

## Three Realms 691

### Chapter 691: Huang'er Makes A Move Again

"A chance, you say?" Jiang Chen stared closely at that bald headed man, the former's eyes as chilly as killing knives. He looked as if he was engraving this Gong Wuji's countenance into his heart.

"Hehe, judging from the look in your eyes, I can see that you're obviously going to squander this precious chance of yours." Gong Wuji shook his head and sighed, "In that case, prepare yourself for judgment!"

Jiang Chen abruptly broke out in laughter, "Does that mean you don't want the sky and earth rank spirit herbs, or even the Longevity Pill's pill recipe anymore? Also... don't you want to know where your sect's spy, Lin Hai, is?"

Gong Wuji's face abruptly darkened when he heard Lin Hai's name. Lin Hai was a pawn he'd mentored personally and planted in the Dark North Sect. He'd never called upon Lin Hai to reap the rewards. So how could he not be shocked when he heard Lin Hai's name from Jiang Chen's lips? He was sure no one knew of his pawn's identity. How did this Jiang Chen figure it out? He admitted that the sky and earth rank spirit herbs were incredibly attractive, but even they had to wait when the great matter the Eternal Celestial Capital had pursued for over a millennium was involved.

"What are you talking about, kid? Who told you about Lin Hai?"

Jiang Chen decided that he might as well start blathering nonsense, "Isn't it obvious that Lin Hai's identity was going to be exposed during the Myriad Grand Ceremony? As the saying goes, the Ninesuns Sky Sect's bark is worse than their bite. When they raised such a high profile, it was your Eternal Celestial Capital who was the treacherous snake plotting in the dark. If my guess is correct, the Great Scarlet Mid Region must have come under your sect's control since a long time ago, right?"

Jiang Chen had more or less surmised what was going on. He'd always thought that the Ninesuns Sky Sect was the greatest threat to the Myriad Domain, but it was only now he realized that the Eternal Celestial Capital, keeping a low profile all this time, was the greatest mastermind. Even the insufferably arrogant Great Scarlet Mid Region was controlled by the Eternal Celestial Capital. It was obvious that not even the Ninesuns Sky Sect had realized this.

Obviously, if Gong Wiji hadn't thought that he had Jiang Chen and Huang'er for sure, there was no way he would've exposed his own identity. The Ninesuns Sky Sect had plotted openly while the Eternal Celestial Capital worked their manipulations from behind the scenes. Now, it would seem that the Eternal Celestial Capital would ultimately be the bigger winner.

Gong Wuji smiled indifferently and said, "I see that you know quite a lot of things, kid. The Ninesuns Sky Sect? They thought themselves clever and made up the so-called Imperial Jade Seal and Guardian Dragon Seal so they could get someone else to do their dirty work. We simply followed their line of thought and used their trick for our own gains. Haha, the Ninesuns Sky Sect wanted to play the good guy and mediate things between the Great Scarlet Mid Region and the Myriad Domain, but could we Eternal Celestial Capital possibly allow this?"

Jiang Chen felt a shiver as he listened to these words. He instantly understood the entire situation. He couldn't believe that a tiny place like the Myriad Domain would draw such crazy plots from so many forces. The Ninesuns Sky Sect wanted to coerce someone else to do their dirty work and had lured the Great Scarlet Mid Region into attacking Myriad Domain. Once the conflict began, they would make a showing, uphold justice, and take advantage of the opportunity to insert themselves into Myriad Domain. However, they hadn't realized that the Eternal Celestial Capital was the mastermind behind the Great Scarlet Mid Region. Therefore, the Ninesuns Sky Sect's plot to use the Great Scarlet Mid Region had only given the Eternal Celestial Capital themselves a chance to play their own plots. Naturally, there was no way the latter would allow the Ninesuns Sky Sect to jump out and uphold 'justice'.

First rank sects often fought and acted as a restraining force on each other. They often simply canceled out each other in the end. Once he'd figured out the ins and outs, Jiang Chen couldn't help but feel great sadness for the Myriad Domain for a moment. It was just an unwitting victim from the beginning to the end. The seeds of disaster had been planted back when Emperor Featherflight escaped into Myriad Domain. The many tragedies that happened later was but a continuation of this incident. The Regal Pill Palace and him were just ignorant victims who had been caught up by the push of great forces.

In that moment, Jiang Chen could keenly feel what laws of the jungle meant. Everything was about as cruel and as direct as one could imagine. The strong caused havoc while the weak waited for their turn to be slaughtered. Jiang Chen forcefully restrained the impulse to use the palace because he knew that the restrictions only had one charge left. If he were to use up that charge, then he wouldn't have this trump card when he went to save Gouyu and the others. That was why he forcefully restrained himself even though he was sure he could kill Gong Wuji and his men.

He could always take revenge later. It was at this moment a gray robed subordinate quickly walked over and reported to Gong Wuji, "Master Gong, there were two wealthy marks, but we only caught one of them. The other one had reacted quickly and escaped."

The gray robed man pushed a person into the place. It was none other than Shen Qinghong! Jiang Chen was dumbfounded when he saw that Shen Qinghong was captured again. However, he felt a bit of relief knowing that Ling Bi'er had escaped.

Gong Wuji's expression darkened, "You let them escape even in this kind of situation?"

The gray robed man stuttered, "That girl seems to carry some sort of powerful escape glyph with her. We couldn't actually stop it. It was strange."

Gong Wuji humphed coldly and waved him off, "You lot are all useless. Go away. I'll be teaching you a lesson if this happens again."

The Thunder Note Hall sect head came forward and said flatteringly, "Master Gong, please allow us Thunder Note Hall to deal with these two people."

The Great Roc Sect's sect head hurriedly followed, "Master Gong, we Great Roc Sect are willing to serve!"

Gong Wuji nodded coldly, "Don't screw up. I want to deal with that true dragon myself. Unbelievable, to think that a true dragon would appear in the likes of the Myriad Domain!"

Jiang Chen frowned slightly and sent a message to Huang'er, "I'm sorry I caused trouble for you, Miss Huang'er. Stay close to me while I open a path for us."

Huang'er shook her head slightly and replied, "Sir Jiang, this is an emperor realm domain. The average escape glyph may not work against it. Let me try."

Huang'er was normally calm and collected, but right now her tone was a bit more serious than usual.

"Miss Huang'er, the Generation Binding Curse is just waiting for a chance to engulf you. You cannot deploy your consciousness recklessly," Jiang Chen said hastily.

"Sir Jiang, we are in a life and death crisis right now, so we'll just have to deal with that later. Prepare the escape glyph while I attempt to break the enemy's domain. The escape glyph will work if there's even a tiny gap in his domain."

Jiang Chen knew that Huang'er had already made up her mind when he heard her tone. He also knew that his chances of success was actually quite low if he didn't use his final trump card against the enemy's emperor's domain.

"Brother Long, come back quickly," Jiang Chen called out in secret. At the same time, a jade green bamboo abruptly appeared around Huang'er and soared towards the sky like an ancient totem. It dragged a long, jade colored tail of light behind it. The crisp-green light rammed into the walls of the palace on the sky.

Bam!

The palace in the sky shuddered greatly before a hole was abruptly blown open at the center, and Jiang Chen's escape glyph shattered at the same time. A ray of light wrapped around Jiang Chen and Huang'er and chased after the jade light, flying out of the palace and city walls. They were gone in the blink of an eye. This series of changes had happened so quickly that almost no one were able to react in time.

Gong Wuji was among the very few whose reactions were quick. When he saw the jade light charging towards his own domain, he sneered inwardly, thinking that these two little fellows were fools who thought they could break through an emperor's domain with their puny strength. However, his sneer didn't manage to manifest on his face before shock replaced it.

Contrary to his expectations, the jade light actually blasted a large hole in his domain. His opponent's escape glyph followed closely behind the jade light, and his captives vanished right under his nose just like that. The emperor's domain was connected to his consciousness. When his domain was blasted open, naturally his consciousness was shaken tremendously as well. For a time, he wasn't able to react towards their escape. The light had long vanished when his mind finally recovered. For a time, the scene was so quiet that only some strictly repressed soft breaths could be heard. Be it the Thunder Note Hall or the Great Roc Sect, everyone present in the area bowed their heads and didn't dare reveal a bit of expression on their faces.

Master Gong Wuji had just called them useless for letting a mark escape a moment ago. In the next moment, two bigger marks had slipped right from under his nose. It was almost as if Master Gong Wuji had set himself up to be slapped by himself! A person would have to be crazy to show any expression at

this moment. Master Gong could easily misinterpret any kind of expressions as an attempt to ridicule him.

Gong Wuji's eyes bulged, and he roared towards the sky. Then, he punched the ground in front of Jiang Chen's residence.

BAM!

The residence instantly collapsed into a pile of ruins. "After them! You must capture those two bastards no matter what the cost!" Gong Wuji had almost gone berserk when he roared out this order and sent spittle flying everywhere. He nearly lost all self control at this moment. If the news that he, a fourth level emperor realm cultivator had actually allowed a sage realm brat to escape his grasp were to spread, it would be a great stain on his reputation.

Gong Wuji abruptly recalled something and swept a dominating glance across the place, "Remember, you will tell no one about today's matter. If anyone of you were to squeak even half a sentence about this, I will lead my men and personally destroy the Thunder Note Hall and Great Roc Sect!" Gong Wuji's tone was overbearing and brooked no disobedience at all.

Even the sect heads of the Thunder Note Hall and the Great Roc Sect shuddered when Gong Wuji's ferocious gaze had swept across their body. They could only nod repeatedly in response, even though they were second level emperor realm cultivators themselves.

"Master, about this kid..." The Thunder Note Hall sect head pointed at Shen Qinghong and asked, "Should we just kill him immediately?"

"That can wait. This kid was a part of their group, so they should be pretty close to each other. Let's interrogate him first. He may have some useful information."

Shen Qinghong laughed loudly, "A warrior can be killed, but his honor will not stand for humiliation. You can capture or kill me, but you will never see the day I become a traitor and betray my own sect!"

"Tsk tsk, your tough talk is useless here. Let's see if you can keep it up after we torture you, kid!"

Shen Qinghong was obviously prepared. He spat, "Kill me if you want to, but there is no way you're getting anything out of me! Remember this well: my junior brother, Jiang Chen will one day return ten times the suffering you've inflicted onto Regal Pill Palace! Hahaha, I, Shen Qinghong, am useless and will not live to see that day. But it will come. That day of retribution will definitely come!" Once he said this, Shen Qinghong shouted and pushed his internal energy to the max.

Bang bang bang!

Shen Qinghong had actually chosen to detonate his own spirit!

The scene was filled with chaos for a time. It was obvious that not even Gong Wuji had expected his captive to be so idealistic.

## Chapter 692: Huang'er's Affection

The explosion caused by a sage realm cultivator's self detonation was fairly threatening. The young geniuses of Thunder Note Hall and Great Roc Sect standing beside Shen Qinghong all suffered moderate

to serious injuries and were quite bedraggled by the blast. One of them had even suffered heavy injuries and looked to be on the verge of death. This unforeseen accident caused Gong Wuji's mood to worsen further. He waved his hand and yelled, "After them!"

Jiang Chen and Huang'er used multiple escape glyphs in succession as they made their escape. It was only after they had run for roughly fifteen hundred kilometers that they finally came to a stop at a secluded place.

They stopped not because Jiang Chen didn't have enough escape glyphs on him, but because he could sense something wrong with Miss Huang'er. Jiang Chen's consciousness was extremely sensitive. He noticed that Huang'er was apparently losing control over the Generation Binding Curse. He hastily came to a stop and summoned the Bewitching Lotus of Fire and Ice, tunneling several hundred feet underground. He found a suitable corner and opened up a space that could fit the both of them. Then, he supported Huang'er to a sitting position on the ground.

"Miss Huang'er, please sit quietly for a moment while I chant the 'Sacred Deliverance Mantra' a few times for you." Jiang Chen knew that Miss Huang'er must have triggered the Generation Binding Curse because she used too much mental power. He had given Huang'er some treatment in the past, but unfortunately it had only soothed the symptoms, not the cause. If they were only looking to suppress the Generation Binding Curse, it could be suppressed for tens or even hundreds of years. But the cursed patient had to refrain from using too much of their consciousness. The moment they did, they would awaken the Generation Binding Curse inside their mind. If that happened, it would grow even more difficult to suppress.

Seeing Huang'er trembling uncontrollably and in a near faint, he recognized them as signs that the Generation Binding Curse was flaring up. He hastily calmed down and chanted the mantra over and over again. The minute trembling that racked Huang'er's body slowly subsided as the 'Sacred Deliverance Mantra' was repeated. Jiang Chen didn't dare stop. He didn't stop chanting even though his mouth was dry. He chanted for twenty four hours straight before Huang'er finally shook slightly once and regained a bit of consciousness.

"Sir Jiang, Huang'er has caused you trouble once more." Huang'er's soft voice sounded a little apologetic.

Jiang Chen smiled wryly and said, "It's I who's caused you trouble."

Huang'er summoned a difficult smile and said, "In that case, let us not bother each other with pleasantries."

Jiang Chen nodded repeatedly, "You're right. Why don't you rest first while I chant the 'Sacred Deliverance Mantra' a couple more times for you."

"You must be tired after chanting for such a long time. Please rest. I am feeling slightly better right now."

Jiang Chen inspected her condition with his consciousness, and he knew that the curse had been suppressed again for now. However, it was only a temporary thing. It was obvious that Miss Huang'er's excessive usage of her mental abilities had awakened the rancor of the Generation Binding Curse once

more. “Miss Huang’er, the ‘Sacred Deliverance Mantra’ is not as effective as the ‘Ethereal Soothing Melody’. If you still have some strength with you, why don’t you play it a couple of times?”

Huang’er struggled slightly in an attempt to sit upright. Jiang Chen hastily lend her a hand and supported her. This wasn’t the time to care about societal niceties between men and women. When he held Huang’er, he felt as if he was touching a goddess’ body. She would’ve been too thin if she’d been a tad bit thinner, and too fat if a tad bit fatter.

Huang’er gently took out her zither. Even though she was feeling weak all over, she still tried her hardest to play the melody properly. Jiang Chen felt a pinprick in his heart at her current state. He knew that Huang’er wouldn’t be suffering this torment if it hadn’t been for his sake. For a time, Jiang Chen’s heart was assaulted with complex feelings.

“Sir Jiang, do you know anything about music?” Huang’er spoke up to console Jiang Chen, as if she could read Jiang Chen’s remorse.

Jiang Chen’s mind went blank as he recalled his past life. He had been an expert at almost everything except martial dao. Naturally, he’d been extremely proficient in music as well. It was just that he hadn’t had the time nor inclination to delve deeper into the art of music in this life. He didn’t know why, but there were some things that Jiang Chen found difficult to say to most people.

But when he was before Huang’er, he always felt an indescribable sense of honesty and frankness. When he looked at Huang’er’s sincere eyes, he felt like her eyes wouldn’t tolerate any of the filth or lies in this world. Moreover, Huang’er was a sincere person. Her clean temperament made Jiang Chen feel like the mere act of lying to her was no different than committing a sin. Therefore, he scratched his head and answered honestly, “I do know a little about music, but I doubt that my skills are comparable to yours, Miss Huang’er.”

Huang’er smiled slightly and stared at Jiang Chen with pure eyes. Then, a vertical bamboo flute suddenly appeared between her hands like magic. “Sir Jiang, may I have the fortune of hearing you play?”

At that moment, Huang’er’s intelligent eyes had a naughty spark in them. She was showing Jiang Chen her playful and carefree side. Jiang Chen laughed wryly and forced himself to accept the flute. Surprisingly, the flute looked no different from what he used to play in his past life. After playing around with it for a bit and testing its sound a few times, he roughly found the feeling he usually experienced when he played during his past life. “I hope you enjoy my performance then.”

Jiang Chen was not a person to be hobbled by embarrassment. He immediately started to play a rendition of the ‘Ethereal Soothing Melody’. His performance was a little shaky at first, but he didn’t take long to enter the artistic mood of the ‘Ethereal Soothing Melody’ and displayed the purity and spiritual quality of a flute to its full. When he reached the second half of the melody, Huang’er’s expression had changed from surprise to solemnity. When the song was finally over, the great surprise in Huang’er’s pure eyes stayed for a very, very long time.

A long time later, Huang’er finally smiled softly and said, “Sir Jiang, you truly are a man of many hidden talents. Huang’er actually feels a lot more clear-headed after listening to your flute version of the ‘Ethereal Soothing Melody’.”

“Oh no, you praise me too highly.” Jiang Chen usually accepted other people’s praises as gladly as one would sweets, but he couldn’t help but blush with embarrassment when he was praised by Miss Huang’er. However, he quickly said, “Miss Huang’er, maybe we can try and play this tune together. The ‘Ethereal Soothing Melody’ may be even more effective against the Generation Binding Curse if we play it together.”

Shyness flashed in Huang’er’s eyes. Thankfully, Jiang Chen hadn’t been looking directly at her. Even so, her heart couldn’t help but thump wildly. She never imagined that Jiang Chen would offer to play together. Of course, there was nothing wrong about performing music together, but... memories of times long past flashed through Huang’er’s mind.

When she hadn’t yet left her homeland, countless young and talented men had sought to woo her. However, she’d turned all of them away. Her suitors had once asked her what it would take to win her affection. Huang’er had told them then that if there came a day she found a man whom she was willing to perform music together with, then he would be the one she fell in love with. Her declaration had just been an excuse to turn down those suitors back then. n( .0./v.(ε/.l--B--l//n

However, Huang’er had maintained that belief ever since she made that declaration. She had never played music with a man since learning the art. She really did believe her own words, too. She believed that only a man whose music could win her heart and make her willing to perform with him would have the qualification to become her love.

When Jiang Chen inadvertently made the suggestion, he didn’t realize that he had touched on Huang’er’s deepest feelings. As elegant as Huang’er was, even she was feeling a little stunned by the offer. Her womanly embarrassment made her panic a little. And yet... Could she really turn him down right now?

Huang’er realized that she actually couldn’t turn down Jiang Chen. In fact, there was a kind of expectation growing inside of her. She had locked up her own heart for the longest time, but Jiang Chen had entered her life out of nowhere on her journey to seeking a cure. He’d showed her again and again qualities that set him apart from other men. Those displays had birthed faint ripples in her emotions for a while now. It was just that she hadn’t dared or wanted to face this problem directly. That lasted until the moment Jiang Chen’s inadvertent words abruptly threw open the doors to her heart. Moreover, Jiang Chen’s flute performance had stunned her far more than any amount of sweet and gentle words could. In that one moment, she’d not only felt shock, but also an infinite amount of happiness.

She had always thought that no one in this world would be able to harmonize with her music. She’d never thought that an inadvertent tune in a hole deep underground would topple her beliefs so utterly. One could say that Jiang Chen’s flute performance had firmly planted his presence in Huang’er’s heart. From this day onwards, no one else could ever replace him.

However, Jiang Chen had no idea that this fairy-like woman before him was experiencing such a tsunami of emotions. He had even less of an idea that his careless suggestion had triggered an emotional storm worthy of a natural disaster in in Huang’er’s heart.

“Miss Huang’er, was my suggestion too rude?” Jiang Chen finally noticed that Huang’er was looking a little off and couldn’t help but ask.

Huang'er hastily waved off his worries, "No, it's just that Huang'er just recalled something from the past. Sir Jiang's mastery in music is truly beyond Huang'er's expectations. It will be Huang'er's honor to play the 'Ethereal Soothing Melody' with you."

"Let's give it a try then?" Jiang Chen wasn't thinking nearly as much as Huang'er. Right now he was filled with regret and just wanted to make up for it by suppressing the Generation Binding Curse again. He wasn't thinking of anything else at all.

"Let's." Huang'er also nodded.

One zither and one bamboo flute began to harmonize together.

It was a strange thing. The two had never played together before, but the moment they started, they fit each other so well that it was as if they had played together countless times in the past. Their performance, despite lacking an audience, actually turned out absolutely flawless and perfect.

They played the melody once, twice... For a brief moment, the notes of a zither and a flute harmoniously filled this little space underground. Both of them were enchanted by the wondrous atmosphere. The performance finally came to a stop after who knew how long. Huang'er's eyes suddenly reddened as tears abruptly rolled down her cheeks.

She was a strong woman who hadn't shed a single tear even when she'd suffered the worst torment in her life at the hands of the Generation Binding Curse. But now, tears were actually rolling off her cheeks, beyond her control.

They weren't tears of sadness, and yet they were. Those tears that spilled from her eyes like a newly broken dam were also tears of happiness. The happiness that suffused her being that came from finding someone who perfectly understood her. Tears of sadness that tore at her heart for her background and life. At long last, after so much time, she'd finally found a man she was willing to perform with. But because of the Generation Binding Curse, this happiness was also destined to be cut short.

Jiang Chen had never experienced such a scene before in his life. For a moment, he was bewildered and unsure what as to what he could do to make things better. It was a good thing that Huang'er quickly regained control of her emotions. After wiping away her tears, she smiled at him apologetically and said, "Sir Jiang, Huang'er just felt like crying a bit. I'm sorry you had to see me like this."

Something suddenly flickered in Jiang Chen's consciousness, and he exclaimed joyfully, "As I thought, the joint performance of the 'Ethereal Soothing Melody' is very effective. Your Generation Binding Curse seems to have been suppressed by quite a lot!"

#### Chapter 693: The Counterattack Begins

The two stayed underground for a full two months before finally suppressing Huang'er's Generation Binding Curse, perfecting their duet of "Ethereal Soothing Melody" along the way. The two communicated with each other's souls through their music, and slowly came to understand each other more and more. Jiang Chen also didn't hesitate to use all of his Sage Fledgling Grass to make Heroic Sage Pills. Although he didn't have enough to treat them as everyday snacks, he did eventually accumulate enough for a hundred sage cultivators. Naturally, it was a sweet sensation to have it all to himself. Using them, he diligently trained until he easily broke through second level sage realm, and rose to a step



away from third level sage realm. When Huang'er's affliction grew more and more controllable, his desire to leave the underground world grew stronger and stronger.

Huang'er had always been empathetic and naturally knew of Jiang Chen's thoughts. She also felt deeply apologetic that Jiang Chen had kept her company underground for two months out of his concern for her. So, she brought up the matter herself, "Sir Jiang, my curse is no longer in danger of acting up; perhaps this is the time to find out what has happened to sister Gouyu and the others? Why don't we head upwards?"

Jiang Chen knew that Huang'er was trying to save him some awkwardness. He gratefully followed her lead, nodding, "I'm also worried about them as well. I wonder how Palace Head Dan Chi, Elder Yun Nie, junior brother Gaoqi, and senior sister Bi'er are now."

Although the Regal Pill Palace had been destroyed, he hadn't found any of their bodies. He guessed that whether it was Elder Yun Nie or Mu Gaoqi, all of them had been taken away. They were important witnesses, and were likely taken as prisoners to be interrogated about the sky rank spirit herb and Longevity Pill. As for Palace Head Dan Chi, Jiang Chen surmised that when they'd returned to see the sect razed, they'd come to the conclusion that charging headfirst into the fray would be a futile exercise. That meant that there was a high likelihood that the palace head and the others were still safe for now. As for whether or not they could escape from the grasp of the Great Scarlet Mid Region and Eternal Celestial Capital, that would be up to them. Although Jiang Chen was worried, he knew that there was nothing he could do for now.

He had to look forward. Palace Head Dan Chi had even made preparations to disband the sect before the Myriad Grand Ceremony, but everything had happened too quickly in the end. They'd thought that the greatest enemy was the Ninesuns Sky Sect, but hadn't ever imagined that the Eternal Celestial Capital would manipulate the Great Scarlet Mid Region into invading the Myriad Domain.

The two left their underground cave and took a quick look around. They were still within Regal Pill Palace territory, but cultivators from the Great Scarlet Mid Region were spread throughout the region, guarding every way in and out. It would be quite the feat to escape. But escape was the furthest thing from Jiang Chen's mind at the moment. His sect had been destroyed, and he himself had nearly been captured. The embers of anger that had been slumbering in his belly for the last two months started to grow hotter.

These embers hadn't just slumbered for the last two months, they'd simply become more potent. Every time he'd remembered the ruins of the Regal Pill Palace, the corpses of disciples and elders, the gore-spattered cave where the swordbirds had resided.... The urge to obliterate the Great Scarlet Mid Region and the Eternal Celestial Capital would rage ever hotter. Even surrounded by enemies as he was, he wasn't afraid. It was high time to collect some interest on this debt they'd accrued.

"Miss Huang'er..." he began to say.

Huang'er smiled, "Sir Jiang, you're the master of the house and I the guest. I will listen to whatever your arrangements may be."

She was quite aware of what the most appropriate action was, but didn't want her thoughts to impact Jiang Chen's dao heart. Jiang Chen nodded, "I plan on collecting some interest before I leave. The

Thunder Note Hall and Great Roc Sect are the ones occupying Regal Pill Palace territory at the moment. That Holy King Gong Wuji is just here for moral support. There shouldn't be many from the Eternal Celestial Capital here."

"Mm. The Eternal Celestial Capital is the mastermind behind the scenes. They're not at liberty to freely reveal themselves," Huang'er agreed with Jiang Chen's judgment.

"The Thunder Note Hall and Great Roc Sect are fourth rank sects. Although they're stronger than the fourth rank sects of the Myriad Domain, each sect has only a few emperor realm cultivators. They certainly wouldn't send out all of them out on a single foray. It's highly likely that the emperor realm cultivators we saw that day are all the ones they've sent." Jiang Chen continued, "Only, that many emperor realm cultivators can't possibly seal off all of Regal Pill Palace territory. Therefore, we still have a lot of opportunities."

Huang'er nodded slightly, "We should take one alive and ask where the others are."

"That's the plan. We'll have to be careful in exacting our interest. It won't be good if they vent their rage on Gouyu and the others." Jiang Chen had clearly weighed the pros and cons of his idea. The two discussed for a bit and decided to target a young disciple, at least a core disciple. Only core disciples had the right to know more of the bigger picture. Regular minions wouldn't necessarily know where Gouyu and the others had gone. With this in mind, the two carefully travelled, looking for a good target.

Half a day later, they came across a potential target in a remote territory. Filled with deep and secluded valleys, it was formerly the territory of one of the sixth rank sects that was subordinate to the Regal Pill Palace. At least a hundred invaders had set up camp there, and from a distance, they looked like they were the central hub of search operations in the area.

"The strongest of them ought to be an elder of eighth level sage realm. There's also a fifth level sage realm true disciple. They're all from the Thunder Note Hall."

Although their fourth rank sects were stronger than their Myriad Domain counterparts, that difference in strength was only a hair. In the Myriad Domain, the pinnacle of cultivation was the fifth level sage realm, whereas their counterparts in the Great Scarlet Mid Region held the sixth level sage realm as their peak. As such, the Thunder Note Hall true disciple at fifth level sage realm was at the top of his class. It was likely that even Xiang Qin wouldn't have been able to defeat him. He had his trump cards, but so did the geniuses of the Thunder Note Hall. However, Jiang Chen didn't plan on making his move against the fifth level sage realm cultivator from the very beginning. He remained in the shadows with Huang'er, quietly observing all of their moves.

The group had been split into four troops, each with about thirty people. Each troop was further split into patrolling teams. Those teams made their rounds fairly frequently, and often crossed paths with other teams. The frequency and concentration of the teams made it almost impossible to find an opening. But that didn't mean that opportunity didn't exist. While watching them, Jiang Chen ran a couple of detailed simulations in his mind. If he could compress his entire ambush inside ten breaths while preventing them from calling for help, then he could capture one of them alive. The difficulty lay in capturing them alive; killing them would've been a hundred times easier.

"That group of three has one at second level sage realm and two at peak ninth level origin realm. This is the one!" Jiang Chen slowly approached them after he'd locked onto his target.

Huang'er's Generation Binding Curse only limited her consciousness and emperor realm abilities; it didn't affect her movement ability. As long as she kept from using those two abilities, she didn't have to worry about backlash from the curse. However, Jiang Chen knew that he couldn't let Huang'er fight again. If she aroused the violent nature of the curse one more time, she would find it even harder to suppress. The backlash from the curse awakening each time would only increase in ferocity.

The three Thunder Note Hall disciples had a decent amount of status in their sect and were laughing and chatting with each other. ~~no ve-ll/In~~

"Senior brother Hua, we've been here for three months. When can we go back to the sect?" One of them asked the youth with the striking brows standing in the middle.

The youth with the striking brows snorted coldly, "Why? You weren't amounting to much back there, were you? We got lucky this time and were assigned to the Regal Pill Palace. It's one of the wealthiest marks among the Myriad Domain sects."

"Yes they're rich, but it's not like we're getting much out of it. Besides, we're not at headquarters, so what kind of riches can we possibly get?"

"Hmph, the executives have spoken. Whoever can offer up intelligence about that kid Jiang Chen will receive fifty Heroic Sage Pills and an earth rank spirit herb."

Heroic Sage Pills were the resources of dreams for sage realm cultivators. Although the Thunder Note Hall was a fourth rank sect, it wasn't that wealthy, so it didn't have many Heroic Sage Pills to dole out to its disciples. Fifty pills was an astronomical figure, an amount that they wouldn't normally be even able to dream about in the sect. Senior brother Hua was second level sage realm and naturally had a deep desire for Heroic Sage Pills. The young man at peak origin realm in front of him however, spoke listlessly, "Senior brother Hua, I've heard that Jiang Chen is very strong and difficult to handle. Apparently..."

Senior brother Hua glared at him, "Shut up! Are you tired of living? Stop fecking gossiping about Jiang Chen! What if Jiang Chen is close by? We don't have to be the ones to capture him, just be the ones who discover traces of him."

Fifty Heroic Sage Pills and an earth rank spirit herb had been dangled just for some clues. If they captured Jiang Chen themselves, the reward would be five hundred Heroic Sage Pills, three earth rank spirit herbs, and a favor from Gong Wuji himself!

The other peak origin realm disciple had remained silent up until now. He was a scrubby looking shorty, and his face had slipped into a lustful leer, "I heard that apart from Jiang Chen, a beautiful genius called Ling Bi'er also slipped away. Apparently she's Jiang Chen's woman. It'll be much easier to get the woman. We won't have to worry about Jiang Chen not coming to find us once we've got her!"

"Zhang Ole Third, what the feck are you dreaming about everyday? I heard that that Ling Bi'er genius is also in the sage realm! And you're dreaming of capturing her!? Shut up and do your job well!" Senior brother Hua lectured them loudly.

The three of them were still searching and chatting when the world in front of their eyes suddenly changed. A boundless forest world of vines and leaves filled the sky for an instant. They gaped, but in the very next moment, the world turned black as the entire world of vines seemed to slam into them.

#### Chapter 694: A Bold Plan

“No!” Warning bells went off in senior brother Hua’s head as he reached for a warning talisman. He crushed it, but somehow, the warning didn’t transmit! “It’s a formation. We’ve been trapped by a formation!”

“Senior brother Hua, save me!” The skinny man had already been caught by the countless vines. The world within the formation was completely isolated from the world outside. Despite trying the warning talisman several times, senior brother Hua couldn’t penetrate the formation’s barrier. He truly wanted to save his junior brothers, but he could scarcely help even himself amidst the chaos. While quite powerful in his own right, he couldn’t withstand the sudden and unending onslaught of countless vines forever. The three were soon trussed up like chickens.

Jiang Chen had utilized the Ancient Slaughter Formation of Seven to conjure a woodland realm and trap the group before restraining them with the Bewitching Lotus of Fire and Ice. The Lotus receded into the earth as soon as the formation disk was retrieved. Jiang Chen tossed the nicely wrapped up trio into a dark corner of the cave he’d dug and quickly and easily set up a formation to isolate them all from the outside world. He intended to take every precaution despite being hundreds of meters below the earth.

“Who are you? What nerve!” Senior brother Hua raised his eyebrows and spoke arrogantly. But while he was sizing up Jiang Chen, his pupils suddenly contracted. There was no light underground. But almost everyone had the ability to see in the dark after reaching a certain level of cultivation. He quickly realized that the person standing before them was, in fact the Jiang Chen they had just been discussing.

“Have you recognized me yet?” Jiang Chen smiled indifferently, “So tell me—should I flay you alive or burn you into ashes?”

The skinny man’s teeth chattered uncontrollably. “Jiang... Jiang Chen, we... we were just following orders. Don’t... don’t kill me.... I surrender!”

“If I didn’t hear wrong, it seemed as if you were saying you’d capture Ling Bi’er to threaten me with?” Jiang Chen’s voice and gaze were frigid.

The skinny man explained in haste while trembling frantically. “No... I wouldn’t dare. I... I just said that for fun! How would I be able to capture a sage realm genius with my meager talent?! You can’t take that seriously, not seriously at all.”

Senior brother Hua swore loudly, “Shut up, Zhang Ole Third!” He raised his head and glared at Jiang Chen. “Jiang Chen, you’re powerful alright. But no matter how powerful you are, can you fight against the entire Great Scarlet Mid Region? Can you overpower the Eternal Celestial Capital all by yourself?”

Jiang Chen had no desire to debate anything with them and only smiled apathetically in response. Great Scarlet Mid Region? Eternal Celestial Capital? These two powers had long since entered his blacklist. He would definitely settle each and every one of those debts one day.

Jiang Chen turned towards Huang'er and suggested. "Miss Huang'er, would you perhaps want to step to the side for a while?"

Huang'er knew that Jiang Chen was about to kill. but only shook her head with a faint smile. She'd been walking the path of martial dao since her childhood. She was no stranger to murder and arson. "Brother Long, please show yourself. I leave this man in your capable hands."

No sooner had Jiang Chen spoken than Long Xiaoxuan appear in a gust of wind. Massive jaws clamped down on senior brother Hua with gusto, spraying blood and gore everywhere. Streams of still steaming blood shot out the corners of Long Xiaoxuan's mouth and splashed on the faces of the other two, causing the skinny man to wail loudly with terror. The ghastly shrieks might've penetrated through the earth to reach the surface if they hadn't been isolated by a formation. Long Xiaoxuan belched with satisfaction after he finished gulping down senior brother Hua. He then turned his sights to the two remaining origin realm cultivators.

The skinny man's face was the picture of terror. "Don't eat me, please don't eat me! I surrender! Is surrender not enough?!"

The other man was as pale as a ghost. It seemed as if he wanted to say something but ultimately held back, swallowing hard instead.

"Do you want to live? Give me one reason to not kill you." Jiang Chen's tone was unsympathetic.

The skinny man hurriedly replied, "I'll tell you, I'll tell you! I have intelligence!" He didn't even pause before continuing; as if he was afraid Jiang Chen would go back on his words, "Nearly 20 fourth rank sects were mobilized this time by order of the Great Scarlet Emperor himself."

"Then what's with the Eternal Celestial Capital?" Jiang Chen asked coldly.

"The Eternal Celestial Capital... we didn't know about it in the beginning. Only later did we find out that the one pulling the strings behind our Great Scarlet Mid Region was the Eternal Celestial Capital."

The Eternal Celestial Capital was a first rank sect from the Upper Eight Regions. It wasn't difficult for Jiang Chen to deduce that they were indirectly controlling the Great Scarlet Mid Region behind the scenes. Jiang Chen shook his head, "I already know all this. If you can't offer anything of better value..."

"I can, I can! I know that... the Regal Pill Palace escaped from the Myriad Grand Ceremony, but they didn't return to the Regal Pill Palace."

This information is rather useful. Jiang Chen laughed coldly, "Why should I believe you?"

"It's... it's true! I'm absolutely certain of it because part of the reason we were told to establish a base here was to intercept the Regal Pill Palace Head. My superiors claim that he's in possession of several earth ranked spirit herbs and perhaps even sky ranked ones. Master Gong Wuji himself had ordered his capture.

"Oh right, there's more—a group led by an elder called Yun Nie was captured by the Great Roc Sect and should already be on their way to the capital of the Great Scarlet Empire."

"Elder Yun Nie? Who else?" Jiang Chen asked with a furrowed brow.

“There’s also... well, all the survivors have been shipped to the Great Scarlet Empire.”

The skinny man recalled something else with much effort. “Oh right, there was a powerful formation set up around your residence that was extremely difficult to break. It took the combined efforts of Master Gong Wuji himself and the heads of our Thunder Note Hall and the Great Roc Sect to finally break through. Master Gong Wuji was so full of admiration for the one who’d set up the formation that he decided to stay back and wait for their, or rather, your return.”

The skinny man was scrambling to try and flatter Jiang Chen, “Master Gong Wuji said we had to capture the one who set up this formation, or else he would become a mortal disaster for everyone in the future. Sir Jiang... as expected of a genius feared even by Master Gong Wuji, even with such strict precautions and defense...”

Jiang Chen motioned with his hand, he was no longer willing to listen to this meaningless bootlicking. “How about the people in my residence? And the wood spirit spring? Who took them?”

“Those people were captured and transported to the capital just like Elder Yun Nie. The wood spirit spring? Did you mean the water spring? I heard that Master Gong Wuji took it away.”

Gong Wuji! Jiang Chen ground his teeth. He carved that name deeply into his heart.

“How long were you supposed to be stationed here?”

The skinny man promptly replied, “I’m not sure. We have to stay here for as long as our superiors command. Sir Jiang, I’ve... I’ve told you everything. Can you be magnanimous and... let me live?”

“Are there any others from the Eternal Celestial Capital here apart from Gong Wuji?”

“Yes!” The skinny man replied swiftly, “There’s a young genius who appears to be Gong Wuji’s grandson. He’s already reached the fifth level sage realm despite only being 13 years old. He’s comparable to the most prominent geniuses of our Thunder Note Hall.”

“A young grandson? What’s his name?”

“His name? Hmm... I hear everyone calling him young master Qi. His name should be Gong Qi.”

“Gong Qi, Gong Qi.” An extremely audacious idea suddenly materialized within Jiang Chen’s mind. “Tell me more about this Gong Qi.”

The skinny man had no idea what Jiang Chen was thinking—his only wish was to survive. Despite not knowing much about Gong Qi, he recounted everything he’d ever seen or heard without holding anything back. “Gong Qi loves a challenge. The top geniuses of our Thunder Note Hall and the Great Roc Sect always get a headache whenever he appears. Exchanging pointers aren’t a big deal, but the boy has absolutely no sense of control. The geniuses from our sect don’t dare to fight seriously for fear of wounding him and rousing the ire of Master Gong Wuji. So everyone avoids him out of fear...”

“Are you certain that the information you gave me is all true?” Jiang Chen’s gaze focused upon the skinny man.

“Absolutely! Not one bit false. It’s practically common knowledge at this point. Senior brother Ding Rong for instance, volunteered to guard this remote passage to avoid drawing Gong Qi’s attention. Senior

brother Ding Rong is fifth level sage realm and is considered to be in the top three in our sect. Gong Qi had been repeatedly asking for him back at the Regal Pill Palace headquarters, but senior brother had always found an excuse to refuse...”

Ding Rong was the Thunder Note Hall genius assigned to oversee this area, along with an elder at eighth level sage realm. Jiang Chen had originally thought that they had other plans for this area. But it turns out they were here merely to avoid Gong Qi. “Where does Gong Qi usually spar with others? Does Gong Wuji always spectate?”

After some thought, the skinny man spoke carefully, “I remember that although Master Gong Wuji doesn’t always come to watch, there are always quite a few experts in attendance. Everyone’s afraid... afraid that they would accidentally wound Gong Qi. No one can bear the consequences.”

Jiang Chen pondered in silence. The skinny man was trembling in fear. He wasn’t certain if he could still live despite having divulged so much. Jiang Chen formed a bold plan after a momentary contemplation. A frosty glow from his eyes converged upon the skinny man. “You have been rather compliant. But the Thunder Note Hall invaded my Regal Pill Palace and you, being an accomplice, can’t escape death...”

The skinny man’s face turned green. “Don’t... don’t kill me!”

“Don’t kill you, you say?” Jiang Chen smiled spuriously, “I can give you a chance, seeing as how you provided me with information.”

“Tell me, tell me what you want me to do!” His eyes displayed his desperate honesty.

Jiang Chen shot a pill into the skinny man’s mouth, “Eat it.”

The skinny man grimaced. He didn’t dare decline despite knowing it was something bad. He could only brace himself and swallow it.

“This pill was refined from Divine Befuddlement Miasma. Without my specific antidote, you’ll die within three days. Even a ninth level pill king won’t be able to save you without knowing the components of this Miasma.”

“Yes... yes...” The skinny man’s countenance was wry, knowing that he had no other choice. “Young master Jiang, I’ll do whatever you ask of me.”

“Very good. First, kill him!” Jiang Chen performed a few handseals, and the Bewitching Lotus of Fire and Ice loosened its grip.

The remaining person screamed, “Zhang Ole Third, have you gone crazy? Do you think he’ll let you go? What kind of dream are you still in!”

Zhang Ole Third’s expression was miserable. “Senior brother Feng, please don’t blame me...”

And with that, Zhang Ole Third thrust a sword into the man’s throat and yanked upwards. To prove his sincerity, he also destroyed the man’s dantian and consciousness.

“Good.” Jiang Chen’s tone was indifferent, “Next, I want you to lure Ding Rong here.” *noVe.lB.1n*

Luring Ding Rong over was a crucial first step.

## Chapter 695: Baiting a Fifth Level Sage Realm Genius

“Ah?” A hint of fear leaked out from Zhang Ole Third’s eyes when he heard that Ding Rong was the one he was going to bait over.

“What? Is there a problem?” Jiang Chen’s expression turned cold.

“You... Senior brother Ding... is with the elder. It’s very difficult to lure him out alone.”

“What if the bait is a sky rank spirit herb?” Jiang Chen asked indifferently.

Zhang Ole Third looked distracted. Then he asked suddenly, “Will you promise to let me live if I lure out senior brother Ding?”

There wasn’t much meaning to killing a small fry like him. Jiang Chen also understood that he had to promise something substantial in order to encourage Zhang Ole Third to take wholehearted action. Moreover, this Zhang Ole Third would become a traitor to Thunder Note Hall anyway if he successfully lured Ding Rong over. His life wouldn’t affect the greater picture in the slightest. When his thoughts reached that point, Jiang Chen smiled faintly and said, “I can swear a heavenly oath that I will not take your life. But don’t forget that if you fail...”

Zhang Ole Third gritted his teeth in determination and said, “I know. In the end, my life depends entirely on whether I can lure senior brother Ding Rong to this place.”

“Smart,” Jiang Chen smiled faintly.

“I want you to swear an oath that you will let me live and also give me the antidote if I do lure senior brother Ding Rong over.”

“Don’t worry, I’ve made up my mind, I won’t go back on my own words. However, you will have to find someplace to hide for several months in order to keep my plans from being exposed.”

“I can do that,” Zhang Ole Third had obviously steeled himself. Since the duo came to an agreement, Jiang Chen swore a heavenly oath to set Zhang Ole Third’s mind at ease. Zhang Ole Third was all fired up after he heard Jiang Chen’s oath. He might be a coward, but he was a smart coward. He knew his life depended entirely on his success.

Jiang Chen then turned to Huang’er and said, “Let’s disguise ourselves and pretend to be those two first.”

Huang’er was a master of disguise, and Jiang Chen himself wasn’t lacking in this area either. His Mu Gaoqi disguise had fooled everyone back at the Myriad Grand Ceremony, so it wasn’t a difficult thing for either of them. He quickly disguised himself as the senior brother Hua who’d been devoured by Long Xiaoxuan. Huang’er had disguised herself as senior brother Feng.

“Zhang Ole Third, it’s time for you to find Ding Rong and tell him that you’ve found a clue regarding the sky rank spirit herbs. Whether or not you succeed, and eventually live, will depend entirely on your own skills. Be smart. If this matter is exposed, then not even the gods can save your miserable life,” Jiang Chen reminded Zhao Ole Third once more.



Zhang Ole Third worked hard to try and bring his emotions under control and calm down. "Send me out then."

Once Zhang Ole Third was aboveground, he took a deep breath to calm himself down and broke into a dead run towards the camp. Many patrol teams that saw Zhang Ole Third along the way, but none of them stopped him for questioning. There was nothing to be gained by questioning one of their own, after all.

Zhang Ole Third successfully returned to camp. In reality, he wasn't qualified to meet Ding Rong. However, he was senior brother Hua's follower and thus represented him in some meager way. Therefore, he was able to quickly meet Ding Rong using senior brother Hua's name.

Ding Rong was very high up on the totem pole as one of the top three geniuses in the Thunder Note Hall.

"Zhang Ole Third? If I remember correctly, you should be patrolling right now. What are you doing here?" While Ding Rong might look genteel on the outside, his actions exuded the authority of a superior officer.

Zhang Ole Third snuck a furtive glance at his peers standing around Ding Rong before grinning, "Senior brother Ding, there's something that I need to report to you alone."

Ding Rong had red lips and white teeth, the very picture of an elegant gentleman. However, he couldn't help but frown at Zhang Ole Third's request.

The cultivators beside Ding Rong yelled, "Zhang Ole Third, stop being secretive and spit out whatever it is already! Senior brother Ding's time is precious, and he has no time to waste on the likes of you."

Zhang Ole Third only smiled apologetically and repeated, "Senior brother Ding, I was sent over by senior brother Hua. This matter is of great importance, and senior brother Hua instructed me to report this to you and you alone."

Ding Rong looked meaningfully at Zhang Ole Third. He noticed that Zhang Ole Third's expression was a little suspicious, but knowing his cowardliness and lack of skill, Ding Rong figured that there was just no way Zhang Ole Third could possibly harbor any malice towards him. Therefore, he waved his men away.

"Zhang Ole Third, you know the consequences if I find your words be nothing more than nonsense, don't you?" Ding Rong warned indifferently.

When he saw that everyone else had gone away, Zhang Ole Third finally spoke in a low voice, "Senior brother Ding, senior brother Hua and Feng found a spirit herb by accident while they were on their patrol. It actually looks like a sky rank spirit herb, but since senior brother Hua dared not come to a careless conclusion, he..."

"What did you say?!" Ding Rong looked greatly surprised. He was well aware of what a sky rank spirit herb meant. Even the sect head of Thunder Note Hall himself might not necessarily possess a sky rank spirit herb! Only Titled Great Emperors had the right to use them.

One must say that Zhang Ole Third's acting skills were top notch. He took a step forwards and spoke with a serious expression, "That spirit herb was sealed by a kind of power. Senior brother Hua himself

attempted to unseal it, but he was constantly a step away from succeeding. He told me to return and report this, but I did not go to the elder directly for a certain... reason. I came to you instead, senior brother Ding.”

Ding Rong roughly understood the situation after listening to Zhang Ole Third. This Zhang Ole Third was trying to win his favor. That was why he’d told this information to only Ding Rong, a blatant attempt to curry favor. As one of the three greatest geniuses in the sect, Ding Rong’s status was incredibly high. It was normally impossible for someone of Zhang Ole Third’s stature to even have the opportunity to win his favor. Ding Rong quickly came to believe almost all of Zhang Ole Third’s words.

“Who else knows about this?” Ding Rong’s tone was heavy.

“Senior brother Hua and senior brother Feng are the only other ones, but they didn’t dare to move away from the spot. They sent only me to ask for help. I thought that if this sky rank spirit herb is destined to fall in someone’s hands, it might as well be the top genius of our Thunder Note Hall. That’s why...”

Ding Rong was a smart person. He understood that Zhang Ole Third was claiming credit for his achievements. Therefore, he patted Zhang Ole Third’s shoulder immediately, “You did well. I will treat you well if everything works out.”

His words were pretty to look at, but held nothing of substance. Zhang Ole Third cursed Ding Rong on the inside, but he continued to maintain a respectful look on his face. “I’ll lead the way and guide you, senior brother Ding.”

Ding Rong nodded and said, “Wait here for a moment while I make some arrangements.” His so-called arrangements were of course a bluff to keep others from questioning his whereabouts for the next while.

Ding Rong met Zhang Ole Third outside the camp a moment later.

“Lead the way.” Ding Rong was confident in his skills, so he wasn’t afraid to head out alone. Of course, he was a little wary, but considering Zhang Ole Third’s cowardliness, it was unlikely that the latter would lie to him. After all, there was no way a small fry like Zhang Ole Third would dare play such a prank. If he did, then he was obviously suicidal. However, despite his certainty, Ding Rong stayed cautious, not letting his guard down even once along the way.

“How much further to go?” Ding Rong asked.

“It’s just a bit further. We’ll be almost there once we pass this mountain ridge.”

.....

“Here they come.” Jiang Chen’s consciousness was fully extended, so he could already see Zhang Ole Third leading a young genius in their direction. Jiang Chen might not recognize this person, but he was sure that this genius was Ding Rong.

“Do you need me to act, Sir Jiang?” If Huang’er were to act, she would definitely have to use her emperor realm domain. It was a surefire method to capture Ding Rong.

"No need," Jiang Chen smiled faintly in a tone that was full of confidence. So what if he's a fifth level sage realm expert? Even Cao Jin, an expert half a step away from emperor realm, could do nothing but suffer Jiang Chen's wrath once he set foot into the trap.

Ding Rong and Zhang Ole Third approached the duo as they chatted. Jiang Chen and Huang'er pretended to be surprised and looked at Zhang Ole Third, "Why did you only bring senior brother Ding?"

Zhang Ole Third was an incredible actor, and looked entirely embarrassed as he scratched his head, "I... I thought that the matter would be exposed if we told too many people. Senior brother Ding takes good care of us, so I thought that it might be better for the sky rank spirit herb to fall into senior brother Ding's hands rather than Eternal Celestial Capital's."

Ding Rong cast a cold glance over at Jiang Chen and said, "Do you have a problem with that, junior brother Hua?"

Jiang Chen shrugged, a wry smile on his face, "I couldn't crack that seal myself. I hope that you might be able to do it, senior brother Ding."

Ding Rong nodded indifferently. He cast a glance at both Jiang Chen and Huang'er, but didn't see through their disguises.

They walked into the darkness, and Ding Rong immediately noticed a spirit herb brimming with spirit energy between the gaps in front of them.

A sky rank spirit herb! Ding Rong trembled and stared closely at the sky rank spirit herb. He could hardly suppress the hint of greed that flashed across his eyes.

"Senior brother Ding, is that a sky rank spirit herb?" Zhang Ole Third asked shamelessly. *no ve. lb/In*

Ding Rong muttered, "Yes, it has to be. Junior brother Hua, none of you shall reveal this to anyone. I will treat you well if this matter concludes positively." He had already fished out a short sword and was walking towards the sky rank spirit herb.

Suddenly, he sensed something and abruptly paused. At that precise moment, the sky rank spirit herb shook and disappeared before his eyes, and an entirely different scene appeared instead.

A gnarled forest suddenly appeared around him, as countless vines rushed towards Ding Rong. He was furious as the vague suspicion that he was being tricked solidified into fact.

As towering rage engulfed his mind, three rays of golden lights appeared in the air as three sky sage realm golden armored warriors dropped to the ground. They surrounded Ding Rong in a triangular formation and attacked him madly. This was three sky sage realm golden armored soldiers pitted against one fifth level sage realm genius. It was an apt scene of lions using their full strength to fight a rabbit. While Ding Rong had amazing skill and a lot of trump cards, he didn't even get the chance to unleash any of them. The three golden armored soldiers shattered his body to pieces before he could even let his soul escape.

The scene caused Zhang Ole Third's jaw to drop to the ground. Everything was cleaned up in a trice, and the trio returned underground once more. Zhang Ole Third was still trembling like a leaf. He was stunned beyond reason by what he'd just witnessed. Ding Rong had always occupied a lofty position in

his heart. But that lofty person had just been manhandled like a doll, killed in a single blow. The psychological impact of this was far too terrifying for Zhang Ole Third to process.

"You did well this time, Zhang Ole Third. Here are three months worth of antidote. I will scatter the rest of them around the borders of Great Scarlet Mid Region three months later. Whether you can find them all will depend on your fortune. Remember, you must stay underground for three months. If your exposure causes my plan's failure or even worse, your antidote will be destroyed as well."

"Y-yes... I'll be careful..." Zhang Ole Third nodded again and again.

Jiang Chen nodded indifferently before turning to Huang'er, "The next step will be to disguise myself as Ding Rong."

Great shock appeared in Zhang Ole Third's eyes. He suddenly thought of something and exclaimed, "Sir Jiang... you... you can't be thinking of entering the Regal Pill Palace's headquarters and targeting Gong Qi, are you?"

Zhang Ole Third was a smart guy. When he recalled Jiang Chen's multiple questions about Gong Qi, the answer abruptly came to him like a thunderclap.

Chapter 696: Nothing Ventured, Nothing Gained

"Report for the elder! Senior brother Ding Rong came back just now and said that he'd discovered some clues. He needs to make an urgent trip to the Regal Pill Palace headquarters to meet with the sect head." A patrolling elder came to make a report to the eighth level sage realm elder standing at the door.

"Oh?" The elder frowned, "Did he say what kind of clues they were?"

"No, and I didn't dare ask," the patrolling elder shook his head.

"Did he go alone?"

The patrolling elder hastily responded, "He was with disciple Hua and two of Hua's followers, Feng and Zhang. However, I didn't see the two followers."

Feng and Zhang were all minor characters in the origin realm, so the elder didn't pay them much attention. He was more curious about the supposed clues Ding Rong had discovered. As curious as he was, he didn't dare hold the slightest dissatisfaction towards Ding Rong's independent actions. Ding Rong was the personal disciple of the sect head and had reached fifth level sage realm at his young age. His achievements would be much higher than the elder's in the future. He thought for a moment and spread out his hands. "I understand. Keep up the high density of patrols; don't become complacent and careless."

Jiang Chen and Huang'er had an easy journey to Regal Pill Palace headquarters. Their identities were now Ding Rong and senior brother Hua.

"Miss Huang'er, it's a bit dangerous this time, do you..." Jiang Chen didn't actually want to lead Huang'er into a dangerous situation.

Huang'er however, smiled faintly back at him, "Sir Jiang, we've been through thick and thin so far, weathering life and death together multiple times. It's more interesting if I adventure with Sir Jiang!"

Jiang Chen laughed heartily. He was a straightforward person and felt that those in the Jianghu had no need to put on coquettish airs. "I'm afraid that I won't be able to explain myself to Elder Shun if anything happens."

"Elder Shun is an understanding person," Huang'er smiled slightly. Jiang Chen nodded. He really did need Huang'er's support for this undertaking. Although his plan was very bold, it wasn't good enough with just him alone. Their chances of success would be much greater with Huang'er.

The two arrived outside the doors of the Regal Pill Palace four hours later. Security here was noticeably heavier than at the Regal Pill Palace headquarters. However, as a personal disciple of the Thunder Note Hall, Ding Rong's position was high and there was naturally no need for additional checks when he appeared. When they heard that he had some important clues for the sect head, no one in the sect dared stop him. On the contrary, they all chatted and laughed with him, the very picture of politeness.

Jiang Chen was very careful as he interacted with these people. He was deep in the lion's den now, and could only go forward with his plans.

"Senior brother Ding, Master Gong has summoned the sect head and the Great Roc sect head. They seem to be discussing something very important. You might have to wait for a while." The one who'd gone in to make his report walked back out with a slightly apologetic response for Jiang Chen.

Jiang Chen didn't actually want to see the sect head either, so he asked, "What important matter is this?"

His peer shook his head apologetically, "I didn't dare ask."

"Who else is in there?" Jiang Chen asked again.

"Some other heavyweights of the two sects," the peer responded honestly, patently having great respect for Ding Rong.

Jiang Chen nodded and paused again, "Is Master Gong's young grandson, young master Qi, here?"

His peer revealed a bit of a wry smile. "He actually is here, but he's not participating in the meeting. He's inside trying to make a Great Roc Sect true disciple spar with him. The true disciple... oh no, senior brother Ding, they're out. Take cover!" The disciple thought that senior brother Ding wanted to avoid Gong Qi when he heard Jiang Chen's question, that he didn't want to be harassed by Gong Qi. After all, Gong Qi was a challenge maniac. He would challenge any genius that was a similar strength to him.

Who dared really fight Gong Qi, seeing as he was Master Gong Wuji's young grandson? Therefore, this kind of sparring was all pain and no gain. All of the Thunder Note Hall and Great Roc Sect reacted skittishly to Gong Qi's name, always seeking to avoid him whenever possible. They were deathly afraid that the kid would latch onto them and demand a round of sparring. It was better to take two punches from him than to actually fight with him. Thus, Ding Rong's peer had the best intentions in reminding Jiang Chen to go into hiding when he saw Son Qi walk out.

Jiang Chen was inwardly delighted but put on a slightly panicked expression, making as if he was about to take cover. However, Gong Qi's eyes were sharp and instantly picked him out. "Haha, Ding Rong you kid! I heard you went someplace else. What brings you here today?" Gong Qi was only fourteen years old, but he was as tall as an adult. He was also styled as a mini Gong Wuji. He had a bald head, yellow eyebrows, and extreme ferocity brimming in his words and movements.

Jiang Chen smiled ruefully, "Young master Gong, I ah, I had some matters to come back and report to my master."

What did Gong Qi care about that for? He walked over and grinned, "I thought I heard someone say you were back when I was inside just now. I was so happy that I ran out for a look. Yeah it's you! You can't ditch me this time, kid! Come come come. Let's spar!"

Gong Qi was a battle fiend alright. He was also the height of arrogance in calling Ding Rong "kid". Ding Rong was at least twice his age!

"Young master Gong, let's forget the sparring? How would I possibly stand up to your beating with my skills?" Jiang Chen pretended to retreat while actually advancing.

Gong Qi's expression darkened, "What, Ding Rong, you'll deny me face? You had all sorts of excuses the first two times. Do you still plan on not showing me face this time?"

He'd quickly flipped his mood as he was now glowering, the air around him descending a few degrees as well. Jiang Chen was happy with how things were going and retained a wry expression on his face, "Young master Gong, it's not that I'm not giving you face, but I feel quite panicked in sparring with you before Master Gong. His aura is simply too strong."

Gong Qi was quite put out when he heard these words and rolled his eyes. "Ding Rong, the hell you mean? Do you mean that it was because of my grandfather's aura that I defeated all you geniuses?"

Jiang Chen chuckled, "I didn't mean that."

The temperament of a young boy made Gong Qi feel even more humiliated when he saw how Ding Rong was chuckling. "How dare you! Ding Rong, how dare you think so little of me! Fine! My grandfather's meeting with your master inside, so let's pick a place far away and have a good fight!"

Jiang Chen looked at the two guards behind Gong Qi. One of them was first level emperor realm, the other half step emperor realm. None of them were easy characters. His expression was quite lively when he looked at the two guards, making it seem like he meant something else by it. To Gong Qi, his opponent was still staying that Gong Qi was bullying others with his superior numbers. He grew enraged, "Don't follow me, you two! I'm going to teach this kid a lesson today and let him know that I beat their faces into the ground with pure skill!"

Gong Qi was indeed an incredible genius to have such cultivation level at fourteen years old. The pride of a genius made it difficult for him to swallow the "you're so cheating" look that Jiang Chen was sending his way.

The two guards hastily spoke up, "Young master Gong, this won't do. Master Gong instructed us that we're never to leave even a foot by your side."

Jiang Chen shrugged, "Then another time, young master Gong."

"No!" Gong Qi was thoroughly enraged. Jiang Chen's every look and move seemed careless, but they were completely provocative in Gong Qi's eyes. All other geniuses were beyond polite when they saw Gong Qi. They couldn't avoid the boy fast enough. But Ding Rong today dared chat and laugh so casually with him. Gong Qi could feel his blood pressure rise as he looked at Jiang Chen's "I'm not afraid of you, I just don't want to offend your grandfather" pose.

"Let's go!" Gong Qi grabbed Jiang Chen's sleeve and glared at the two guards. "Don't follow us! I'll break the legs of whoever follows us!" n--OvεlBIn

The two guards may be strong, but they really wouldn't dare hit back if Gong Qi was beating down on them. But they also didn't dare obey Gong Wuji's orders. Gong Qi lost his temper, "What?! Do my words not mean anything?"

The two guards were obviously afraid of Gong Qi. They looked at each other. Although they weren't by his side, they still trailed after him. The group walked towards the Regal Pill Palace fighting arena, and Gong Qi landed in the ring with a mighty leap. He spoke impatiently, "Are you chicken now, Ding Rong?"

Jiang Chen smiled faintly, "Young master Gong, I'm worried that your two guards will rip me apart if anything happens. I still feel uncertain and I'm worried I won't be able to give it my all."

Gong Ji leered, "What kind of future would us cultivators have if we can't triumph even over a little bit of fear? Kid, stop making excuses. It's your honor to spar with the genius of a first rank sect. Just think, ten years from now, I might not even be willing to take a second look at you if you throw yourself at my feet and look up at me."

These words were quite arrogant, but they were justifiably so. To have such accomplishments at fourteen years old, he'd be at peak sage realm in another ten years, and possibly even half step emperor realm. He did indeed have half the right to look down on a fourth rank sect top genius like Ding Rong. If it'd truly been Ding Rong here, he might've more or less felt a bit humiliated after hearing these words. However, Jiang Chen only laughed coldly. Gong Qi was a kid after all. He was arrogant and full of himself.

Jiang Chen smiled, "Alright, young master Gong is a genius of a first rank sect after all. It is indeed the fortune of several lifetimes that I can spar with you. Therefore, will young master Gong let me have three moves first?"

Gong Qi started and then smiled proudly, "I'll give you even ten moves, much less three."

Chapter 697: Capturing Gong Qi Alive

No sooner had he spoken than did the scenery around him flicker. Gong Qi's eyes narrowed, but soon relaxed as he sneered, "A formation, is it? This is nothing!"

When he'd looked around, the landscape around him looked like the mouth of a volcano. Lava bubbled ominously as the temperature seemed to jump, the prelude to a volcanic eruption. However, Gong Qi's skill was only surpassed by his confidence. He felt no fear whatsoever as he extended his hand and clenched his fist. A glyph on his palm flickered brightly, about to attack the formation directly. It was precisely at this moment that several rays of golden light abruptly appeared from beneath his feet. In

the next moment, the golden light congealed and transformed into six golden soldiers that completely surrounded Gong Qi. He suddenly began to panic as his pupils constricted violently.

An extremely bad premonition struck his heart like a bell. The three closest golden armored soldiers were all at sky sage realm! Any one of these three soldiers could have pounded him down into the dust on their own, much less than three of them working together. Moreover, there were another three earth sage golden armored soldiers eyeing him predatorily just behind them at the perimeter. Gong Qi felt every hair on his body standing on end. He had the vague feeling that he had just fallen into a trap.

Gong Qi was strong. In fact, he was slightly stronger than Ding Rong. However, he had made one crucial mistake from the start to end; he had drastically underestimated his opponent. This was especially true since Jiang Chen had been careful to portray a weak look in the guise of Ding Rong. This caused Gong Qi to grow even more sure of himself and disdainful of Ding Rong. Since then, Gong Qi's underestimation of his enemy had only grown more pronounced.

After activating the formation, Jiang Chen had then used the Soldier Rosary Beads. This was his strongest lethal move. With this strategy, even a top rank genius like Cao Jin would only have a roughly sixty percent chance of making it out alive. While this Gong Qi was without a doubt a genius, he was ultimately too young and absolutely incomparable to someone like Cao Jin in terms of cultivation. If Jiang Chen hadn't wanted to capture him alive, even two Gong Qis combined would have perished beneath a single blow. n-)p-(V(-e)/ℓ-)b.)1)-n

Gong Qi's two bodyguards had already reacted when Jiang Chen activated the formation and prepared to charge into the arena. But Huang'er had not been waiting all this time in vain. She immediately crushed two great offensive talismans in her palm and fired them at the bodyguards. Jiang Chen had acquired these offensive glyphs from Cao Jin. The glyphs' offensive power was top class, forcing even the two bodyguards to step back to evade the attack. This momentary pause in their attack bought Jiang Chen the time he needed to deal the perfect blow.

When the two bodyguards finally found their footing, Huang'er had already leapt up onto the arena and Jiang Chen had trussed Gong Qi up. Jiang Chen suppressed every single one of the young cultivator's meridians and fed him a few exclusive pills he'd created out of the Divine Befuddlement Miasma. Moreover, the Divine Befuddlement Miasma of these pills wasn't at all similar to the one he'd fed to Zhang Ole Third.

Jiang Chen laughed loudly and tore off his disguise, revealing his true face to the bodyguards. "Tell that old fool Gong Wuji to come and see me!"

Jiang Chen's tone was cold and arrogant. He swept a disdainful gaze around his surroundings and looked down at the two wary-looking bodyguards, "If that old man doesn't show up in ten breaths, then he can come collect his grandson's corpse!"

"Don't you dare, kid!"

"He's Jiang Chen! Look, he's Jiang Chen!" Someone recognized him amidst the crowd.

Jiang Chen smiled faintly. He had never intended to hide his identity in the first place. The reason he'd entered the lion's den today was to make a dangerous gamble. He had heard from Zhang Ole Third last time that Gong Qi especially enjoyed challenging the top geniuses of the Thunder Note Hall and the



Great Roc Sect. The information had immediately sparked a flash of inspiration in Jiang Chen's mind and formed the foundation of his plans. He felt that Gong Qi's youthful arrogance was a good breakthrough point.

That was why he had executed this plan step by step, first by baiting out Ding Rong, then killing and pretending to be him. After he encountered Gong Qi, he pretended to be hesitant in attempt to incite Gong Qi's competitiveness. As expected, Gong Qi was arrogant in his youth. He was slowly lured into the arena, allowing Jiang Chen to deal the perfect blow. With Gong Qi in his hands, Jiang Chen had basically obtained a trump card that allowed him to advance or retreat as he pleased. The news quickly reached Gong Wuji's ears.

He been holding a meeting when Gong Qi was captured, and his face immediately drained of all color upon hearing this. Gong Qi was his grandson and his darling. In fact, he loved this grandson more than his own son. Gong Qi was almost identical to him in terms of both talent and behavior. The child had inherited all of the qualities of his grandfather, and was in fact even more talented. One might say that Gong Wuji had sunk everything he had into Gong Qi. Therefore, how could he not be shocked and angry to hear that Gong Qi had fallen into Jiang Chen's hands?

"Jiang Chen... if you dare touch even a hair on my grandson I will shatter your soul and make you suffer for eternity!!" A mad howl came rolled in from the the distance like countless thunderclaps. Some low realm fighters paled greatly upon hearing the roar. They felt as if their consciousness had boiled over in an instant, and that it was a step away from collapsing on the spot.

However, Jiang Chen continued to stand tall like a demon god who'd descended from the sky. He was perfectly calm in spite of Gong Wuji's earth-shaking aura. His cultivation was far weaker than Gong Wuji's, but his consciousness wasn't necessarily much weaker. If Gong Wuji was trying to intimidate him with his might, then he'd obviously barked up the wrong tree.

Jiang Chen's voice suddenly pierced through Gong Wuji's rumbling roar in an abrupt fashion.

"Anyone can talk big, don't you know, old fool? So what if I hurt your grandson, huh?" Jiang Chen swung his arms and slapped Gong Qi's face twice in a row, intentionally spreading the crisp sounds to every corner of the Regal Pill Palace.

Slap slap!

The sound frightened the people of the Thunder Note Hall and the Great Roc Sect so much that they could faint. Although they were enemies, they couldn't help but be shocked by Jiang Chen's actions, and be fearful for his sake. He's offending Master Gong Wuji as much as he can!

This kid is absolutely out of control! The Thunder Note Hall's sect head, Great Roc Sect's sect head, and their respective elders had all rushed into the open. It was obvious that even they couldn't sit still now that something of this magnitude had happened. This was especially true for the sect head of the Thunder Note Hall. The guy was drenched in cold sweat and feeling goosebumps all over his body when he'd heard that Ding Rong was the one who'd lured Gong Qi to the arena.

He was racked with a terrible premonition for a second. If Ding Rong was the one who lured Gong Qi to the arena, how had he suddenly turned out to be the vestige of the Regal Pill Palace, Jiang Chen? This matter was weird all around. Could it be? Is Ding Rong... The sect head of the Thunder Note Hall felt like

going on a rampage himself when his thoughts travelled up to this point. However, he didn't even have the time to worry for Ding Rong.

This was because Gong Qi was Gong Wuji's precious grandson! If anything were to happen to Gong Qi because of Ding Rong's involvement, then Gong Wuji's wrath would absolutely descend upon the Thunder Note Hall. Even if the entire incident had absolutely nothing to do with the Thunder Note Hall, even if they were the victims from the beginning to the end, they would most likely suffer Gong Wuji's wrath and be turned into a scapegoat all the same. The sect head of the Thunder Note Hall quickly scuttled to the edge of the arena.

The sect head of the Great Roc Sect had also figured out the ins and outs of the situation. However, he revealed a trace of a gloating smile when no one was looking. Gong Qi was rude and overbearing, and he had put the geniuses of the Great Roc Sect through plenty of hardships while he was around. Worse, the Great Roc Sect couldn't do anything about it. Moreover, the Thunder Note Hall and the Great Roc Sect were in fact competing against each other even though they were partners on the surface. If the Thunder Note Hall were to lose favor from this incident, then the Great Roc Sect's reputation would no doubt rise in response. This was literally the most perfect situation for the Great Roc Sect.

But of course, he didn't reveal any of his thoughts and wore a sanctimonious look on his face instead. Not wanting to fall behind, he also ran towards the edge of arena and put on an appearance of irreconcilable differences with Jiang Chen.

Gong Wuji's sucked in a deep breath and forcefully restrained his anger. He glared at Jiang Chen with eyes as cold as a hell magistrate's, "What do you want, Jiang Chen?"

"Are you trying to discuss something with me?" Jiang Chen's tone was indifferent. He sneered and said, "Stop looking like a dead fish if you really want to discuss something with me."

Gong Wuji hated Jiang Chen so much he could explode on the spot. But still he restrained his anger and said, "Aren't you something! Speak. What do you want in exchange for stopping all this?"

"Do you think you can give me what I want?" Jiang Chen sneered.

"Say it." Gong Wuji worked hard to restrain his anger, but he'd locked his consciousness firmly onto Jiang Chen and was searching for that one bit of opening. If he saw even a tiny bit of opening, he would absolutely deal Jiang Chen a fatal blow without hesitation.

"My Regal Pill Palace lies in shambles and ruins. Can you restore it? Those of my Regal Palace people are dead. Can you bring the dead back to the living? Come on, tell me. Which one of my requirements can you fulfill?" Jiang Chen was filled with righteous indignation as he said this, killing intent growing ever thicker. If his rationale hadn't warned him that Gong Qi was still useful to him, he would've torn this guy into shreds already.

Gong Wuji pondered for a moment before saying loudly, "Let's cut the angry words, shall we? Nothing can be changed at this point already. Jiang Chen, you can hardly escape death yourself if you kill my grandson. Why don't we find a compromise that we both can accept?"

This was the truth alright.

“Jiang Chen, stop persisting in your erroneous ways!” The sect head of the Thunder Note Hall also said loudly.

Jiang Chen laughed loudly, “Persist in my wrong ways, you say? You invaded my sect and killed my peers, but here you tell me that I’m the one who’s in the wrong? Gong Wuji, are you forcing me to kill this brat?”

Gong Wuji immediately swore on the inside when he heard this. He glared fiercely at the sect head of the Thunder Note Hall. The sect head of the Thunder Note Hall felt cold sweat pouring down his back and retreated in haste. Although he knew that Jiang Chen was purposely driving a wedge between him and Gong Wuji, there was nothing he could do to justify his actions. Any justification was pointless to Gong Wuji at this moment. It would do nothing but make Gong Wuji feel even more disgusted by him.

“Jiang Chen, I admit that I’ve underestimated you, but do you seriously think that you can control me just because you captured my grandson? What a joke!” Gong Wuji still refused to admit that he was in a bad spot.

“Oh? Does this mean that we’re parting ways now?” Jiang Chen smiled malevolently suddenly slashed down on Gong Qi’s left arm with his own hand.

Crack!

A broken arm flew towards Gong Wuji. Gong Wuji’s expression changed greatly as big droplets of sweat rolled down his forehead. Gong Qi also roared out with anger and pain, “Jiang Chen, I swear I’ll kill you!”

Jiang Chen shrugged, “I guess you’ll never accomplish your oath in this lifetime.”

Gong Wuji panicked when he heard this, “Wait!”

“Jiang Chen, tell me anything you want!” Gong Wuji gave up on maintaining a tough outlook. He knew that Jiang Chen had thrown all caution to the wind and wasn’t afraid to go to the extreme. Even if he could kill Jiang Chen after this matter was over, he still wouldn’t be able to save his grandson’s life.

Jiang Chen obviously didn’t plan to kill Gong Qi right now either. He stared at Gong Wuji indifferently and said, “Since you insist, then I won’t be holding back my requests. Remember, and I am only going to say this once: Don’t try to negotiate with me. If you do it even once, I swear that you won’t even get the chance to collect his corpse.”

#### Chapter 698: More Unexpected Events Arise

“Speak!” Gong Wuji was a senior executive of a first rank sect, a majestic holy king of the Eternal Celestial Capital. He was an existence that could personally dictate the fates of those in the Upper Eight Regions. Who would’ve thought that such a person would be forced to restrain his temper before this sage realm cultivator? It wasn’t difficult at all to imagine the boiling resentment in his heart.

“First, I want all of you to get the hell out from Regal Pill Palace territory!

“Second, you will bring back each and every one of the prisoners you’ve captured with the fastest speed possible. You have one month. For every missing person, your grandson will personally donate an organ to their memory. Remember, you have only one month!

“Third, you will return each and every item you took from this place. If not, your grandson will also suffer for each missing item!” Jiang Chen didn’t want to speak too much. He calmly looked at Gong Wuji silently after stating his three demands. He hadn’t made any absurd requests. All of Jiang Chen’s conditions were fully within Gong Wuji’s authority to agree to and fulfill. Just as Gong Wuji was worried about his grandson, so was Jiang Chen worried about those of his sect and fellow disciples.

Gong Wuji’s countenance turned dangerously dark as he digested the demands. He would’ve retorted straightaway had that infernal Regal Pill Palace disciple not stated that there was no room for negotiation. He had the ability to fulfill each and every one of these three conditions, but it would cause him a great deal of humiliation. He would’ve made this trip in vain if he agreed to all three demands, not to mention the disgrace he would be subjected to when he returned. But this was his only grandson. If he didn’t agree to the terms and the other party decided ‘to hell with it all’, it would be too late for regrets.

“Jiang Chen, this seat can consider fulfilling your conditions. But how can I trust you to release Gong Qi afterwards?”

Jiang Chen replied indifferently, “I told you already not to haggle. Pull back all these useless troops and deliver the prisoners and items—then we can negotiate. Remember, you have one month.” He gave a leisurely peal of laughter and left the arena looking completely at ease. Gong Qi was dragged along behind him, and Huang’er demurely followed. He didn’t go anywhere, but headed directly for his own residence in the Rosy Valley.

He had an obligation to remain at the Regal Pill Palace now as one of its only remaining disciples in residence. The ones who should be showing themselves out were those people, now that he had a bargaining chip in hand. “Oh and one more thing—if these people don’t get the hell out, I don’t mind coming out to kill a few of them every now and then. Feel free to stick around if you lot have no fear of being killed or maimed.”

Gong Wuji really wanted to rush in and murder Jiang Chen after watching the young man walk off cockily into the sunset. But he didn’t dare take the bet. He knew he had a good chance if he charged in, but he could not afford such a gamble. If for some reason, he slipped up even once, then he and his beloved grandson would be forever parted by death.

“Sir Gong, this brat is far too insolent...” The sect head of the Thunder Note Hall approached with hopes of currying favor.

“Get out of my sight!” Gong Wuji was not in a good mood. It was just as the sect head of the Thunder Note Hall had thought, the former had decided to take it out on them. The sect head of the Thunder Note Hall was the very picture of wry acceptance—he dared not retort and could only retreat obediently.

“Master Gong, please set aside your anger. Saving the young master takes the utmost priority,” The head of the Giant Roc Sect stood out at this point to play the good man.

“Jiang Chen!” Gong Wuji’s eyes seemed to spout flames as he gazed at Jiang Chen’s fading silhouette. He clenched his fists so hard that his joints cracked, as loudly as stirfried beans. “Your two sects will move

your men out of Regal Pill Palace territory!" Despite his overwhelming fury, Gong Wuji dared not challenge Jiang Chen's temper.

"Yes, sir." The two sect heads dared not disobey. It was very possible that Gong Wuji would personally kill them if Jiang Chen mentioned that he wanted them dead. Leaving this troublesome area at the fastest possible speed might not be a bad thing for them. Moreover, Jiang Chen had announced that he didn't mind coming out to kill anyone who remained. This was likely not a bluff, considering his strength.

"Leave everything you have plundered. Remember, don't even think about playing petty tricks. If any part of this goes wrong, I don't mind sacrificing both your sects," Gong Wuji's tone was frost and steel.

The two sect heads were near helpless, but could only respond with due respect, "Yes, sir."

The head of the Great Roc Sect still wanted to gain some favor. "Sir, those captives should have arrived at the capital by now. I suggest we contact them right away. If we drag on and encounter some setback, we might delay the more important matters."

Gong Wuji nodded rigidly and motioned with one hand. "Understood. The two of you may withdraw."

Jiang Chen observed the retreat of the Thunder Note Hall and Great Roc Sect from a high vantage point in his residence. Killing intent still surged in his heart. "I'll let you lot leave for now. But the day that I take the fight to the Great Scarlet Mid Region will be your doomsday!" His killing intent did not recede, but instead concentrated, growing ever more potent. He repeatedly reminded himself to endure; to be patient, to bide his time. Even so, he still had to fight the urge to rush out and start a massacre.

One had to look at the greater picture!

Jiang Chen could only pinch his nose and endure for now.

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While Jiang Chen was silently resisting his urge to kill every Scarlet Mid Region cultivator in sight, the flames of fury burned uproariously amidst those of the Thunder Note Hall when they learned that Ding Rong had perished. The sect head's wrath surged to the skies. He stood at the border of the Regal Pill Palace territory and gritted his teeth, "Jiang Chen, you killed our successor! You and our Thunder Note Hall now have an irreconcilable feud, to the death!!"

The Thunder Note Hall sect head did not mind the deaths of Zhang Ole Third and the disciple surnamed Feng. But Ding Rong was his successor, one of the three strongest geniuses of the Thunder Note Hall. Ding Rong's death was as painful to him as having half his heart gouged out.

"Sect head... things don't look encouraging. We have news from the capital," An elder hurriedly approached the sect head during his outburst.

"What is it now?!" The sect head of the Thunder Note Hall had a distorted expression as he lamented the loss of Ding Rong.

"Those at the capital have tortured and interrogated the prisoners already. They found two sky ranked spirit herbs and a batch of earth ranked ones. The recipe to the Longevity Pill has also been obtained." The elder's expression was grave.

"Isn't that a good thing?" The sect head of the Thunder Note Hall replied absentmindedly.

"But... But after getting everything they wanted, the prisoners were no longer of any value..."

"Don't tell me they've been killed?!" The sect head's tone grew heavy.

"They haven't been killed... yet. But they were all sold to the Veluriyam Capital just a few days ago."

"Veluriyam Capital?" The sect head's voice hitched., "Do you mean the Veluriyam Capital from the Upper Eight Regions?"

"Yes." There was only one Veluriyam Capital beneath the skies.

The expression of the Thunder Note Hall sect head turned rigid after receiving this confirmation. But contrary to expectations, an evil smile split his face, "That also means that the deal between Master Gong Wuji and the brat has... gone down the drain?"

The elder nodded with a complicated expression, "That would inevitably be the case."

The sect head more or less held some resentment towards Gong Wuji after being repeatedly humiliated. It was just that he dared not express it. But now, he was feeling secretly delighted since the deal had gone awry. He almost rejoiced at Gong Wuji's plight. Aren't you very capable? Didn't you scold us like dogs? Now that things have turned out this way, you can only wait to collect your grandson's corpse!

The Thunder Note Hall sect head was not a placid and easygoing person. There was no way he wouldn't bear a grudge after being humiliated so by Gong Wuji. He was a sect head after all, and it was certain that he would feel upset. He couldn't vent this resentment directly, but it was natural for him to gloat in secret. He decided to throw caution to the winds now that things had reached this stage.

The Giant Roc Sect also received the news from the capital soon afterwards. The news, of course, reached Gong Wuji even faster than either of the two. Gong Wuji almost fainted after receiving this information. It was still possible for him to rush over and make amends if the prisoners had been sold to any other major power. But the Veluriyam Capital was one of the top powers in the Upper Eight Regions. Their formidable strength wasn't the least inferior to first rank sects, despite not being one themselves. They might even be more powerful!

The Veluriyam Capital was a bright and transcendent pearl embedded in the map of the Upper Eight Regions. No first rank sect, kingdom or empire dared to provoke it, since it was almost a legend in the Upper Eight Regions. No one clearly knew how many Titled Great Emperors they had, and no one was privy to its inner workings. History spoke of many first rank sects challenging the Veluriyam Capital. Yet, there they stood, as strong and mysterious as ever, while their challengers had disappeared or suffered irreparable losses to the point where they were removed from the list of first rank sects. As such, even first rank sects dared not provoke the Veluriyam Capital.

There were a number of publicly recognized major powers in the Upper Eight Regions, and the Veluriyam Capital ranked among the very top. So much so that the Veluriyam Capital was recognized by those in the region as having the foundation and strength of two first rank sects! Therefore, Gong Wuji did not entertain any thoughts of redeeming the prisoners after they'd been sold to the Veluriyam Capital.

He knew it would be nothing but a fool's errand. The Eternal Celestial Capital was a first rank sect, but the Veluriyam Capital had no need to earn their favor.

Sudden apprehension struck deep within his heart. He could not fulfill Jiang Chen's terms if he was unable to bring back all the prisoners—that meant the doors had closed on any possibility of negotiation. The only way left was to outsmart him.

As soon as the idea struck him, he rushed towards the border of the Regal Pill Palace territory and rounded up the experts of the Thunder Note Hall and Great Roc Sect. He stared meaningfully at the sect head of the Thunder Note Hall and said indifferently, "Sect Head Lei, everything happened because of Ding Rong from your Thunder Note Hall. I can overlook this transgression, on the condition that Gong Qi is safely rescued. I believe that both of you have received news from the capital. The possibility of negotiating with Jiang Chen is now no more. Our only path left is to rescue the hostage by force. I hope both sect heads will prove their sincerity in this regard."

The sect head of the Thunder Note Hall had already cursed all of Gong Wuji's ancestors several times over in his mind before Gong Wuji finished. But he could only spout compliant reassurances, promising that he would spare no effort to rescue Gong Qi. Someone in the crowd spoke up, "Sir Gong, this Jiang Chen schemed against us all by pretending to be Ding Rong. Why don't we pretend to be prisoners from the Regal Pill Palace?"

Gong Wuji laughed coldly. "Do you think that devious rogue Jiang Chen doesn't have a mouth? Do you think he won't ask questions of his friends? You'd be exposed after a mere couple of questions if he had the mind to check!"

Gong Wuji immediately overruled the proposed strategy.

#### Chapter 699: Consecutive Blows

"Veluriyam Capital?" Jiang Chen received the Goldbiter Rats' secret report almost immediately. The Goldbiter Rats race had undergone multiple bloodline evolutions, and some of them had even reached the human sage realm. The Goldbiter Rat King, in particular, was almost at the level of human earth sage realm. His cultivation speed was just as quick as Jiang Chen's.

However, Jiang Chen didn't feel envious of the Goldbiter Rats.

They were a race of ancient saint beasts, and their bloodline was ludicrously powerful. In comparison, Jiang Chen held no advantages over them other than the fact that he possessed the memories from his past life. Moreover, the Goldbiter Rats were guaranteed to become powerful because their bloodline could evolve, and their inherited memories would awaken as they grew stronger. Unfortunately, the Goldbiter Rats were limited by the resources that they could scavenge, and the fact that they hadn't evolved into a fierce form yet. But once the Goldbiter Rats completed their evolution, they would be an impressive trump card!

Even a couple hundred thousand or so Goldbiter Rats were enough to destroy countless experts. An almost unstoppable force of nature that was tens of millions strong. Even an emperor realm expert could only run on sight when faced with a crazy race like this one.

Of course, Jiang Chen wasn't in a hurry. He had raised the Goldbiter Rats with the idea of long term investment in mind. When the time was right, the Goldbiter Rats would definitely become his ace! For now, they were more than qualified to act as his eyes and ears. Gong Wuji had summoned the Thunder Note Hall and the Great Roc Sect to the fringe of Regal Pill Palace territory. Jiang Chen had in turn heard of the news through the Goldbiter Rats. He was both shocked and angered.

What angered him was that Great Scarlet Mid Region had traded the people of the Regal Pill Palace like common goods. This was obviously slavery! What surprised him more was that he had read a little about Veluriyam Capital from the book 'The Annals of Mountains and Rivers'. He knew that this mysterious force was very powerful among the Upper Eight Regions. This was an organization that not even Gong Wuji would dare to provoke. It might be far, far more difficult to save his people from Veluriyam Capital than from Great Scarlet Mid Region.

"Great Scarlet Mid Region!" Jiang Chen's fists were clenched tightly.

"Sir Jiang, Veluriyam Capital is quite far away from here. Even if we were to travel non-stop towards them, it would still take us a couple of months. If we wish to save your people, then it may be prudent to act as soon as possible." Huang'er was also worried when she heard that Gouyu and the others had been sold to the Veluriyam Capital.

Jiang Chen nodded, "We should head out immediately, but Gong Wuji and the bastards of those two sects are still plotting against me. I need to teach them a lesson they won't soon forget."

He pondered for a moment, and a plan slowly formed in his mind. "Miss Huang'er, I'll need your help again this time," Jiang Chen's smile was rather mysterious.

"Sure," Huang'er didn't even bother to ask how.

"Take Gong Qi with you and make some noise. It'd be best if you can make this kid scream. You'll definitely be able to lure Gong Wuji and a couple of experts to you. I'll then attack while they're away and kill a couple of cultivators from the Thunder Note Hall and the Great Roc Sect. Let's reap some more interest before we go."

This was no problem at all for Huang'er. She possessed a number of powerful escape glyphs. Not even Gong Wuji could say with assurance that he could catch up to Huang'er. Even if he did, he wouldn't need to worry for her safety since she had Gong Qi in hand.

"Let's coordinate meeting spots once the matter is done. First day will be this location. If no one shows up, the second day's location is here. If we run into trouble, day three's location is..." Jiang Chen pointed at several locations on a spread map of Myriad Domain and made his arrangements patiently.

Huang'er was extremely smart. She understood Jiang Chen's plan with a quick glance.

"Be careful, Sir Jiang. Your safety is of the utmost priority," Huang'er gave him a rare reminder before she left.

"You too," Jiang Chen replied gravely. After the duo parted ways, Jiang Chen waited until Huang'er had left and slowly counted. Then, without the slightest warning, he vanished into thin air.



At the borders of Regal Pill Palace territory, Gong Wuji and the two sect heads was almost done making their plans to ambush and kill Jiang Chen. It was obvious that they were determined to kill him this time. "Don't worry, Master Gong. If your drugs work as intended, then we will definitely capture this Jiang Chen. When that happens... hehe," The Thunder Note Hall's sect head laughed sinisterly.

"Don't underestimate our enemies. My drug is just one part of our plan. If the first plan doesn't work, then we must immediately move on to the backup plan. Both of you must prepare all necessary arrangements by then." Gong Wuji had prepared three plans in total, and if the first one didn't work, he would immediately move onto the second plan. He would not brook any mistakes.

A bloodcurdling scream suddenly cut through the air as they went over the plan once more. The pitch of the scream clearly revealed its owner as a youth. It didn't take long for the scream to register as belonging to Gong Qi. Gong Wuji's face turned cold, "Was that Qi'er?"

The sect head of the Thunder Note Hall and the Great Roc Sect exchanged glances with each other. They had obviously realized that it was Gong Qi's voice too. The atmosphere on the scene immediately turned oppressive and serious. Then—

Another bloodcurdling scream cut through the air, "Jiang Chen, you bastard, I swear, if you ever fall in my hands I'll... *Ah!!!*"

This time, no one could mistake this voice for anyone else's but Gong Qi's. Everyone was stunned by this turn of events. Wasn't Jiang Chen at the Regal Pill Palace? That was incredibly far from them, so how did Gong Qi's voice transmit all the way to their meeting spot? It couldn't be that their plans had been... exposed, could they? Had Jiang Chen brought Gong Qi out into the open as a show of strength? Gong Wuji couldn't just sit by and do nothing. He charged out of the door, leaving behind a command, "Let's go take a look."

The sect head of the Great Roc Sect cast a glance at the sect head of Thunder Note Hall and said, "Let's go."

Although both sect heads felt that this whole thing might just be a ruse, they didn't dare not show their support since Gong Wuji himself had gone. If they didn't go after him and seek out the source of the voice, then Gong Wuji would be even more irate when he returned later. However, the two sect heads were very cautious and warned their subordinates, "Keep your heads about you just in case this is a trick to lure us away!"

The elders of both sects chuckled and said, "Don't worry, sect head. If that kid dares to show his face here, we'll make sure that he never returns!"

The elites of both sects had all been gathered at this place. Considering how numerous their experts were, they weren't afraid of just one Jiang Chen. In their view, the reason Jiang Chen had even managed to capture Gong Qi was because he'd relied on dirty tricks and sneak attacks. They thought that Jiang Chen would have to be insane to attack their elite team head on. Unless he was suicidal!

Although that was what the elders told their respective sect heads, they didn't dare to neglect their defenses either. All of the elders stood up and personally patrolled the grounds, yelling, "Stay on high alert, everyone. If that Jiang Chen is stupid enough to charge into this place, then it'll be the perfect opportunity for us to score some merits!"

“Hehe, I’m only afraid that he wouldn’t come!”

“It’ll be perfect if he shows up. We can capture him ourselves!”

“No way! There’s no way he has the guts to show his face around here!”

“Yeah, that kid ambushed senior brother Ding Rong and captured young master Gong only because he was using a couple of dirty tricks. But how powerful could he possibly be in true face to face combat?” There were plenty of people who didn’t see Jiang Chen as their equal or superior. Although Jiang Chen was a fourth rank sect disciple just like them, they’d always had this feeling of superiority that a fourth rank sect in the Great Scarlet Mid Region was far better than a corresponding sect in the Myriad Domain.

Jiang Chen was just a fourth rank sect genius in the Myriad Domain. He may have been in the limelight for the past few days, but that certainly didn’t put him on their level. Cultivators of both sects were frustrated with the amount of attention he’d been getting recently, and were only too eager to receive an opportunity to teach him a lesson. A sudden burst of laughter rang out in midair as they happily trash talked. An indifferent voice entered everyone’s ears, “Oh? Then, guess what? Here I am!”

Countless rampaging vines burst out of the ground before the voice’s echo had even dispersed. Lotuses started to bloom, and they whipped towards the crowd, maws gaping.

“Calm down, don’t panic!”

“Hold your ground. He’s just one person! Don’t be afraid!”

“Yeah, don’t be afraid. He’s only one person! What could he do even if he has three heads and six arms?”

Words were comforting in their own right, but the carnage that several hundred berserk vines can create is more than enough to make the most persuasive of arguments seem hollow. Some low realm cultivators even immediately fled from the scene. But there were also plenty of sage realm experts who leaped headlong into battle, unsheathing their blades as they hacked at the vines.

One slash, two slashes...

Swords and blades danced everywhere as hundreds of people defended themselves against the vines at the same time. They might not be able to cut down the vines in one cut, but they weren’t alone. The successive attacks of both swords and blades hacked apart countless vines. However, the vines themselves were rather flexible. As soon as the cultivators started to feel like they were about to gain the upper hand, all of the vines dived deep back underground. In a blink of an eye, they’d vanished.

“Eh? What’s going on?”

“Did he leave?”

“Don’t fall into his trap. This is a harassment tactic!”

“Yeah, we shouldn’t lose our own footing.” The unpredictable attack had vanished as quickly as it came. The two sects waited for the next wave to arrive with great suspicion, but it never did show up. It really seemed to just be a harassment tactic. Its only objective was to annoy them. However, a couple of origin

realm cultivators started to collapse to the ground. Before long, more and more started to fall to their knees, clutching at their chests.

“Oh no! Poison!”

“I can’t move my body at all!”

“Ah! I’m poisoned too!” A dozen or so people standing near the edge of the battlefield cried out.

A couple of elders hastily yelled orders with ashen faces, “Leave this place now! Quickly!”

“Hold your breaths and don’t use your consciousness! We must evacuate this place quickly!” These elders had come to the realization that this attack wasn’t a probe or harassment at all. It was an absolutely lethal attack under the cover of a diversion. The vines were simply the delivery mechanism for the fatal poison. Chaos once engulfed the scene. The cultivators who showed the first signs of poison were all origin realm cultivators, but it didn’t take long for sage realm experts to begin to show symptoms too. The elites of both sects totaled several thousand people. Within minutes, the number of poisoned people reached eighty, and it only looked like it would increase from there.

The group quickly evacuated the scene under their elders’ commands. Suddenly, a volley of arrows sped through the air, aimed at their flank. Approximately thirty arrows, the elders flew up to deflect the arrows away, stopping a large majority from hitting their people. These elders were all sky sage realm cultivators. Some of them were even half step emperor realm. Naturally, these non-lethal arrows were nowhere near powerful enough to be a threat to their defenses. However, they immediately noticed that the arrows were just a trap. As the arrows landed harmlessly in the ground, they each discharged a burst of poison powder into the air.

“This is bad!”

“Retreat, retreat!”

“Don’t stay in one place, keep moving!” Every second they stayed inside the poison cloud meant an increase in casualties. At this moment, everyone of them felt a sudden sense of apprehensive fear. They’d originally thought that the Regal Pill Palace would be easy pickings, with the promise of a fat reward for little effort. But now, gloom and regret were the only emotions that filled their minds.

#### Chapter 700: Immense Losses

The poison within the arrows latched onto nearly thirty unprepared cultivators as it spread through the chaos. It was absolutely tyrannical. Once inhaled, it swiftly infiltrated the ocean of qi in the cultivator’s dantian, spelling their doom. Once that happened, the cultivator could no longer mobilize their inner energy, since doing so would only speed up its spread in their bodies.

The thousand strong group finally escaped the range of the poisonous arrows and arrived in a fairly spacious area. Intense killing intent was clear in the eyes of the several elders. They gazed in the direction from which the arrows had been shot from before exchanging surreptitious glances with each other. They were debating whether or not they should just charge out and kill that brat! It wasn’t that they didn’t want to go. It was just that they were restrained by the seemingly endless tricks up Jiang Chen’s sleeves. Any one of these elders was superior to Jiang Chen on the basis of pure strength. But as

things stood, the enemy was in the dark while they stood in the light. They truly didn't dare to casually provoke Jiang Chen after seeing all the methods at his disposal.

If only a couple of them sallied forth, not only would they be unable to catch Jiang Chen, but they might be picked off instead. On the other hand, there would be no one to protect the group if all of them charged out. The elders were momentarily wracked with indecision. They wanted to obtain the credit of capturing Jiang Chen, but were also worried about leaving their group unprotected. After all, Jiang Chen's tactics were too convoluted. They feared that he was creating a diversion, like luring a tiger away from his mountain. If he returned to deal with the group while they were focused on a diversion...

Their impulse to charge out gradually receded as caution started to rear its head. Just when they thought they were in the clear, a ghastly cry rang out from their midst.

"Ah, my dantian... I've also been poisoned!"

"No! It seems this area is also poisoned..."

"Poison formation... this is a poison formation, it's all around us... we're dead!" Panicked screams rang out from the crowd once more. The elders felt a chill run through their hearts—it felt like an endless nightmare. Another poison formation had actually been set up around them!

The deployment of this formation was rather ingenious and its destructive potential far more lethal than the previous one. Hundreds of disciples fell to the poison within a few breaths. There were no shortage of sage realm cultivators within the victims.

"Retreat, keep moving!" Will this never end? The few elders were almost losing their minds from the continuous onslaught that came in wave after wave. Was this Jiang Chen aiming to exterminate them with this relentless rhythm of attacks? Even the experienced elders were momentarily overwhelmed by his methods.

They closed off their consciousness, evidently fearing that the poison would penetrate their dantian. They had learned from their mistakes this time and sent some men to scout ahead before moving the entire group. The group finally had a chance to reorganize roughly fifteen minutes later.

The three consecutive assaults had left the two sects in a state of great alarm. They felt terrified at the merest rustle of grass in the wind, like a bird intimidated by the sound of a bow. It felt like every tree and brush was an enemy. After a quick head count, they realized that their casualties had reached over a hundred between the two sects. Most of them were origin realm cultivators, but a dozen or so sage realm cultivators had also fallen. This was undoubtedly an enormous loss for the two sects. Although not to the point where it undermined the constitution of the sect, but it was definitely painful. There were no shortage of talent within the two sects, but the number of sage realm cultivators was very limited. They had mobilized their elites in full force for this invasion, deploying most of their experts to the Regal Pill Palace, but who would've thought that they would take such terrible losses. The most depressing thing was that their casualties had not been a result of their assault on the Regal Pill Palace, but rather from the lone attacks of Jiang Chen. He had them all in a constant state of anxiety, completely on tenterhooks.

Gong Wuji rushed back after half an hour with two bodyguards and the two sect heads in tow. He returned empty handed, with nothing to show from this excursion. Gong Wuji's expression was so

gloomy that it'd sunk to new lows. After being tricked and having his face slapped repeatedly, this fourth rank emperor realm cultivator had somewhat lost his calm demeanor. The two sect heads also felt their hearts sink after seeing the chaos and hurriedly inquired about the situation. They cursed loudly after finding out what had transpired, feeling as if their hearts had been gouged by blades.

"This beast is truly cunning!"

"Jiang Chen, you and our Thunder Note Hall are absolutely irreconcilable!" The Thunder Note Hall sect head was burning with fury after the recent string of misfortunes. He roared at the skies, unable to suppress his frustration.

Gong Wuji's temper was worse. As things stood, he realized that Jiang Chen must have gotten wind of what had transpired at the Great Scarlet Capital. He wouldn't have launched an attack like this otherwise. This was no longer a simple demonstration of might, but an obvious eruption of hostility.

"Master, Jiang Chen is extremely crafty. Since he already knows that those from the Regal Pill Palace are no longer in our hands, I think we should immediately pursue him and attack. Every moment we delay adds to the young master's peril..." one of Gong Qi's bodyguards mustered the courage to voice a suggestion.

Although Gong Wuji was angry at their failure to protect Gong Qi, he was in dire need of manpower at the moment and found himself unable to rebuke them. He nodded with a deep sigh, "Time is of the essence. Give chase!" He glanced at the two sect heads, "What say you?"

Sparks spat from the eyes of the Thunder Note Hall sect head, "We chase. Of course we have to chase him down! I'll burn him to ashes when I capture him!"

The Thunder Note Hall had first lost Ding Rong, and then suffered heavy casualties. All of this had no doubt wounded the foundations of the Thunder Note Hall. The Giant Roc sect head also nodded, "We're willing to follow Master Gong! We pledge with our lives to chase down and kill this little thief Jiang Chen! If this scum doesn't die, none of us will be able to live out our days in peace!"

The elders from the two sects all nodded in succession, evidently in agreement with the Great Roc sect head. Just the nightmare that Jiang Chen have given them a while ago was enough to haunt them for half their lives, to put talk of all else out of their minds. Rather than wait for Jiang Chen to ambush them repeatedly, it would be better to mount an active assault and kill the child.

"Master Gong, Jiang Chen has many tricks up his sleeves. He is adept at camouflage, able to control vines and has a number of golden armored warriors at his command. He can set up formations and possesses sophisticated escape talismans. If it wasn't for all this, he wouldn't be able to cause any trouble at all, being at just mortal sage realm."

"Those golden armored warriors are not to be trifled with. His formations, on the other hand, aren't particularly advanced and so pose no threat to us. But it's more than enough to sow chaos and disruption."

"Mm hmm... if we want to capture him, we need to figure out how to deal with his escape talismans. We need to either lock him down with an emperor realm domain or use a powerful restriction talisman." They were able to come to this conclusion after suffering a beating. Each person weighed in

with the methods that Jiang Chen had used during this time. Ultimately, they came to the conclusion that the most difficult thing to deal with were the escape talismans. There were thousands of variations on the dao of glyphs and talismans. If there was an escape talisman, there would naturally be a restriction talisman to counter it.

Some of the higher grade restriction talismans could lock down space, effectively preventing escape talismans from tearing through them. Of course there was no easy way to compare two talismans. It all came down to their ranks. It was a battle between the grades of the talismans themselves. However, the restriction talisman was intrinsically designed to restrain the escape talisman.

It was just that the difficulty of refining a restriction talisman was much higher than that of an escape talisman. As such, the restriction talismans available on the market were mostly of low quality and wouldn't be able to restrain a high level escape talisman. It was also difficult to find a high grade restriction talisman. There weren't many people who could afford to use an advanced restriction talisman unless they absolutely required it. An emperor realm domain would usually do the trick.

However, Master Gong Wuji's emperor realm domain had obviously locked down the entire area last time. But the expert beside Jiang Chen had been able to tear a hole through it, allowing them to escape. This particular memory was enough to cast a shadow over their hearts. It would be too difficult to kill Jiang Chen when his companion couldn't be contained even by an emperor realm domain. After all, the only surefire way to deal with the escape talisman was to deploy an emperor realm domain.

Gong Wuji was at fourth rank emperor realm, while the other two sect heads were second rank emperor realm. There were also a few half-step emperor realm elders who were barely able to exert their own domain. Everyone's gaze landed on Gong Wuji in the end. They would follow his commands. Gong Wuji himself found it difficult to understand what had happened previously. After giving it some thought, he concluded that it was impossible for the Regal Pill Palace to have someone who could break through an emperor realm domain in their ranks. He felt that the opponent must've utilized the power of a formidable talisman. This type of talisman most likely couldn't be used multiple times. Even if that wasn't the case, Jiang Chen himself didn't possess the power to break through an emperor realm domain. If only he could be separated from that expert, then they would definitely be able to lock him down and kill him.

"Wait for an opportunity to defeat them individually," Gong Wuji led the two bodyguards in pursuit of Jiang Chen after deciding on the strategy. Even if they couldn't find Jiang Chen, they could still track Gong Qi. Hidden within his body was a bloodline mark that only Gong Wuji could track. The sect heads of the Thunder Note Hall and the Great Roc Sect followed suit along with the elites of their sect after making arrangements for the remaining disciples.

Now that things had escalated to this point, it was obviously no longer a simple dispute between Jiang Chen and Gong Wuji. This much was clear to the two sects. Their two sects were also now embroiled in a vendetta that would only end in death. Jiang Chen had killed their disciples while they had also killed those from the Regal Pill Palace. This vengeance would only end with the death of Jiang Chen. Otherwise, Jiang Chen would become an eternal nightmare for their sects. He was already such a thorny problem in the sage realm. They could foresee with certainty that the calamity of annihilation would descend upon the Thunder Note Hall and the Giant Roc Sect if he was allowed to ascend to the emperor realm. Thus, it was imperative that they chase down and kill Jiang Chen as soon as possible.

Gong Wuji suddenly stopped two days later. With a wave of his hand, he whispered, “I sense Qi’er’s blood within fifty kilometers. We will split up—Thunder Note Hall will circle around to the left and the Great Roc Sect to the right. The two of you will charge straight in while I go around to his rear. We’ll form a complete blockade this way.”

After locking him down from all sides, Gong Wuji wanted to see just how many escape talismans Jiang Chen had left. Considering the resources available to the Regal Pill Palace, there was definitely an end to his supply! The day that brat uses up all his escape talismans is the day he will be executed!

Fifty kilometers... twenty five... fifteen...

Everyone’s emotions became more and more agitated, and all of deployed their domains slightly when they entered within five kilometers of the mark. Everyone charged forward at the same time when Gong Wuji gave the order, furiously expanding their domains to its maximum area.

“Let’s go!” Loud yells exploded out, all directed towards the target they’d chosen.