

Three Realms 1421

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

Chapter 1421: A Celestial Demon Lord?

In ancient times, strong creatures often indulged in extreme violence when close to death. For example, a massive slaughter or mobilizing a beast tide on the human world. Perhaps the weakened Vermillion Bird's rampage could also be explained in this way. Jiang Chen could tell that it was at the end of its tether.

However, he couldn't be certain. He had the nagging suspicion the divine creature hadn't wished the humans to enter the secret realm to begin with.

The ancient beast language made the Vermillion bird pause amidst its rage.

Even in ancient times, very few humans on the Divine Abyss Continent could speak such an abstruse and profound language. He hadn't expected to stumble upon one of them in this day and age.

"Human..." The Vermillion Bird's consciousness brimmed with nobility. "Which clan are you from to know the ancient language?" The young man had clearly piqued his curiosity.

There's hope! Jiang Chen thought happily. It seemed that communication was possible. If it hadn't been, he held a spacetime seal, ready for a quick getaway.

"Senior, rather than me, what matters is your hazardous situation. Your life is in the last of its cycle."

"Hmph! Human, petty tricks are useless on me. Don't even try." Contempt laced the bird's voice.

"Senior, these ordinary cultivators are child's play for you, but I'm a different kettle of fish. I merely stayed behind to seek your guidance."

"Guidance?" The Vermillion Bird glanced at the formation with a snicker. "You humans think yourselves clever. In any case, why aren't you hiding in there?"

Jiang Chen shook his head. "First, the formation is strange. It's hard to tell whether death or salvation awaits inside. Second, despite your formidable power, I have ways of protecting myself. Third, something's been puzzling me from the start. It seems you've tried to prevent us from entering the secret realm. As to finally killing us, you must have good reasons..."

The bird stilled. It tilted its noble head, its feathers blazing like holy fire, clearly sizing up the young lord.

"Kid, you're a little different from these idiots." It was too proud to explain any further.

Jiang Chen's doubts deepened.

"Senior, is there something we're not aware of?" he asked keenly.

The bird snickered. "Hmph, I've been benevolent enough. If you humans insist on courting death, then be my guest. Fools. Such an obvious trap, yet you scramble one after another to get inside. Your kind is still so dumb after all this time!"

Trap? Jiang Chen shook.

Indeed, it'd been too easy to enter the Primosanct Sect. Despite the so-called trials, only the lava restriction had proved a real danger. It should have been arranged by the Vermilion Bird. Only, someone had interfered with it and allowed them to pass.

If not for the bird's attack at the end, the cultivators would've suffered almost no harm inside the secret realm. This was why Jiang Chen had been so skeptical. He took a deep breath. "Senior, can you be more specific?"

"What's there to say? I owed your race a debt, so I kept watch over the celestial demon lord sealed here and protected your world. I've done my share, but in your ignorance, you humans keep trying to free him. I fear the end is nigh for your race."

What?

Jiang Chen's heart pounded furiously. When the bird said humans were courting death earlier, he'd thought it meant only their group and not all of mankind!

A celestial demon lord?

Jiang Chen hadn't experienced the ancient demon wars, but the title and the bird's tone spoke volumes about how dangerous an existence it was. Had the demon plotted everything from the start?

"The celestial demon lord... Senior, are you talking about a lord from the celestial demons?" Jiang Chen cried out involuntarily.

"Tsk, you're insightful for a human kid. Celestial demons are the greatest of the ten demon races. They are rulers among their kin, demons among demons. When this one wakes up, it will rain devastation upon your race. Breaking the Boundary Stele will seal your race's fate!"

Celestial demons! Jiang Chen had a deep understanding of the demons from his past life. As the divine creature said, celestial demons were noble existences among their own kin.

In the heavenly planes, demons were known to flaunt their lineage. Celestial demons in particular considered themselves peerless in the three realms. Of course, some of it was self-conceit, but their strength was undisputed. To think he would meet a sealed celestial demon lord in Phoenix Cry!

A demon lord wasn't necessarily the liege of all demons. It referred to a commander of outstanding status. For example, in an invasion of ten thousand demons, there might be several lords involved, or even a dozen, any of which would boast of terrifying power.

In ancient times, a demon emperor's status was third tier at most, while demon lords were second tier. They were at the very least empyrean powerhouses. As to the highest tier, it consisted of forefathers possessing immeasurable strength.

At its peak, the Vermillion Bird must have been an unfathomable existence. Even so, it still seemed wary of the demon lord. The latter's might was clear for all to see.

Mighty waves of emotion surged in Jiang Chen's heart. He looked at the formation. Countless beams of light crisscrossed each other, obscuring his view. Had the hundreds of elites inside become a grand feast for the demon?

There was little love lost between him and Cloudbillow or Long Baxiang. Both were his mortal enemies. He should've been glad for their misfortune, but he couldn't feel a speck of joy at this moment.

"Senior, what on earth is going on? Aren't we on the Primosanct Sect's sacred land? Why can the demon do as he want?"

Looking tired, the Vermillion Bird merely sneered. "It's too late now in any case. As you said, this place belongs to the Primosanct Sect. Here, the sect once waged a great war against the demon lord and sealed him inside this formation. I owed them a great debt, and also needed to rest in solitude due to the stage of the life cycle I was in. So I stayed here to stand guard. But you humans keep rushing inside, so eager to sacrifice yourselves to the demon and giving him hope. How ironic..."

Jiang Chen's brain went blank. He finally understood the truth.

The Primosanct Sect had lure the demon to their sacred land and sealed it inside, while the Vermillion Bird had watched over the formation ever since that time.

But humans discovered this secret realm in the end and poured inside in an endless stream, offering themselves up on a silver platter. Once the demon lord had recovered enough to regain his consciousness, he'd slowly started unraveling the seal.

Demons were hardy creatures. Their consciousness wouldn't perish. It was difficult to extinguish them for good. Celestial demons, in particular, were basically immortal and could easily revive given the chance.

Jiang Chen murmured, "The previous illusions and chants seemed so righteous. Did the demon manufacture them all with his strong consciousness?"

"Hmph, too bad most humans are idiots. Few are as perceptive as you." The bird sniggered. "In my great benevolence, I tried stopping them from dying here. But they insist on doing so. What else could I have done?"

Jiang Chen was speechless. Ancient beasts were proud creatures. Lying was beneath them, to say nothing of fabricating an entire fable to dupe him. More importantly, everything concurred with what he'd observed, down to the smallest detail.

"As I thought..." He sighed. "I couldn't explain why you'd wait for us to reach the palace before slaughtering us when there were ample opportunities beforehand. No wonder."

An icy arrogance laced the bird's tone. "It's already too late. Kid, you should pray now. If the blood of those inside is enough for the demon to break free, your race will soon face extinction!"

Jiang Chen blanched.

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Chapter 1422: Warning And Persuasion

When Jiang Chen had reincarnated on the Divine Abyss Continent, he'd felt little sense of belonging. But now, he had parents, brothers, lovers, a daughter, friends, and like-minded companions...

Just like the heavenly planes of his previous life, this human world was also his home. He knew full well how terrifying the demons were.

They wouldn't be worth mentioning if he had his former father behind him. Even the most arrogant demon wouldn't dare act high and mighty in front of the celestial emperor and his host of powerhouses.

Though Divine Abyss Continent was unusual and even seemed somehow related to his past life, the continent was too weak to withstand the demons. The human domain in particular was far too lacking.

He'd always been on guard against them and observed their activities in the desolate wildlands. They'd begun to stir, but he was confident they wouldn't be able to stir huge, catastrophic waves within a hundred years.

However, a celestial demon lord had suddenly appeared from thin air! No one in the human domain would be able to stop such an existence at the peak of its power.

He activated the Evil Golden Eye and shot a golden beam shot his eyes to pierce the formation's curtain of hazy light. Inside, he saw the cultivators crowded like quails. He could almost smell their fear.

It seemed that they hadn't realized their predicament yet. To them, the Vermilion Bird was still the mortal enemy. He flung caution to the wind and tore off his mask to reveal his true face. He spread out his consciousness, his voice ringing like a bell. "Cloudbillow, Long Baxiang, take a good look. Who am I?"

Many recognized him instantly.

"Jiang Chen!" Cloudbillow clenched his teeth, his eyes screaming murder. "I knew it! When there's trouble, this kid is never far away!"

Long Baxiang stared in bewilderment. Why had the young man exposed his identity? There was no point to this. Was the Vermilion Bird compelling him to seek shelter inside the formation? But that made even less sense to reveal himself. No one could figure it out.

Jiang Chen looked at Ninesuns' great emperor, cutting straight to the point. "Emperor Newsun, there's some friendship between me and Emperor Clearsky, so I don't want to see you die in vain. Charge outside with your sect if you want to live."

Emperor Newsun was the sect's number two. He'd met Jiang Chen when the latter had borrowed his sect's refining formation. He blinked and smiled wryly. "Young lord Jiang Chen, surely you jest? Wouldn't that be suicide? The formation is our only defense against the ominous bird."

"Do you really think it will save you? Not that I want to scare you, but you don't realize the dire straits you're in. Do any of you know where we are?"

"The Primosanct Sect's sacred land, no?"

Jiang Chen nodded. "Right. However, it's also a Boundary Stele. The ancient sect once fought a celestial demon lord here. Your so-called protective formation is the seal imprisoning the demon. The demon has lured all of you inside like lambs to the slaughter!"

"What?" Newsun gasped aloud. "Young lord Jiang Chen, now's not the time for jokes."

“Hmph! Do you think I’m in the mood for that? Pillfire is my Veluriyam’s enemy. They can die for all I care. However, if you stay there, the demon will feast on your flesh and escape from his prison. Worse than death, even history will revile your names!” The young lord was solemn with no trace of amusement on his face.

Newsun hesitated. In truth, the warning did alarm him. His gaze shifted to the Vermilion Bird, his heart beating like a drum. The bird’s earlier massacre was too frightening to recall. Even the great emperors had been scared stiff.

“Young Lord, it’s not that I don’t believe you, but... how do you know this much? Can it be from the Vermilion Bird?”

Jiang Chen didn’t deny things. “I conversed with it in the ancient beast language. The bird once owed a debt to the ancient Primosanct Sect and watches over the seal because of it. It did everything in its power to stop us from entering. It doesn’t want us to fuel the demon’s power. Alas, the celestial demon kept lending us a hand time and again. Think about it. How was our journey in so smooth?”

Indeed, apart from the Vermilion Bird’s final assault, they hadn’t been harmed at all.

Cloudbillow sneered. “You little rascal, don’t try to frighten us. What are you plotting? Maybe you want to lure us out so the bird can kill us in one fell swoop. Veluriyam will have no enemies then, am I right?”

“Indeed, you conniving little bastard. Everyone, don’t fall for his lies!” the Eternal Celestial Capital’s great emperor shouted.

The Empyrean River Palace’s great emperor followed suit. “Veluriyam’s always wanted to conquer the human domain. There must a fishy reason why he’s staying out there!”

The crowd was deeply torn. Which side were they to believe?

Jiang Chen made sense. Thinking about it now, their expedition had gone too smoothly, almost unbelievably so.

However, Pillfire also made sense. Everyone knew of the conflict between Pillfire and Veluriyam. If the young lord were scheming against them, leaving their shelter would be walking into the lion’s den.

His eyes indifferent, Jiang Chen glanced one more time at Newsun. “I wouldn’t even have warned you if not for Emperor Clearsky. Do as you see fit!”

He couldn’t run inside and drag them out one by one. Their fate rested in their own hands. No matter what he said, Cloudbillow and the others would always muddy the waters.

His conscience was clear. What else was he to do? If they were determined to die, he was powerless to stop them. If he could, he’d even bear the infamy and kill them all. Better to die at his hands than to become food for the celestial demon!

There were so many elites, almost ten great emperors and countless emperor realm experts, what a wonderful feast this was!

The Vermilion Bird observed in marked silence. A trace of admiration for Jiang Chen sparkled in its aloof eyes. Despite mankind's decline, such an insightful and unflinching young genius yet walked amongst them.

"Senior, can we salvage the situation?" Jiang Chen asked in earnest.

The bird shook its head. "We can't. The seal has been bleeding power since antiquity, and the demon has feasted on too many humans to count. It's only a matter of time before he escapes."

"Senior, you're an ancient divine bird. Is there nothing you can do?"

"Hmph, do you think I'd fear a measly demon back in my heyday?" Grief laced the its tone. "Alas, my life is soon ending." It was unthinkable for the proud bird to expose weakness. It was just, the years had been too lonely.

It'd finally met someone who spoke his language. It brought a sense of intimacy, even from a human kid. That was why, despite its earlier murderous intentions, it hadn't directly attacked the young man.

"Senior, Vermilion Birds are known as immortal birds who can resurrect in fire. Even in your current state, you will rise again from the ashes and recover your former glory."

"Hm? You know quite a bit." The Vermilion Bird's eyes shone, but it sighed immediately. "Alas, this world has declined too much. It can't sustain my rebirth."

Several conditions had to be met for a Vermilion Bird to be reborn.

First, formidable spirit energy, enough to bear the mighty waves caused by a rebirth.

Second, sufficient resources and a suitable location.

There were also several other harsh requirements. Each had to be fulfilled, or else the odds of rebirth would be greatly affected. Any of the conditions therein was too tall an order for the current human domain.

More importantly, the Vermilion Bird had made an ancient vow to protect humans against the demon lord. To violate it would be to incur the heavens' wrath.

Jiang Chen naturally knew of the severe prerequisites and empathized with the bird's difficulties.

"Senior, we'll cross that bridge when we come to it. The human domain can't provide for you, but that's not the only territory on the Divine Abyss Continent," Jiang Chen reminded.

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Chapter 1423: Terror and Despair

As an ancient creature, the Vermilion Bird knew as a matter of course that the Divine Abyss Continent wasn't limited to the human domain.

"Young man, I am an ancient being. I understand much more about this continent than you do. Long ago, I owed a favor to humanity. That's why it is my duty to protect this place. I can fail in that duty, but I cannot shun it by departing. Do you understand?"

Its extended loneliness filled the Vermilion Bird with patience. It also found it odd that it would explain so much to a human youth who understood the ancient beast language.

Jiang Chen was filled with respect when he heard the bird.

As expected of a creature of the four sacred beasts' lineages! Its natural nobility meant that a promise was weightier than gold. This kind of enduring spirit was worthy of admiration in anyone.

"So what you're saying is that the lord of the celestial demons struggling free of the seal is a kind of freedom for you as well, senior!" Jiang Chen exclaimed.

"Maybe according to your human way of thinking," retorted the bird. "A promise from me must be upheld on the principle of preventing the celestial demon lord from leaving. For what reason would I shirk my responsibilities and allow the prisoner to leave? You are uncommon, young man, but your character is rather uninteresting after all. You are a far cry from the sagacity of your forebears." The Vermilion Bird's tone took a chilly turn. It considered Jiang Chen's words rather insulting.

Realizing his social gaffe, Jiang Chen smiled apologetically. "I misspoke just now, senior. My apologies. Still, I haven't given up yet... so how about this idea instead?"

"What now?"

"What way is there to make these people leave that area on their own?"

"Almost impossible. Do you think the celestial demon lord would let them escape so easily?" The Vermilion Bird shook its head. "They're in the belly of the beast now."

"So the celestial demon lord can't be stopped from breaking its seal?" Jiang Chen became rather anxious.

"That's why I said that you better hope he can't break his seal after consuming his newfound meal. Otherwise, your race will face untold calamity." The Vermilion Bird was hardly exaggerating.

Jiang Chen didn't know what else to say. He could simply up and leave, but where could he possibly flee to?

Veluriyam Capital?

When the celestial demon lord was free of his seal, what place in the vastness of the human domain was safe? So Jiang Chen could hole up within the Veluriyam Pagoda, but what about the others? He wasn't alone any more and couldn't seek self-preservation above all else.

His family and friends at the young lord residence – was he supposed to simply let them die at the demons' hands?

Jiang Chen was absolutely sure that a resurgent demon race would target the largest factions and first rank sects; Veluriyam Capital would be singled out for special attention. They were the only sources of resistance against the demon race.

Taking them out would intimidate the rest of the human domain into staying put. Once Veluriyam fell, the southern part of the human domain would be completely lost to the demons.

Leaving now was no better than burying one's head under the sand.

Jiang Chen knew that if the celestial demon lord broke the seal soon, any plans he could hastily cobble together after leaving would be all for naught.

His Nine Sparks Petalstorm Formation was potent, but only against great emperors. A formation that was impregnable against a few great emperors was paper-thin against an empyrean expert.

The lord of the celestial demons was a veritable chieftain of demonkind. He was unquestionably empyrean realm, and not the typical minor empyrean expert either. The formation's defense was worthless against an entity like that.

"Young man, I think you're a good kid. If you don't want to die with those people, you should leave now. My promise to the human race includes a full-effort defense against the lord that struggles free. If he wants to leave this place, he'll have to step over my corpse first."

The Vermilion Bird's serious demeanor proved its words were more than hot air.

"Senior, there must be another way. A formation of the Primosanct Sect set up here to seal the celestial demon lord away must mean that there are failsafes to deal with any unexpected situations. Why not think about possible solutions, senior?"

Heaven offered a way out of almost any situation. Jiang Chen couldn't just leave without doing anything.

The Vermilion Bird shook its head and said nothing more.

At this time, there was a cool snicker from within the sealing formation. "Feathered chicken, you're still as stubborn as ever!" The impassive voice had an air of indescribable authority.

It was none other than the voice that had led the cultivators here. Compared to before, however, it had dispensed with any pretend kindness; its tone was positively frigid.

"Tsk tsk. I didn't expect a Vermilion Bird to stoop as low as to natter with a human youth." The voice cackled relentlessly in mockery of his jailer.

The Vermilion Bird remained proudly silent and still. Its eyes exuded incredible killing intent.

"What is your name, human youth?" The voice turned its attention to Jiang Chen. "I didn't think the human race's decrepit heritage was capable of producing someone proficient in the ancient beast language. Quite unexpected indeed. I like you, kid. Are you interested in joining up with the celestial demons?"

The celestial demons!

These words were a bolt out of the blue, stunning the other cultivators within earshot. Many thought that they had misheard, and everyone uniformly colored upon hearing them.

Emperor Newsun gasped with horror. "This is bad, retreat!"

The others were as thoroughly panicked as him. They all charged outwards with reckless abandon.

Alas, their fates had been decided as soon as they had entered the foreign space.

“Can you now?” The voice laughed faintly. “Now that you’re in my realm, those who do not obey can die!”

Even as it enunciated the last sentence, a giant net knitted together from the bizarre lights at the core of the formation. Countless strange runes glittered menacingly in the air.

When the crowd approached the edge of the giant net, streaks of black lightning zapped the weaker cultivators into ash. A roiling black mist then consumed the unlucky victim’s blood and essence.

The scene was absolutely shocking.

Everyone screeched to a halt, no longer brave enough to mount another careless escape.

Cloudbillow was as pale as the others. He instinctively congregated with the other great emperors even as they traded looks. Unease and anxiety were reflected everywhere he looked.

Newsun complained. “Cloudbillow, you’ve ruined everyone. You filled the young lord’s kind reminder with nonexistent malice! Everyone knows what kind of person the young lord is. There’s bad blood between Pillfire and him, but there’s no way he would drag innocents in. You... you’re the death of us all!”

Cloudbillow regretted it somewhat as well, but he wasn’t about to admit it. “Stop your yapping!” he harrumphed. “Didn’t you suspect him as well?”

Long Baxiang had enough of it. “Enough with the useless bickering! What’s the point of arguing now? We need to come up with a plan to break through together.”

That was true in theory, but the cultivators had collectively been cowed by the demon lord’s terrifying methods. They had little fighting spirit left within them.

The demon lord’s voice echoed forth lazily once more. “A pack of fools. It’s trivial for me to slaughter all of you in a single instant. Do you think that you pieces of trash can escape my celestial demon domain?”

Though the demon lord was still sealed away and had barely a tenth of his power left, killing anyone stuck in his domain was completely inconsequential.

He could expand his demon consciousness to an unlimited degree, but he could only exert control over these human cultivators once they were inside his domain. It was his precise and careful guidance that had led them into this sealed area.

Of course, it was partially thanks to the helpful assistance of the Vermilion Bird outside. If not for its obstruction and pursuit the entire way, these slippery human cultivators wouldn’t have come into his domain nearly as easily. The misunderstanding had been key.

“Is anyone interested in trying out my methods?” The celestial demon lord asked nonchalantly.

Long Baxiang’s chest heaved in apparent hesitation.

“You?” The demon lord’s pressure swept towards Long Baxiang. It felt like a mountain had been placed right on top of the human’s head, rendering him completely immobile under its weight.

“I... I...” Sweat caked Long Baxiang’s head. “Senior... please quell your anger. I... I surrender.”

Under the demon lord's immense influence, Long Baxiang's consciousness was on the verge of collapse. His pride and need to keep up appearances were rendered moot. The only thing meaningful left was the decision between life and death. He didn't want to die, and thus submitted.

"Very good, you're smart. I led all of you here by promising you a heritage. The promise stands even now, but I offer not the heritage of the Primosanct Sect. Instead, the demon race's knowledge is open to you. Are you willing to join the celestial demons? Will you swear loyalty to us?"

The human cultivators had come in search of a destiny-changing heritage. They didn't mind breaking with their original identities for the sake of this goal. However, the drastic turn of events had completely eluded their expectations. The Primosanct Sect's heritage turned into the celestial demons' heritage!

"Hmph! If I didn't have a need for people right now, you wouldn't be worthy even as slaves with how weak you are. You humans have both weak bodies and bloodlines. We demons on the other hand, are one of the great races in the heavenly planes. We are dominant over many realms and supremely noble. Moreover, the celestial demons are demon royalty. You insignificant humans are blessed eight times over for garnering the favor of celestial demons. Are you such a fool that you don't recognize this boon?"

The celestial demon lord's tone abruptly entered sub-zero conditions, taking the perceived temperature in the demon domain with it.

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Chapter 1424: An Enormous Hand of White Bone

When the domain's temperature dropped sharply, everyone felt that they'd plunged into an endless abyss of an icy hell. Their very souls shivered.

Join the celestial demons?

That was a surprise beyond words. Many of these cultivators had little in the way of morals and had committed their fair share of wickedness in daily activities. But they had also been uniformly taught to fear the demon race since birth. Demons were the mortal enemy of humanity, a plague upon the world. Therefore, each and every human cultivator despised and dreaded the demons.

Never in their wildest dreams had they imagined joining evil one day. Alas, that was the choice before them. Either they joined, or they died!

The celestial demons had led the invasion into Divine Abyss Continent in ancient times. Even the other demon races subjugated themselves before their celestial brethren.

Just as the demon lord had said, he wouldn't have cared about these human cultivators if he wasn't currently derelict and in desperate need of henchmen. The elite human cultivators of these times would've been nothing more than ordinary mortals back then.

In the ancient times, while humanity hadn't been the strongest race on the continent, empyrean experts and great emperors were still as common as weeds.

In contrast to present day, great emperors were as scarce as the morning stars in the human domain. They were less than one-ten-thousandths of their numbers in ages past.

Of course, it was the same for the demons too. The war that sealed away demonkind had dealt a severe blow to every demon race. Aside from the lords and emperors who were too difficult to kill, most demonic scions had perished in the conflict. The race's strength had also been significantly diminished.

The celestial demon lord had slumbered for more than a hundred thousand years in the Primosanct Sect's sacred place. When his demonic consciousness had first awakened just a little bit, he found that he was unable to fight the powerful sealing formation laid on him.

Unfortunately, the unrelenting sands of time had chipped away at the sect's seal. Every bit of damage meant that the demon lord's consciousness had more room to reawaken.

It was akin to the tipping of a set of scales. When one side's mass went down, the other side would inevitably rise upwards. Without someone to maintain it, the sealing formation could only continue to weaken.

This was exactly what had happened in the desolate wildlands.

The demonic aura of the celestial demon lord made the minds of the weaker willed cultivators tremble. Their nerves were on the edge of breaking. It took no time at all for the first group of defectors.

"O great demon lord, this humble one is willing to serve you."

"I too, am willing to serve the demon lord."

A few lower level emperor realm cultivators found themselves teetering on the edge of implosion. When their knees gave out, so too did any lingering fighting spirit.

When the first traitor came forward, more inevitably followed. Like a set of dominos, the collapse of a single token led to a chain reaction without much resistance. In that moment, a great swathe of cultivators knelt.

Only twenty or thirty remained standing – largely the great emperors and a few emperors who'd come from the Upper Eight Regions. They could just barely stand against the celestial demon lord's authority.

As members of the largest factions in the Upper Eight Regions, they knew that betrayal here meant completely breaking away from the rest of the human world. They would be mortal enemies of the entire human race.

They knew the consequences of changing allegiances better than anyone. This wasn't only a betrayal of their own faction, but the entire human race and heritage. They would suffer eternal shame even after death.

The great emperors from the Emyrean River Palace and Sublime Chord Temple looked at Cloudbillow, clearly clueless at this juncture.

"Heh heh heh..." the celestial demon lord smiled faintly. "If you want to show off your pride to me, I will allow you to do as you wish." His words scarcely fell before the strength of his aura intensified.

The great emperors bore the brunt of the assault. Under siege by the powerful demonic pressure, their consciousnesses ballooned with stress, ready to pop at any moment.

“Ah!!” Emperor Newsun suddenly roared with bloodshot eyes. “The Ninesuns Sky Sect will never submit to demons! We charge!”

The emperor had finally erupted. Like a burning sun, he hurtled towards the outside, his people behind him. Evidently, Newsun had no intention of bringing shame to his sect by joining up with demons.

“Emperor Newsun, we will cover you!” Several of the sect’s cultivators slammed themselves into the invisible light veil with uncommunicated synchronicity.

Newsun gasped in shock. “Don’t!” he called out.

“With divine radiance crowned by the heavens, may the nine suns destroy the world!”

“Break!” The cultivators transformed into streaks of light, accelerating to incredible speeds. Their bodies burned like comets, smashing with brute force into a single point.

This was one of the forbidden techniques of the Ninesuns Sky Sect. The disciples weren’t permitted to use it save for extremely dire situations. The technique used the executing cultivator’s life as fuel. Only by detonating one’s qi ocean could such terrifying energy be unleashed.

The self-destruction of a single cultivator could create an attack three to five times that of his total strength. The self-destruction of multiple cultivators in tandem further magnified this, amplifying it to several hundred to thousand times their ordinary strength.

This kind of attack wasn’t usually effective against more powerful cultivators, since the opponent could just move out of the way. However, it was superb at attacking unmoving restrictions such as the one before them.

The cultivators who had sacrificed their lives were Emperor Newsun’s confidantes, the sect’s deathsworn. They knew the nature of the deadly situation they were in and were able to complete the joint attack without any prior signalling in the face of adversity.

Boom!

The strands of light converged at a single point, exploding outwards. The sight was as blinding as the detonation of a noonday sun, sending potent shockwaves in every direction. The celestial demon lord’s domain boiled over with excess energy.

“Go, Emperor Newsun!” Even as the bodies of the Ninesuns’ cultivators disintegrated, their voices echoed within Newsun’s mind.

With lightning-fast reflexes, Newsun transformed himself into a streak of escaping light, lunging in the direction of the explosion. He couldn’t yet judge whether his subordinates had succeeded, but this was his only chance regardless.

If the attack had been successful, there was sure to be a gap there. If not, that place would still be the weakest point in the domain. Perhaps he had a chance using the fullness of his own strength.

Long Baxiang reacted in record time. “Follow him!” he waved.

He had no desire to join the demons either. He understood that the celestial demon lord's promise was a thinly-veiled command to become his slaves and puppets in the campaign against humanity.

He would not accept that kind of fate. Long Baxiang was perfectly pleased to battle it out with other human factions, but the loss of freedom involved in surrendering to the demon lord was a fate worse than death.

Everyone saw the opportunity in this new development.

Emperor Cloudbillow was swift and decisive. "Everybody together now!" he shouted.

They all knew that the celestial demon lord was powerful and imposing. However, he was still held back by the power of the seal, and could only use his consciousness to exert his power over them. As long as they broke free of the domain, they were safe!

Absolutely everyone swarmed in that direction, these thoughts fresh on their mind.

"Fools, the lot of you!" The celestial demon lord's impassive voice echoed forth once more. In the next moment, the black net appeared again over the domain, darker and more fearsome than its last appearance.

Still, there was a tiny flaw in the portion of the net that Newsun was charging towards. One that was being quickly repaired, but existed nevertheless.

Newsun was incredibly quick. He was able to reach the flaw before it could completely fix itself.

Everything that happened next took place in mere seconds.

The emperor tossed out a talisman as he reached the edge of the flaw. The talisman blossomed in the wind into a golden shield overhead.

At the same time, an enormous bony claw slammed downward from the air. The claw of bone was nine meters long and six meters wide. It collided and wrapped around the golden shield with a clang.

There was a rumbling impact.

The golden shield was doubtless very durable, but the bone claw crushed it into a ball with little struggle. The instant the shield bought for him though, did give Emperor Newsun a lifeline.

Another burst of speed was enough to propel himself free of the net.

Even as he succeeded in fleeing, the giant net's flaw repaired itself completely. There was no sign that it'd been damaged in the first place. Long Baxiang and the Heavenly Dragon Sect's men arrived a split second too late.

The claw of bone seemed to have been angered by Emperor Newsun's escape. It raised itself high into the air, then grabbed Long Baxiang and the experts from the Heavenly Dragon Sect.

Long Baxiang whitened with terror, struggling desperately against his captor. Alas, he couldn't move an inch.

“Disobedience deserves punishment.” The celestial demon lord’s voice was cold. A second later, the bony claw closed viciously around its prisoners in a flash of black light.

There had been no time even to scream. The Heavenly Dragon Sect cultivators – Long Baxiang included – were utterly crushed, their essences absorbed cleanly by the demon lord.

Emperor Cloudbillow and the others were unlucky enough to witness the entirety of these proceedings. The high-ranking Pillfire member paled despite his prominence, kneeling unceremoniously in fear.

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

Chapter 1425: The Demon Mind Brand

What pride of a great emperor? Dignity of a cultivator? None of it mattered at this juncture. The overweening Long Baxiang had been squashed like a bug. At this sight, the remaining cultivators gave up all idea of resistance.

“My lord, we surrender to you!”

“I also pledge myself wholeheartedly to you! My lord, please spare me!” Cloudbillow, experts from the Sublime Chord Temple, Emyrean River Palace, and Eternal Celestial Capital... all mentally crumbled.

Long Baxiang’s death had destroyed the last bit of their battle spirit. Only terror was left, and a desperation to serve. The scene was deathly still. Apprehension gnawed at them. Surely, their attempt to flee must have deeply offended the demon lord?

They no longer had a way out. They could only wait for their sentence.

The celestial demon was indeed seething over Newsun’s escape. For him, it was an unprecedented disgrace. Granted, he couldn’t even use a tenth of his power within the seal. Even so, everything should have been within his grasp.

Such a mistake would’ve been impossible more than a hundred thousand years ago, but he’d awoken not long ago and his consciousness was quite rusty compared to his former heyday. He also never would’ve made any strategic missteps. After such a long isolation, his judgment in battle had proved wanting.

Even a single fish escaping his net was a deep shame. He itched to vent his rage and massacre everyone left, then absorb their essence and energy. But he resisted this urge in the end.

While doing so would indeed greatly reinvigorate him, his lack of capable pawns was the most pressing issue. Manpower was required for his grand plan. Otherwise, even if he broke free, how was he to accomplish his ambitions just by himself?

In any case, even if their life essence might not be enough to enable immediate escape, he was confident he could do so sooner or later. He simply needed to be patient. He could control them instead and have them attack the seal. He might free himself earlier this way.

His mind set, he spread his consciousness wide. A black glow shot forth from the giant net.

Whoosh whoosh whoosh!

Black beams of light struck the cultivators' consciousness, marking them with his imprint. From that moment on, they would spend the rest of their days as demon slaves.

"This is your last chance. Don't even think of struggling, or I'll swallow you whole!" he warned.

He was in fact secretly worried. His consciousness was too weak to control them if they were to all fight back. He might lose his grip on the domain if he were exhausted further, giving these fellows another chance to run. It was why he'd made a bloody example out of Long Baxiang!

It proved to be a brilliant move. His limited strength was severely taxed, but none dared mount the slightest resistance, not even Cloudbillow.

Their courage had been shattered, leaving the way free for the demon mark to slowly enslave their souls, giving him full control over their consciousness. He inwardly heaved a long sigh of relief.

It had been a gamble. In fact, if not for the great emperors' total surrender, they might have noticed his extreme weakness and even struck back.

Fortunately, everything had ended well in the end. These humans hadn't shown a shred of resistance and were now at his mercy. They would die in the next second if he ever willed it.

"You'll be my attendants from now on. I shall bestow my personal guidance upon all the great emperors. Why aren't you paying your respects yet?"

"Greetings to the celestial demon lord, we pledge our lives to you!"

"Long live the demon lord!" The cultivators knew they no longer controlled their own destiny. The demon lord's frightening power had also scared them into submission, leading to their wholehearted surrender.

"Very good. You weak humans don't know the extent of your fortunes just yet. The bloodline of the celestial demons ranks in the top three of the heavenly planes. You'll realize one day how smart a choice you've just made."

"My lord, we're humbled by your forbearance and your favor."

After his narrow escape, the frightened Newsun had retreated to the farthest corner from the demon domain, his heart still palpitating with fear.

As for Jiang Chen, he'd observed the unfortunate events inside thanks to the full power of the Evil Golden Eye. He sighed, shaking his head helplessly. "To think the demon can do all this while still restrained by the seal. It's hard to imagine what will happen once he breaks free."

"I already told you. It'll be the end of your race. Alas, you humans don't even have the most basic moral backbone compared to your forefathers. How ridiculous!"

Noticing the contempt in the bird's tone, the young lord sighed. "What else could they have done?"

"What else? They should have still tried to run, of course. Didn't that guy escape thanks to his companions' protection? The demon lord is strong, but he's still hemmed in by the formation. His

domain is frightening, but from what I can tell just now, his consciousness hasn't recovered as much as I thought. Most of these fellows could have made it out alive. Too bad they're cowards. Cowards!"

After a long silence, the young lord finally asked, "Why didn't the demon devour them? Doesn't he want to break free?"

"Celestial demons are cunning and deceitful. Who knows what they're thinking?" The divine creature had a bird brain in the end, thinking wasn't his forte.

Newsun had finally calmed down somewhat by now. He yelled, "Young lord Jiang Chen, many thanks for your previous warning. May we talk in private?"

Jiang Chen cast a sidelong glance at the Vermillion Bird. "Senior, may he come over?"

The bird snorted but didn't refuse.

Jiang Chen shouted, "Emperor Newsun, please come closer."

Newsun's heart was still pounding, but he couldn't act too cowardly in front of a junior. He made his way over despite his fear of the Vermillion Bird.

"Don't worry, Senior Vermillion bears no animosity towards us. He only attacked us to prevent us from ending up in the demon's stomach."

Relieved, Newsun cupped his fists. "Young lord, I must thank you again for this new lease on life. Unfortunately, these other daoists..."

Jiang Chen waved a hand. "They weren't as resolute as you when push came to shove. They've surrendered to the demon lord. They're no longer human cultivators, but demon fiends!"

Emperor Newsun's face fell. Worry colored his voice. "Young lord, is a demon calamity upon us?"

He'd escaped with his life, but joy was in scarce supply given the circumstances. The celestial demon lord's power extended beyond his knowledge.

The demon was already this strong when limited by the seal. Once free of the seal and restored to his peak, who in the human world could resist this monster?

No one!

Pillfire, Veluriyam, or even a coalition of all the powerhouses, none could stand in the way of this ancient evil. Even now, the might of a sealed, half asleep demon was still etched deeply in his mind.

Jiang Chen kept his eyes on the formation, his face grave. "He hasn't devoured them yet. It seems that he won't be coming out for now."

"Alas." Newsun sighed in dejection, then snuck a glance at the Vermillion Bird. "Does the ancient senior have a way?"

Jiang Chen shook his head. "The senior isn't in its best condition either. This demon would be no threat otherwise."

The Vermillion Bird didn't speak human language, but it could understand a few words. Jiang Chen's high praise sounded like music to its ears. Now happier, it became a little more lively and suddenly recalled something. "I spoke too soon earlier. In fact, the Primosanct Sect's left a hidden card behind. But it's very difficult to use, so I didn't think of it off the top of my head."

Jiang Chen's eyes suddenly shone. Newsun also stared, his dismay long forgotten. He looked at the Vermillion Bird, his eyes full of hope.

"Senior, don't keep us waiting. Why didn't you tell us earlier?"

The Vermillion Bird shook its head. "It's too early to rejoice. You humans have declined too far. This method might be out of your reach!"

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

Chapter 1426: The Ultimate Treasure of the Sect?

Jiang Chen replied anxiously, "Senior, how do you know we'll fail before we even try?"

Newsun nodded in agreement. "Senior, young lord Jiang Chen is a one of a kind talent who'd compare favorably to the ancient geniuses. Maybe what the ancients left behind is waiting for him!"

Dazed with no coherent thought in his mind, he instinctively felt Jiang Chen was a ray of hope for humanity's future. For example, when everyone had scrambled for the vortex, only he had stayed outside. Such a detail demonstrated the young lord was unlike any other.

"Follow me!" The Vermilion Bird may be the realm's guardian, but it knew that it was currently powerless. In the end, human affairs were best left for humans to deal with.

Jiang Chen and Newsun glanced at each other, then flew behind the ancient bird without a word. Silently huddled in a corner until now, Forefather Zi also followed them, shouting, "Young lord, wait for me!"

His heart pounding, he'd be hard pressed to describe his current mood. The events had scared him witless, but he also felt incredibly lucky. What if he'd wavered and followed the crowd into the seal? He'd have been either killed by the black net or be a demon puppet by now. He shuddered at the thought.

Up at the front, Jiang Chen couldn't resist asking, "Senior, didn't you say the demon hasn't recovered as much as you thought? Why don't we..."

"What? Kill him?" the divine bird cackled.

"Err..." Jiang Chen coughed. Indeed those were his thoughts, but the divine creature's tone seemed to suggest it was an idiotic idea.

"Even the Primosanct Sect couldn't kill him. Are you stronger than them? An ordinary demon is already hard enough to kill with their tenacious lifeforce, but it's almost impossible with a demon lord."

"No matter how strong their vitality may be, it doesn't mean they can't be killed, does it?" The young lord understood demons better than most thanks to his past knowledge. True, they were war machines almost as enduring as cockroaches, but they weren't invincible.

No race was perfect. In the heavenly planes, even demon gods could be killed, to say nothing of empyrean demon lords.

The Divine Abyss Continent thought them immortal simply because the locals were too weak. Not even the strongest powerhouse could easily slaughter one.

However, Jiang Chen didn't argue with the Vermilion Bird. What good was his knowledge? He was merely mid rank emperor realm. He couldn't use any of the demon-slaying methods he knew.

The bird led them downstairs and out the palace. It sped up once outside with Jiang Chen and the others in tow. Shortly after, they arrived at the foot of a tall mountain on the western side.

"Senior, where are we going?"

"Up there!" the bird replied succinctly.

The mountain faced the palace from afar like a colossus challenging another.

The ancient bird soon led Jiang Chen to the mountain peak, where a barren precipice as glossy as a mirror could be found.

"Where are we?" The human couldn't help asking.

For once, the Vermilion Bird deigned to give further explanation. "The Primosanct Celestial Peak. Disciples used to come here to reflect on their mistakes."

"Oh, so it was used as a punishment area." Jiang Chen observed the surroundings.

"So, what do you think? Does anything feel different?"

Jiang Chen frowned with bafflement. "Hm? Senior, what do you mean?" But he soon sensed a trace of something odd. He spread his consciousness in every direction. "There's an enormous murderous aura permeating this place."

"As I thought, your consciousness is remarkable. The dunce beside you hasn't sensed anything even though he's a great emperor." The ancient bird glanced at Newsun.

The latter didn't understand the ancient beast language. He smiled foolishly, unaware he'd been derided.

"Senior, what does this place have to do with the seal? Can the mountain stop the demon's plans?" Jiang Chen asked, still puzzled.

"Don't fret. First, try to feel where the aura comes from." The bird deliberately tested him once more.

"It's right beneath the celestial peak. There's a power there that seems to be suppressing something."

"Correct. There's an ancient divine bow there. I've heard it's the sect's ultimate treasure. Sadly, it never acknowledged any master back in my time, but legends say its arrows can slay even a demon lord like the one we have trapped here."

"Amazing!" Jiang Chen gasped. "But how can it be called a ultimate treasure if no one can use it?"

The Vermilion Bird cackled. "It was a common occurrence back then. Many ultimate treasures were finicky. The ancient world wasn't as weak as now. Geniuses and treasures were as numerous as dogs. A treasure might spurn an entire generation, but it might favor someone in the next. You juniors can't imagine this sort of era..."

Jiang Chen didn't bicker with it. Spellbound, he looked at the bare ground, seemingly lost in thought. The ancient Primosanct Sect's greatest treasure!

"Senior, what was the sect's status back then?" he asked eagerly.

The bird thought for a moment. "Very high, probably amongst the ten greatest sects. They defended mankind's southwestern border, guarding the Boundary Stele here."

"Was it the strongest?"

"No, but one of the strongest."

"I see." Jiang Chen sighed softly. "Yet even such a great sect couldn't kill the celestial demon lord. He's a difficult enemy indeed."

"Young man, you can't begin to imagine the bitter struggles of that era. Alright, I've shown you the way. The bow is here, the rest is your own business."

Jiang Chen smiled wryly. "Senior, you aren't giving up yet, are you?"

The bird sighed. "My time is running out. My strength is far from what it used to be. Moreover, I've spent nearly all my energy this time. My mission will end when I die. Young man, you're very interesting. Unfortunately..."

Grief laced the bird's tone. As a divine creature, it was keen of spirit and rich in emotions. After finally meeting someone to talk to after a hundred thousand years, it was full of affection for the young man.

"Senior, don't despair. Believe me, with your heaven-bestowed gifts, you'll definitely have a chance at rebirth!" Jiang Chen didn't want to see it so crestfallen and give up on life. He still needed its help. More than that, he admired it greatly.

True, it was simply repaying its debt, but it'd gone above and beyond what most humans would have done for a mere debt.

"Senior, have faith in me. I'll find a way one day so that you may enter the cycle of rebirth."

He knew of several methods to help the Vermilion Bird. Alas, the human domain was currently far too lacking. With its current condition, he couldn't even refine pills to prolong the ancient beast's life.

The Pinecrane Pill was no use. The pill's astounding effects were limited to great emperors, while the Vermilion Bird was plainly above them. There were also many similar pills in the heavenly planes. The most perverse one was the Sun Moon Pill that Jiang Chen's father had refined for him.

It could absorb the essence of the sun and the moon, and pilfer the world's fortunes. Imagine a celestial emperor overturning the laws of nature and subverting the cycle of life and death with the strength of

his fortunes alone, all for the sake of a single pill! Even though Jiang Chen couldn't cultivate in his past life, he'd lived a million years thanks to it.

In any case, there were pills to prolong anyone's life at any level. But he didn't make grand promises. Any of the ingredients necessary for a pill of that caliber was currently out of his reach.

About to speak, the Vermilion's Bird's eyes suddenly flashed with astonishment. It shouted, staring at the palace, "Young man, there's trouble brewing!"

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

Chapter 1427: The Primordial Stone Golem Tribe

Jiang Chen peered at the palace with the power of the Evil Golden Eye.

Surprised by his golden eyes, the Vermillion Bird sighed with praise. "Tsk, young man, your eye technique is quite interesting."

An eerie, thick black haze shrouded the inside of the palace, obscuring the young lord's vision. No matter how strong his consciousness was, he still couldn't compare to a divine ancient beast, even one nearing the end of its life.

"What do you see?" the bird asked.

"An eerie, black fog." Jiang Chen's tone was grave.

"The demon's unexpectedly repressed his appetite. Instead of devouring the humans, he must be imparting demon arts to them to turn them into useful pawns," the divine bird responded with conflicted tones.

"Hmph, as long as the demon lord doesn't come out himself, we have no need to fear this rabble."

"Is that so?" the ancient bird asked with faint amusement. "You think too little of him. Celestial demons have mysterious abilities. With his guidance and the help of demon techniques, the humans might become three to five times stronger! Or even ten times, if they can obtain demon blood! The great emperors could become empyrean powerhouses in a short period of time. Tell me, can humanity withstand this group in its current state?"

It heaved a soft sigh. "Our enemy isn't an ordinary figure, it seems. It's quite a character amongst its kind and has decent foresight."

Jiang Chen took a deep breath. He'd taken things too lightly. As the ancient bird said, a demon bloodline could help the human cultivators break through to empyrean realm. Moreover, they knew the human domain like the back of their hand. They might wreck greater havoc than demons themselves.

Raw strength could possibly be deflected. But what to do against enemies with full knowledge of their enemies? Not even a chance for escape existed.

"Young lord, what's going on?" Newsun had also noticed the black haze, but was unaware of its implications.

“Nothing good, I’m afraid. Those bastards have surrendered and are receiving the demon’s teachings.” Jiang Chen didn’t hold back.

Newsun blanched. “What should we do?”

The young man stayed silent. His golden gaze locked onto the palace entrance, beholding the eight statues at the entrance.

“Senior, what about these statues at the doors? Do they hide any secrets?” he was more interested in them at the moment.

The Vermillion Bird started. “What secret do you see?”

Jiang Chen couldn’t put his finger on it, but there was something odd about them. Other than size, they were identical to the eight stone carvings he possessed down to the smallest detail. It was why he was so interested in them.

“Senior, they can’t be mere decorations. I can feel an extraordinary power hidden inside,” he responded, testing the waters.

The bird replied with mixed tones, “Even the sectmaster of my time didn’t know all the specifics. Apparently the statues have stood there since the beginning of this sacred land’s history, when the first generation of the sect cleaved this land into existence via a great art. According to the sect’s earliest records, the statues are creatures of the stone golem tribe from the primordial times. When the tribe met with disaster, the first sectmaster used a secret art to shelter eight of them. He separated their souls from their bodies. These statues must be their bodies, but they are empty shells.”

“Incredible!” Jiang Chen’s heart raced.

As he seemed to recall, the tribe had been a rare sight even in the heavenly planes, but their fighting prowess was astounding. However, their extraordinary power was also their downfall, attracting hostility and envy from other races.

No matter how mighty, each race had its own weaknesses. Just like the demons, the golem tribe’s reproductive abilities were low, and they consumed a frightening amount of resources. Moreover, they were naive and not given to scheming, so they were often reduced to being hired muscle for others.

The Vermillion Bird sighed. “We wouldn’t need to fear the demon if we could reattach their souls to their bodies.”

“Are they that powerful?” Despite his memories, the young lord only had a vague idea about their specific strength. But at a guess, they certainly weren’t weak.

Do my stone carvings contain their consciousness? Otherwise, why would I sense tremendous consciousness emanating from them?

The possibility suddenly seemed more and more real. The carvings had felt odd back in the desolate wildlands when he took them from the Prince of Shangping. What was the strange power hidden inside when he occasionally probed them with his consciousness? Why did they almost seem alive?

After hearing the Vermillion Bird's explanation, he was almost certain they were related to the eight giant statues. The carvings might even be their souls!

Seeing the human fall silent, the Vermillion Bird expounded, "Young man, I haven't experienced the remote era myself either, but I've inherited some memories from that time. The golems were once one of the ten strongest races. Even the demon lord would cower in front of them. Alas, fate seems not to have blessed them. They were few in numbers, and more importantly, they attracted resentment from all sides."

"Senior, could we awaken them if we had their souls?"

"We also need a secret technique. But they've never been whole again after the first sectmaster separated them from their bodies. Their souls are also lost, or perhaps even extinguished. It's been too long since the primordial times, after all." The bird was downcast.

"Secret technique? Does the Primosanct Sect have a copy?"

"Of course. It's carved on the statues' back." The bird suddenly glanced at Jiang Chen. "Young man, don't waste your time. The primordial times are an era that precede the ancient times. They're much too far back. You might as well try to find a way to activate the divine bow instead."

Where would they find even the beginning of a trail? The souls had been long lost in the river of time. Rather than this vain hope, the divine bow was a more realistic approach.

Jiang Chen smiled. "Senior, do you know what the souls materialize as?"

The bird shook its head. "I'm not sure."

"Let's take a closer look at the statues."

The bird blinked. "Young man, what are you thinking of?"

Jiang Chen chuckled. "Our connection seems destined by fate."

The ancient bird tilted its head and stared at him. "How so?"

"Senior, if I can revive them, will they listen to my commands?" Jiang Chen asked.

"The golems make the best friends and the worst enemies. They're strong of limbs and simple of mind. Once their mind is set, they will never waver. Alas, many of them have fallen with the relentless march of time, their heritage and very foundations destroyed. But if you can breathe life into them again, they'll definitely swear allegiance to you!"

Jiang Chen nodded. The ancient bird's opinion agreed with his.

"Hehe, then you must help me resurrect them. Senior, you might finally be able complete your lifelong mission and be free to seek an opportunity for rebirth."

The bird froze. "Young man, are you serious?"

Jiang Chen spread his hands, levitating the eight stone carvings in the air. "Senior, please take a look. I obtained these carvings a few years ago in another land of sealed demons. They're identical, miniature versions of the statues. Also, I've sensed formidable mental fluctuations from them more than once."

The Vermillion Bird suddenly narrowed its eyes and stared at the carvings, enraptured.

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

Chapter 1428: The Primosanct Sect's Secret Ar

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"Young man, what are those statuettes?" The urgency in the Vermillion Bird's voice betrayed its excitement.

After Jiang Chen relayed the entire story, it murmured, "This must be providence. There can't be such a coincidence in the world. Young man, they must be the statues' souls."

Jiang Chen beamed. "Senior, even if they aren't, we've got to give it a shot."

"Right, we have to try!" The divine creature's personal fate was at stake. If the statues could truly be revived, they could replace it as guardians of this land. It might not have to die here! It would be free to seek another cycle of rebirth.

"Let's go, let's go right now! I'll stand guard while you try!" It was so eager that it let Jiang Chen ride on its back and hurtled towards the place.

Jiang Chen transmitted, "Emperor Newsun, wait here with Zi Tan for now. Don't act on your own."

Newsun and Zi Tan were unwilling to tarry a second longer. They could die at the slightest provocation in this terrifying place! However, leaving now would be the ultimate disgrace of desertion.

Most importantly, Jiang Chen was their only lifeline. Here was a young man who could even chat and joke with a divine creature! Their faith in him was almost total. Since he'd commanded them to stay, they wouldn't budge an inch.

Forefather Zi was particularly overwhelmed. He'd spent a lifetime as a prominent figure of his region, but the last few days had felt like a dream.

All of the other local heavyweights had fallen and become demon puppets, leaving him the lone survivor. Moreover, he'd struck up a good relationship with Veluriyam's young lord and judging from the august personage's tone, the young lord wouldn't abandon Zi Tan.

He couldn't resist praising his own wisdom. He'd be dead if he hadn't stuck by Jiang Chen in front of the demonic formation, or worse, become a demon's dog.

"Daoist Zi Tan was it?" Emperor Newsun suddenly asked.

Flustered, Zi Tan protested, "I dare not. This humble one is Zi Tan. Allow me to pay my respects, Emperor Newsun."

"Haha, we're fellow sufferers now. Let's drop with the ceremonies. Daoist Zi, I admire your decisiveness. It must have taken courage and insight to stand by the young lord so staunchly." His praise was

heartfelt. Inside of following the crowd, Zi Tan had resolutely cast his lot with Jiang Chen. An ordinary man couldn't have done that with his life on the line.

Zi Tan hurried to respond modestly, "It wasn't courage. The young lord is simply trustworthy."

The Vermillion Bird pierced the sky like a bolt of red lightning, landing in front of the palace.

From up close, the statues' build was even more awe-inspiring. They were as tall as eight ordinary men stacked on each other, if not more.

"Were the members of this tribe all so enormous?" Ambling between them, Jiang Chen observed them in earnest.

The golems were a giant tribe, but not to this degree, at least to his knowledge. They could also adjust their size at will.

Carved on their backs was the sect's secret art to dispersing and recollecting the golems' souls. However, the various passages were plainly purposefully in the wrong order. It took Jiang Chen and the divine creature a long time to rearrange them.

He studied it repeatedly and finally sighed in relief after confirming there were no further issues.

He took out the eight figurines. They were minuscule compared to the statues.

"Senior, according to what's written here, we need to break the seal in the carvings' outer layer in order to awaken their souls."

The figurines might look small, but they were extremely durable. He'd used them as shields in the Eight Trigram Boulder Formation in the past; the powerful of attacks had left only faint traces.

To peel away their exterior would be an arduous task. Thankfully, he could utilize the first sectmaster's secret art. After all, the one who'd created the problem ought to be able to fix it.

He held out a figurine. "Senior, I'm going to start. I have to arrange a defensive formation as I can suffer no disturbance in the process. Will you stand guard for me please?"

The ancient bird hurried to say, "Don't worry, you can count on me! Other than the bastard demon, the rest is mere rabble."

Even exhausted and near the end of its life, it still was a divine bird from ancient times. Cloudbillow and the rest were no match for it.

Jiang Chen conscientiously arranged the formation before starting the secret technique.

First, he needed to find the sealing points on the statuette, then follow the layout in order to unravel the seal.

Caution was required. The lives of the ancient golems were at stake. An moment of careless could kill them for good. In fact, were the souls still intact? Nothing was more uncertain.

True, he'd sensed their auras several times in the past, but they'd been separated from their bodies since time immemorial.

“No matter. I can only do my best.”

Concentrating wholly, he pinpointed the sealing points. Then he started dismantling the seal’s power. Any mistake could harm the souls inside. A fine sheen of sweat appeared on his brow.

Seconds ticked by, turning into minutes.

As he held his breath and slowly worked on the figurine, a golden glow suddenly spilled from it, chipping and melting away grit from the stone. The figurine shrank more and more.

Jiang Chen stayed sharp for any signs coming from it. If a soul was truly sealed inside, it should manifest itself soon.

However, nothing happened.

The presence he’d once sensed had seemingly vanished, as if everything had been an illusion. But he didn’t give up. He doggedly continued onwards with his mental communications, his consciousness alert to any unusual signs.

Once the process perfectly completed, he held the figurine, flabbergasted. It was as quiet and still as ever.

Was I mistaken? But he’d always paid close attention to the eight statuettes. The sensations couldn’t have been solely his imagination.

When he started losing hope, he finally caught a faint ripple with his consciousness. In the next moment, a formidable aura spilled forth, a terrifying presence suddenly awakening after eons and ripping free of its restraints.

“Oh... who woke me?” This consciousness was groggy and confused, but the power it unintentionally emitted was almost too much to bear. Jiang Chen’s mind would’ve crumbled if not for the chain seal inside.

“I am the Primosanct Sect’s heir. I came here especially to return your souls and revive you,” he sent tentatively.

“Ooh... Primosanct Sect... Is the Primordial War finally over? Can our tribe... finally see the light of day again?”

The Primordial War?

Jiang Chen felt his brain seize up. He knew little about the Divine Abyss Continent’s ancient era, to say nothing of time periods even more remote. The primordial times possibly referred to when the light of civilization had first dawned on the continent. It was far too distant a time reference for him.

“Eons have gone by since,” he revealed.

“What? What about Saint Dan?” The voice asked despite itself.

“Saint Dan? Are you talking about the sect’s founding sectmaster?”

“Ai... yes, that’s him. When our tribe met with extermination, he secretly took us in and separated our souls from our bodies to save us brothers.” Filled with sorrow, the voice added, “Are you a descendant of his?”

Jiang Chen thought a moment. “You could say that.”

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

Chapter 1429: Revival of the Ancient Stone Golems!

Jiang Chen was tremendously excited. He hadn’t expected the eight statues that he’d taken from the Prince of Shangping to contain such a momentous secret.

“Is Saint Dan still alive?” The consciousness sounded vaguely sorrowful and forlorn.

“I don’t think he’s present in this world anymore,” replied Jiang Chen honestly. “Perhaps his good works has allowed him to ascend to the heavenly planes, or perhaps he’s passed away and reincarnated. It’s been hundreds of thousands of years since the primordial age, maybe even a million.”

Truthfully, Jiang Chen didn’t know exactly how long it had been since the primordial age, but the ancient times was a dozen or more hundred thousand years at minimum. In light of that, his estimate didn’t seem too over the top.

The primordial age was likely the origin of all civilization on Divine Abyss.

The consciousness found this a bit odd. “A million years? Has it been that long?”

“Yes, after the primordial age came the ancient age. In the ancient age, the demon race invaded and changed Divine Abyss’ history forever. The Divine Abyss Continent of today is in its weakest and most abject time. Maybe we need a resurgence of a primordial race like the Primordial Stone Golems. Your reintroduction may be the catalyst that revitalizes this world!” Jiang Chen offered the tribe a timely bit of praise.

“The ancient age? What age is that? Does it come after the primordial age? The demon race? Where did that race come from? The Divine Abyss Continent has no such race.”

The Primordial Stone Golem Tribe had been born in the primordial age, but hadn’t experienced the ancient age. Therefore, it was no wonder that it neither knew what the demon race was nor what had happened during that era.

“The demon race is a race from the outer planes that invaded Divine Abyss Continent.”

“Divine Abyss has many powerful races. How strong are these demons to dare invade like this?”

“Haha, that’s a long story. Maybe you should find out for yourselves what’s happened after you reawaken. The demon race is one known in the heavenly planes, and Divine Abyss cannot rest a single day while it remains unextinguished. The other races can’t possibly peacefully coexist with it.”

The tribesman was furious. “How can this have happened? Do these demons have three heads and six arms?”

“Not just that, but numerous abilities and methods.” Jiang Chen intentionally provoked the tribesman. “You Primordial Stone Golems were one of the strongest races in the primordial age, but perhaps these demons exceed even you in their capabilities.”

“Impossible. There were very few races stronger than my tribesman in the primordial age. Hmph, if not for our tribe’s honesty and low reproductive rate, we should have been the rulers of the continent!” There was a deep loyalty to his race in the golem’s voice.

Jiang Chen chuckled in tacit agreement. “Alas, your race had neither the ambition nor the boldness to conquer the world. Alright, enough with the small talk. I’m going to use the secret method required to revive you. I do need your cooperation, though. If the secret method fails, your consciousness and body will never reunite ever again.”

“Of course, of course,” the consciousness agreed hurriedly. “You are a junior of Saint Dan, and thus the Primordial Stone Golem Tribe is indebted to you. We will do what you say.”

A Golem always repaid his debts. He returned even the smallest favor ten times over, and the gravity of Jiang Chen’s life-saving actions was much weightier than that.

“Don’t worry,” nodded Jiang Chen. “I will use my full strength to revive all eight brothers of your clan.”

As long as there was a secret method available, he was confident he could pull it off. He had always been sure of his own skills.

In his previous life without cultivation, he’d still been able to become a pill dao master renowned in the heavenly planes. Now, he had more than sufficient cultivation and talent to back his knowledge up.

Following his prior actions, Jiang Chen found the sealing points on the giant statue. Because the larger statue held the tribesmen’s bodies, the resolution of the bindings was considerably more difficult.

Under his concerted efforts, more and more of the seal broke.

“Alright, the seal on your outer body is no more. Prepare yourself. I will use the secret method to transfer your consciousness back into your body. Remember, this is the most key component of the revival ceremony. If anything is done improperly here, your mind and body will never be united for the rest of eternity!”

Jiang Chen emphasized the importance of this fact again and again.

This was no idle threat. The final step was also the deadliest. Since consciousness and body had been separated for so long, whether they could return to their prior states was a very good question. If there was a misstep somewhere along the way...

Because of this, utmost caution was required for the entire process. Using the figurine, Jiang Chen guided the Stone Golem’s consciousness out. Making a series of hand seals, he cried out, “Go!”

A streak of bright light surged into the larger statue under Jiang Chen’s supervision and impetus.

Whoosh!

There was a rapid ripple on the exterior of the body as its consciousness entered, countless cracks visibly forming on the surface. These cracks tore away multiple layers of discarded granite, revealing new skin and runes beneath.

This was a sign that life had returned, and that the body had regained a modicum of vitality.

Jiang Chen let out a long breath. He understood that this dangerous process was over. More importantly, he had succeeded!

After soul was joined to body, the giant's form began to slowly rumble into movement from his previous paralyzed state. Vigor and cadence began to flow within the giant's body once more. Blood pumped through the veins, and organs roared to life. Gradually, the senses began to return as well.

There was a distinct rumbling. The golem's joints popped continuously like a wok of fried beans.

Suddenly, his neck moved from left to right. Enormous eyes the size of bronze bells opened wide, the celestial light emanating from them, brimming with spirit.

Freed from the shackles of a million years of being sealed away, a living Stone Golem had been restored to new life!

"Don't get overexcited, big guy. Calm down. Calm down. You have seven brothers who are still stuck. If you attract the celestial demon lord, there'll be a lot of trouble."

"Who is the celestial demon lord?" The golem waved his thick, powerful arms around. His voice was full of energy and strength.

"The celestial demon lord is a lord of the demon race sealed away here."

"Hmph, is he strong? We braves of the Primordial Stone Golem Tribe aren't scared of a celestial demon lord. If he comes, he can eat my fist!"

"I don't know if he's strong or not, but the ancient Primosanct Sect couldn't kill him. That's why he was sealed away here."

"Impossible. Saint Dan was ridiculously strong. How could he not kill a celestial demon lord?" The golem tribesman was in disbelief.

"Saint Dan was a primordial expert. There were innumerable generations between him and the ancient age," Jiang Chen reminded.

"Oh, that means you've failed his heritage then. Pretty useless, if you ask me." Stone Golems seemed to be quite brutish as a whole. Such words were harsh enough to make anyone actually from the Primosanct Sect cough up blood.

Thankfully, the ancient sects' forefathers had died out in the present day.

"Haha. By the way, big guy, I'm Jiang Chen. What's your name?" The human spoke like he was the big bad wolf luring in a little bunny.

The golem tribesman scratched his head. "We Stone Golems are all called Stone. We don't have any real names. I'm Big Stone, my second brother is Second Stone, third brother is Third Stone..."

Jiang Chen quickly stopped him. "Alright, that's enough. I know you have a lot of brothers. Your seventh brother is called Seventh Stone and the eighth brother is Eighth Stone, right?"

"How did you know?" The big man reacted in unfeigned shock, as if Jiang Chen had solved the hardest problem in the world. The human didn't know what to say or think.

Were Stone Golems really this simple?

Was there a point to asking 'how did you know' to something so obvious?

"Aha! I've got it. Saint Dan must have told you." The giant looked very thoughtful. Jiang Chen was at a complete loss for words.

What was he supposed to reply with? His eloquence had no outlet here.

The Primordial Stone Golem Tribe was naïve enough to the point of being mentally handicapped. Jiang Chen even felt guilty, like he was tricking a three-year-old.

Alas, the present circumstances meant that he had to take hold of these tribesmen and exert absolute control over them, lying through his teeth if necessary. Otherwise, they would be extremely troublesome if mobilized by the celestial demon lord.

"Big Stone. Saint Dan saved your lives, and I returned them to you. Don't you think that you and your brothers should listen to me from now on?"

The big man nodded multiple times in quick succession. "Oh, of course. You are Saint Dan's junior and heir, and our savior. That's right, Jiang Chen, I hear that humans are a wily and crafty race. Not many good people. You aren't tricking us, are you?"

"Of course not. If I wanted to do that, why would I rescue you?"

"Mm, I guess so." The big man nodded. "Get my brothers alive first."

Jiang Chen knew that the Stone Golems were a tribe of simple-minded creatures, but he estimated the one before him to be a child of that race despite his musculature. Otherwise, the race would have bordered on straight-out idiocy.

The Stone Golems could not possibly be that simple. How would they have survived in the primordial age otherwise?

Jiang Chen was even more pumped up when he considered this possibility. He had picked up a few younglings of the Primordial Stone Golem Tribe! While they were in this stage of their lives, they would be easy to guide and tame. Entities with more experience were far harder to brainwash.

The Vermilion Bird patrolling outside was overjoyed to see Jiang Chen's revival of the Primordial Stone Golems and tittered with excitement. It also became a bit more curious about this human youth.

The secrets of these eight Stone Golems hadn't been uncovered by anyone in the ancient Primosanct Sect. How unexpected and quaint that this modern youth had revived them while his forebears could not!

A primordial secret that had passed through the long ancient age, then the hundred thousand years after that, without being revealed. This young man had practically pulled off a miracle!

Sovereign of the Three Realms (WN)

Chapter 1430: The Demon Lord's Scheme

Hundreds of thousands of years had passed quietly by after the ancient demon cataclysm. The Vermillion Bird had suppressed its lifeforce and avoided using any of its divine arts to minimize the exhaustion of its lifespan. Even then, it couldn't avoid the decaying effects of time and was now in its twilight years.

If this had been the ancient era, it could simply plunge into the flames of rebirth and have a fifty percent chance to rise from the ashes again. Unfortunately, the current state of affairs wasn't conducive for such things.

If it were to attempt rebirth now, its success rate would likely be less than one in a thousand. Thus, it'd already given up hope. Its promise to the ancient Primosanct Sect was the sole reason it persevered to this day.

It would keep an eye on the demon lord until death relieved it of its duty.

Deep down, it'd already accepted that death was inevitable. However, a sliver of optimism suddenly blossomed from the stagnant waters in its heart.

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Within the demon domain, the demon lord's actions had drained his consciousness greatly since he was still shackled by the seal.

The mysterious nightly fragrance in Agarwood Valley and various illusions were all manifestations of his consciousness. He'd even penetrated the Vermillion Bird's restriction so that the human cultivators could get through. The schemes and tactics used to lure them to his domain had been a large drain on his being.

Emperor Newsun and Long Baxiang's defiance had only aggravated things further. In fact, he was almost spent after marking the cultivators with his imprint. He was weak beyond measure.

However, those before him were now wholly under his control, making passing on demonic arts to them a much more efficient affair. This gave him time to catch his breath and recharge. He was very content with the outcome of reducing the human cultivators to demonic slaves.

He picked a few demonic arts, sorted them according to level, and "bestowed" them to his new servants. He was extremely amused when he saw the excitement and gratitude from his new minions.

Humans are truly a vile race. They cravenly cling onto life and every small boon they can get their hands on. Yet somehow, they continue to prosper and thrive. They really do make for very excellent slaves.

The demons didn't think very highly of humans. Their obsession with the human domain stemmed from the human race's reproductive capabilities and disunity. Simply put, humans were easy targets. Moreover, most human cultivators lacked faith and would rather kneel to the enemy than die.

However, the demon lord also understood that humans were a force to be reckoned with. No matter how great the adversity they faced, they still clung ferociously to life, like weeds growing in the cracks. Their resilience was something that many races lacked.

Countless races had been wiped out during the great primordial war of the races. However, despite countless calamities, humanity always had the last laugh.

They weren't always the victors in wars, yet in defeat, they'd swallow their humiliation and come back stronger. By relying on their reproductive capabilities, heritage, and time, they'd eventually come to defeat countless extremely powerful races. It was a bizarrely mysterious and complicated race.

Every time it seemed like their flickering candle had been snuffed out, they'd rise again after the raging storms. No matter grim their lives were, a new tomorrow was always right around the corner.

On paper, humans seemed like an inferior race. But when push came to shove, heroes would always emerge and completely turn the tides.

They were afraid of death, yet often boasted of experts who feared nothing.

They were disunited, yet in the face of danger, they'd come together and achieve many earth-shattering feats.

They lacked loyalty, yet they'd somehow find stores of incredible strength when protecting their homeland.

The demon lord was filled with great emotion as he looked down on his slaves. The demonic invasion into the human domain during the ancient cataclysm had been obviously a great failure. They'd underestimated the humans from the very start. Conquering a disunited race was supposed to be as easy as destroying a rotten log.

Unfortunately, this oversight had proven costly. The humans were greatly set back after the war as many great sects were completely annihilated, but so were the demons. Many demonic descendants were killed in the war, and powerful experts were either killed or sealed away.

The demon lord had vowed to learn from his mistakes. The best method to conquer the human race was to rip them apart from within. It was why he'd spared the humans' lives instead of killing them.

However, what's with that human brat? How did he see through my plans when not even the great emperors could? The question niggled at the demon lord, concerning him greatly.

"Cloudbillow, come." The demon lord summoned his servant after his consciousness had recovered a little. His mind couldn't help but dwell on the matter.

The demon lord had assigned Cloudbillow as a first rank personal attendant. Even though the human was still merely an attendant, he was clearly higher than the others.

"My lord, how may I help you?" Cloudbillow responded subserviently.

"When you entered my domain, there was a youth that lingered outside. Who is he? The two of you don't seem to get along."

Cloudbillow gnashed his teeth in anger when Jiang Chen was brought up.

“My lord, that brat is a cunning one. He will become a thorn in your side one day if you plan on dominating the world.” The great emperor immediately placed a target on Jiang Chen’s head without a care for the world.

“Oh? He’s just a youth! Why do you fear a mere emperor? Did you suffer a great loss at his hands?” The quick-witted demon lord immediately saw to the heart of the matter.

“My lord, when I was still a citizen of Pillfire City, the brat...” Cloudbillow answered truthfully without holding anything back. To drive his point home, he even added some embellishment to make Jiang Chen seem as cunning as possible.

“My lord, the brat is already a leading figure in the human domain at the age of thirty. You mustn't underestimate him. You have to be ruthless and cut all the nonsense when it comes to him. If you give him any breathing space, he might wriggle his way to safety yet again.” This was Cloudbillow's final conclusion after several encounters with Jiang Chen.

The demon lord’s face darkened. “So it sounds like he will be a problem indeed. The human race always gives birth to a few fearsome geniuses like him in critical times. I will keep a watchful eye on him.”

“My lord is wise.” Cloudbillow bootlicked.

“Mm, Cloudbillow, I expect a lot from you since you're a first rank personal attendant. I'll have many great uses for you when I begin my conquest. As long as you serve me well, there will be plenty of rewards and opportunities for you. With your potential, great emperor is your limit. Do you wish to reach the empyrean realm and be a man above all men?”

Empyrean realm?

Cloudbillow’s eyes burned with excitement. “My lord, can I really ascend to the empyrean realm, receive the heavenly dao’s recognition, and obtain an empyrean decree?”

“You don’t believe me?” The demon lord’s tones chilled.

“N-no! Never! I have nothing but respect for my lord’s abilities. It’s just that it’s been a very long time since an empyrean expert has appeared in the human domain, so...”

“Hmph! What a falsehood! The true experts from your race have abandoned the human domain. You’ve been sidelined, destined for a life of mediocrity.”

“My lord, what do you mean?”

The demon lord answered blandly. “The human domain was one of the main battlefields during the ancient great war. Countless spirit veins have been destroyed since, depleting the spirit energy from the heaven and earth. Meanwhile, resources grow more and more scarce with each passing day. It’s only natural that this domain would be sidelined.”

“My lord is well-informed about the matters of the outside world despite being trapped behind a seal. Your subordinate is in awe.” Cloudbillow was genuinely taken aback. “If what my lord says is true, then what do you stand to gain by conquering this land?”

This question yet lingered in Cloudbillow's heart. Since the human domain had already been sidelined, the demons should no longer have a reason to conquer this land.

The demon lord laughed coldly. "Plenty. First of all, instead of establishing foundations on this land, we lost a great number of our brethren during the ancient war. So, we need some territory to strengthen our numbers again. Secondly, many powerful demons remain sealed in this domain. Only by freeing them can we grow stronger. Thirdly, you humans might not be very powerful, but you make extremely good slaves. The destruction of the spirit veins and the lack of resources are issues that can be fixed. Moreover, we need humans a lot more than any spirit vein or resource. For us demons, a big population is the most important resource!" The demon lord didn't need to hide anything since he'd gained sovereignty over Cloudbillow.