

## Three Realms 1551

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

#### Chapter 1551: The Way to Grand Ascension

Even though each guest was an empyrean master, they couldn't help being moved by the word "benefit." In the secular world, perhaps Veluriyam's young lord was the only one who could tempt them in this manner.

"Gentlemen, I have the beginning of a mantra here. Please peruse it at your leisure." Jiang Chen unfurled a sheepskin scroll containing a passage he'd personally written; it was only a few hundred characters in total.

He handed it to Xue Tong so that the latter could pass it to Old Crane, the one with the highest prestige out of all the empyrean masters.

The elder was satisfied by the young lord's obvious high regard. He brought out a talisman and offered it to Xue Tong in return. "Thank you, little friend. This talisman is an empyrean defense talisman. Consider it my humble gift as thanks for hosting us these past two days."

Xue Tong had been in charge of the guests' well-being. Clever and lovable, the child had left a good impression on the elder.

Xue Tong was torn whether to accept the present or not, but Jiang Chen chuckled. "Xue Tong, remember that the elder's goodwill is your blessing. Accept it."

Xue Tong therefore took the talisman with due deference. "Many thanks for your favor, senior."

Old Crane laughed out loud. "Master and servant are both so courteous. As the elder, I ought to give some presents to my juniors."

He cheerfully unrolled the scroll and studied it in earnest. His eyebrows twitched into a frown at the first two lines. Sharp concentration replaced the smile in his eyes as he stared at the characters, seemingly absorbed by the profound mysteries within.

His chest heaved faintly after taking in the full text. Gone was his relaxed demeanor. His face was dead serious, as if he'd made an earth shattering discovery. He couldn't help reading it over again, then over and over, finally handing it to Liu Yuan with clear reluctance after a full nine times.

"Liu Yuan, your comprehension ability is quite good. Take a look."

Astonished by Old Crane's reaction, the latter took it solemnly with both hands. Was there some magic to this scroll? It must have been remarkable to make the elder so solemn. An ordinary item wouldn't have shaken such an aloof character.

He read it once, then twice, yet still couldn't completely grasp the content. It seemed a little too cryptic and abstruse for him.

His reading speed was slower than Old Crane's. He'd been a little confounded the first time, so he slowed down the next time around, spending a long while on each sentence before proceeding with the next.

In that manner, he spent over an hour on his second reading. His difficulties astonished the assembled guests. What on earth could be giving a powerhouse like Liu Yuan such a hard time? What kind of text in this world could be so arcane?

Liu Yuan finally realized he'd monopolized the scroll for far too long by the end of his third reading. He had no choice but to hand Zhu Yun the scroll.

A little embarrassed, the latter tugged at his tufts of wild hair. "I'll pass. Brother Liu, your talent and knowledge are both above mine. If even you need so much time, how would a crude man like me understand it? Just explain it to me once you make sense of it, will ya?"

With a simple and honest smile, he stuffed the scroll to the next person.

But Liu Yuan responded cautiously, "This should be a mantra. I can understand some of it, but it's too profound for me to master. Even so, I can vaguely tell it's a sophisticated mantra that can perceive the rules of the heavens."

"How sophisticated?" Zhu Yun puzzled.

A little uncertain, Liu Yuan turned to Old Crane. "What do you think, Old Crane?"

The elder smiled. "Let's wait for everyone to read it and share their opinions. That being said, I'm certain it surpasses all the internal methods we usually cultivate. It's only the first couple hundred characters, but sublime truths are hidden within. Perhaps it comes from the ancient times, or even from the primordial age."

Indeed, no one could create such a technique in the current era. There were quite a few people present, and each of them spent a long time studying the scroll. Half a day quietly went by.

As the host, Jiang Chen didn't manifest any impatience. He leisurely sipped at the fine liquor he'd brewed, quite at relaxed ease. He was waiting for these men's reactions.

At long last, the last empyrean master finished reading and handed the writing back to Old Crane. The latter carefully read it again, then sighed. "Young lord Jiang Chen, this opening of yours is frightening enough."

Jiang Chen smiled faintly. "Old Crane, what do you think of it?"

"As I've already said, the mantra exceeds our current standards. It must be a legacy from an era gone by, perhaps even from the primordial times."

"You have an exceedingly sharp eye." Jiang Chen applauded. "Old Crane is Old Crane alright, your reputation is well-earned. Your discernment alone is the most eminent in the human domain. To tell the truth, this scroll comes from an expert who taught me during my childhood."

His past was no longer a secret, and public opinion had its own ideas for the reason behind his earthshaking talent, fooled as it was by the young lord's fabrication of a mysterious teacher in his youth.

As to the teacher's identity, no one could find that out. Of course, no one doubted his story. On the contrary, the absence of an exalted master would be more suspicious.

How else could the scion of a mundane official risen to these heights? Could his opportunities and skills have come out of nowhere?

Had Emperor Peafowl secretly groomed him as a successor? Even the great emperor wasn't mighty enough to have trained such a prodigy.

As to Veluriyam, Jiang Chen was a newcomer to the city, and his feats astonishing even before becoming young lord. So the presence of an extraordinary teacher went without saying. It was the most logical explanation.

Old Crane's eyes lit up as a thought occurred to him. "Young lord, your teacher must have been an extraordinary senior. You're truly fortunate. Do you perhaps have the full version of this mantra?"

Like a bug scritchng over his heart, this question gnawed at the elder and stirred his dispassionate heart.

Jiang Chen admitted with a smile, "I do."

Old Crane leapt up from his seat, discarding all pretense of propriety. "Can you perhaps make it available for a look?"

No matter how great, the beginning by itself was useless. One couldn't cultivate it before understanding the entire structure, so he needed the complete version.

All ears, the others also brimmed with eagerness.

Jiang Chen chuckled. "This is precisely the benefit I've mentioned when inviting you all. My master called this mantra 'The Way to Grand Ascension.' It guides one's cultivation, paving the way to comprehending the heavenly rules in pursuit of the supreme grand dao. They say that the creator set down his thoughts and reflections in this mantra after ascending beyond empyrean realm. It's particularly easy to understand and very well suited for empyrean cultivators. It's meant for public education."

This mantra was naturally from his past life. It had been of a decent caliber in the heavenly planes. More importantly, it was a perfect fit for the empyrean level, making it a famous obligatory study for empyrean cultivators.

Of course, it hadn't been the most outstanding method, but it'd become widespread thanks to its relative ease of comprehension, turning it into a classic textbook. He was certain it was foreign to the Divine Abyss Continent, hence why he'd selected it.

His words left the crowd on tenterhooks.

An existence above empyrean realm? How exalted a being was that? Empyrean cultivators were those who'd peeked into the secrets of the heavens and gained their acknowledgment, obtaining an empyrean decree.

Certainly, it was merely the first step to the grand dao. A higher level had to exist. But it was outside the scope of their knowledge and imagination. Afire with desire and curiosity, they couldn't begin to imagine how fearsome beings at that level could be.

If this Grand Ascension was truly so mystical, couldn't it guide them further along the empyrean road?

There was no end to martial cultivation. Even at their level, their goal forever remained one and the same: to go even higher! However, everyone's potential was limited. Breakthroughs become harder after a certain stage.

Some people would halt at a realm or another for a couple thousand years without making any headway. Such were bottlenecks that visited everyone. Some bottlenecks were obstacles of a lifetime!

### Sovereign of the Three Realms (WN)

#### **Chapter 1552: The Road To Divinity**

A self-collected man, Old Crane asked with a deep breath, "Young lord, doesn't that mean the Grand Ascension can..."

Jiang Chen nodded immediately. "Yes. The senior said that if I can fully comprehend it, I can at least reach the peak of empyrean realm. If destined to, I can even shed the material plane for a higher plane of existence."

Even a personage like Old Crane shook all over. With an intense stare, he whispered, "Did the senior mention what kind of plane that is?"

"Above the empyrean realm lies the road to godhood, where both the soul and the flesh can communicate with the divine. At that stage, apart from heavenly tribulations, there's no limit to one's lifespan. One can survive as long as the universe exists."

This had been common knowledge in Jiang Chen's past life.

As the son of a celestial emperor, he'd been a prominent figure standing above the masses. The things he'd seen were a million times beyond the ken of the Divine Abyss Continent. Anything he casually imparted would stun these secluded masters.

Sure enough, the atmosphere became heavy. The guests' expressions took a strange turn. Apart from Old Crane, all of the empyrean masters were seized by a sudden sense of inferiority.

Sudden realization had dawned that this confident young lord was truly their equal, or perhaps even their superior. They were entirely at his mercy at this moment, desperate for him to grant them "The Way to Grand Ascension."

From a certain point of view, wasn't it the same as young men longing for their elders' guidance? Jiang Chen had gained the upper hand in that regard.

And in fact, this was the result he'd been gunning for. It would've been difficult to use force to beat honest obedience into the bunch. However, his knowledge and experience, and the prestige of his mysterious teacher, had awed them into submission.

If an expert could casually impart a mantra such as the "Grand Ascension," how could his strength be lacking? Could he be worse than ordinary empyrean cultivators like them?

Old Crane exclaimed, "Divinity... sure enough, such an indistinct realm exists above ours! There's indeed no end to the grand dao. They say that the gods are immortal, residing in the everlasting heavenly planes, enjoying endless bliss and pleasure. How enviable! They've truly become perfect lifeforms."

Empyrean experts were mighty enough. But like common mortals, their lifespan was limited. They would kick the bucket all the same when their time was due. They seemed eternal to the common folk, but were far from true immortality.

Jiang Chen smiled. "They're not actually immortal. The gods also have to face heavenly tribulations and cataclysmic disasters. Mortality is high among them. In fact, it might not be lower than for mundane cultivators."

"Ah?" The guests looked at each other, perplexed. How could death be so frequent for the gods? Were the heavenly tribulations that frightening?

Jiang Chen smiled. "Of course, that's all hearsay from my teacher. I used to be curious as well, so I asked him if gods lived forever."

"How did he answer?" Old Crane quizzed.

"That the heavenly dao has its own rules. Life and death, rise and decline, there is a cycle to everything. Nothing is everlasting and lives forever. Of course, if divine cultivators survive their tribulations, they will live as long as the sun or the moon. However, their world isn't foreign to conflict and massacre. Their wars also result in heavy casualties. Otherwise, no matter how vast the heavenly planes, how could they contain an infinite number of divine creatures?"

Like frogs at the bottom of the well, the guests were shocked time and again by his revelations.

Old Crane exclaimed. "I wouldn't dare presume comment on the affairs of the gods. I simply wonder if your teacher's cultivation..."

"It's far above all of yours. of this I'm certain of. His aura and presence are on an entirely different level. However, I didn't dare ask for specifics, and I probably won't have another opportunity to."

The crowd took his explanation in stride. Of course such a figure was stronger than them. The mysterious man must have been close to divinity. Otherwise, how would he raise a monster like Jiang Chen in such a short time?

Did an ordinary man have such ability? Only a near infallible god did. Even Old Crane had to concede that he couldn't possibly train a mundane youngster into a third of Jiang Chen in a short amount of time.

So what if they were weaker than this mysterious teacher? That was only right and proper; there was nothing to be angry or resentful about here.

Old Crane sighed in regret. "No further opportunities? Young lord, did the senior already leave our continent?"

Jiang Chen sighed deeply, his voice desolate. "I don't know either. I once asked him, 'Will I see you again?' He responded, 'When the time is right.' But when might that be? I haven't a clue."

Like an inborn actor, he skillfully made this fake teacher come to life, firmly fooling the crowd.

Old Crane wrung his hands. "It'll be the regret of a lifetime if I can't pay my respects to such a master."

The others nodded, sharing in the sentiment. They were envious of Jiang Chen as well. Since he and the unknown senior were predestined to cross paths, the latter must've paved the young man's entire future, only waiting for the boy to progress step by step until empyrean realm, then even further in the pursuit of a higher plane...

The same thought flashed in everyone's mind: they couldn't afford to make enemies of Jiang Chen.

You can become jealous of someone who's on the same level, or even a little inferior. You might want to beat him down or ostracize him. But when you find out that this person is only inferior to you for now, and that his origins and potential far exceed yours... and that his backing can easily crush you like a bug...

Jealousy of such a person was futile. Jiang Chen was destined to walk a different path and soar to higher skies. What waste effort being jealous of or suppressing him?

Their sole preoccupation was currently whether he would pass on the "Grand Ascension" to everyone. Hadn't he mentioned benefits?

Jiang Chen smiled. He could surmise their thoughts. "We've digressed. Let's go back to the topic at hand."

The guests sat upright, their eyes fervent.

"My teacher told me that I can pass on the mantra to predestined friends. But he solemnly warned me it requires upstanding moral character and unyielding resolve. More importantly, you need to be human and stand fast by mankind, never to betray it! You must work for humanity's betterment with a thankful heart!" The young lord's voice was full of sincere gravitas.

"Why did I arrange this tea party outdoors? Because the gods watch us from the firmament. In your heart of hearts, do you believe you can fulfill my conditions? If yes, the mantra is yours. If not, then perish the thought forever." His open gaze swept over each of them.

Old Crane chuckled. "Though I've retired from the world, you've ignited a fire anew in my chest. If I can obtain this mantra, I hereby declare I'll always be loyal to mankind and support our race with a heart full of gratitude. May the heavens smite me if I lie."

He swore an earnest oath beneath the vast blue sky, his heart brimming with sincerity.

As his faithful follower, Liu Yuan also pledged, "I also swear to the heavens that I'll always be grateful if I can cultivate this mantra. No matter my future results, I shall be loyal and work to the benefit of the people. May the heavens destroy me if my resolve ever weakens or if I betray mankind!"

Zhu Yun laughed heartily. "Count me in too..."

Everyone gladly obliged with their pledges. No one could resist the mantra's temptation. For one, Jiang Chen hadn't made excessive demands. But even if he had, such as a task for Veluriyam, they'd also have accepted cheerfully.

Jiang Chen nodded with a smile. "Wonderful. All of you have perceived the rules of the world, making you particularly attuned to the heavenly dao. So you must be aware of the significance of an oath in the

name of the heavens. Very well. You will each be given a copy of the mantra. As to your future achievements, they're up to your own potential and comprehension ability."

The crowd was elated by his promise.

"Young lord, you're truly a man of principle. We pale in comparison." Liu Yuan sighed. "I have to say, since you've been so generous to us, we naturally have to reciprocate. Feel free to ask if Veluriyam ever needs us."

Old Crane laughed gently. "Liu Yan's said everything I wanted to say."

Zhu Yun grinned. "Old Crane happens to be a friend of mine. I can't go wrong listening to him. Young lord, I used to have my reservations about you, but now it looks like you're really a good man. You're a friend worth having!"

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

#### **Chapter 1553: Old Crane's Promise**

The tea party became much more cheerful once the greatest benefit had been distributed. Holding a copy of the "Grand Ascension" as their most treasured possession, the empyrean guests were all smiles, praising Jiang Chen to the high heavens.

Some had been guarded against him, or even hostile, but such thoughts were now a distant memory. The young lord had completely won them over.

They sat down to discuss martial dao. Jiang Chen also participated, generously sprinkling a few ideas here and there, intoxicating them with his knowledge. Envious, they all shared the same thought: a strong teacher was truly a blessing!

The gathering lasted for a full three days in a festive mood.

Almost all the participants expressed their willingness to rejoin the fray and shoulder mankind's cause.

Jiang Chen had no other stringent requirements. He simply said, "Seniors, you've lived in seclusion, yet haven't forgotten righteousness. Please allow this junior to thank you in the name of the people."

Most of the guests left, leaving only Old Crane behind. Jiang Chen wanted a private conversation with the elder and especially asked him to stay.

Full of admiration for the young lord, Old Crane gladly complied.

"Elder, it's rude of me to have detained you so suddenly. Please forgive me."

"Haha, what are you saying? At my advanced age, it's a pleasure for me to become friends with an interesting young man."

Jiang Chen smiled. "You flatter me. In fact, I have a matter I wanted to discuss with you. To be frank, many seniors have come to the tea party, but you're the most reliable."

Old Crane's face sobered. "Young lord, what could be so urgent?"

"It concerns the demons," the young lord admitted.

“Oh? Is there some trouble that you couldn’t mention in front of everyone?” The elder turned grave.

Jiang Chen nodded. “That’s correct. We must be on our toes against the demons. Though nothing will happen in the short term, we must exercise constant vigilance against these formidable enemies.

“To my knowledge, they’re divided into ten lineages, each of them possessing its own characteristics. For example, celestial demons are their royals, demons among demons. The one in Agarwood Valley was a celestial demon lord who survived despite being sealed in an ancient formation for several hundred thousands of years. I can’t overstate how fearsome they are!”

Despite his age, Old Crane wasn’t very knowledgeable about the ancient demon-sealing war since it’d happened eons ago.

History had since moved on. The human domain had changed beyond recognition.

Those who’d lived through the war had either fallen or departed afterward. Those left behind had been marginal players who hadn’t participated in the core of the war. Ultimately, their descendants had slowly shaped the current human domain.

For that reason, current humans had little resemblance with their ancient forebears. Many ancient legacies from before the war had been lost. Some had been taken to Myriad Abyss Island, but the vast majority remained in the human territories, simply buried under the dust of history. The Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect, for example.

Old Crane finally realized the gravity of the situation. After a moment of silence, he asked, “You said we stand little chance against them without a great change of fate. What change were you referring to?”

Jiang Chen replied, “In the ancient war, all of the leading sects pooled enormous strength and resources to lay down a formation called the Great Formation of Heavenly Soul Confinement. They activated it, but didn’t capture all of the demons because the first wave of attack was fielded by scapegoats — slaves captured from other planes. Our forefathers paid a bitter price to finally seal the demons away. Restarting this formation will give us a ray of hope.”

Old Crane was moved. “How feasible is it to do so?”

Jiang Chen shook his head. “Not very. Just think about it. The ancients sects had to invest so much to operate it, while our resources and manpower might not be even a tenth of theirs. So you can easily see the difficulties ahead of us. More importantly, we don’t know the activation method. I only know the formation’s location.”

“Oh? Where is it?”

“In my land of birth, Myriad Domain’s sixteen kingdoms alliance. Mostly within the borders of Eastern Kingdom and the surrounding kingdoms.”

“Eastern Kingdom, that must be your home?” Old Crane was somewhat familiar with the young man’s background.

“Correct.” Jiang Chen nodded.



Old Crane started fantasizing, "Your teacher must also be human. He must have taken note and was monitoring the formation. The reason he took you under his wing was because you had a shared destiny with him!"

Jiang Chen smiled. "Perhaps so. But the formation stumped him as well. He simply said that it must have been laid down by many ancient formation sects acting in concert. To reactivate it requires the correct method, or at least an understanding of its underlying principles."

"Most ancient legacies have gone to Myriad Abyss Island. To find the underlying theory is easier said than done." Old Crane was a little downcast.

But Jiang Chen retorted, "Not necessarily so. Only a part of the ancient inheritances is there. I'm guessing most is still in our territories. However, the ancient sects were determined to fight the demons or die trying. So on the eve of battle, many sealed their homeland with secret arts and hid their legacies, denying the enemy their treasures in case of defeat. Those who left for Myriad Abyss Island were lacking in resolve, or plainly put, deserters. They couldn't have been the elites."

The elder hadn't considered this angle before, leaving him dumbstruck for a long while.

"Did the senior tell you all of this?" His tone was laced with sorrow.

"Yes, these were his speculations. He told me that activating the formation will be key against the demons. We will be in deep trouble otherwise."

Old Crane nodded, fully buying into the story. "In that case, it seems that finding the method is our greatest priority. Young lord, do you have any clues?"

"Some. I heard noise about the formation's legacy being in Myriad Abyss Island. Either way, I have to go there."

"Go to Myriad Abyss Island?" Old Crane started. The place was shrouded in a haze of mystery. He himself had never pinned down its location. He'd been fascinated with the island like many others, but had been forced to give up after several vain attempts. Ultimately, his interest had slowly faded with time. So the mention of a journey took him by surprise.

"Do you know the way there?"

"I have a few ideas." Huang'er had given him a few hints before leaving, and Jiang Chen had squeezed some information out of Xiahou Jing's aides after their capture. He had a rough idea where to start.

Of course, both Huang'er and his captives had mentioned that the road to the island was fraught with danger.

Seeing the young lord's serene mien, Old Crane sighed again with admiration.

No, more than admiration, he felt true respect. The young man's road to success must have been an arduous one. But he far exceeded his seniors when it came to insight, the ways he analyzed oncoming challenges, and his breadth of vision.

"Are you going there by yourself?"

Jiang Chen nodded. "Numbers won't matter there. I can move more easily by myself. It'll be more convenient."

He didn't conceal his intentions. He wouldn't even take the golems with him. Of course, Senior Vermillion was another matter altogether. The ancient bird ultimately needed a suitable place for his rebirth, and Myriad Abyss Island might be the best location.

So the Vermillion Bird would accompany him.

Old Crane wholeheartedly yielded to the young man's bearing. It was a long moment before he responded. "Heroes spring from the young. You are thus reliable and determined, so I wish you a smooth and victorious journey. As for the human domain, I make no guarantees, but as long as I'm here, I won't let anyone run wild in Veluriyam!"

This was his way of expressing support.

I can't go with you, but I can protect your home!

Jiang Chen beamed. "Old Crane, I was waiting for this declaration."

As a man of virtue and prestige, the elder was publicly recognized as the leader among empyrean cultivators. The young lord couldn't hold a candle to his rallying power. It was why he'd asked the elder to stay.

Old Crane blushed. "I can't leave all the hard work to a young man while I sit back and reap the benefits, can I? I've distanced myself from mundane affairs, but I can still find a pretext to stick my nose back in. Since I've returned to the world, I won't shirk my responsibilities! However, I'm worried whether we can redeploy the formation even with the right method. After all, even the ancient sects found it burdensome."

"We don't need to deploy it again. The foundations are still intact. We simply need to gather enough resources to activate it again."

This was their greatest advantage. Setting up a formation of this magnitude from the ground up would be too large an undertaking. There were simply not enough outstanding formation grandmasters to be found.

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

#### **Chapter 1554: Final Preparations**

Old Crane felt steadier after hearing Jiang Chen's statement.

"I don't talk big. I will safeguard the human domain for now, until you return victorious from your expedition. What I can guarantee is that any empyrean expert, whether they came for the tea party or not, will not cause trouble for Veluriyam. Anyone who does will regret it for his entire life!"

This was a hefty commitment.

Jiang Chen bowed. "I am all the more relieved despite my imminent departure. Thank you for your words."

Old Crane was further reassured after receiving more secrets from Jiang Chen. The Way to Grand Ascension had satisfied him a great deal.

Jiang Chen did not become freer after sending Old Crane off. His next order of affairs was increasing Sacred Peafowl Mountain's level of fortification. The Nine Sparks Petalstorm Formation could no longer handle the current state of affairs. He had set up the formation in order to ward off peak great emperors like Pillzenith, not empyrean experts.

He needed to raise it to the level of the Hundred Sparks Petalstorm Formation. Doing so would give it the defensive prowess required to stand strong against empyrean attacks. Leveling up the formation was a grand project, costing innumerable resources. Thankfully, Jiang Chen had a glut of them from Shu Wanqing's belongings.

Xiahou Jing's subordinates, the late Elders Mo and Peng, had carried many resources with them as well. He had more than enough funding for this undertaking.

After about three months, the Hundred Sparks Petalstorm Formation was successfully completed.

Jiang Chen wasn't satisfied with just this. He fused the ancient mid empyrean cultivator, Guo Ran's residence into the young lord residence as well. In case of emergencies, those closest to him could take shelter in it.

There remained a terrifying restriction within the residence, refined as Guo Ran's life's work. It could instantly slay any cultivator below mid empyrean realm. Even a mid empyrean expert surprised by the restriction would suffer a grievous injury. In this way, the young lord residence had two layers of protection.

The eight stone golem brothers and the other empyrean cultivators meant that the young lord residence had its own complement of experts too. But that still didn't feel enough.

"My friends," Jiang Chen instructed Wellspring and Peerless. "You must take care of the affairs here after I leave. When an especially strong enemy comes that cannot be stopped by the formation, you must use this secret attack."

He gave them a storage ring. "There's a enormous amount of Soulless Powder of Wind and Cloud in the ring, as well as antidotes. If an enemy manages to get past the defenses, give them a taste of this!"

The Soulless Powder was tasteless and odorless, superb for both offense and defense. Even Forefather Bamboo of the Embittered Savages had fallen prey to it.

"Sacred Peafowl Mountain is virtually impregnable then," Wellspring laughed.

"We still can't let our guard down. The world is getting more and more unpredictable these days. Enemies may come that we can't predict the strength of."

"Hmm," Wellspring nodded seriously. "Don't worry, young lord. Old Mo and I will hold down the fort while you're gone."

Jiang Chen implicitly trusted these two friends of his. Wellspring was wise and calculating, Peerless, daring and resolute. Both men could be relied upon for the gravest of matters.

Jiang Chen instructed others of the necessary details as well. After that, he headed to Taiyuan Tower to find Forefather Bamboo.

Having been exiled here by Jiang Chen, the forefather was enjoying some peace and quiet as of late. He knew that the young lord had placed him here because there were still reservations about him.

In actuality, Forefather Bamboo had no thoughts of betrayal whatsoever. He'd resigned himself to his new position a long time ago. What else could he do? Jiang Chen could kill him with a single thought.

"Embittered Bamboo. You've been pretty idle recently, haven't you?" Jiang Chen asked with a smile.

"Not quite by choice, you see." The old Savage cracked a smile. "I hear many human empyrean experts came to your martial dao tea party."

"Oh? You heard about that too?"

"I always thought humans barely had any empyrean experts left. If I knew how many there actually were, I wouldn't have come so foolishly with my people. We were courting death!" The forefather let out a long sigh. His words were lined with tangible regret.

If he had known humanity still had such reserves of strength, they certainly wouldn't have chosen to march into the heart of the human domain. Border raids would've been the most of their endeavors.

Jiang Chen didn't sympathize with the old man. To the victor went the spoils. It was his own fault for starting a war that he eventually lost. There was no need to pity him simply because he was regretting his actions.

Allowing someone like this to leave would be setting a tiger free. Once he'd forgotten about his recent defeat, he was very likely to come back for a repeat.

Jiang Chen had no intentions whatsoever of forgiving him.

"Embittered Bamboo, I agreed to give you a few martial dao opportunities. The time isn't right for them yet, but I do have half a scroll of the Way to Grand Ascension. Try to grasp it. If your behavior is good, you'll have the chance to obtain the latter half."

"The Way to Grand Ascension?" Embittered Bamboo was confused. "What's that?"

"It's an internal method written by one who's ascended beyond empyrean realm. When empyrean experts continuously cultivate, they receive a chance to break through to a higher level."

"What? You're bluffing! A divine existence beyond empyrean realm? Do entities like that still exist after the ancient era?" Obvious disbelief could be found across the alien's face.

Jiang Chen shrugged. "Do as you like with it."

He'd given the empyrean masters the complete scroll of Grand Ascension. For Forefather Bamboo, he had only given half. Clearly, this was a test for the old recruit.

Awed by Jiang Chen's presence, the forefather took the half-volume from the youth.

"I have a few matters I must attend to. I will leave Veluriyam for a time. I'm sure you know what to do during my absence, yes?"

Forefather Bamboo blinked, then nodded. "Don't worry. If nothing else, the Savages can all read the times and act accordingly. My life is in your hands, so you don't need to worry. I will remain honest and forthright."

"You think being honest is enough?" Jiang Chen frowned. "Don't forget, you're supposed to be my servant now. You must work on Veluriyam's behalf. While I'm gone, you must do everything in your strength to take care of the city. In particular, you must defend it against any outside enemies. Do you understand?"

"I do." The old savage coughed out a laugh.

Jiang Chen waved a hand. "Remember to conduct yourself well. It's up to you whether you'll soar the heavens or descend to the abyss."

He flitted away on the wind after making the declaration, Jiang Chen's actions and poise were quite thought-provoking for Forefather Bamboo. Though his strength was far above the young man's, the old Savage was completely docile, as if the youth was actually many generations his senior.

After Jiang Chen was long gone, the forefather laughed weakly. "Never mind," he shook his head. "That kid was born to be my nemesis. I was fated to meet and lose to him. Let me see if this 'Grand Ascension' business is the real deal?"

Forefather Bamboo was a bit stronger than even Old Crane. His heart leapt when he saw the contents of the parchment. He raised an eyebrow, hissing softly in exclamation.

"Is this really a mantra for cultivation?" Having experience that rivaled Old Crane's, his understanding of martial dao methods was very strong. He saw value in the text immediately.

"So he didn't lie to me?" Forefather Bamboo was stunned. Focusing back on the scroll once more, he was a bit incredulous.

He'd thought Jiang Chen would grind away at his willpower by putting him in cold storage. But the young man had come to see him so quickly and in such earnest.

"He's using both the carrot and the stick, eh?" Forefather Bamboo cracked a wrinkled smile. "This Way to Grand Ascension looks quite genuine. If I can get the entire volume, that would be a tremendous opportunity! What did I invade the human domain for? Resources and heritage, that's what! What's the point of being so stuck on how I got it with something like this in my hands?"

Savages reasoned differently from humans. They were extreme pragmatists that cared only about the end result. To accomplish it, they were perfectly happy to employ any means necessary.

.....

The secretly happy Forefather Bamboo aside, Jiang Chen remembered something else after he returned. "I left too early," he mused vexingly. "I forgot to ask him who is the human expert stirring up a storm back in Embittered Savage territory."

The question had been present in the young man's mind for a while now.

If not for this expert's diversion leading to the delay of the forefather's itinerary, Jiang Chen might not have won the campaign against the Savages so easily or smoothly.

That human empyrean expert had been instrumental in the war effort. Jiang Chen would've very much liked to meet such a person. He had offered a helping hand without wanting anything in return, not even reputation. A true man like that was sure to have strong ethics and responsibility.

Alas, I was too hasty. If I went back now, it would be too forward of me. I'll ask next time. Jiang Chen decided after a little thought.

Back in the young lord residence, he spent some restful moments with his family. His parents, Dan Fei, and his daughter; these were the people closest to him.

Dan Fei was an understanding girl. She knew that Jiang Chen had been preparing for a trip to Myriad Abyss Island in the past few days. Rather than opposing it, she'd quietly supported him by packing and making other necessary preparations.

This mindset was something she had come to understand after her bleak experiences. She was perfectly at peace. As long as Jiang Chen and Nian'er were near, nothing else mattered.

Moreover, Jiang Chen and Huang'er had exchanged vows a long time ago. Though Dan Fei had met Jiang Chen earlier – had known him earlier, their relationship had bloomed later. Dan Fei didn't have the license to stop Jiang Chen from going to Myriad Abyss Island.

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

#### **Chapter 1555: The Celestial Cicada Cour**

t

After settling everything, Jiang Chen meditated for a few days to sort out his thoughts. He went over many possibilities of his trip in his mind. Though he couldn't make preparations for every eventuality, he could prepare enough to mitigate most potential surprises.

On this day, Jiang Chen quietly headed out of Veluriyam to the southeast. He didn't bring any humans along, but he did bring the Goldbiter Rats and the three sacred beasts – the Vermilion Bird, Long Xiaoxuan, and Little White.

He had three of the four ancient sacred beasts and was missing only the Black Tortoise. His secret aspiration and ambition was to acquire a Black Tortoise and thereby gather the bloodlines of all four ancient sacred beasts. Once converged, they corresponded to the laws of heaven and earth by fulfilling the five elements and would form their own minor cosmos.

Getting his hands on a specimen of that bloodline was much harder said than done. He had a vague idea and hope, but wasn't lost in it.

Lightly equipped, Jiang Chen didn't ask the Vermilion Bird to carry him. Instead, he requested that the beasts transform to more itinerant forms and carried them on his person.

After breaking through to great emperor, his Kunpeng Meteoric Escape had increased dramatically in speed. He was faster than any great emperor alive. Even some initial level empyrean experts were unlikely to be faster than him.

The plethora of defensive treasures he carried with him gave him sufficient assurance for the journey to Myriad Abyss Island.

In a few days' time, Jiang Chen entered the territory of the only first rank sect in the human domain's southeast – the Celestial Cicada Court.

The Court had a long and deep relationship with Veluriyam. Jiang Chen's reign over the city had been amply supported by its mistress, Su Huanzhen. Thus, he afforded the older woman a great deal of respect.

Moreover, she had been Emperor Peafowl's lover and they'd nearly become dao partners. Their relationship had been an extremely intimate one. Though a few specific reasons had prevented their union in the end, Su Huanzhen still loved Emperor Peafowl in her heart of hearts. Her attention had been constantly on him wherever he went.

She'd been sad for quite a while upon the emperor's disappearance, unable to accept what had happened. Her affection for him was deep-seated and immovable. Because of this, Jiang Chen was filled with the utmost respect for her.

Loving someone was easy, but loving someone for a long time was hard. Especially when that love was unable to come to fruition, but did not turn to hatred. A long-lasting attachment and loyalty like that was exceedingly rare.

Jiang Chen kept everything on the down-low for his visit. Only when he neared the Celestial Cicada Court's sacred grounds did he send a message glyph to contact Su Huanzhen.

He'd promised her that he would visit a long time ago, but he hadn't had the free time because of a series of Veluriyam-related affairs. Now that he was finally here, it was appropriate for him to stop at her doorstep.

Upon defeating the Embittered Savages and removing the looming danger over the human domain, the various sects returned to their bases. The Celestial Cicada Court was to the southeast of Veluriyam Capital, which meant it had been shielded from the disaster by the city's protective wings. It was comparatively safer here than the other sects. This meant that the Court had seen no damage whatsoever. The four Savage armies' invasion had left these lands untouched.

Su Huanzhen had been spending recent days in a daze. She was surprised by Jiang Chen's visit, but also very pleased. The young lord had asked her not to make raise a fuss in his message.

She discreetly left the sect's headquarters, arriving near a quiet valley just below the mountain. Jiang Chen's solitary shadow stood before a boulder, looking off into the southeast. His back cut a sharp figure.

Su Huanzhen was overwhelmed by the sight of the young man. He was almost the spitting image of Emperor Peafowl in his youth.

Back then, he'd been as separate from the crowd as Jiang Chen was now. No matter how remote or unassuming the place they stood was, they always found a way to distinguish themselves in the eyes of others.

She was overwhelmed by a rush of bittersweet nostalgia. But she quickly ceased this emotional disturbance; Jiang Chen was technically her junior. She had to maintain some semblance of decorum before someone so much younger than her.

"Young lord Jiang Chen, the Celestial Cicada Court can finally welcome you!" Su Huanzhen's voice was crisp and pleasant to the ear. It was almost youthful in its harmoniousness, and distinguished itself from the dust of the world.

Jiang Chen smiled when he heard her, turning around. "Sect Head Su. I didn't inform you of my coming beforehand... my deepest apologies for the intrusion."

Su Huanzhen smiled slightly. "You are so much like the young Peafowl... both of you speak even the most common of courtesies in such an elegant manner."

Jiang Chen broke into laughter. "Please excuse me, Sect Head Su."

"Ah, I didn't mean that in a ridiculous kind of way. In any case, good timing, young lord. I have something to ask you."

"Oh?" Jiang Chen was a bit surprised.

"Have you had any news about Peafowl lately?" Su Huanzhen cut to the chase. At her age, there was no longer any need to be as embarrassed as a sixteen-year-old girl would have been.

Jiang Chen blinked. "Why do you ask that, Sect Head Su?"

Su Huanzhen sighed softly, her voice solemn. "In the past few days, I've felt uneasy during my meditations. I can see strange images and scenery flickering through my head, all of them related to Peafowl. I think he's still alive!"

Her tone was resolute, her eyes radiating intense concern.

"His Majesty Peafowl is sure to be alive still. I've never doubted that." There was steel in Jiang Chen's voice.

"Really? Then... will he reappear in the world?" Su Huanzhen asked.

"His Majesty Peafowl carries the entire world in his heart. If he's in a position to, he will certainly make himself known again. Don't worry about that."

Hearing this lifted a burden from Su Huanzhen's shoulders. Some color returned to her face. "I just hope he's doing well these days," she sighed softly. "He's still the same man after these thousands of years. Pure-hearted and single-minded, holding the entire world in his heart but his own..."

Though Jiang Chen knew about Su Huanzhen's relationship with Emperor Peafowl in years gone by, he couldn't comment much because he didn't know the details.



Instead, he changed the subject. "Ah, Sect Head Su. Last time, you invited me to the Celestial Cicada Court for a few formation discussions. I have a bit of time on my hands right now. Why don't we take this opportunity to see that come to fruition?"

"That's perfect!" Su Huanzhen was overjoyed. "I will summon all of the young geniuses and elders in the sect for your lecture. How about it?"

"That won't be necessary," Jiang Chen hastily amended. "I don't want to make too much of a fuss or bother too many others. Just us two is fine."

Su Huanzhen didn't press him on it. "Then I'll benefit from your wisdom myself," she smiled.

Formations had always been the sect's forte. Su Huanzhen had listed a formation-related bounty in Pillfire's Bounty Arena for this precise reason. It was Jiang Chen's guess that the sect was very likely related to the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect.

Su Huanzhen related the problems the Celestial Cicada Court had with its formations in detail to Jiang Chen. The young man was patient enough to solely listen while she recounted all the issues. It took many hours for her to be finished the basics.

"Young lord Jiang Chen, we became a first rank sect solely on the basis of formational knowledge. However, there are a few flaws still..."

"Celestial Cicada Court's existing formation heritage is quite uncommon already," Jiang Chen chuckled. "The only issue is that much of it is incomplete in some way. You only have a superficial portion of the ancient formation sect your heritage originates from, which means a severe limitation on the power of your formations as well."

"You are a formation master, young lord Jiang Chen. Please enlighten me." She'd never asked anyone in such a studious voice before, not even Emperor Peafowl.

"Enlighten is a strong word," Jiang Chen smiled. "Do you know where the Celestial Cicada Court's ancient heritage comes from?"

"I don't know." She didn't feign knowledge that she didn't possess. "Might you know, young lord Jiang Chen?" Her tone saw an uptick in serendipitous joy.

"There's an ancient formation sect called the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect. Many of the your sect's formations are deeply connected to their formations."

"The Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect?" Su Huanzhen was lost. She'd never heard of it before.

Jiang Chen didn't have time to explain to her in more detail. He took out a storage ring. "Sect Head Su, there are many books in this storage ring about formations. A few diagrams are included as well. Everything comes from the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect. Their stores of knowledge were profound indeed. If you research and study the ring's contents, you will surely be able to increase the potency of the Celestial Cicada Court's heritage many times over. You would have a good chance at even surpassing the other first rank sects!"

Su Huanzhen was ecstatic. She'd yet to recover from the shocking information Jiang Chen had brought – everything was simply so incredible! The Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect; formational heritage; surpassing the other first rank sects!

These directly corresponded to the goals she had as sect head.

"Young lord Jiang Chen, it seems that the Celestial Cicada Court has only met with good fortune after making your acquaintance. These things are priceless treasures for us. Truly, I don't know how to repay you. You have a dao partner, right? A shame. We have many pretty girl geniuses in our own right... hehe." The sect head giggled at this point.

"Please don't arbitrarily play matchmaker for me, Sect Head Su," Jiang Chen smiled wryly. "Actually, I came today for another equally important matter." His tone grew serious.

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

#### **Chapter 1556: Three Sites of Ruins**

Jiang Chen's seriousness led Su Huanzhen to sober up as well. "What is it? Go ahead and ask, young lord."

"I want to know if there are any suspicious ancient formations or sites within your sect's territory." Jiang Chen's eyes glittered as he gazed intently at Su Huanzhen.

The older woman pondered a moment. "Our lands are in the southeast and weren't a core area to Divine Abyss in ancient times. Still, there are a few ancient sites scattered around. The sect's past generations have investigated them to a degree, but no secret realms exist so far as we can tell. Obviously, no treasure was to be found either."

"Can you take me to see them, Sect Head Su?" Jiang Chen looked extremely keen.

He hadn't come to brave any secret realms or excavate any treasure. He wanted to look for a secret formation leading to Myriad Abyss Island. A formation like that was sure to exist only in a mysterious ancient site. Normal people wouldn't be able to even comprehend what they were seeing.

Intelligence told him that there weren't many points of travel between the island and the human domain. The information Huang'er had left behind and bits he'd obtained from coerced questioning were both incomplete. Nevertheless, he'd gleaned a good guess from what he knew. The Celestial Cicada Court's lands was likely one of the most important bridges between the two.

Ancient sites often held passages for dimensional transportation. Such a passage wouldn't necessarily take him all the way to the island, but he could probably reach some kind of relay point instead, from where he would be able to find the coordinates with which to head to Myriad Abyss.

Though island was technically in the same plane as Divine Abyss, it was just in a separate pocket from the main continent. Without the correct coordinates, it was essentially impossible to reach.

Though Jiang Chen didn't explicitly declare why he was looking into these ancient sites, Su Huanzhen trusted Jiang Chen enough not to press him. "Shall we go now?"

"As soon as possible." Jiang Chen was quite forward.

Su Huanzhen nodded receptively. "Alright. I know three suspicious sites like what you've described. Let's go check them out one by one."

She could see how important this was to the young lord. Jiang Chen's manifold gifts had been a bit embarrassing for her to receive, which fueled her helpfulness in this situation.

She firmly believed that he had only come for altruistic purposes. Moreover, the Court had already excavated said sites countless times without return before. There was nothing she was loathe to give up about them, nor was she going to be forbidding about Jiang Chen's own investigation.

She would have considered things a bit longer if another sect had made the request. But there was nothing to consider in Jiang Chen's case. Only two men in the world warranted such treatment, and it was a coincidence that both were rulers of Veluriyam Capital.

The first site wasn't far from the sect's headquarters, so the two arrived very quickly.

"This is one of the sites, young lord. I've studied this place often, but I haven't found anything out of the ordinary here." Su Huanzhen led Jiang Chen into the ruins.

Jiang Chen walked around the place for a bit before shaking his head disappointedly. "This place is what's left of an ancient battlefield. There is clear evidence of a large-scale brutal conflict here, with a formation to reflect that fact. However, nothing useful remains to us."

A single loop and several scans was enough for him to form his judgment.

Su Huanzhen was unsurprised. "The sect's past generations came to the same conclusion. It seems that we are in agreement, young lord Jiang Chen."

The duo flew toward the next site. The second was more out of the way, situated in a valley.

"Young lord Jiang Chen, this site is rather more confounding. The Celestial Cicada Court comes here often to research it, but we can't make heads or tails of it." Su Huanzhen clearly put more importance upon this site.

Jiang Chen nodded, beginning his own sweep of the ruins. There wasn't nearly as much of a mess here; everything was comparatively more secluded. He strode back and forth, expanding his consciousness fully outward to pick up any stray details. Unfortunately, there seemed to be no connection here to Myriad Abyss Island.

"Sect Head Su, I believe an ancient expert once dwelt in this place. There are many things to be found here, but it's not possible to see that from the surface. There's a well-hidden formation around this place that creates an extra-dimensional pocket. If you weren't familiar with it, you wouldn't know that there was far more to this place than met the eye."

Su Huanzhen was elated. "Are you saying that this is an ancient secret realm?"

"Very likely so," Jiang Chen nodded.

The older woman's eyes widened at the discovery. This had simply come too sudden.

"Do you understand this dimensional formation's secrets?" Su Huanzhen's clear eyes looked at Jiang Chen expectantly.

"A little bit." He smiled.

"Then..." Su Huanzhen was interrupted by Veluriyam's young lord.

"Sect Head Su, I don't have time to open this secret realm for you right now. However, there is information related to dimensional principles in the books I gave you. In addition to that, I will draw out a blueprint of the principles behind this realm operates for your reference. Remember: any secret realm is dangerous in its own right. Even if I were to explore this place personally, I would observe ten steps for any one I took."

Su Huanzhen was somewhat downcast. "I feel uncertain without your participation, young lord."

"Your words are weightier than I can bear," laughed Jiang Chen.

Without delay, he began to analyze the formation, casually sketching down its lines in the process.

Su Huanzhen felt rather apologetic when she saw Jiang Chen's earnest work. It wasn't easy for the young man to draw out every line and trail he perceived.

He handed the schematic to Su Huanzhen. "Here's everything I can see, Sect Head Su. If you are going to venture into this formation, you must remember exercise every precaution. Don't get in too deep all at once. Otherwise, you might be trapped and never get out again."

Taking the schematic in her hands, Su Huanzhen uttered a word of sincere thanks. "I don't know how many times this is now, young lord, but the Celestial Cicada Court owes you a great favor."

"You are treating me like an outsider, Sect Head," Jiang Chen laughed. "If you have time, let's go to the third set of ruins. I hope we can find what I'm looking for there."

Su Huanzhen nodded. "Alright."

The duo set off again for the third site. They arrived very quickly thanks to their shared swiftness.

These ruins were set by a riverside. Green mountains stretched off into the distance on both banks, the towering scenery a wonder to behold.

"Young lord, these ruins are set in the nicest place out of the three."

Jiang Chen stood by the rushing river, taking in the mountains' inspiring presences. He felt his heart sing in the presence of their greatness.

"Excuse me a moment, Sect Head. Let me delve into things here a little." The youth called upon his Cicada's Wings as he said this, taking the sky.

These ruins were well-hidden between the sheer cliffs of a mountain range.

He opened his consciousness up entirely in an effort to probe the environment more closely. He didn't know why, but the first impression he got was that this place was far more likely than the previous two.

Though it was remote, he could clearly feel strange turbulence coursing through the air. These chaotic winds were light enough to be usually imperceptible. Normal people would have thought them to be part of the wind created by the ambient geography.

It was normal for things to be windier by a river. But Jiang Chen was a man with a wealth of experience. He knew the difference between turbulence and regular wind.

The most important distinction between them was that turbulence had no direction or rule whatsoever. They embodied anarchy to the fullest degree.

He sought after the feel of these chaotic currents, following the entire way. The more he proceeded, the more he furrowed his brow.

His premonitions were intensifying as he walked. This place was likely an outpost for Myriad Abyss Island into the human domain. Though there was no man-made aura remaining at present. Nevertheless, Jiang Chen's sharp senses picked up the otherness of this place.

"Did you find something, young lord?" Su Huanzhen asked candidly when Jiang Chen returned to shore.

"Sect Head Su," Jiang Chen replied gravely, "I must come clean with you about something. Perhaps this will have a significant effect on the Celestial Cicada Court."

"Oh? What is it?" It was obvious to Su Huanzhen that there was an important matter at hand.

"It's very likely for this place to be an outpost from Myriad Abyss Island into the human domain. If the inhabitants of that place is planning a large-scale intrusion one day, your Court will be forced to bear the brunt of their assault."

The news struck Su Huanzhen like a bolt from the blue.

"What? Myriad Abyss Island?" The sect head paled. These three words were still quite scary to her.

"Yes." Jiang Chen saw no reason to lie. "The trouble with the Order of Wind and Cloud last time... its supreme lord, Xiahou Jing, was someone from Myriad Abyss Island. An average genius from a middling house was enough to send an earthquake through the human domain. If Myriad Abyss Island comes in force, I'm worried that..."

He wasn't willing to continue with the hypothetical, especially because of Su Huanzhen's rapidly whitening visage.

"Don't worry too much," he comforted. "Myriad Abyss Island has a rule forbidding its scions to return to the human domain for frivolous reasons. You needn't worry about a large-scale invasion from there before this rule is removed."

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

#### **Chapter 1557: Winterdraw Island**

Jiang Chen's consolation brightened Su Huanzhen's mood a little. She was clever enough to make an educated guess about the young man's intentions. "Young lord," she inquired, "are you planning to make a trip to Myriad Abyss Island?" Why else would he be looking for the island's outpost otherwise?

“So you’ve guessed it too,” Jiang Chen sighed softly. “Please, do keep it a secret.”

“Of course,” Su Huanzhen nodded hurriedly.

“How are you planning to go?” she continued with interest. “Is there a teleportation formation here? Or an entrance of some sort?”

The older woman was very curious now that she’d calmed down. The head of a first rank sect wouldn’t be disquieted for too long.

Jiang Chen smiled. “I’m trying to figure out how to find the entrance. Sect Head Su, that’ll be all for today. If you have any other business to attend to, please feel free to go back to the sect. You’ll find many surprises in the tomes and diagrams I’ve given you.”

Su Huanzhen giggled. “You’re sending me away, huh? I guess I’m not of much help to you in staying here anyways. I hear your dao partner, Miss Huang’er, is from Myriad Abyss Island. Are you going there to kidnap your wife back?”

Peafowl’s paramour sure liked to joke around. Without waiting for Jiang Chen’s response, she disappeared into the cloudy sky in a flash of rainbow light. Though her person was gone, her laughter rang still.

Jiang Chen waited for her to fully depart before he broke out his secret investigation method.

If there was an outpost here, it would be invisible to the naked eye. Even the consciousness might not be able to perceive it. Only secret methods would function properly. Finding a more specific area was vital before one could materialize the formation from the ether.

Thankfully, the proceedings were hard but not impossible. He was executing according to a predetermined line of thought. Jiang Chen continued following the riverbank.

Suddenly, his consciousness shifted. He paused before a patch of space. “It’s here,” he noted happily. “Reveal yourself!”

Jiang Chen manipulated torrents of air in an attempt to disturb the fabric of spacetime in this spot, further disturbing the natural turbulence already present. Introducing more entropy caused the affected area to widen and expand.

Rumble!

Suddenly, an enormous twister of water rose out of the river. It soared to impossible heights before falling once more. A huge swirl was left on the face of the water, cryptic and mystifying.

“This is it.” Without hesitation, he dove headfirst into the spiral. The flow of the water swallowed him up. In the next moment, the surface of the water returned to calm.

It was as if everything had been an illusion.

Within the twister, Jiang Chen was completely calm. Though the churn and forth of the vortex was an enormous trial, his tempered body found it easy enough to resist the agitation.

After who knew how long, his consciousness began to recover its awareness. His body was no longer being thrown about so wildly. He opened his eyes to discover himself upon a hillside.

The hill was jadeite green, pretty to an almost artistically perfect degree. Its beauty seemed somewhat otherworldly. So too was the other scenery he beheld around him. Land and verdant green water were equally breathtaking.

The sight brightened his mood considerably. Jiang Chen climbed up from where he lay, dusting off and cleaning up his clothes in the process. He surveyed his surroundings.

He was reasonably sure he had entered Myriad Abyss Island, but he had no idea where and how the vortex had taken him.

"That was easier than I thought!" Jiang Chen was very pleased with himself. He began to walk around.

There was nothing to be dissatisfied about with his journey. He'd expected extreme trials that demanded risking his life in the process, but the formation had directly taken him here!

Though he had been sorely tested in the process in more ways than one, it had nevertheless been significantly easier than he'd thought. He took in the fresh air, taking in the potent spirit energy concentrated in the air. His heart sang in the breeze.

"There's more to this place than meets the eye. It seems that I really am at Myriad Abyss Island. From the perspective of cultivation alone, this place is only better than Veluriyam and Sacred Peafowl Mountain. But this looks like only some far-off corner!" Jiang Chen smacked his lips in exclamation.

Something suddenly registered in his consciousness. He instinctively dodged a few steps to the side. Three figures appeared at the other end of the path he was walking on.

They descended before Jiang Chen. The one in the middle was as thick as an iron pillar. The two who flanked him were fat and lean, though their expressions were uniformly sinister.

The heavy-set man in the middle roared with laughter. "It's our lucky day today, brothers. It's been a long time since there's been a newcomer to Winterdraw Island. And now that there finally is one, we're the first to meet him. Not bad, not bad!"

"Take off all your clothes first, kid!" The fat one cackled.

Jiang Chen didn't know what to say. What exactly did they want? He'd seen many bandits in his time, but none had told him to strip before. Did they want his money or his person?

Snickering, he swept his consciousness about himself. The trio before him were great emperors, but he saw no reason to fear them. He was more interested in whether they had companions nearby.

The lack of nearby activity was a reasonable negative.

"Boss, did this kid freeze up or something?" The fat man was perplexed at the lack of a reaction. "Didn't someone tell him about the rules here at Winterdraw?"

Rules?

Jiang Chen was none the wiser.

What ridiculous place is this Winterdraw Island? Was stripping really a mandatory part of coming here? Was there something stranger than this under all the heavens?

The thin man snickered maliciously when he saw Jiang Chen's blank look. "What are you looking at, kid? Can't you see that we're robbing you?"

"Robbing me?" Jiang Chen was still quite confused. "Even if you're robbing me, you're not poor enough to need the clothes off my back, are you?"

If he didn't know this was Myriad Abyss Island territory, he would've thought himself lost among barbarians. Who tried to steal clothes?

The thin man glowered. "Stop feigning ignorance, kid! We're telling you to strip so you have nowhere to hide your treasures! Didn't someone tell you about this when you were exiled to Winterdraw, eh?"

Jiang Chen had no words to respond with.

He had no idea what this 'Winterdraw' was supposed to be. From what the man was saying, it was a place where people were exiled to? That didn't make much sense. Why was it so nice here then?

This vacation-worthy weather and scenery was a deserted prison??

The fat man chortled. "Ole Third, that kid's really messed up in the head. Let me crack it open in a bit. I bet there's nothing in there."

The thin man grinned, revealing bone-white teeth. "We haven't tried boiled brains in quite a while. I miss the taste. This kid looks pretty young and soft... we've struck gold today, brothers!"

The big man glared at Jiang Chen. "Stop pretending, kid. It's your unlucky day to run into the Cursefiend Trio!"

"The Cursefiend Trio? Do you three own this island?" Jiang Chen intentionally allowed fear to show upon his face.

The three men guffawed when they heard the question.

"What an uninformed idiot!" The fat man was even more sure of his judgment now. The blubber on his entire body quivered when he laughed.

"What're you laughing about?" Jiang Chen played up the dumb act as he glanced sidelong at the fat man. "Do you know you look really creepy when you laugh? You have more fat on you than a well-bred pig! Don't you have any self-awareness?"

The fat man blinked, then realized what the young man had said. "The f\*ck, this kid is calling me names! Let me cut him up, boss!"

The big man frowned. "Let's tie him up first. He's not the softest or the whitest, but he ain't a bad looker. I haven't had a woman in a long time, so I suppose he'll do."

The fat man roared with reckless laughter.



Though Jiang Chen wasn't scared one bit of these men, goosebumps of disgust popped up all over his body. What was up with them?

The Cursefiend Trio were aptly named, for they were an accursed bunch indeed. One said he wanted to eat brains and another enjoyed sodomizing people. What were they if not perverts?

Jiang Chen's eyes contracted when he saw the fat man stride toward him. Without warning, a ray of aureate light blasted forth from his pupil.

The fat man's smug look met the light head on. It pierced into his eyes and in the next moment, he froze as if he had been electrified.

The fat man was approximately mid great emperor. In terms of cultivation level alone, he was technically slightly higher than Jiang Chen. The technicality alone wasn't nearly enough to save him.

In terms of practical battle strength and the strength of one's consciousness, he wasn't on the same level as Jiang Chen at all. And this was without factoring the latter's wealth of items into the equation.

Jiang Chen's Evil Golden Eye instantly froze the fat man in place. His inflated body visibly solidified in real time. In a few moments, he had hardened into a golden statue, almost as if he'd been cast in metal and immediately cured in place.

The big and thin men were both slack-jawed at the sight.

"This isn't good, boss. That kid was just pretending to be easy prey!" The thin man bolted, completely ignoring his companion.

"Where do you think you're going?" Jiang Chen sneered. He flicked his fingers, sending two Confounding Puppets through the air.

Two thumps marked twin tackles from the puppets, forcing the would-be bandits to the ground.

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

#### **Chapter 1558: The Place of Exile**

The two men were completely helpless before the Confounding Puppets. They were hauled up to Jiang Chen like dead dogs.

If Jiang Chen hadn't toned down the force of his puppets beforehand, they would've been puddles of blood already.

The thin man lay prostrate on the ground, devoting himself to vehement begging. "Sir, sir, I was too blind to know how great you were. I've inadvertently offended you and I deserve utter misery!"

He was clearly not a principled man. He wasn't planning on resisting at all and was the perfect image of kneeling cooperation. In fact, it seemed that he itched to pounce and lick Jiang Chen's feet.

Jiang Chen didn't enjoy such a reprehensive sight. Someone like this was absolutely vicious when he got his way, and pretended to be a dead dog when he lost. There was no compassion to be wasted for men such as these.

“Hou Ole Third,” the big man cursed, “why won’t you grow a spine? Damn it, you’ve ruined my reputation.”

The thin man didn’t seem to care. “Sir,” he begged, “don’t listen to that fool. He grew up tall but didn’t grow any brains.”

Apparently, he didn’t care that the big man was supposed to be the boss. Badmouthing was fine as long as his life could be saved.

This made the big man to roar in anger. “Hou Ole Third, you’re absolutely shameful! I was completely blind to be brothers with trash like you!”

“Tch, you think I treated you like a brother? You don’t have enough brains to be my boss. You’d need to be at least as handsome and graceful as this gentleman over here! He’s obviously a quality specimen of humanity, destined to soar above the clouds. Sir, what do you think of me? I’m good at anything and everything. I can do whatever you like. Please, take pity on me and let me be your dog. Look, I can bark too... woof, woof, woof!”

Jiang Chen was at a complete loss for words. He was a stranger in this strange land, yet the first people he’d met here were infinitely more strange than he. He hadn’t met someone so shameless even back in the human domain.

He’d seen many afraid of death, but none had been willing to stoop this low. This man was threatening to exceed the extents of understanding with his immodesty.

“Shut up.” The young lord couldn’t take it anymore.

The thin man immediately closed his mouth, rushing to present a smile that was as pretty as he could manage.

“Do you want to live?” Jiang Chen asked coolly.

“Yes, sir. You are very wise.” The thin man was overjoyed. He had finally gotten through just a bit.

“We’ll see whether you’re worth sparing, then.”

“Of course I’ll be worth, sir. I’m not an important character here on Winterdraw Island by any means, but I am most suitable to run errands and do chores for you.”

“I don’t keep dogs around,” Jiang Chen refused flat-out. “Alright, enough with the chit chat. I want to ask you what kind of place this... Winterdraw Island... is.”

The thin man was stunned. “You, you don’t know Winterdraw Island? How did you come to be here?”

“Who’s asking the questions here?” Jiang Chen snapped back impatiently.

The thin man’s entire body shook. “You’re asking me, sir!” he hurriedly responded. “I’ll talk, I’ll talk! Winterdraw Island is part of the Rejuvenation Isles, where repeat criminals are exiled to, it’s a place of no return.”

“What??” Jiang Chen was stunned beyond belief. This was some luck! He’d been transported to some place of exile on his first attempt to journey to Myriad Abyss Island??

*Should I laugh... or should I cry...*

The thin man was equally surprised by the gentleman's reaction. Who was this person to come to Winterdraw, but have no idea where he was?

He calculated furiously, speculating about Jiang Chen's identity.

"What kind of place is the Rejuvenation Isles? Another island in Myriad Abyss Island? Does it have any place in the local rankings?" Jiang Chen's woeful lack of knowledge was showing itself.

The thin man was growing ever more confused. It was one thing not to know what Winterdraw Island was, but not even the Rejuvenation Isles? Just where did this young gentleman come from? His manner and dress and bearing didn't place him as some country bumpkin, so why didn't he know any of this?

But the thin man was quite wary of Jiang Chen, so choked back his curiosity knowing that the gentleman didn't like questions.

"The Rejuvenation Isles are a third rate to second rate power in Myriad Abyss Island. It doesn't number amongst the 36 Isles, much less the Ten Divine Nations."

A third rate power?

Jiang Chen heaved a sigh of relief. A third rate power was nothing to be afraid of. "Who's in charge of the Rejuvenation Isles?"

"There's no single person in charge," the thin man responded carefully. "There are many large and small islands making up the collective. Each island represents a faction, and there's around six islands on par with each other. Together, they hold the reins of power for the Isles."

"So Winterdraw is the local prison?" Jiang Chen asked indifferently.

The thin man sighed. "Winterdraw is a very complicated place. Criminals are sent here to fight and kill each other, but the Isles often recruit from here as well."

"Oh? Why is that?" Since this was where criminals were exiled to, shouldn't all the residents be left to live or die as they would?

"Ah, you may not know this, sir. Winterdraw is where people are exiled to, but also where deathsworn are trained."

"What do you mean?"

"Just think about it. Everyone here is guilty of severe crimes. Who doesn't despair and waits for death? But if someone is willing to give you a chance, to take you away to participate in wars or dangerous missions, with freedom being awarded upon success, wouldn't you do so even if the price was to become a deathsworn warrior?"

Understanding struck Jiang Chen. More than just a simple prison, this island was also a training ground. It was a barbaric and primal place with the law of the jungle as the only rule.

The strong fought to survive until opportunities arrived, whereas the weak became fish on the chopping block for others.

*How the hell did I end up in a place like this?* Had something gone wrong with the transportation formation?

Or were there many possible destinations and he'd ended up in the unluckiest one?

Despite the baffled state of his mind, he quickly came back to his senses. He'd landed in a very awkward and dangerous location. Though it might look peaceful for now, potentially fatal danger lurked around every corner.

"How often are the deathsworn selected? Are the requirements for becoming one stringent?"

"Once every decade or two, but there's no hope in the short term as a batch was just selected last year. A dozen lucky guys got the chance to leave. Though we don't know if they're still alive, it's much better than us sitting here, waiting for death. At least they have the chance to win freedom." Pain crept into the thin man's voice.

Jiang Chen finally understood why the Cursefiend Trio seemed so perverted. It was all a matter of circumstance. It was impossible not to go stir crazy in such a harsh environment; even a normal person would be twisted in such a place.

"Can we only wait for death here? Is it impossible to survive if we just live out our days peacefully?"

"Sir, you really don't know this place! The three of us don't actually have that much skill to our name, but we puff ourselves up and call us the Cursefiend Trio because we want to intimidate others with our name alone. It's a type of self-protection! Every minute and second is fraught with danger here, and everyone you meet might want to kill you. They'll want your wealth, your storage ring, and anything of value on you."

Jiang Chen smirked disdainfully. The thin man made himself to be quite innocent, but he was just like the jackals and wolves he was describing. He'd only tucked his tail away for the moment because he'd met someone even fiercer than him. One could never believe or trust someone like this because they'd just as well turn around for a bite. But his information had been rather useful.

"You said a batch was chosen last year, so there's no hope for this year?"

"Definitely not in the next three to five. If you're unlucky, probably no hope in the next twenty years. Besides, even if someone comes to make another selection, there's at least a million people on the island. What makes you so sure you'll be that lucky?"

The man suddenly realized he might've gone overboard. "I'm not doubting your abilities, sir. I'm just saying that there are just too few chosen. And even if you're picked, who knows what kind of mission you'll be sent on? You have to go through crazy things to regain freedom. To be honest, your life is 99% no longer yours after entering Winterdraw." Resentment filled the man's complaints.

"Since there are so many people here, has no one ever thought about escaping? Or inciting a mob to get out together?"

The thin man smiled ruefully and looked oddly at Jiang Chen. "Sir, it looks like you really don't know anything about the island. The Sea of Death surrounds the island and you can't fly across the surface.

There's no way out if you don't have a certain airboat. Besides, there's restrictions all around the island. You're courting death if you try for them!"

### Sovereign of the Three Realms (WN)

#### **Chapter 1559: Good Guy Chen**

"Moreover, Winterdraw has patrol teams as well as various factions vigilant against each other. They all want to get off, you see. This place has seen hundreds of millions of prisoners, but less than ten have ever successfully escaped. Do you understand what that means?" The thin man retorted.

Jiang Chen didn't believe what the man was saying. "Is your thin brother over here telling the truth?"

"Pah! I don't have a brother like him. He's spineless, cowardly, and scared of death. On Winterdraw, anyone like that is the first to die!"

The big man glared at Jiang Chen with reddened eyes. "I'm not scared of you. Kill me if you want. I've had enough of this awful place, anyways!"

"If you're not scared of death, why are you afraid of telling me the truth?" Jiang Chen replied coldly.

The big man blinked. "What?"

Jiang Chen frowned. "I asked you if he told the truth."

"Are you crazy enough to think of escape?" the big man mocked. "You better forget about it right now! That monkey exaggerated things a bit, but he's mostly accurate. In the last several dozen millennia, less than ten have managed the feat!"

Though this big man was apparently into sodomy – which in itself was a trait that gave Jiang Chen a ton of goosebumps – he looked much more trustworthy than his thinner compatriot.

Jiang Chen nodded, then let the big man go. "You can leave."

The big man was stunned. "You're letting me go? Aren't you worried I'll do something against you in the future? Or tell on you?"

"That's your business." Jiang Chen shrugged.

The big man was completely lost. Someone on Winterdraw was allowing him to live? This defied all understanding of how things worked here!

The law of the jungle ruled this place.

The big man was rather suspicious that the young gentleman before him was possibly playing a trick. Was the gentleman going to launch heavy pursuit after the fact? Did he enjoy hunting and toying with his prey, perhaps?

"What, you don't want to go?" Jiang Chen frowned. "I guess I won't be opposed to you committing suicide." He seemed completely at ease.

The big man couldn't believe what he was hearing. "You're really letting me go?"

"You can take this thin monkey with you. I don't want to kill him on principle, but he's plainly too disgusting. I really don't like him."

The big man wordlessly strode up.

The thin man shrieked. "Sir, sir, I've said everything I could. Please let me live. Don't kill me. I'll lick your boots!"

Jiang Chen was reviled.

Anger flashed through the big man's eyes. "You've utterly shamed me with your behavior, you bastard." He stomped his sizable foot down.

Crack!

The thin man's head exploded like a watermelon.

"Nicely done," Jiang Chen smiled coolly.

The big man glared at Jiang Chen. "You're really not going to kill me?"

"Do you really want me to?" Jiang Chen asked with a half-smile. "If you're uneasy, talk a bit more about things the other guy didn't talk about. Maybe I'll let you live longer if I'm in a good mood."

The big man let out a long sigh. "Never mind. You probably offended someone in your clan. That's how you got exiled here. Maybe you still don't know how scary this place really is. If you did, you might not be able to laugh any more.

"I can tell you straight that we brothers were just bottom-feeders here on Winterdraw. Someone like me has to flit around the edges here, worrying about my own safety from day to day. We made up the scary name and exaggerated our behavior to intimidate anyone who might mean ill for us."

"If you're at the bottom, what level are the strongest cultivators here? Emptyrean?"

"Emptyrean for sure. I hear the strongest are great emptyrean experts. But that's just rumors... no one has actually seen any. Winterdraw isn't as simple as you think. It's extremely unlikely for you to be able to leave this place. Rather than think about these things, you should first think about how you can safely live here from now on. Only by staying alive will you have future opportunities. If you're not alive, you can't be picked to be deathsworn." These words sounded much more trustworthy coming from the big man, rather than his dead comrade.

He appeared to be a bit grateful for Jiang Chen's mercy. Long periods of dwelling here would harden anyone's heart. However, matters pertaining to things as grave as life and death were sometimes sufficient to soften it.

"Are there really a lot of factions on Winterdraw?"

"Yes! But here, we don't know how many there are exactly. Even the weakest factions don't care about us!" The big man was mildly sad. Clearly, the trio hadn't had a good life here. They had been three sparrows of roughly equal unimportance.

There was little information Jiang Chen could gather from someone as insignificant as this. He waved sadly. "Get out of here. You're a bit more bearable than the other two, so I'll let you go."

Jiang Chen had originally hated the three men equally, but that was before hearing about the environment here on Winterdraw. It was enough to drive any man mad. The big man didn't intrinsically seem to be an irredeemable criminal; Jiang Chen didn't have much interest in killing ordinary people.

The big man hadn't expected this turn of events. After some hesitation, he grit his teeth and nodded before turning to depart.

After reaching safety, he breathed out in relief. But his mood didn't relax because of it. He found it quite ridiculous to have been let go. This was Winterdraw! Was there someone capable of showing mercy?

He hesitated about simply stepping away, losing himself in thought for a while. After a few moments, he turned back towards Jiang Chen.

The young man had taken a seat near his original location. His consciousness noticed the big man returning. Surprised, he furrowed his brow. "Do you think I really won't kill you no matter what you do?"

The big man raised both hands airborne. "I'm not here to start a fight. I already got to a safe zone. I came back because I remembered something."

"You better have a good reason for this," Jiang Chen retorted coldly. If he didn't value a chance at life, the young man wouldn't mind sending him off in a different way.

The man didn't get too close. Instead, he tossed something at Jiang Chen. It landed in the grass.

Jiang Chen discerned with a glance that it was a jet-black jade slip. "What is this?"

"I don't really know. I found it inside the bones of a corpse a few years back. My consciousness is too limited to decipher what it contains. Maybe you'll find it useful."

No one on Winterdraw could possibly be called rich. There was only robbery and no production here. Material goods didn't just appear out of thin air!

Limited resources were gathered in the hands of a few, transferred generally only upon death. Whenever someone died, his murderer received a windfall of possessions. The murderer would sometimes be killed in turn the next day, resulting in another transfer of wealth, and so on. It was impossible to tell where many items had originally come from.

Picking the slip up, Jiang Chen did a perfunctory scan before trying to break into it.

"That's right, another piece of advice. On Winterdraw, you should be as vicious as you can. Don't just let random people live. Here, doing that harms only yourself." The big man continued to remain to offer advice rather than leaving.

Jiang Chen didn't agree with or rebuke the man. He knew that the big man was doing everything he could to repay him for his life.

The big man didn't know whether the young gentleman before him had taken his advice. He sighed helplessly. He suddenly recalled something else. "Sir," he glanced at Jiang Chen once more. "You said you wanted to escape the island?"

"What?" Jiang Chen replied nonchalantly.

"Don't misunderstand. I'm not looking to tell on you. If someone else said something like that, I would think his brain was fried. But I can't understand a lot of things about you, and I actually don't think you belong here. Maybe you really will be able to get out one day!"

"Of course I will." Jiang Chen delivered in the same deadpan.

The big man sank down on both knees without any forewarning. "Sir, I have a request."

"What now?" Jiang Chen frowned again.

"I have a daughter in the Rejuvenation Isles, within Six Leaf City. She doesn't know that I've been imprisoned or that I'm here on Winterdraw. I have a few things here. If you manage to escape one day and pass by Six Leaf, can you give my daughter these things along the way?" The big man showed a rare display of emotion when he spoke of his daughter. His eyes reddened, and his lips trembled. Clearly, he loved his daughter very much.

"Why aren't you waiting to give her these things yourself?"

"Me?" the big man shook his head. "I don't have any hope of getting out for the rest of my life. I know how much I'm worth. On Winterdraw, I'm less than nothing. Escape? I can try, but I'd only die faster. Ah! I'm not a good father. My daughter is all alone in the world. I..." He slammed his fist into the ground as he said this and laid face down in the dirt, sobbing.

Jiang Chen was reminded of his father the Celestial Emperor from his previous life.

"What's your daughter called?" He was compelled by an indescribable feeling to ask this.

The big man was overjoyed when he heard the reply. "This means you agree, sir?"

"I'll try my best. Six Leaf City, hmm? I'll remember that." Jiang Chen didn't admire the big man, per se, but the paternal love he radiated was real. He felt it reasonable to oblige on the basis of that alone.

"My daughter lives in Six Leaf City. Her name is Yingying, and her surname the same as mine: Fang," the big man said.

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

#### **Chapter 1560: Sin City**

The towering, manliest of men, giant had revealed his tender side when bringing up his daughter.

Jiang Chen smiled blandly, "Aren't you worried that I'll pocket your items?"

"I must've been stupid or blind to have treated Hou Ole Third like a brother, but my eyes don't lie this time! An extraordinary person like you would never be interested in what I have! Moreover, you're not like the others in Winterdraw!" The towering giant declared.



"I'm no different. I'll wipe out anybody who threatens me." Jiang Chen smiled coldly.

"No no no! That's precisely why you're different! You only retaliate when provoked and won't initiate a fight. You're not hostile like a ravenous wolf! At the very least, there's still some humanity inside of you, but that's not a good thing to have. This is a place where only beastly instincts can help you survive and prosper!"

Jiang Chen frowned. "That's enough. This isn't the first time you've warned me of this. I have my bottomline. If I abandoned all of my humanity in return for beastly instincts, it'd be better that I don't leave for the rest of my life."

That was the honest truth.

He'd ventured to Myriad Abyss Island in the first place to find his lover. Like the sun, she filled his life with light and hope. If he had to lose his humanity and become a beast so that he could leave this place, what was the point of finding Huang'er?

What difference would it make if Huang'er was freed from House Xiahou's clasp, only to fall into the claws of a beast?

Humanity was literally the only line separating humans from beasts.

"Hand over your items. If I manage to escape this place, I'll pay Six Leaf City a visit."

The towering giant stared at Jiang Chen for a long time as though he was seeing a monster. When he came back to his senses, he brought forth a storage ring and handed it to Jiang Chen.

"My daughter should be twenty-three this year. She was only five when I was exiled to Winterdraw," the towering giant muttered to himself. "She's much more talented than I. It's a pity that she hadn't been born to a better life. She definitely would've been a peerless genius if she'd been born to a noble household..." He lamented as he staggered away from Jiang Chen's sight.

Jiang Chen couldn't help but feel a little woeful upon seeing the giant's towering back.

He didn't check the contents of the ring, but it was most likely cultivation resources. When fathers risked their lives for their children, it was usually to bring home better cultivation resources.

Putting the ring away, Jiang Chen collected his feelings and mediated to put himself in an impertable mentality.

About an hour passed before he picked himself up and continued forwards.

Winterdraw was extremely vast even though it was merely an island. Even with the God's Eye, Jiang Chen could see nothing but rows after rows of mountain ranges, the end nowhere in sight. It might not be as vast as one of the Upper Eight Regions, but it's definitely comparable to a lower region.

To think that the sole purpose of this island was to incarcerate criminals. What a luxurious gesture!

Myriad Abyss Island is a lot more complicated than I thought. Jiang Chen had imagined as a single collection of islands with countless cultivators living on them. By the looks of it, he'd underestimated its vastness. It was definitely no smaller than the mainland in the Divine Abyss Continent.

And worst of all, nobody knew exactly how many isles there were in Myriad Abyss, and how far out it spanned. This was a most frightening aspect.

The Divine Abyss Continent was extremely vast, but the lands and borders had been mostly defined in the ancient age.

Of course, the human domain was merely the tip of the iceberg compared to the rest of the continent. If Rejuvenation Isles' penitentiary island was already so vast, one could only imagine how vast the entire collective was.

And it was only a second to third rate faction in Myriad Abyss Island! Isles of this caliber were extremely common and aplenty. All Jiang Chen could do was calm himself down to ensure that he wasn't overly hasty.

Escaping Winterdraw won't be easy and I don't have an abundance of time to waste. Huang'er is waiting for me and Veluriyam still needs my counsel. All will be lost if I'm trapped here for too long.

Without those considerations, Jiang Chen might've chosen more wary and conservative method. He'd at least get to the bottom of the situation before making any moves.

Unfortunately, time waited for no one. He'd have to be a lot more proactive from now on. He didn't hide his speed for the rest of the journey. It wasn't because he wanted to show off or anything, he simply wanted to avoid any more encounters. Just as Hou Old Third had said, almost everyone on this island would leap to take his life.

The best way to deal with this issue was to avoid all everyone. Even if he did encounter someone, he could simply frighten and deter any pursuers with his overwhelming speed. Hundreds of miles later, he finally made it out of the mountain ranges and spotted some buildings in the horizon. It seemed to be a city.

A city? Jiang Chen was moved. Cities were often densely populated, making it much easier to gather information. He decided to pay the city a visit.

Sin City? He spotted the signboard hanging on the city gate from afar. He couldn't help but crack up at the name. As expected of an island of exiles! Even their city's name is full of character!

The name didn't matter. He'd venture in even if it was called Hell City.

"Halt." A ferocious guard standing at the city gates blocked Jiang Chen's way. He became even more hostile after spotting an unfamiliar face. "Do you have a residency seal?"

"A residency seal?" Jiang Chen was taken aback. What in the world was that?

"Does that mean you don't have one?" A guard captain asked. The eyepatch on his face made him that much more menacing.

Jiang Chen shook his head. "Indeed I don't."

"How dare you barge into Sin City without a seal? Do you think I wouldn't dare execute you in public?!" The guard captain yelled belligerently.

Other city guards flooded in in groups when they heard his raised voice. They'd guessed that Jiang Chen was a newcomer due to his youth and unfamiliarity. Those in their profession were often very adept in identifying and scamming newcomers.

Jiang Chen remained nonchalant. "Does everyone in Sin City have a residency seal?"

"Obviously! Without the seal, how can we know that you're not a spy sent by an opposing faction?" The guard with an eyepatch answered impatiently.

"How do I apply for such a seal?" Jiang Chen kept his calm.

He wasn't here pick a fight as his primary goal was to enter the city, to gather information. There was no need to escalate matters with the city's lackeys unless necessary. Killing them would be as easy as killing a fly, but what about the consequences? Entering the city after a murder spree would be suicide.

The mighty dragon doesn't contend with the local snake. Unless the situation called for it, he didn't wish to rile up the hornet's nest.

"How to apply?" The guard captain sized Jiang Chen up and smiled ambiguously. "Do you wish to apply for one?"

Jiang Chen answered without moving as much as a single muscle on his face. "If that's the city's rule, then I shall apply for one. However, if I ever find out that you've lied to me..." He stared deep into their eyes. "I will remember all of you."

The guard captain smoldered with rage. He was extremely pissed off by Jiang Chen's attitude. "You're a tough talker, aren't you? So what if you remember our faces? Do you really think we'll be threatened by a brat that's still wet behind his ears?"

Jiang Chen smiled coldly. "Cut the crap. Where and how do I apply for a residency seal?" He didn't want to waste any more time. The seal was most likely used for identification purposes. That shouldn't be too difficult.

"It'll be a total of one million sky spirit stones. You'll be given a seal when you pay up." The guard captain glared at Jiang Chen.

One million sky spirit stones?

Jiang Chen crowed with laughter. "One million for a seal? Are you sure there's nothing wrong about the price?"

"Why would it be wrong? Get one if you want!" The guard captain yelled while making rude and dismissive gestures. "Either pay up or scram!"

Jiang Chen's face darkened. He activated the Evil Golden Eye and pierced deeply into the depths of the guard captain's soul.

The latter trembled all over. It felt like his soul had suddenly turned into ice, his mind drawing blanks.

Fortunately, Jiang Chen showed him mercy and retracted his glare. He resumed his indifferent consideration of the captain.

Having escaped from the maws of death, cold sweat poured down the captain's forehead.

"Are you absolutely sure that the seal costs one million spirit stones?" Jiang Chen's cold and icy tone sounded again.

The guard captain's lips quivered. The panic in his eyes were quite apparent. He'd realized that the youth before him wasn't someone he could afford to offend, at least for now. A gaze alone had costed his life. The youth was clearly not an ordinary person.

"One million can buy you the gold-amethyst seal. In this city, gold-amethyst residents aren't just permanent residents, they can also be involved in the city's plans and decisions." The guard captain's arrogance had vanished in the face of Jiang Chen's threatening glare.

"What about the other residency grades?"

"For one thousand spirit stones, you can get a temporary residency seal which will last for one to three months. For ten thousand, you will get a bronze seal which gives residency for ten years. For fifty thousand, a silver seal which gives residency for up to one hundred years. And lastly, for two hundred thousand saint spirit stones, you get a gold seal which gives you residency for a millennia." The captain was extremely sincere this time round, going into every single detail and price.