay in the near future, Veluriyam welcomes you. Though other sects like the Sublime Chord Temple and Empyrean River Palace may be allied with us, I will decide on a case-by-case basis whether to take them in. The Moon God Sect's responsible behavior at a crucial time at least tells me that our ideals are similar."

This was all that the young man could offer. He couldn't be more direct in his demand for them to join Veluriyam in their time of difficulty. Even if that was what he meant, it was inappropriate to be that blunt.

Moreover, he wasn't so mean as to force them to join. It didn't matter to him whether they did in the end. Veluriyam Capital wasn't going to be fundamentally improved via the addition of an extra faction or two, and neither did the human domain just need a simple addition of manpower.

Jiang Chen had made things very clear. His help today had been offered on the basis of Xu Qingxuan alone. The Moon God Sect's efforts at defending and repairing the Boundary Stele were a minor supporting factor.

He saw little reason to extend his stay. "Sectmasters, things are tough everywhere. I came here with the risk that the Order could attack Veluriyam in the meantime." His intent to depart was obvious. "Now that the immediate danger has passed, I must return without delay. Whether you're going to fight or retreat, you must make ample preparations. The Embittered Savage Tribe may have suffered a short-term loss, the fact that the Boundary Stele has been broken means they won't wallow in loneliness for very long. I wonder how much of their forces were rallied against you today?"

The head sectmaster had an answer for this. "From what they said, that young man seemed to be the prince of a village called Gunuo. The Embittered Savage Tribe has many of these villages, and they are the elites."

Jiang Chen's expression was somber. "If that's the case, the Embittered Savage Tribe is even more difficult to deal with. If the elites of a single village are a force to be reckoned with, the full brunt of multiple villages can only mean catastrophe for the human domain."

The Moon God Sect's executives were grave about this prospect. They had all realized the severity of the situation.

"Ah! The Embittered Savages and the Southern Celestials both have empyrean experts. There's no reason for the human race not to have them!" The third sectmaster suddenly exclaimed.

Jiang Chen smiled faintly. "Who says the human race doesn't?"

"Do we?" The three sectmasters collectively blinked. "Are you talking about... the ones Veluriyam Capital has, young lord?"

Jiang Chen waved in dismissal. "They are stone golems, not humans. I can definitively tell you that the human race has its own empyrean experts. I've seen one with my own eyes. Unfortunately, he has no intention of helping the rest of us. Instead, he rescued the Order's supreme lord, and is liable to bring trouble down on Veluriyam at any moment."

Though he didn't know where that human hermit expert had come from, he disliked the man a great deal. An empyrean expert like him should have stepped forth to stem the tide when his race needed him, not cause trouble when it was needed the least.

Jiang Chen hated irresponsible troublemakers like him. "Alright. Time is of the essence, so I must be off."

He made a cupped fist salute and readied to leave. Seeing Xu Shan with a sidelong glance, he smiled at her. "Holy Maiden Xu Shan, your Yin Yang Reverse Bloodline lives up to its fame. It hasn't been long at all, but your cultivation has already advanced by leaps and bounds. You have a bright future ahead of you. When a new age arrives, the Moon God Sect is sure to stay ahead of the pack with a genius such as you."

Having said his piece, the young man stepped into the air, drifting away on the wind.

The Moon God Sect's heads looked at each other, conflicted in his wake. The youth they hadn't taken seriously a few years back had become a man they now had to look up to.

The world was constantly in flux.

Despite her customary pride and hard-headedness, the second sectmaster found it difficult to tap into her usual obstinacy. Jiang Chen had become someone that she couldn't even criticize behind his back.

"Head Sectmaster, what shall we do?" The third sectmaster was a bit lost, and her face reflected it. She – and the entire sect – was completely unprepared for the rocky road ahead.

"What do you think, number two?" The head sectmaster sighed softly.

"You decide." The second sectmaster's tone was unusually low. "I've realized over the years that my personality holds me back from important matters. It's easy for me to get too emotional. If you listen to me, the Moon God Sect may very well fall into the abyss of destruction."

It was rare for her to be so self-aware.

The leader of them all wore a bleak, woeful expression on her face. She gazed out over all the lands the sect encompassed, especially the Precious Tree with a soft, radiant hue around it. Emotion overcame her for the moment.

"Number two, number three, I don't think we can keep hold of this place for the time being." She stated sadly.

Though everyone had long guessed this result, the head sectmaster's words nevertheless brought them to tears.

"Alright, that's enough sadness. Young lord Jiang Chen has a point. Life and death hinges on a single decision. As the head sectmaster, I must bear responsibility to our forebears and ancestors as well as all of our disciples. We can take back our lands, but we won't exist without our heritage. Therefore, my orders are as follows: everyone belonging to the Moon God Sect must pack up his bags and head south. We shall seek asylum with Veluriyam Capital!"

Seek asylum with Veluriyam Capital!

This command from the head sectmaster saddened the entire sect. However, no one was surprised by it. This was the only choice they had.

With the Embittered Savage Tribe at their gates, the Moon God Sect wouldn't even have had this chance without Jiang Chen's timely assistance.

Time waited for no woman. The Savages weren't going to launch any immediate attacks after eating the loss; they were sure to gather information about Jiang Chen before proceeding in any kind of pursuit.

This gave the Moon God Sect a chance to withdraw.

When the Embittered Savages finished their preparations and invaded Tilted Moon a second time, it would be much harder for the sect to do so.

Withdraw!

It was easy to evacuate people and things. The hardest was the Moon God Precious Tree. Transplanting it was quite challenging. Thankfully, the sect had its secret methods in this regard.

But even so, there was some risk to taking the tree with them. Men were revitalized upon a move, but trees tended to die. It wasn't going to be easy to take the ancient Precious Tree with them while preserving its vigor.

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Jiang Chen returned very quickly to Veluriyam Capital without delay.

Thankfully, the Order hadn't come in the few days he was away. Things in the city had been stressful, but under control. His reappearance gave the city its spine and mind back.

Xu Qingxuan hurried over to ask him about his trip when she heard the news. She'd been very much set on going with Jiang Chen originally, but her brother had expressly forbidden it. Only with her parents' patient pleas had her determination dispersed.

"Qingxuan, the Embittered Savages have broken the Boundary Stele in the northwestern wastes. Luckily, we arrived in the nick of time to save the sect from their entrapment. The Moon God Sect isn't in any immediate danger, and I've analyzed the situation in the human domain for the sectmasters. As for their choice, I'm not in a position where I can make it for them." Jiang Chen saw no reason to hide anything from his own sister.

Xu Qingxuan stomped anxiously. "Brother, you should've taken me! I would've absolutely convinced them to let their holdings go. If their students and heritage remain, what worry is there of not being able to retake the land?"

"No, I have to go talk to master." Truthfully, Xu Qingxuan was worried most about her stubborn master. If she couldn't take a step back and accept the facts...

The head sectmaster, on the other hand, could definitely make the best decision in light of all the information.

Jiang Chen shook his head. "No. If you go now, I don't know what danger will end up getting you."

Xu Qingxuan's anxiety softened Jiang Chen's heart. She looked like she was going to sneak out if he didn't agree, anyways. "Okay. Write a letter, and I'll have someone deliver it. Make everything you want to say clear in that letter. Will that be alright?"

The girl knew her brother wouldn't permit her to endanger herself. This was the only reasonable solution.

"Young lord, the members of the alliance have returned from the Ninesuns Sky Sect. The heads of the various sects are asking to see you outside of Sacred Peafowl Mountain."

"They're back?" Jiang Chen blinked. "Send them in."

The last time he'd ordered a domain-wide meeting, every first rank sect had been in attendance, aside from the defeated Heavenly Dragon Sect.

The fact that they'd all come back to Veluriyam Capital meant they had all sensed the delicacy of the human domain's present circumstances.

The Great Yu Skysword Sect and Celestial Cicada Court had gone with Emperor Wellspring to the latter's base prior upon detecting the Order's infiltration. They had congregated at the capital this time as well, alongside their first rank peers. One could say that every major faction of the human domain had gathered at Veluriyam.

"Young lord Jiang Chen."

"Congratulations, young lord Jiang Chen."

"Felicitations on your complete victory over the Order of Wind and Cloud!"

"Veluriyam Capital is the only rightful leader of the human domain. The Order was just some boisterous upstart. It didn't stand a chance!"

The sects and factions' leaders saluted Jiang Chen when they saw him, all spewing words of courtesy and endearment. Evidently, Jiang Chen had been elevated even more in their eyes after his battle with the Order.

Sovereign of the Three Realms (WN)

Chapter 1508: The Moon God Sect Requests Asylum

Almost all of the factions that mattered in the human domain were gathered at Veluriyam Capital.

His expression stern, Jiang Chen's gaze swept past everyone in the audience. "Ladies and gentlemen, what are your future plans?"

They'd formed an alliance the last time, but it hadn't convened since his departure for the Ninesuns Sky Sect. With the rapidly changing circumstances, they might've had a change of heart. For him, indecisive fellows weren't welcome in Veluriyam.

The city hungered for talent, but quality mattered far more than quantity. It was better to do without factions that only saw him as a temporary refuge, who were ready to abandon ship as soon as the tides turned. Thus, he needed to ascertain their true intentions.

Ninesuns' Emperor Clearsky was the first to speak. "Young lord, battle didn't break out at my sect in the end, but all of us have witnessed your righteous loyalty. It will be difficult for any sect by themselves to withstand the great changes upon us. Apart from you, who else is qualified to lead us all?"

He thumped his chest. "From now on, the Ninesuns Sky Sect is at your orders. May the heavens be witness to our oath and strike us dead if we betray you."

He was clear-sighted enough to recognize that apart from Veluriyam, no other faction had the ability to withstand the upcoming dangers. The city was mankind's last hope. Being the leader of a previously hostile sect lent his words greater credence.

The Skysword Sect's Han Qianzhan laughed heartily. "Let me be frank. My sect already has a deep friendship with the young lord, and without his protection, I don't think we can survive, unless we're enslaved by another race."

Su Huanzhen sighed softly. "My Celestial Cicada Court naturally has no objection to young lord Jiang Chen as our young leader. We'll provide whatever assistance is in our power."

The Eternal Celestial Capital had been eradicated, the Order had defeated and then absorbed the Heavenly Dragon Sect. Out of the eight first rank sects, only six were left. And among the six, three had clearly expressed their stance.

The Empyrean River palace master sighed softly. "Young lord, my sect was once close to Pillfire, but since we're now allies, we're naturally yours to command against foreign invaders. We have no second thoughts, this I do swear!"

Only the Sublime Chord Temple and the Moon God Sect were left. The Moon God Sect's representatives hadn't arrived yet, so the Sublime Chord Temple became the center of attention.

"We're willing to obey the young lord," the Temple also declared.

The remaining second rank and third rank sects naturally followed suit in the wake of the first rank sects.

A faint smile on his lips, Jiang Chen stayed noncommittal. He waited for everyone to say their piece before nodding. "Ladies and gentlemen, I'm very grateful you all think so highly of me, but you're mistaken.

"You speak of swearing loyalty and obeying my command. But in fact, Veluriyam's forces are strong enough to stand tall even in these troubled times. Your first loyalty should be to your own conscience. Don't feel compelled by the circumstances. I have no need for fairweather friends who will go where the wind blows.

"I like being blunt upfront." Jiang Chen's gaze seemed mild, yet it exuded a forbidding dignity. "You can stand here and talk to your heart's content because we share a common identity. We're all humans with the same ancestors, the same homeland, and the same mission. But if some of you have forgotten who you are or your own conscience, then please leave. Whatever your future endeavors are, I promise not to stop you."

The crowd turned grave. Everyone realized he'd spoken from the heart.

"All of you are aware of the disunity infecting our domain. We're busy either fighting or scheming against each other. But if we continue down that path, foreign invaders will carve us apart and send us to the depths of hell before we even face the demons." His words hammered the crowd like heavy blows.

Indeed, many had fallen into the very vicious circle he'd spoken of. Every major faction busily schemed and undermined its peers.

But peace was now a thing of the past. Alien races had begun to stir, extending their clutches deep into the human domain. If nothing changed, humans would be easily divided, then picked apart one by one.

For example, the Order had pushed mankind almost to the brink of despair in a few short years. Now that Boundary Steles were breaking one after another, the threat of the foreign races loomed large upon the human domain.

Jiang Chen declared gravely, "I need to remind you all of something else as well. I've been to the northwest in the past few days and seen the Boundary Stele there completely broken. The Embittered Savages' vanguard has already crossed into our lands. If not for my timely arrival, they would have

captured the Moon God Sect's three sectmasters, many of its holy maidens, and wrested control of the entire region."

"The Embittered Savages... have they truly come?" Clearsky turned somber.

The audience's expressions mirrored his. The tribe's ominous reputation had persisted from antiquity until now. Anyone would pale at the mere mention of their name.

Han Qianzhan asked gravely, "Are they as fearsome as they used to be in the past?"

"Young lord Jiang Chen, you've fought them. What's your assessment of their strength?" Full of questions, the crowd was keen to learn more.

"I'm not fond of alarmist talk, but none of the first rank sects in our domain could've withstood that simple advance party."

All of the sect heads turned grim at the news. Even a first rank sect couldn't withstand the advance party? Their strength hadn't dwindled at all since antiquity?

"Some of you must think I'm exaggerating. No matter. You'll have ample opportunities to face them in person." Jiang Chen could read the skepticism written on some faces.

Someone outside the gates suddenly announced, "Young lord, the three Moon God sectmasters and several holy maidens have arrived outside Sacred Peafowl Mountain. They seek an audience with you."

Jiang Chen blinked, then quickly understood. The Moon God Sect had finally realized they needed a protector and came to offer their allegiance.

"Good timing. Send them in." He'd been worried no one could back him up with first-hand experience, but the Moon God Sect could now tell the rest of these fellows about the Savages' viciousness.

Accompanied by Xu Qingxuan, the sectmasters and holy maidens quickly arrived at the scene.

Rather ashamed, the senior sectmaster said, "Young Lord, I haven't had the opportunity to repay you for your life-saving grace, but here I am, troubling you again. Please forgive me."

Jiang Chen smiled. "You've come right on time. All of the various factions happen to be gathered to discuss mankind's future. You were the only ones missing."

The senior sectmaster smiled wryly. "To think we would be last. Allow me to express my thanks. Without the young lord, I fear we'd never have had the opportunity to meet again."

A heavy atmosphere descended upon on the crowd.

Su Huanzhen asked, "Head Sectmaster, since you've fought against the Savages, can you tell us exactly how strong they are?"

"How strong?" The senior sectmaster's tone was bitter. "Courtmaster Huanzhen, that's a sore subject for us, to tell the truth. I can't tell you the full extent of their fighting potential, because they didn't need to go to any effort to almost destroy us. If not for the young lord's timely rescue, all of us would've already been disgraced."

Lingering fear coursed through her at the memory of the battle.

Those in the audience looked at each other. Silence stifled the air; only the crowd's urgent, oppressive breathing could be heard.

"Are the Embittered Savages truly this fearsome?" The Emyrean River Palace's palace master's tone was wry.

"We've only faced the troops led by one prince from one village, yet there were at least three empyrean masters among them." The senior sectmaster sighed softly. "How many villages do the Savages number? How many empyrean masters do each of them possess?"

No one could answer.

In the end, everyone's gaze landed on Jiang Chen. The young lord truly hadn't been exaggerating. No matter how rich the heritage of a first rank sect, what use was it against empyrean masters? None of the factions could've withstood that advance party.

Sovereign of the Three Realms (WN)

Chapter 1509: The Magpie's Nest is Occupied By the Dove

The Embittered Savages was only one of the tribes situated beyond the Boundary Stele realms. There were many more of them besides the northwestern one. If Boundary Steles all over were broken and the aliens came rushing in, the human domain would be a cake to be divided up by others at their leisure.

The atmosphere became even more tense.

Han Qianzhan broke into sudden, hearty laughter. "What are you all getting so depressed for? So what if the Embittered Savages are a bit fierce? Didn't they lose to young lord Jiang Chen? Same with the Southern Celestials! Their three empyrean experts slunk home with their tails between their legs, no?"

"The overweening Order was also smashed into submission. Chaotic times breed heroes, and whenever the human domain is in danger, countless great characters rise up to save it from trouble. In the ancient demon-sealing war, humanity fought far more dangerous foes than these. The situations we were embroiled in back then were far more complicated too. We survived all that, didn't we?"

Clearsky nodded as well. "Since he first made his way into the world, young lord Jiang Chen has enjoyed remarkable fortune. To be honest, we Ninesuns Sky Sect used to harbor quite a grudge against the young lord. After a while, I noticed that his rise was so meteoric as to be unstoppable and wisely made peace with him. Look at his achievements today. I can declare with certainty that the young lord will surely lead the human race out of its current quagmire!"

The heads of the two strongest sects had spoken, somewhat relieving the strain in the air.

Wellspring chuckled. "I used to be a wandering cultivator, so I can't contribute much to the discussion. However, I have my own methods of judging a person's worth. Young lord Jiang Chen is destined for greatness. If we're to defeat the Embittered Savages, the Southern Celestials, and even the demons, it will be with the young lord at the helm. No one else."

As one of the six wandering cultivator titans, Wellspring was just as prominent as most of the first rank sect heads. His words were equally convincing.

Peerless smiled serenely. "I won't say much here. Young lord Jiang Chen has saved my life at least three times. I only want to say that from my years of laying low among the Order... its supreme lord is good at putting on a persuasive show, but he has no actual leadership to speak of. The Order is just a clown compared to Veluriyam Capital."

The joint support of these two wandering cultivator titans was credible indeed.

Jiang Chen waved a hand, smiling himself. "I am a little embarrassed that you think so highly of me. That's enough with the courtesies. now isn't the time for them. Everyone here today who's willing to fight to the death is my kind. Anyone who lacks the resolution to do so, please leave now. I guarantee that I will not stop or trouble you if you decide to do so!"

"We shall fight with young lord Jiang Chen to the bitter end!"

"Please lead us, young lord! We shall follow you with our very lives!"

"We would rather die standing than live on our knees!"

"How can we human cultivators become slaves to another race? We can't let aliens trample our dignity!" The attendees felt their blood ignite. They shouted loudly, each trying to best the others in volume.

"A claim isn't enough. The Ninesuns Sky Sect is willing to swear an oath!"

"Quite so! A blood oath that heaven and earth will utterly destroy you if you betray it!"

"Anyone who betrays humanity for alien invaders is less than an animal!"

"Exactly. The young lord has done so much for us humans. If we can't stand firm on a point as minor as this, can we even count ourselves as human?"

"Who can lead humanity aside from young lord Jiang Chen and Veluriyam Capital? Who can stand against the alien races?"

All the factions requested the swearing of a blood oath. In doing so, the most hesitant individuals were revealed. The indecisive and reluctant were relatively few in number. Most sects were emphatic with their oaths.

Jiang Chen didn't pursue the sects and factions who weren't. Instead, he politely sent them out. The sects that remained were all adamant allies.

"My friends, if you've decided to stay, I recommend that you remove as much of your heritage and personnel as you can while things are still peaceful. According to my estimates, great chaos is going to descend upon the human domain very soon!"

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The Order swiftly received news of what had happened at Veluriyam Capital.

Supreme Lord Xiahou Jing was quite dejected. “Daoist Shu,” he sighed. “We’ve overestimated Jiang Chen’s high-handedness.”

“He’s truly shrewd,” replied Shu Wanqing coldly. “But you shouldn’t be too anxious. Even if he doesn’t gather forces to the northwest in a large-scale battle against the Embittered Savages, do you think the Savages will just leave him in peace? Right now, essentially every major sect and faction has withdrawn into Veluriyam Capital. If the Embittered Savages makes its way south unhindered, it will come upon Veluriyam sooner or later.”

Xiahou Jing was a bit jittery. “But then I don’t know how long I’ll have to wait.”

“Do you have any ideas?” Shu Wanqing inquired coolly.

Xiahou Jing sighed. “I have to come up with one to push them forward a bit faster.”

Shu Wanqing considered this for a moment before smiling strangely. “There are ways to do that. If someone important to that tribe were to be ambushed or harmed, they’ll surely be enmaddened. Given their natures, they’ll disregard everything else to engage in mortal combat with Veluriyam Capital.”

Xiahou Jing’s eyes lit up. “A great idea, Daoist Shu! Are you willing to perform this momentous task for the Order?”

Shu Wanqing chuckled. “It’s not impossible as long as I’m appropriately repaid for my efforts.”

A man of his age had little remaining convictions and morals. He sought profit first and foremost. He would do anything for the right price, even pierce the skies through.

“If you can pull this off,” Xiahou Jing mused, “I guarantee that I will give you a position on Myriad Abyss Island!”

“Truly?” Shu Wanqing intoned in a low voice.

“If I lie, may heaven and earth smite me!” Xiahou Jing responded seriously.

Travelling to Myriad Abyss Island was what Shu Wanqing most desired. He wanted to go to the legendary holy land of martial dao. He felt no hope for his future here in the human domain.

“Supreme Lord Xiahou, wait for my good news!” Shu Wanqing disappeared in a streak of light as he said this.

Watching the cultivator leave into the distance, a sneer curled at the corner of Xiahou Jing’s mouth. The lack of a backbone in this human empyrean expert made him look down on the residents of the human domain all the more.

“Jiang Chen, I don’t believe for a minute that you can revitalize the human domain as someone who’s not even a great emperor.” The young man from Myriad Abyss was filled with resentment whenever he mentioned his bitterest foe.

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In the northwest, Gunuo Village’s army of savages had been delayed – if not seriously hurt – by their combat against Jiang Chen.

On this day, scouts finally brought back more comprehensive information about the human domain.

“Your Highness, the Moon God Sect has retreated from the northwestern lands. Its ancestral holdings are totally empty and defenseless.”

“What?” Gu Tianqing blinked when he heard the news.

The reaction from his closest bodyguards was similar. They’d been adjusting and thinking of a battle plan for the past few days, calculating all kinds of eventualities related to a hard-fought battle.

Naturally, they’d made preparations to crack a hard nut. In fact, a request for help had been sent back to the village’s chieftain to ask for a few more capable experts.

Their wariness of Jiang Chen and the stone golem warriors was evident. Their current troops were more than sufficient to take on the Moon God Sect alone, but on the off chance that Jiang Chen had remained there for a decisive battle, they would have a very hard time winning.

This was the reason for their present delay.

Their reinforcements would be here very soon and the Savages would really move forward then. Who would’ve expected such shocking news about the sect’s activities?

The Moon God Sect had withdrawn!

Not only that, but the lands they’d ruled over were devoid of any resistance. These northwestern gates into the human domain were wide open, ripe for the Embittered Savages’ taking.

“Damn it!” Gu Tianqing realized that he’d been tricked by the Moon God Sect into missing his best opportunity. If the Savages had pressed the attack, there was no way the sect would’ve been able to evacuate so quickly. Alas, the short postponement of only a few days meant that the withdrawal had been leisurely.

“Has the Moon God Sect left anything behind?” Old man Gu Qi asked.

The scout shook his head. “Aside from their main doors, essentially every material good has been taken away. Not even one lowly servant or steward remains.”

Their flight had been extremely thorough!

Gu Tianqing gnashed his teeth. “Human are slippery! Our ancestors were absolutely right. Not only that, but they have no spine! They’re running from a fight they know they can’t win. But they won’t be able to take this land with them! If the Moon God Sect’s former base is available, then we’ll take it for our own!”

In the absence of loot and plunder, some new land to live on wasn’t bad. The Embittered Savages needed their own base in the human domain anyways. They couldn’t emulate locusts by destroying everything wherever they went.

Without the support of logistics, an army that ventured too far into enemy territory risked being encircled and devoured.

Sovereign of the Three Realms (WN)

Chapter 1510: The Third Palace of Heritage

Though many factions had decided to join Jiang Chen and affiliate themselves with Veluriyam Capital, the young man didn't forget himself because of this.

Veluriyam's raw strength had unquestionably been improved by the addition of new blood. But with new arrivals came new logistics and issues of all stripes.

Jiang Chen gave authority to resolve these issues to Emperor Wellspring. A man of his talents and prestige could coordinate everything quite capably. He could take on a pleasant or harsh demeanor as necessary.

The young man's own attention was focused on the Embittered Savages. His Goldbiter Rats gave him an unparalleled advantage in terms of gathering information. He was able to gain the knowledge he wanted from the frontlines rather swiftly.

"The Embittered Savages have occupied the Moon God Sect's former grounds?" Jiang Chen was a bit surprised upon hearing the news. So the Embittered Savages were maintaining their composure!

They hadn't rushed headlong into enemy territory after hearing about the Moon God Sect's retreat. Instead, they'd opted for a more reliable approach in occupying the sect's former grounds first.

From Jiang Chen's point of view, the Embittered Savages were supposed to be descended from ancient savages. They were known for their single-track minded brutality, not strategic thinking! But it seemed he'd underestimated the tribe.

He recalled his battle in the northwestern wastes and remembered very clearly the defensiveness of the bodyguards around the prince. He'd made several attempts at assassinating the prince, but there'd been no opportunities to do so.

This detail revealed that these savage tribesmen were no mere brutes. Alas, Jiang Chen rather preferred to deal with mindless people. He found a measured, steady Embittered Savage Tribe much more annoying.

"Old Gold, tell your descendants to stay safe. The observations must continue. Any tiny bit of unrest in the human domain must be reported as quickly as possible."

The Goldbiter Rats' high reproductive abilities enabled scouts to be scattered all over the human domain. It was the greatest advantage that Jiang Chen presently had available to him. With the Rats as his lookouts, he could find out any changes anywhere and plan accordingly.

In actuality, Jiang Chen had hinted to the Moon God Sect to abandon its home for a secondary purpose. He hadn't intended to throw the sect to the wolves, but to show weakness to the enemy. Sadly, the Embittered Savages hadn't fallen for the ruse.

If Gunuo Village's vanguard had become drunk on pride at the Moon God Sect's perceived weakness and proceeded blindly, Jiang Chen would've chosen to set an ambush at an appropriate place.

It couldn't be helped. Gunuo Village had chosen to take the safe route by taking over the Moon God Sect's grounds. They were digging in for the long haul. This was significantly more troublesome than the alternative.

"Never mind that. It'll take quite a while for the Embittered Savages to get to Veluriyam. I'm already advanced emperor realm, which means I qualify for the third palace of heritage. When in the second palace, Venerated Skysoarer told me that this was the minimum level of cultivation to stand a chance. Now I'm here, there should be no problem."

This was something that had been on Jiang Chen's mind for a while now. Given the current circumstances, he needed to head into the third palace to procure more assets as soon as possible.

Each of the Six Palaces of Heritage was superior to its predecessor. These palaces were the ultimate heritage of Veluriyam Pagoda. Venerated Skysoarer had also told him that the palaces were sorted into pairs of the same rank.

The first two palaces didn't have much of a difference between them, but there was a much bigger one between the second and third. It was quite possible for an incredible opportunity to be contained in the third palace that would be unthought of in the second.

The fourth palace though, was probably similar to the third. But the fifth would naturally be a rank higher than both. Jiang Chen was ready to dive into the third palace. He was going to brave its depths!

Having settled on this idea, he summoned forth the stone golem brothers, the Vermilion Bird, and a few great emperors closest to him.

"My friends, I have a martial dao opportunity before me that demands a few days in closed door cultivation. It'll take half a month if I'm lucky, and three to five months if not. No matter what happens in the outside world during this time, Veluriyam should ignore it and defend its own gates.

"If the Embittered Savages come, use your collective wits to delay them. There's no need to rush into battle. Everything can wait until I come out of cultivation."

How fast Jiang Chen grew would decide Veluriyam's and even the human domain's fate. Everyone was excited to hear about his breakthroughs in martial dao comprehension. The public had borne witness to the speed at which his skills had increased. Though the situation right now was less than ideal, there was still great interest in Jiang Chen's recent developments.

"Young lord, you can't neglect your martial dao growth no matter what happens. Don't worry, the Embittered Savages aren't invincible. Even if they reach our gates, we will have ways to fight them."

"We will obey your commands and take things slow and steady."

"Jiang Chen, I don't respect that many humans, but you are one of them," the Vermilion Bird declared. "Don't worry, I promise that the Embittered Savages will not be allowed to infringe upon Veluriyam territory even if you are in seclusion. I was able to keep my oath to the Primosanct Sect and I will do the same for you. As long as I am here, those savages won't set a foot on Veluriyam soil. I did not once bow to the ferocious demon race despite their strength. What can these worthless savages amount to? Go and cultivate in peace."

Though the Vermilion Bird was proud, it still perceived humans as a race that had led the demon-sealing war of yore. What was an Embittered Savage Tribe worth?

They appeared quite violent, but they had been most insignificant in the ancient demon-sealing war. The demons hadn't even visited their ancestral lands because of how sparse they'd had been. Frankly, the bird didn't care for such a lackluster race.

"Don't worry, Savior." Big Stone thumped his chest. "We brothers don't care whether they are embittered or happy savages. We're better at fighting than anybody."

Jiang Chen was reassured by the high morale of the defenders.

"Very well!" He grinned. "I haven't anything to worry about given your concerted efforts."

After making the necessary arrangements, he found a secret room and activated the spacetime seal. A passage opened, sweeping him into the third palace of heritage.

This was his second time here.

The last time he was here, both arrival and departure had been a thoroughly hasty affair. He had no impression of what had gone on here, and only remembered the guardian to be a senior with a lazier-than-usual voice.

Truthfully, it hadn't been long since then. The only events that had taken place in between were the battle with the Order and the trip to the northwestern wastes. Nevertheless, he felt an indescribable pressure upon re-entry.

He vaguely remembered the guardian to be mildly displeased about being used as a shortcut. It seemed to be a personal affront. Though Jiang Chen had been let through in the end, he was worried he had left a bad impression.

When his footsteps resounded upon the palace's floor, the scenery before him evoked a sense of familiarity. He'd taken note of a few things on his first trip, despite the relative haste.

At the time, the guardian of the third palace had said he would consider increasing the difficulty.

Jiang Chen wasn't scared of a harder challenge. The only concern he might have had was about the guardian's potentially peculiar nature. Someone really mean could intentionally nitpick and thus delay his progress.

Because war was waging outside, he wouldn't be at peace even if shut in in the third palace.

"Ah, it's fine. Let's just deal with problems as they arise. I've seen and weathered a lot in my previous million years of life. What can he possibly do to nitpick me with?" This thought calmed Jiang Chen down a great deal, dispelling his anxiety.

"Little kid, are you sure you're not playing a joke on me?" The languid voice sounded at Jiang Chen's ear, colored with a hint of displeasure.

Jiang Chen steeled himself. Though the voice sounded lazy, there was also a sense of authority imbued within. From the aura it contained, he could observe that this guardian of the third palace was higher in cultivation than Master P'eng and Venerated Skysoarer.

Jiang Chen offered a cupped fist salute. "Senior, I had urgent business when I came by last time. Now that the problem has been resolved, I came to apologize straight away."

"Hmph. Your words are sweet enough kid, but I don't see any contrition from you any more. You were a bit fidgety when you just entered, weren't you?" It was as if the voice could read Jiang Chen's mind. It perceived his thoughts with only the smallest of details.

Jiang Chen was taken aback, then embarrassed. He'd been highly uneasy about what would happen here. But he calmed down after thinking things through. The keenness of the guardian of the third palace was remarkable.

"Senior, I'm sure you wouldn't want the person to get here to be a spineless coward or a trembling sheep, no?" Without emotional baggage, Jiang Chen became a lot more decisive and forthright.

The six palaces of heritage were a place to test the entrants' talent and poise. It was highly improbable that the master of the Veluriyam Pagoda would have invited anyone narrow-minded to become a guardian for his palaces.

At least, that was what Jiang Chen personally believed. He was willing to stake his bets that this was the case.

The voice fell silent for a moment, taking some time to judge the daring youth. It had been countless years since the Pagoda's construction, but very few had managed to make it to the third palace of heritage. Moreover, someone audacious enough to use the third palace as a shortcut like this youth was a first!

Moreover, the kid didn't seem at all remorseful about his actions. He had no guilt whatsoever for his disrespectful actions last time!

There was something to this kid!

However, as the third guardian of the palace, he wasn't going to elevate or castigate someone solely for this small detail.