

Three Realms 1921

Sovereign of the Three Realms (WN)

Chapter 1921: A Crazy Efficiency

These people had never heard of the Goldbiter Kingrats before. They didn't know what this species meant in the heavenly planes. However, the addendum that even the four sacred beasts' kindred didn't like crossing them gave them an inkling of what these rats were like.

In the world of martial dao, the bloodline of rats in general was grossly discounted by the vast majority. The fact that these rats could be so strong surprised Imperial Prince Huo and the others.

"I can summon a million of these rats, gentlemen. Moreover, I can guarantee their cooperation in the mining effort. Can the timespan be shortened to three months now?" Jiang Chen asked the craftsmen probingly.

His audience was rapt with astonishment and awe. They'd heard of many absurd plans before, but using rats to dig up spirit stones was surely a first in its class.

A million was a lot of rats.

But now, here was another question.

After some consideration, one of the craftsmen spoke up furtively. "Young lord Jiang Chen, we do not doubt your ability. However, these rats aren't exactly human. Are they reliable? What if they snack on your spirit stones?"

"I will be supervising them," Jiang Chen laughed. "Plus, I can all but guarantee that they won't do what you said. They wouldn't dare!"

"If you can ensure that's the case, then I see no problem with it. Will they listen to what we tell them to do?"

"Don't worry about that either. Goldbiter Rats are very clever. They understand the human language. Moreover, since I'll be overseeing them the entire time, they'll follow orders to the letter."

All the craftsmen nodded in understanding. The young lord had said more than enough, and they weren't exactly about to oppose him.

It would be incredibly unwise of them to do so. After all, the young lord had come up with all the solutions already. If they refused to execute, that was on them.

"As long as these rats are obedient and diligent, I think we can manage three months," one of the craftsmen affirmed. "Provided, of course, that they're orderly enough not to make a mess."

The rats' advantages were clear as well. Their incredible biting ability was very good at getting rid of the waste ore around the spirit stones. The product didn't need much more processing before it was ready to use.

They were also small rodents, which meant they didn't occupy nearly as much space as human miners would.

The king of the Goldbiter Rats summoned up a swarm of his descendents immediately.

Everyone who saw the teeming sea of rats felt their scalps tingle. Even the advanced empyrean experts' hairs stood on end when they saw the density of the furry creatures.

The rats were almost too terrifying to behold. If a large enough group rushed at them, even they could do little more than flee.

The rat king began to his speech. "Without young master Chen, we Goldbiter Rats wouldn't be where we are today. Only by following in his footsteps will we have a brighter future, and a hope of a world of our own. Young master Chen's business is our business. We must obey his orders to the letter. I have only called descendents here today whom I deem trustworthy. Tell me, will you sneak a bite of the spirit stones?"

The Goldbiter Rats in attendance were generally of the more awakened variety. They squeaked in unison in a show of loyalty, solidly affirming that no, they would not misbehave by eating the spirit stones.

The rat king became more serious still. "The young lord may be kind enough not to do much to you, but I'm making this very clear right now: if I discover that one of you have infringed, I won't show the same mercy!"

Having received much from the young master, he wanted to put his own devotion on display - hence the enthusiastic performance.

Jiang Chen clapped. "You've a lot of work ahead of you, my friends," he said in ancient beast language. "Know that I am watching. When the opportunity arises to do so in the future, I will surely compensate you in other ways. These spirit stones are vitally important to me. Even eating a single one is measurably detrimental to my work."

The rats squeaked again to insist their resolution.

Smiling, Jiang Chen waved a hand to the craftsmen. "You can get to work now."

The rats were surprisingly docile and organized. They worked with an efficiency far exceeding that of human cultivators.

Since rats were social animals, they communicated among each other with relative ease. It was actually easier to direct them than humans. Humans could only offer basic limited assistance where they were able and couldn't keep up with the actual mining.

The work of many rats was accompanied with incredible chatter. The Goldbiter Rats dug out and carried away the spirit stones with shocking speed.

Even Jiang Chen thought the sight was rather impressive, never mind Imperial Prince Huo and the rest. He'd merely wanted to make a bold experiment at first. He hadn't anticipated at all that his foray would produce results far beyond expectations.

Those from Heavenlight were utterly convinced.

They had to admit that this heir of a sacred land lived up to his name. They had never heard of the preposterous things he was doing, much less seen them before.

Still, they were pleased to find that they didn't need to do any hard labor. They'd already resigned themselves to that fate, given Jiang Chen's demotion of them to their current status, but there wasn't much room for them to do much. The frenzied rats were taking care of practically everything.

The rats' incredible productivity was simply astounding. Many places that would have required a miner's trained hand, such as drilling, chipping, and smashing, were reduced to trivial operations by the Goldbiter Rats' sharp teeth.

These rats were certainly natural-born experts in this field.

All this was an eye-opening experience for Imperial Prince Huo. "Young lord Jiang Chen," he joked, "with these rats helping you, you could very well be considered one of the very best prospectors in Myriad Abyss. These Goldbiter Rats'll make practically everything easy!"

This gave Jiang Chen an idea. He remembered Mount Cloud Camel back in Eternal Divine Nation. His buddy the Astral White Tiger had discovered a vein of ore there a while ago.

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Chapter 1922: One's Only Crime Was Their Wealth

Once the Goldbiter Rats were deployed, efficiency was boosted significantly. No one, not even Jiang Chen, had anticipated this result. They'd thought it'd take the rats three months to completely excavate the large mine, but it ended up being depleted in one and a half months.

Mountains of spirit stones shone with a seductive sheen, taking all bystander breath away.

Even though Master Han was no more than a miner now, envy couldn't help but creep in when he looked at the stones. Unfortunately, Heavenlight was fated to have absolutely nothing to do with them.

Jiang Chen could barely contain himself. The yield was about as big as he'd expected. Half of it would account for thirty percent of the stones he needed for the Great Formation of Heavenly Soul Confinement! Added to that the stones he'd collected before, that meant he was forty percent done!

He looked at the cultivators from Heavenlight. "All of you should be glad that you only had to be miners for one and a half months and barely did any hard work."

Master Han smiled awkwardly and nodded. "It's all thanks to the young lord's clever plan and fine execution."

"Alright, there's no need for flattery. Count your men and think about paying the ransom. You either serve me as slaves from now on or buy your freedom. Your choice."

"I'm willing to pay," the middle-aged man rushed out. "But how much is the ransom?"

"How much do you think you're worth?"

The middle-aged man's face fell. "Unlike the sacred land, Heavenlight doesn't have any large mines. It's difficult for us to bring forth that many spirit stones."

Jiang Chen pointed at the mountainous piles of stones. "I'm not asking for much. I'll let you go as long as you pay a tenth of the stones here."

The middle-aged man paled and pleaded, "Young lord Jiang Chen, it'll be impossible for us to buy our freedom if that's the case. There might be less than ten mines as big as this one in the entirety of Myriad Abyss, and this is the only one we've ever excavated. The others have either been claimed, depleted, or haven't been discovered yet. Heavenlight will never be able to gather that many stones. Even if we can, our peers will never agree to pay all of our reserves for our freedom."

Jiang Chen knew it was going to be difficult, but he wasn't going to listen to their whining.

With a slight smile, he remarked, "So you prefer being my slaves. That works too. Atoning for your crimes by serving me isn't too bad a bargain, is it?"

Han pulled a long face and begged, "Is there room for negotiation, young lord? Please allow us some leeway in the payment. We'll try our best to satisfy your needs."

"Alright, one twentieth of the stones extracted then. That's my bottom line. If you can't pay up, prepare to serve me as a slave."

One twentieth of the stones was still a large number, but Heavenlight could afford it, albeit with great difficulty. The fellows here were pretty important back home. Without them, Heavenlight would suffer a great loss in manpower.

And so, an agreement was reached. Jiang Chen let two minor characters go back and report to Heavenlight, telling them to collect the stones and find him on Winterdraw Island.

He wasn't going to take everyone back to Rejuvenation. Neither did Imperial Prince Huo want him to do that. Rejuvenation had no desire to become Heavenlight's enemy.

The imperial prince was grateful. He knew Jiang Chen could've completed the trade in Rejuvenation, but had instead picked Winterdraw. The young lord was being rather reasonable and considerate.

"We'll split the spirit stones here, Imperial Prince Huo. You witnessed the extraction of the stones. You should be able to tell that I haven't hidden anything for myself."

"Oh, you're a man of integrity, young lord Jiang Chen," Imperial Prince Huo responded hurriedly. "I'm very grateful and thoroughly impressed."

This was the honest truth. Imperial Prince Huo wouldn't be able to oppose Jiang Chen at all if the young lord forcefully claimed a bigger portion of the stones, or even all of them.

When it came down to things, Jiang Chen hadn't taken the islands from the imperial prince, but from Heavenlight. Rejuvenation had long lost their ownership over the islands.

Jiang Chen peered at Imperial Prince Huo, then at those from Heavenlight. An idea came to mind. He smiled. "There's something I hesitate to tell you, Imperial Prince Huo."

“Please do,” the imperial prince replied earnestly.

“I’ll be frank then, I’m fine with you taking half of the stones, but it may not end well for Rejuvenation. A great fortune can be its owner’s death sentence. Have you considered that yet?”

That was right. Was Rejuvenation powerful enough to keep and protect the large number of stones?

If there hadn’t been any witnesses from Heavenlight, they might be able to quietly ferry the stones back to their territory with no one the wiser. As it was now, the news would get out sooner or later. How many potential enemies would be coveting the stones then?

The sum was large enough to make even the first rate factions lose control. Not even the ten sacred lands could resist the temptation of such a great fortune.

The imperial prince threw the middle-aged Han a glance, who gave him a half smile.

Clearly, Heavenlight wouldn’t be bold enough to rob them of the stones, but they had no qualms about spreading the word of Rejuvenation’s recent acquisition.

The stones could very well be their downfall.

They had thrown themselves under Jiang Chen’s banner and acquired his support, but that didn’t mean the young lord was going to be their bodyguard and keep them safe at all times.

Other factions could easily take all the stones from them when the young lord wasn’t around. There wouldn’t be much he could do from the Eternal Sacred Land. The robbers would be long gone when he arrived.

Imperial Prince Huo’s good mood evaporated. He was smart enough to recognize the truth to Jiang Chen’s words. It was a problem they had to face seriously, and if they failed to solve it, great trouble would soon follow.

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Chapter 1923: Promising Great Benefits

Imperial Prince Huo frowned deeply. He wanted to seek advice from his royal brother, but what if Jiang Chen upped and left them now?

Once they brought the stones back to Rejuvenation, the prince gave it anywhere from ten days to half a month before their enemies came knocking, or thieves and robbers targeted them. It was considerable wealth that would attract a lot of attention. No factions would let slip the opportunity to make a great profit.

“Young lord Jiang Chen, I can’t figure out a solution,” Imperial Prince Huo responded deferentially. “Do you have a good idea? Please enlighten me.”

“Let’s move the stones to Winterdraw first.” Jiang Chen waved a hand. “And I mean all the stones, yours and mine. The stones will only be your downfall if you take them to Rejuvenation.”

Imperial Prince Huo hesitated. What if he didn't get the stones back afterwards?

However, if the young lord wanted to take their half of the stones for himself, he didn't have to do so in such a roundabout way. He could simply just take them. After all, he was the one who'd reclaimed the spirit vein from Heavenlight. Rejuvenation had no say in the matter.

"We will do as you say, young lord," Imperial Prince Huo agreed hurriedly. "If you're so inclined, Rejuvenation is willing to give you all of the stones."

The imperial prince wasn't a shortsighted man. Further thought had enlightened him that the stones would be more trouble than they were worth. If he gave them to Jiang Chen, Rejuvenation would be losing only the stones. If the prince took them home instead, Rejuvenation's very fortunes might be in danger.

Jiang Chen smiled. "Your kind offer is appreciated. The stones will be of great help to me. Let's settle things like that then. We'll take them back to Winterdraw first."

Imperial Prince Huo had simply been testing the waters. He hadn't expected Jiang Chen to just accept the offer without a word of protest. His heart was bleeding, but he maintained a bright smile. "Alright, let's do that."

Jiang Chen was surprised and secretly impressed by the imperial prince's self-control.

One after another, airboats made their way to Winterdraw.

Lu Che and the others were delighted to see Jiang Chen return. They were surprised that the young lord had brought back a large group of captives, and ones that Lu Che recognized to boot.

The middle-aged man from Heavenlight was equally surprised to see Lu Che and his companions. "Venerated Elder Lu? Aren't you law enforcement elders from Warmspring? What are you..."

Lu Che pulled a serious face. "Warmspring is a crock of shit compared to young lord Jiang Chen. We've chosen to follow him."

The middle-aged man made a dejected sound of understanding. It was true that Warmspring paled in comparison to the young lord of the Eternal Sacred Land. There was absolutely no competition.

"Watch them closely, Lu Che, and wait for their people to pay their ransom," Jiang Chen ordered coolly. "If no one comes around in a month, they'll be Winterdraw's slaves from then on. You'll be free to order them as you will."

"Great!" Lu Che responded excitedly.

Jiang Chen summoned Imperial Prince Huo and Chief Warden Ding after taking care of those from Heavenlight.

"You must be resentful, thinking that I'm greedy for taking your share of the stones."

"Not at all!" Imperial Prince Huo protested hurriedly. "Honestly, Rejuvenation can't really claim to have any ownership over the spirit stones. You took the mines back from Heavenlight. It's in your right to not give us anything. In fact, we owe you the stones."

Jiang Chen waved a hand. "That's not how things go. I told you to give me the stones for your own good."

"What?" Imperial Prince Huo was befuddled, but realization then dawned on him.

"You'd be the cause of your own doom by taking the stones with you," explained Jiang Chen. "That's the truth even if you don't want to admit to it."

"Honestly, you're right, young lord. Rejuvenation isn't powerful enough to keep the stones for ourselves."

"That's why I asked you to come here, to listen to your opinions," Jiang Chen said with great conviction. "If you insist on taking the stones, I won't force you to surrender them. You can keep your share."

"But I'd greatly appreciate if you'd be willing to exchange for other compensation. I need the stones and I'll pay you back with things of the same value. The compensation won't be in terms of material resources, but heritage you can pass down for many generations."

"Oh?" Imperial Prince Huo's eyes lit up. Jiang Chen was indeed a man of integrity. He was offering them a fair trade! That would be the best outcome for Rejuvenation. He was both excited and curious about what the young lord might offer them.

Jiang Chen did have pressing need for the stones. If Rejuvenation gave him their half, he'd have gathered fifty to sixty percent of what he needed for the great formation. Sixty to seventy if taken into consideration the stones he'd accumulated beforehand.

He'd be halfway there.

With some hard work, it'd be possible for him to gather the remaining thirty to forty percent in three to five years.

It'd require some luck to locate more mines, but there must be a wealth of untapped spirit veins on the vast land of Myriad Abyss. He was most confident he could achieve his goal.

"What do you think it is that Rejuvenation lacks the most, Imperial Prince Huo?"

Imperial Prince Huo paused and gave the question some thought. "We lack a solid foundation and heritage, without which we have difficulty raising top cultivators. There aren't any peak empyrean cultivators in Rejuvenation. If we did, factions such as Heavenlight would at least think twice before invading us."

"That's right, you lack a solid foundation." Jiang Chen nodded. "How is a foundation laid down for traditionally powerful factions? Heritage. It may not be material resources either. A wealth of collection can often be more important, such as martial dao methods, divine treasures, and other heritage."

Imperial Prince Huo sighed. That was something Rejuvenation didn't dare even dream of.

"The spirit stones are quite valuable. I'm not going to take you for a ride. If you're willing to give me the stones, I'll grant you three things."

“First, if you can find the ingredients for the Crowning Emyrean Pill, I’ll refine you a cauldron of them for free. The pills can advance empyrean cultivators a level at no cost.

“Second, I’ll give you a martial dao method. It’ll be at demigod level, if not divine level.

“Third, if you encounter trouble you can’t resolve, I’ll unconditionally come to your aid once!”

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Chapter 1924: Enormous Gains

Jiang Chen’s offer was generous. In fact, in certain ways, what he promised in return was more valuable than the stones themselves.

Therefore, Imperial Prince Huo could scarcely believe his ears. He exchanged a glance with Chief Warden Ding, silently confirming that the other had heard the same thing before falling into deep thought.

It was an offer they couldn’t resist.

Spirit stones were consumables. Once used, they were gone. There was no heritage to speak of, and they contributed nothing to Rejuvenation’s foundations.

They would either make Rejuvenation nouveau riche, or bring doom to their home. A double-edged sword, so to speak.

On the flip side, what the young lord promised would benefit Rejuvenation in the long term. Any of his three offers was too good to turn down.

“Take your time to consider my words. Give me an answer in a month.” With that, Jiang Chen waved a dismissive hand and walked away.

Imperial Prince Huo glanced at Chief Warden Ding. “What do you think, Old Ding?”

The chief warden sighed. “We’d have to be remarkably short-sighted to turn down such an offer. There’s no telling what the spirit stones will do to us, but what the young lord offers will surely do us good.”

“I agree. However, I worry that those who lack foresight may assume we’re giving away the spirit stones to get on the young lord’s good side.”

“That can’t be avoided no matter what we do. It’s impossible to make everyone happy.” Chief Warden Ding chuckled. “Besides, His Majesty will be the one making the final decision. As long as we convince His Majesty, there’s nothing the others will be able to do. One cannot achieve greatness without making a leap of faith. This decision will determine Rejuvenation’s future. You shouldn’t be overly concerned with things, Your Highness.”

Chief Warden Ding was a worldly man. He knew what the right thing to do was.

“Old Ding, stay here while I return to Rejuvenation and brief my royal brother so that he can make a decision. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity.”

Chief Warden Ding nodded without hesitation. "Understood."

The imperial prince was efficient. It took only eight days to make a round trip from Rejuvenation.

When he came back, he sought out Jiang Chen.

"Have you made a decision yet, Imperial Prince Huo?"

"My royal brother has the final say in all things for Rejuvenation," Imperial Prince Huo responded seriously. "This minor prince wanted to make the deal happen. Therefore I reported back about it and detailed the factors involved. Being the wise man my brother is, he approved of my judgement. However, he's been so bold as to make a few trivial requests of his own."

"Let's hear them." Jiang Chen could fulfill a few reasonable requests.

"First, he said the young lord could have all the spirit stones, but it should be announced to the public."

Jiang Chen smiled. "That's fair. It's the only way to ensure Rejuvenation isn't targeted. You'll never be safe if people don't know you've given the stones away."

"Exactly." Imperial Prince nodded. "Second, we hope you might announce that Rejuvenation is under your protection from now on. Targeting us will be equivalent to challenging your authority."

That was also fair.

It wasn't unreasonable for Rejuvenation to use Jiang Chen's name to deter potentially hostile factions.

Jiang Chen nodded. "I can grant you that wish, but remember, if I find out you've been using my name to commit atrocities and hurt people, there will be consequences. You better think before you act."

"Rest assured, young lord, we aren't bold enough to do anything untowards on your behalf." Imperial Prince Huo had no doubt about that. After the time he'd spent with the young lord, he was aware that Jiang Chen cared about his image. If they dared damage his reputation, they would have no one to blame for their doom.

"Anything else?"

Imperial Prince Huo shook his head. "No, just these two."

"Good. It's good that Rejuvenation didn't let greed get the better of you and stayed within the boundaries." Jiang Chen had thought they would make a lot more requests, but there were only two, and both were in good faith.

"Since you haven't requested for anything unreasonable, we have a deal. Among the three offers, I can fulfil the second now. Do you need a cultivation method or a tangible martial method? Or perhaps you have other needs?"

"Cultivation method," Imperial Prince Huo said without hesitation.

Cultivation methods were the basis of martial dao. It could improve one's level and bring about the most comprehensive progress. Specific martial dao methods were too limited.

Jiang Chen browsed through the wealth of cultivation methods in his head and picked one to share.

“Imperial Prince Huo, any empyrean cultivator can learn this method. How effective it is will vary depending on each person’s fate. Those who aren’t as fortunate may stop at advanced empyrean, while the more fortunate may reach peak ninth level empyrean, or demigod. Those who are particularly compatible stand a chance to ascend to divinity. In other words, the method, if used well, can be your heritage for generations to come.”

That was no exaggeration. The cultivation method was considered a demigod method, but in reality it was as good as any divine method.

Imperial Prince Huo didn’t doubt the young lord’s words at all. There was an air of integrity about Jiang Chen that demanded trust. The thought that the young lord might be lying to him didn’t even cross his mind. He gingerly accepted the method and cupped like the precious treasure it was.

The imperial prince knew his place well. Jiang Chen added after a bemused pause, “Since you’re being so cognizant of the situation, it’d be remiss of me to give you only a cultivation method and not a martial one. I’ll give you a hand-to-hand combat method as well to go with the cultivation method. However, you mustn’t let anyone outside Rejuvenation learn about the method. Otherwise I have ways to take it back from you!”

Imperial Prince Huo could barely contain his excitement. He hadn’t expected the additional boon! He hurriedly promised, “We’ll be sure to keep it from outsiders!”

Jiang Chen handed both methods to Imperial Prince Huo. “And here’s the list of ingredients needed for refining the Crowning Empyrean Pill. You must keep this confidential as well. In addition, don’t try to study and refine the pill yourself. Once you gather all the ingredients, contact me.”

It’d be difficult to gather all the ingredients. If Rejuvenation managed to do it, Jiang Chen wasn’t opposed to refining a cauldron of the pills for them.

Noting the bemused look on the imperial prince’s face, Jiang Chen added faintly, “It’s for your good. It’s difficult enough to gather the ingredients. If you recklessly try to refine the pill yourself, all of the ingredients will go to waste. You won’t be able to get any results even after a hundred thousand years.”

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Chapter 1925: Revisiting Old Haunts

Jiang Chen had put it plainly enough. Imperial Prince Huo would be a fool not to understand by this point. The prince’s heart pounded as he held the items in his hand. His heart was crystal clear on their meaning: these were immeasurably precious treasures for Rejuvenation, fit to be passed down through countless generations.

More men from Heavenlight arrived on Winterdraw in a fortnight’s time.

When they heard that some of their comrades had fallen into young lord Jiang Chen’s hands, they were dumbfounded. The Eternal Sacred Land and its young lord weren’t entities that they could afford to anger.

Furthermore, the ones who'd brought back this news had described Jiang Chen's power and the Vermilion Bird's terrifying consciousness in exaggerated detail.

The whole of Heavenlight had descended into great fear, concerned that Jiang Chen would take this chance to strike at them. Thankfully, the end of the message included only a request for ransom. The young lord didn't seem to want to ruin them too much.

Heavenlight could finally breathe a sigh of relief. The ransom was quite exorbitant in its amount; it took seven days to ready that many funds.

After they were prepared, a group was sent to Winterdraw to immediately redeem the prisoners. The prisoners were incredibly important to Heavenlight's power structure. If they couldn't return, its strength would plummet overnight, possibly to a level equal to the likes of Rejuvenation.

Thus, the ransom had to be paid, even if they had to pinch pennies for a while after the fact.

Jiang Chen kept things simple. He released his captives as soon as he got the money, but not before issuing a warning.

If these Heavenlight nationals committed some crime and ran afoul of him again in the future, a simple ransom wouldn't be enough resolution.

Everyone else involved made fervent promises as to their future subservience before they were finally permitted to depart.

The little interlude had substantially increased Jiang Chen's spirit stone supplies. He now had seventy percent of the amount needed to reactivate the Great Formation.

The remaining third wouldn't be too much harder to put together. Another trip to the Eternal Sacred Land and some extra work was needed, but three to five years was quite doable.

He didn't plan to stay too long in Winterdraw. Huang'er was with him, and her heart had probably already flown to Eternal Divine Nation.

Yan Qingsang had wanted to return to House Yan alongside Yan Wanjun before, but the old man had denied his grandson's audacious request. Yan Qingsang been forced to stay on Winterdraw and train instead.

Jiang Chen and Huang'er's return presented a welcome opportunity for the youth. He swore up and down that he would be accompanying the couple back to Eternal Divine Nation this time.

Yan Qingsang's obvious resolution was enough to sway his friend. The rebellion had already been quelled in Eternal, so the trip wouldn't be particularly dangerous. Moreover, the Vermilion Bird was more than sufficient of a deterrent to any threats.

"Let's go back together then, Brother Qingsang," he nodded.

Calling Lu Che and the others to his side, he instructed them, "Rejuvenation and Tritalent have both sworn their allegiance to me. If anything serious arises, you can request help from them when necessary."

"Yes, milord," Lu Che nodded.

After taking care of everything, Jiang Chen soared rapidly atop Starfate in Eternal Divine Nation's direction.

Huang'er felt very differently about this trip home than her last.

Darkness and despair had gripped her heart the previous time she'd been here. Aside from her faith in Jiang Chen, she had very little to hold on to.

This time, she was together with her beloved. Her worries now rested with her parents. She knew that House Yan had been warned to rescue them from the Boundless Prison within the allotted time, but she couldn't cast aside her anxiety.

The suffering her parents had no doubt experienced over the years cut her heart to ribbons. She didn't even know if they were still alive!

"I'm sure they're blessed enough to survive, Huang'er. We'll be back at House Yan in only a few more days. Everything will be made plain then." Jiang Chen comforted his beloved, aware of the topic of her worries.

Huang'er leaned lightly upon his shoulder. "Brother Chen," she murmured, "my parents were thrown into the Boundless Prison not long after I was born. It's been so many years since then... what if they haven't lasted until now? Even in my childhood I heard stories of how terrifying that place is..."

Jiang Chen had heard of the Boundless Prison before. Supposedly, it was a kind of extra-dimensional prison that had entrances in each of the ten divine nations. It was a tremendous furnace that consumed the vast majority of those who entered.

Having little actual impression of her parents, Huang'er's apprehension for them stemmed from something more primal.

One day, Starfate passed by the Bluesmoke Isles.

Bluesmoke had been the place of their reunion some time ago. Jiang Chen still had some ancient jade on hand from the meeting that'd forged his friendship with Yan Qingsang. He would earn quite a pretty stone for them if he sold them now.

Informing Huang'er of his intentions, he was met with complete support. Huang'er knew what these spirit stones meant to Jiang Chen. It would only take half a day to sell the jade, an inconsequential delay in the grand scheme of things.

"Your business comes first, Brother Chen. Don't worry about me."

Jiang Chen nodded, and the couple revisited Miracle City.

Stepping upon the ground of the city recalled past experiences, filling his heart with warmth. He gripped Huang'er's hands more tightly. Evidently, she shared the same sentiment as he did. Adoration filled the lovebirds' eyes when they looked at each other.

“Good thing you’re dressed in your normal clothes, Huang’er. If you were wearing a man’s clothing, the imperial family might recognize you. They’re probably looking for a certain someone.”

Huang’er burst out in laughter. She knew what Jiang Chen was poking at; Ling Bi’er had been a princess here, and they’d taken her away, never to be heard from again.

Though Bluesmoke’s imperial family had sent envoys to Eternal Divine Nation to investigate what had happened, they’d only managed to pick up on the drastic changes within House Yan. No one knew a thing about ‘Princess Bi’er’.

Tremendously depressing news for them, to be sure.

A little asking around found them the largest jade store in Miracle City. Its reputation and scale were unparalleled. Its employees didn't dare slight a customer with Jiang Chen’s imposing aura. He demanded to see the person in charge as soon as he entered.

Someone higher-up was found immediately: a shrewd, middle-aged woman who was perceptive and experienced. She was the very image of courtesy to the couple of undoubtedly grand origins.

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Chapter 1926: The Unexpected Arise

“Honored customers, my surname is Liu. Many within the industry call me Sister Liu. Your noble bearings mark you as extraordinary people. If I may?” The middle-aged woman was adroit at socializing and hobnobbing with her betters.

But Jiang Chen was uninterested in small talk. He was here to transact in business, nothing else.

“My surname is Shao,” he stated coolly. “I’m in the market to make a mutually profitable deal. Are you interested, Sister Liu?”

“Haha, Sir Shao, then. We are open for business, so of course we’re happy to consider all business propositions. What amount of product are you looking to buy or sell?”

Jiang Chen brought out the storage ring with the ancient jade. Opening it up, he laid out a veritable mountain of jade.

Sister Liu drew a sharp breath. Some of the jade was of exceptional quality, which frankly astonished her. Even this store rarely handled jade in such impressive amounts.

Excavation on this kind of scale was largely impossible. Moreover, Bluesmoke hadn’t seen any events that did involve extensive unearthing of ancient jade. Where did all these come from then?

The woman colored slightly before recovering.

“Are you able to take all of this?” Jiang Chen scrutinized the manager across from him.

Sister Liu breathed in deeply. “We need a few days to gather up the requisite capital. It’s a bit hard for us to rustle up this much cash on the spot.”

"A few days?" Jiang Chen frowned. "Never mind then. Buy as much as you can afford and I'll look for a few more stores to lighten your load."

"Please don't, honored customer," the Liu surnamed woman hurriedly interrupted. "If you split it up between several stores, you won't get the best price for such a huge amount of jade."

"If you can't purchase all of it, then that is what I must do."

"Will two days suffice?" Sister Liu looked at Jiang Chen earnestly.

"I can't wait for even that long. All of this jade will be yours tomorrow at this time if you can furnish the funds. If not, then let that be the end of it," Jiang Chen declared decisively. He only had a single day to dawdle here for.

Fervor flashed through Sister Liu's eyes. There was so much jade here that she couldn't resist its allure. Gathering the stones in just one day was an almost impossible task, but she agreed without hesitation nevertheless.

"One day is fine! Let us follow through on our agreement tomorrow at this time."

"Hah, what agreement? We haven't decided on the price yet," Jiang Chen smiled coolly.

"We have a systematic method of determining the price based on rank and amount. I guarantee you'll get fair market value for your jade," Sister Liu laughed. "Our store is the largest of its kind here in Miracle City, the leader in the industry. We wouldn't damage our own reputation by ripping off our customers."

"Alright. I'll wait a day for you then." Jiang Chen had nothing further to say. He whisked his ancient jade and Huang'er away.

With a conflicted look, Sister Liu saw the couple off until they disappeared into the street.

She'd made several important deals since getting into this line of work, but none of them had been on the scale of the one she was about to make.

Many cultivators could only sell a handful of jade at once. The volume of jade that this young man had produced completely defied her understanding. Could he be a scion of the imperial family?

Definitely not!

There were only so many in the imperial family. None of them had the ability to get their hands on so many – nor were they so dignified and beautiful as the young couple she'd just received.

Regardless of her turmoil, Sister Liu absolutely wanted to push the deal through. If she could finalize the purchase of these goods and flip them later, she would make an incredible amount of profit.

"Watch the store," she directed her employees. "I'm going to gather funds."

As promised, Jiang Chen and Huang'er didn't visit any other stores afterward. Instead, they checked into an inn. The young man planned to complete the transaction the next day.

If Sister Liu couldn't get together the stones in time, he would sell as much jade as she could afford. The leftover amount could be offloaded onto the other stores.

He wasn't much interested in what was contained within the ancient jade. There were some neat finds, yes, but nothing particularly valuable to him.

The former half of the night passed relatively peacefully, but this wasn't to stay the case. Amid Jiang Chen's meditations, just after midnight, he heard a flurry of quick footsteps from all around. Countless cultivators approached from every direction.

Furrowing his brow, he opened his eyes to find Huang'er staring at him.

"Is something the matter?" She looked a little puzzled. "Are they here for us?"

Jiang Chen frowned a little. "I don't know yet. If they are, I can only attest to their blindness."

He was no longer the hot-blooded youth he used to be. He wouldn't come to a hasty conclusion without evidence. He focused on listening to the commotion outside before declaring, "The place has been surrounded. They're after someone in this inn, I presume."

"Everyone inside the inn, listen up! Bluesmoke's Blue Eagle Guard is looking for a criminal. You should remain in your rooms and await our search. Do not move about or leave. You will incur our wrath if you do."

The Blue Eagle Guard?

Jiang Chen remembered a force with that name as the imperial family here's private guard. They occupied a lofty position and possessed considerable strength, a group to be reckoned with.

In the Bluesmoke Isles, they could do as they liked.

He didn't take them too seriously though. Miracle City was one of the most bustling cities in Bluesmoke, filled with outsiders from every corner of the world.

That the Blue Eagle Guard was operating with such a high profile was utterly irritating, regardless of whether they were actually tending to their duties. Personally, Jiang Chen wouldn't permit them to search his room for a second.

Many shared his attitude. A number of people began to curse loudly.

"What criminal are you looking for at midnight?! You can do whatever you need to tomorrow. What the hell are you disturbing our sleep for?"

"Exactly. I'm not from Bluesmoke myself. The Blue Eagle Guard has no right to be so obnoxious!"

"Want to search my room? I'd like to see you try!"

There were definitely more than a few uncooperative individuals. The Blue Eagle Guard's rude, overbearing attitude had provoked quite a crowd.

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Chapter 1927: The Blue Eagle Guard

Jiang Chen sat idly back down and smiled at Huang'er. "Looks like we don't have to do anything. Others will be giving them trouble."

Huang'er nodded. "I hope they aren't here for us."

Huang'er's worries weren't unfounded. One's fortune was best kept a secret. They'd let it be known that they had a wealth of ancient jade earlier. It was possible that someone had targeted them for it.

The Blue Eagle Guard might not be the righteous organization it claimed to be. There was no telling if they had any qualms about committing clandestine deeds.

However, Jiang Chen wasn't concerned at all.

The Blue Eagle Guard would be wise not to make a move on him. If they did, he wouldn't hesitate to teach them a lesson. He'd been irritated enough these days due to the pressure of collecting spirit stones.

Outside, all hell had broken loose.

Numerous cultivators shouted and swore at the guards, but that didn't stop the guards from doing their job. Many foreign cultivators were beaten up. After howls of protestation and pain, they were forced to cooperate with the investigation.

Tempers were stoked ever higher.

On hearing how aggressive the guards were, many cultivators rushed out of their rooms in a fit of rebellious rage to support the victims.

The conflict continuously escalated.

More and more cultivators left their rooms and as a result, a temporary alliance against the Blue Eagle Guard was formed.

That rather surprised Jiang Chen. He hadn't expected the cultivators in the inn to be bold enough to go against the guards.

After all, the Blue Eagle Guard was the authority figure of the Bluesmoke Isles. No one dared disobey their orders.

Most of the cultivators in the inn were wandering cultivators from other lands. They had no support network in Bluesmoke. It would be very unwise for them to fight the guards. And yet, more and more cultivators took a stand to join the resistance.

Bam, bam, bam!

If you're not reading this in a place that's talking about a contest with 4k USD in prizes, this chapter has been stolen! Support the real deal, it's free.

Someone pounded on Jiang Chen's door.

He frowned. Was the Blue Eagle Guard truly blind enough to target him?

The door burst open.

Jiang Chen swept a frigid glare outside, surprised to find that his caller wasn't anyone from the Blue Eagle Guard or a ferocious, uniformed cultivator, but a few wandering cultivators.

One of them cupped his hands in greeting. "Excuse me, brother, the Blue Eagle Guard is way out of line and keeps bullying us foreign cultivators. This isn't the first time they've conducted a midnight raid and they always make a scene. We can't let them walk all over us. We're all ready to stage a protest. Are you going to selfishly think only of your own safety, brother?"

Jiang Chen smiled slightly. "I've just arrived and know nothing about this city. What's wrong about the Blue Eagle Guard investigating and searching for wanted criminals?"

"Ai, it's more than wrong. Do you know how many innocent people they've victimized lately? How many have been falsely accused?"

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

"Let's put it this way, brother. The Blue Eagle Guard claims to be searching for wanted criminals, but really, no one knows who they're looking for. If you have a lot of valuable items on you, you better be careful. It won't end well for you if they find out."

A surprised look blossomed across Jiang Chen's face. "What would my property have anything to do with them?"

"Ha, that's for them to say! This is Bluesmoke, not your home. Your words don't count. Here, they have the final say. So are you joining us or not?" the cultivator asked in a frustrated tone. "If you hide in here and something happens to you, don't blame us for not giving you a hand then."

In other words, if he didn't help when it was needed, he only had himself to blame when he was targeted and no one helped.

Jiang Chen huffed out a silent laugh. He wasn't a selfish man. However, he didn't want to blindly follow the herd before he had a good grasp of the situation. He smiled faintly. "You guys can go on. I'd like to see what's happening first."

The cultivator scoffed angrily and waved a hand in the air. "Fine. Good luck with that."

He and his companions stalked away without another word.

When Jiang Chen returned to the room, Huang'er frowned at him. "It looks like the Blue Eagle Guard isn't exactly a lawful organization."

"I hope they don't bother us." Jiang Chen smiled. "Why don't we go take a look?"

The din outside was making it impossible for Huang'er to meditate. She nodded. "Alright, let's do that. We can see if they're actually searching for criminals, or just using that as an excuse to rob people."

There was a patch of empty ground outside the inn. The inn itself had been encircled by the Blue Eagle Guard. Not even a fly would be able to escape.

More and more wandering cultivators swarmed to the empty ground, standing up to the guards. It was chaotic, and tension was thick in the air. Both sides were running high on emotions.

Jiang Chen and Huang'er stayed on the fringes of the crowd and calmly looked on. Jiang Chen took note of a thing or two.

Suddenly, the guards parted to the side to make way for a group of people. At the center of the newcomers was a burly man with eyes as bright as lightning, his presence remarkably fierce.

"Commander Yan!"

"Greetings, Commander Yan!" All guards bowed to the man in unison.

Commander Yan's presence loomed over all the protesting wandering cultivators. His piercing gaze swept through the crowd and made everyone shudder.

"Ninth level empyrean?" This took Jiang Chen off guard. He hadn't expected someone of that level to be part of the Blue Eagle Guard.

Bluesmoke was merely a second tier faction, with quite a ways before they reached their first tier brethren. And yet, the commander of the Blue Eagle Guard was a ninth level empyrean cultivator!

There was no denying that Myriad Abyss was powerful.

However, Jiang Chen could tell that the commander had only just entered ninth level empyrean. His consciousness would definitely overpower the commander's.

"The Blue Eagle Guard is fulfilling our duty as the law enforcers. What do you think you're doing?" Commander Yan's voice wasn't loud, but it demanded respect.

The crowd fell silent. Previously shouting cultivators timidly averted their eyes, worried that the commander would target them.

"Any objections to us doing our job?" the commander slowly asked again.

A cultivator took a step forward at this time.

"Commander Yan, we came to do business in Miracle City because we admire the city. However, the Blue Eagle Guard kept intervening during this time and always causes a great disturbance. How do we know you're actually doing your job or if there's something nefarious going on? None of us know if the people you arrested are wanted criminals!"

Jiang Chen knew the man was in trouble as soon as he'd taken a stand.

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

Chapter 1928: Playing the Tyrant

As expected, a figure leapt from Commander Yan's side. He reached the wandering cultivator's neck with a single, wraithlike grab.

The poor sap didn't even have time to resist before being picked up like a hapless chick.

He was thrown onto the ground with incredible force, making every bone and organ in his body creak in protest. The impact brought him to the brink of death as he breathed out without taking any air in.

The one who'd taken action was one of the captain's capable underlings. After the deed was done, he dusted off his palms, like he'd done something utterly insignificant.

The display of brute force utterly stunned the other dissenters.

"Since when did the Blue Eagle Guard suffer commentary from the rabble?" The guard swept a murderous glare across the wandering cultivators' faces.

"All of you, get the hell back to your rooms now and wait for inspection. Anyone who does not after a count of ten will be treated as a rebel. The penalty for noncompliance is death without exception!" The man spoke in a dominant, unquestionable tone.

Jiang Chen shook his head to himself. He didn't know why these guardsmen thought they were untouchable, or if there was another reason. But what they were doing was utterly unreasonable.

Yes, the Blue Eagle Guard was unrivaled in Bluesmoke, but who knew if anyone present was from a greater outside faction? What guarantee was there that they would respect Bluesmoke's strength?

There wasn't much risk of the above occurring, but it certainly existed.

Still, there had to be a reason for their actions, though Jiang Chen wasn't interested in finding out what they were.

In the meantime, the ruthless subordinate had already begun the countdown.

"Ten, nine, eight, seven..."

Part of the crowd scampered off with each counted number, retreating back to their rooms. The more cowardly cultivators gathered couldn't ignore the threat.

"Five, four..." The man put down his fingers one by one, mockery plain upon his face. These cultivators were nothing special. A bit of shock and awe would easily force them into submission.

But there were a few stubborn ones that remained. They furtively traded disgruntled looks.

Commander Yan's aura was the deciding factor that beat them back. He was too strong for them to take on.

All of the wandering cultivators here added together wouldn't be able to defend against a single one of his attacks.

In the blink of an eye, most had retreated back into the courtyard. Those who were especially timid had already retreated into their rooms. The stragglers were close behind them, sighing helplessly all the while.

Jiang Chen's eyes rested on the back of one of them. A surprised glint entered his eye. The person he was looking at seemed rather familiar!

Just as the last couple of people were about to walk back into the inn's courtyard, the guard interrupted them. "Stop right there, you lot!"

The stragglers tensed as their footsteps came to a stop, unnerved by the sudden demand.

"Commander Yan, these guys should be the ones behind that commotion we had earlier. They're the last ones to leave. Clearly, they're not going willingly." The savage lieutenant snatched to his captain.

Commander Yan nodded slightly. "Investigate all of them. Don't miss a single lead."

All of the mentioned people paled at this. "Commander Yan," a few of them called out, "we didn't start anything. Look, aren't we going back inside as well?"

The captain ignored these people. He swept his gaze in front of Jiang Chen instead, scrutinizing the youth in the corner.

In the meantime, Jiang Chen's attention was on the wandering cultivators. When the one he'd noticed turned around, he was very pleased to confirm his suspicions.

It really is him!

Jiang Chen hadn't remotely expected to see him here in Bluesmoke. It had been so many years... that they would meet again!

It was none other than Chu Xinghan, whom Jiang Chen had saved on Eternal Spirit Mountain! The former disciple of the Purple Sun Sect had then departed under the charge of Elder Shun.

As a student of the House Yan elder, he had disappeared after Elder Shun's capture a few years back. Jiang Chen had asked the elder about his whereabouts, but the elder hadn't known where the young man had ended up.

To meet him again here at this Miracle City inn was certainly propitious!

Jiang Chen's drastic growth and disguise had prevented Chu Xinghan from noticing him. Even if he had, he wouldn't have recognized him.

The Eternal Sacred Land's young lord swept his eyes across his old acquaintance. Chu Xinghan certainly hadn't wasted his time in Myriad Abyss in these recent years.

He wasn't yet empyrean realm, but already peak great emperor. This kind of progress was virtually impossible in the human domain. And yet, it was only slightly remarkable in Myriad Abyss.

If he had kept studying under Elder Shun's tutelage, he might have been talented enough to break through to empyrean.

By now, Chu Xinghan and a few others had caught the unwelcome attention of the Blue Eagle Guard. Several furious guardsmen surrounded them.

"Hand over your storage rings!" There was immediately an unreasonable demand.

The cultivators who were hemmed in collectively paled at this.

A sallow man mumbled, “Good sirs, I’m from House Helian of the Verdantpine Isles. I’m definitely not the criminal you want. Here’s proof of my identity...”

“Enough prattling. Do you not have ears? Didn’t you hear what we said?” The lieutenant who’d killed someone a moment ago delivered a crisp slap.

Clearly, the Blue Eagle Guard had no regard whatsoever for some so-called House Helian.

The man’s face bruised immediately. The hungry guards stripped him bare, then began to loot his valuables.

Though everything worth money was found, it was thrown on the ground in front of him. Evidently, his property wasn’t particularly interesting. “What a beggar. Go back to your room!” a guard cursed.

The sallow-faced man stumbled off dejectedly, afraid of making another fuss. He picked up his things and clothes, then ran for shelter.

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

Chapter 1929: They Come With Unfriendly Intentions

“You, come here!” One of the guards pointed to Chu Xinghan, his face twitching impatiently. He didn’t seem to hold with much regard the person he was intent on victimizing.

Defiance shot out from Chu Xinghan’s eyes. His resilient, resolute nature had once caused him to be discarded by the Purple Sun Sect. In fact, he had almost died at the hands of a former ally.

After all these years, he was still the same stoic, indomitable man.

Chu Xinghan had no intention of cooperating: Jiang Chen saw it in his eyes. He wasn’t going to go down without a fight.

A moment later, his actions confirmed this. Chu Xinghan raised his head, glaring coldly at the uppity guard.

“I am only a wandering cultivator, but I am no dog. Do you take me for some animal you can order around? You can kill me, but you cannot humiliate me!”

The guard was unprepared for such adamance. The murderous lieutenant from earlier grew icy. He brandished a sleeve towards Chu Xinghan, sending gleaming steel towards the young man’s head.

His bloodthirst was almost instinctive. He didn’t want to waste any words. Why do that, when cutting the guy in half was so much easier?

This subordinate of Commander Yan’s was clearly much stronger than Chu Xinghan. He was a mid empyrean expert, and gave no opportunity for his weaker prey to flee from the blow.

Jiang Chen's intervention was nearly instantaneous. He'd known before Chu Xinghan had spoken that the young man would not go quietly. The prospect of him being attacked was almost a certainty.

Thus, he reflexively tossed out a magnetic storm toward the attacker. A different drawing force pulled Chu Xinghan towards himself.

The fluidity of his motions belied their difficulty. His martial expertise was on display for all to see.

This unexpected turn of events caused the situation to descend into chaos once more.

All of the Blue Eagle Guards drew their blades. Their eyes were trained upon Jiang Chen with hungry interest, waiting only for their captain's order to pounce.

The wandering cultivators were overjoyed to see someone stick up for them. The few who'd been stopped were already despairing at being shamed or killed today. That someone would intercede on their behalf was a blessing from heaven!

The vicious cultivator stumbled as Jiang Chen's magnetic storm slammed into him, almost biting the dust in his unsteadiness.

All eyes rested upon Jiang Chen. He had stood in the corner prior to now as someone unassuming and unnoticed. That had immediately changed when he joined the fray.

The wandering cultivator who had visited Jiang Chen earlier was agape with surprise. He had thought the impassive man a coward, but it was obvious that that was a misunderstanding.

Commander Yan examined Jiang Chen with great scrutiny. "I've been paying attention to you for a while. Are you simply interfering in others' business? Or are you the criminal we've been after all along?"

Jiang Chen sneered. "I've traveled all over the world and have been to the Ten Divine Nations as well. However, this is the first time I've seen law enforcement behave in such an arrogant way."

The captain cracked a sinister grin. "There are many firsts in life. I'm sure you're prepared for the consequences of acting this way?"

"What consequences are you talking about? Actually, don't bother answering that. I'm not interested," Jiang Chen retorted coolly. He didn't much care what these guardsmen had in mind for him.

"To resist the Blue Eagle Guard is to make an enemy of us." When Commander Yan's tone grew frosty, the atmosphere around him did as well.

But party tricks like that didn't scare Jiang Chen one bit.

Yes, the captain was a strong and capable cultivator with a powerful consciousness. Regardless, trying to scare the young lord with a mental ability was a foolish endeavor.

Cultivation-wise, while Jiang Chen might only be at the threshold of advanced empyrean, his consciousness rivaled demigods'.

Therefore, this Commander Yan's ninth level empyrean consciousness wasn't worth very much in his eyes at all. The pressure the man tried to exert felt barely more than a spring breeze. There was minimal actual effect.

Derision curled at the corner of the young man's mouth. "Commander Yan, was it? I'm rather curious. If it were some common criminal, the Blue Eagle Guard alone would be enough. The fact that you're here means it's not that simple. Why not make plain what you're here for?"

From the details of the situation, Jiang Chen supposed that these guards and their captain could very well be here for him. The reason? Because he had shown off so much ancient jade earlier.

Perhaps they did have another criminal they were after, but a trumped up excuse seemed more likely.

Commander Yan's expression darkened as questions swirled in his mind. Just who was this young man? He seemed to be able to see clearly through everything.

He didn't like the youth in front of him, not one bit. Not his smile, not the way he talked, and certainly not the way his eyes seemed to pierce his soul.

"I've no interest in wasting words. The Bluesmoke Isles has seen many instances of ancient jade being excavated without permission by some rogue or bandit. We've received information that this individual has been roaming near Miracle City as of late. This inn could very well be his hideout. Therefore, you better make every effort to accommodate our inspection. If you don't, your fate will be determined by whatever I say!"

Jiang Chen burst into peals of laughter.

"I see no reason to explain myself then. Sure, I have some ancient jade with me. Your excellent investigative abilities will no doubt conclude that I am that bandit, correct? I wonder, who's really the bandit here? I think you're failing to notice some important suspects right in front of you."

Anyone could hear Jiang Chen's sarcastic insinuation: these guardsmen were using the excuse of arresting a criminal to conduct robbery.

Commander Yan's face was as black as coal.

There was a bandit he was after, but he wasn't here because of that. He had heard from Sister Liu that this person possessed a tremendous amount of ancient jade, and the temptation of such a princely sum had lured him here.

Though she'd informed him that the ancient jade wasn't freshly excavated, the captain didn't care at all. Did it matter whether this person was the bandit or not? Not really.

He had something that the commander wanted!

Jiang Chen was smart enough to guess that this was the case. Thus, both men had a tacit understanding of the other's motives.

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

Chapter 1930: Stunning the Blue Eagle Guard

Jiang Chen hadn't expected to run into Chu Xinghan here. The two young men held a mutual admiration of each other, and Chu Xinghan had become Elder Shun's disciple to boot. Jiang Chen couldn't possibly stand on the sidelines when he was going to be killed.

That was the reason behind the intervention, which gave the Blue Eagle Guard another excuse to attack.

Chu Xinghan was actually completely befuddled. He'd been in Myriad Abyss for years now and knew how aloof the locals were and how dangerous the jianghu could be. It was unimaginable that someone would come to his aid.

He'd been prepared to die, yet a young man had stood up for him and saved him at the last moment.

His rescuer didn't seem to fear the Blue Eagle Guard. He maintained an easy smile even when faced with the aggression from so many guards.

He must be someone important.

Moreover, Chu Xinghan had an unexplainable inkling that his rescuer was an old acquaintance.

Taking a closer look at the man's appearance, he didn't find anything familiar about it, and he was sure he'd never known someone with such a strong consciousness and presence.

So why was the man familiar? Chu Xinghan didn't have an answer.

The Blue Eagle Guard had gathered around Jiang Chen and was prepared for a fight. The air was thick with tension and killing intent. The slightest movement would be enough to trigger a fight.

Commander Yan took in a deep breath and boomed, "I'm going to ask you one last time, young sir. Who are you?"

Jiang Chen broke out in laughter. "Why bother asking when you've clearly made up your mind already? Just do whatever you want to do. You'll only be embarrassing yourself by getting to the bottom of this."

"So you insist on defying the Blue Eagle Guard?" There was a growing doubt in Commander Yan's mind. Something about the young man made him wary.

Even young geniuses from powerful factions would at least show some signs of nervousness in such a situation. However, this man didn't seem at all concerned. His confidence gave even Commander Yan, who had a wealth of experience, pause.

Could they afford to offend the young man?

He pushed aside his doubts and hardened his resolve. To hell with that. The young man is too insolent. Even if he is from an important faction, we'll take him down first. If he resists, we'll kill him. What's he gonna do?

Anger boiled and made him bold.

"Take him!" ordered the commander. "If he resists, kill him!"

At his order, the empyrean cultivators at the frontline growled and split into groups, their faces contorted as they charged Jiang Chen.

Looking at them piercingly, Jiang Chen manifested a golden behemoth of a mountain with a fling of his hand, from which came countless air torrents that rushed in all directions like a golden waterfall.

The torrents of air covered Huang'er and Chu Xinghan in a protective circle.

The magnetic golden mountain had become progressively stronger as Jiang Chen continued to refine it. Capable of both offense and defense, the mountain could deter most regular cultivators.

The empyrean cultivators struck relentlessly at the mountain, but they couldn't break through the defenses and get to Jiang Chen.

Unfazed, Jiang Chen shot them a glare, and his Evil Golden Eye split through the air in the form of golden arrows, hitting three cultivators at the front.

They froze, their movement slowed. The next moment, it felt as if their blood had also congealed due to some unknown force, its flow decelerating.

"Shit!" The three cultivators finally realized they were in trouble, but it was too late. Their consciousness had already started to dull.

Commander Yan thought that they'd been hit by Jiang Chen. He shouted, "Retreat, all of you!"

He was on the right track. It was survival instinct to back away from danger. However, he didn't know what the three cultivators were facing. His warning was useless.

The petrifying force of the Evil Golden Eye had seeped into their meridians, blood, and organs, and then entered their consciousness.

Their movements slowed visibly, their expression pained and increasingly desperate.

In no time at all, they had stilled completely. Their bodies were frozen and harder than stones. They had become immovable, lifeless statues.

The cultivators trying to break through the magnetic mountain looked on with fear in their eyes, their hearts pounding. Reflexively, they took a few steps back.

Jiang Chen looked idly at them. They didn't even have the courage to meet his gaze.

Commander Yan finally realized what Jiang Chen's method of attack was. "Watch out and don't meet his eyes!" he exclaimed. "He has a powerful eye technique."

It was too little, too late.

Those with a weaker will suffered the same fate as their peers when Jiang Chen's gaze swept over them. One after another, the guards were turned into statues.

The same thing befell more than ten of the arrogant and egoistic guards. Not even the most aggressive empyrean cultivators had escaped the fate. Without any forewarning, Commander Yan lost all his best people to Jiang Chen.

He felt a sharp pang in his heart. These were his best officers. Without them, he was a beast without wings and fangs. What would a commander do without anyone to command?

Resentment burned in his eyes, but even he cautiously averted his gaze from Jiang Chen. It was clear that he dreaded the young man's terrifying eye technique.

He could tell that Jiang Chen's cultivation fell short in comparison, but the young man's eye technique and consciousness were no lesser than his. In other words, even he had to be cautious when fighting the young man. He couldn't guarantee that he would be able to defend against the eye technique.

The wandering cultivators struggled to recover their dropped jaws. It wasn't the first time they'd witnessed a raid from the Blue Eagle Guard. The guards had been unchallenged in Bluesmoke. They'd never suffered such loss before.

They turned to Jiang Chen with conflicting emotions in their eyes. Who was this young man?

No wonder he didn't care about the Blue Eagle Guard's threat. His cultivation was at such a great height and his techniques so powerful!