

## Three Realms 1781

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

#### Chapter 1781: Jiang Chen's Preparations

Jiang Chen's amazing performance had salvaged the sacred land's reputation and pride. Just about every young genius celebrated joyously with great delight.

Instead of losing himself to the euphoria, Jiang Chen was unusually calm. Once seated, Yan Qingsang noticed the concerned lines on his face. "Brother, you look worried. Is winning over Xiahou Zong not enough to make you happy? You've won the love of your life!"

Huang'er noted his unusual state as well. She looked at him tenderly.

"Things have settled down now, Huang'er. Are you interested in returning to the human domain?" Jiang Chen asked out of the blue.

"The human domain?" Yan Qingsang exclaimed in surprise. "Huang'er has finally regained her freedom with Xiahou Zong's death. She's no less talented than Yan Zhenhuai. It's finally her time to shine. Won't it be a shame for her to return to the human domain now?"

He was talking about the competition for all geniuses in two years.

Ling Bi'er perked up when she heard Jiang Chen's question, excitement flashing through her eyes. She was never going to return to the imperial family of the Bluesmoke Isles.

She didn't care how House Yan was going to explain things to them. Huang'er and Yan Qingsang had cut all ties. She didn't feel guilty at all for making House Yan the scapegoat. Besides, Bluesmoke Isles most likely wouldn't be bold enough to confront House Yan.

Without skipping a beat, Huang'er asked quietly, "Brother Chen, is there a lurking threat? If you think it's better to return to the human domain, I'll listen to you. However..."

Jiang Chen looked at her seriously. "I know your biggest concern is your parents. Will you entrust this matter to me?"

"Are you not coming with us?" she asked in surprise.

Jiang Chen sighed. "I can't without finding out more about the Great Formation of Heavenly Soul Confinement. I can return any time with a secret method, but I can't take you all with me."

The spacetime seal would send him back to the Six Palaces of Heritage if a problem arose. He'd reached a high enough cultivation to take on the fourth palace, which had at most required him to be at initial empyrean, or even the fifth palace, which called for intermediate empyrean.

As for the last palace, that would require advance empyrean level according to his calculations.

All was part of his plan.

For now, he still didn't know enough about the Myriad Abyss Island. It wasn't the time for him to return just yet. It'd been only a few years since his arrival, and he estimated that the demons wouldn't invade in droves until a few decades later.

There was still enough time.

Even if the invasion was to happen early, they'd still need about two to three decades to prepare.

What he had to do was to find clues about the great formation. If he could activate it again, he'd be able to keep demons out of the human domain. Then, even if an invasion occurred, the demons would flock to the territories of other races on the continent. The human domain wouldn't be the main battlefield.

He wouldn't hesitate to fight the invading demons, but he wanted to at least keep the human domain safe from becoming the main war zone again. Call him selfish, but that was what he had to do.

"What danger is there, brother?" Yan Qingsang asked, agitated. "I don't believe there's anything we need to be scared of now that Xiahou Zong is dead. What are you worried about?"

He definitely wasn't as far-sighted.

Jiang Chen sighed. "It's difficult to explain. I can only say that it may not be safe even in the Eternal Sacred Land. A seismic shift might be coming to Myriad Abyss Island. It would be wise to leave while you can."

"A seismic shift?" Yan Qingsang asked in disbelief. "What are you talking about? The island has been peaceful for countless years. Are you just being an alarmist, brother?"

Jiang Chen smiled and didn't elaborate. He couldn't make someone frivolous like Yan Qingsang understand the gravity of the issue. He turned to Huang'er with a serious expression. "Senior sister Bi'er must be missing her homeland after all these years, Huang'er. Will you go back to the human domain with her?"

Huang'er trusted him implicitly, and she wasn't that interested in the competition anyways. She'd been plagued by the Generation Binding Curse since she was young. As a result, instead of being hotly competitive, she was prudent and adaptable.

She knew there must be a reason for Jiang Chen to make the suggestion. She thought for a moment and smiled softly. "I'll do as you say, Brother Chen. To be honest, I do prefer the human domain and its simple lifestyle over Myriad Abyss Island."

She was speaking from the heart. She wouldn't have returned here if not for her parents. She might've been born and raised on Myriad Abyss, but the place felt completely foreign to her.

"Alright, it's best we act soon. When do you think we should depart, Huang'er?"

Yan Qingsang was becoming upset. "What's going on? You've only just reunited with my sister. You can't send her away so quickly!"

"I was going to have you go with them as well, but I know you won't be willing to leave," Jiang Chen remarked faintly.

Yan Qingsang huffed. "Just as long as you know that."

"Huang'er, trust me when I say that your parents will be my top priority. I'll rescue them from the Boundless Prison while I'm here."

His impending marriage to Huang'er was done and settled. Naturally he wouldn't stand by and watch his in-laws suffer.

"It pains me to see you work so hard for me on your own, Brother Chen."

"Nonsense. Your business is mine as well." Jiang Chen smiled. "I just hope you won't resent me for telling you to leave so soon."

Huang'er smiled. "I couldn't be happier. Stop arguing with Brother Chen, cousin Qingsang. He knows what he's doing. When has he ever done anything without a good reason? Don't forget who it was that helped you ascend to empyrean realm."

Yan Qingsang retorted exasperatedly, "It's said that women prioritize their husbands over their family after marriage. You're defending him before you even get married!"

"Sister Bi'er, let's depart in two days. What do you think?" Huang'er wanted to leave as soon as possible after seeing how anxious Jiang Chen was.

Ling Bi'er responded in a upbeat tone, "I've wanted nothing more than to return. Anytime works for me as long as you're ready."

"Alright, that's decided then. How about we leave tomorrow night?"

"Huang'er, how did you leave for the human domain with Elder Shun before?" Jiang Chen asked suddenly.

"There's an ancient portal on Myriad Abyss. We snuck our way there back then, but I think it's going to be heavily guarded now. It'll be difficult to get there without attracting suspicion." Huang'er was worried.

"That's no problem. I believe there's another for leading to the human domain somewhere else, but I'm not sure what state it's in."

Huang'er's eyes flicked to him. "Do you mean Winterdraw Island?"

"Guessed it, haven't you?" Jiang Chen chuckled. Huang'er was indeed quick on the uptake. His first stop when he came to Myriad Abyss was Winterdraw Island. He speculated that there was an ancient transportation formation leading to the human domain there. However, he wasn't sure if it was still functional.

The portal in the human domain was working, but there was always a possibility that the portal on this end had been damaged.

No matter what, it was worth checking out. After the foundations of Winterdraw Island had been destroyed, almost all the inmates there had escaped. The island was unlikely to be restored, which rendered it useless for the Rejuvenation Isles. Rejuvenation wouldn't hesitate to abandon it.

"Let's depart from Winterdraw Island then, Brother Chen. I believe the ancient portal I left through last time won't be a viable option."

"That's decided then. We'll get ready and depart tomorrow night."

Jiang Chen was resolute. He should be enjoying married life with Huang'er, but what the venerated forefather had said had left a deep impression on him.

The sword competition further convinced him that aside from the imperial family, there were many more factions working against the sacred land both openly and under the table. He didn't know if the factions had formed an alliance, but one thing was for sure—the Eternal Sacred Land was in a delicate position.

Any day from now, the tension might escalate into an all out war. Either the sacred land could successfully suppress the ambitious usurpers, or it'd be destroyed and replaced.

No matter what, there would be a bloody conflict leaving both sides heavily injured. Not even the sacred land would be a safe harbor when that happened. Jiang Chen didn't want his lover to be targeted by his enemies. It was better for Huang'er to go to the human domain.

Jiang Chen and his companions prepared for the trip. It might not be that dangerous, but better safe than sorry. He was going to personally escort them to the island to prevent any accidents from happening. He would wallow in regret forever otherwise.

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

#### **Chapter 1782: Forefather Xiahou**

While Jiang Chen was preparing for his trip with Huang'er, several of House Xiahou's executives urgently plotted in secret in a hidden base. They met at their venerated forefather's hermitage.

The forefather in question had closed his doors to cultivate for more than three hundred years. It had been nearly a millennium since news of him had last circulated. In fact, it was a mystery to the outside world whether he was still alive at all.

"Xiahou Zong is dead?" A wizened, emotionless voice came from within the serene valley. It was the house's sole, remaining forefather, Xiahou Ming.

He was more than ten thousand years old. There was barely anyone alive in the Eternal Sacred Land older than him. Someone of his age should've come to terms with life and death long ago, and the emotions tied to mortality. However, the forefather sounded strangely affected.

Xiahou Zong's death astounded him a great deal.

"Forefather, we juniors have failed in protecting Xiahou Zong. We were incompetent!" Despite his status as the patriarch, Duke Xiaoyao was careful to be on his best behavior before the forefather.

"Ah..." Xiahou Ming sighed wistfully. "I divined Xiahou Zong's fate and fortune once. A calamity was fated to strike him before forty. I emphasized it time and time again, but none of you ever took it to heart. He didn't need to die. If he had passed the ordeal, he would have risen into the skies and attained true greatness. Now that he's gone, House Xiahou's fortunes will be severely affected."

Duke Xiaoyao was intensely distressed. "I have failed, Forefather. Please punish me harshly."

“Punish you? If that did anything, I would kill you on the spot. But what good would that do for us? Moreover, you weren’t the main reason for Xiahou Zong’s death. At the end of the day, his fortunes didn’t run deep enough. His nature hadn’t been tempered properly. Such is the case with countless geniuses in the world of martial dao. But his talent... what a shame, what a shame...”

There was unspeakable regret in Xiahou Ming’s aged voice.

“What should the house do from now on, forefather? Do our plans proceed?” the duke couldn’t help but ask.

“The arrow is nocked on the bow, why should it not be fired? Matters here in Eternal Divine Nation must be resolved eventually. Xiaoyao, any faction at the zenith of its strength, yet still unable to replace the sacred land, is destined to decline. The sacred land will eventually suppress it to become a second or third-rate faction – or worse, cause it to disappear from history forever.

“Remember, we cannot foresee the limits of our own future, but we must cherish this opportunity. After these long years of expenditure, the Eternal Sacred Land is on the verge of exhaustion. We are becoming stronger each year, while the sacred land is becoming weaker. Do you not even understand this much?” Killing intent flashed in Xiahou Ming’s eyes.

“This junior understands.” Of course the duke knew all this. He had hesitated merely because of Xiahou Zong’s death. He wondered whether the house had enough luck left to challenge the Eternal Sacred Land.

“What are you perplexed about, then? Xiahou Zong is a genius that comes once in ten thousand years, yes. But House Xiahou hardly relies on a single youth for its strength. If you’ve lost your fighting spirit because of his death, you disappoint me.”

“My fighting spirit burns as brightly as ever,” the duke affirmed hurriedly. “Especially since you are leading us, Forefather.”

“How are things everywhere else in the nation? The other factions?”

“Of the three sects and seven houses, seven out of the ten have formed a coalition in order to disrupt the current state of affairs and end the sacred land’s rule. The sacred land’s dictatorship will come to an end.”

“Seven? So three have sided with the sacred land?”

“No no no, not at all. Declined trash like House Yan can be taken out of the equation automatically. Though they seem neutral, they are actually on our side. They simply lack the strength and resources to participate in a momentous matter like this.” Duke Xiaoyao’s tone was filled with disdain for House Yan.

“House Yan?” Xiahou Ming harrumphed. “If I remember correctly, the root of Xiahou Zong’s trouble was this house, yes?”

“Yes...” Duke Xiaoyao was rather embarrassed. “Shao Yuan hated Xiahou Zong because of a House Yan girl.”

“Women have ever been a source of danger. If Xiahou Zong could not understand even that much, he had good reason to die at his enemy’s hand.” Xiahou Ming’s tone carried a hint of displeasure still.

“Our great work is at hand, Xiaoyao. You must compose yourself. Don’t let the sacred land perceive anything awry, or all we have done will have been for naught.”

Xiahou Ming instructed Duke Xiaoyao.

“Don’t worry, Forefather. We’ve kept everything quite secret. If we destroy the sacred land, then the imperial family...”

“Hmph, what will the imperial family amount to once the sacred land is gone? It’s just a puppet of the most powerful faction. Useful for keeping up appearances, but totally superfluous otherwise. The current imperial family has too many idle thoughts. Quite a bold stance to take, I should say. It will not be allowed to exist in the nation’s future.”

Xiahou Ming’s tone was icy despite the topic of the conversation. The imperial family’s existence was a trifling matter to him.

Duke Xiaoyao crowed with laughter. “Exactly what I think, Forefather. The imperial family is too ambitious for its own good. We are merely making use of its ambitions and connections to form a stronger alliance with the other factions. There would be no reason to suffer them otherwise.”

The imperial family had been an accessory of the sacred land from the outset.

Precisely because the sacred land’s usual involved role in their affairs, it was tired of playing the puppet. It wanted to become a master in its own right.

Sadly for it, it would never get that chance in Eternal Divine Nation.

Whether the ruler behind the scenes was the sacred land or House Xiahou, no serious consideration would be given to turning over any real authority to the imperial family.

“Your line of thought is still clear enough at the moment, Xiaoyao,” Xiahou Ming declared coolly. “I hope the death of Xiahou Zong will not cloud your judgment.”

“Don’t worry, Forefather. House Xiahou has prepared so many years for this moment. I will grasp this opportunity with all my might.”

“Remember, wait for my command. I’ve observed the old man in the sacred land for thousands of years. When I act, you must immediately respond by conquering the sacred land. Kill everything alive within, whether man or beast!”

“We are to eliminate sources of future trouble?” Duke Xiaoyao chuckled. “I understand.”

“Go. Call together your men and ready for battle. It might very well happen in the next few days.” Xiahou Ming’s aged voice sounded rather sinister.

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One day of preparation was more than enough. Jiang Chen intended to sneak Huang’er and Bi’er out of the Eternal Sacred Land. The current situation was far too complicated to risk alerting anybody.

The lower a profile he kept, the better. The more people that knew meant the more potential for trouble.

Though he was able to force himself to stay calm the entire day, there was an uncomfortable sense of dread within. He only became more resolved to carry out his plan because of it. The sooner Huang'er and Bi'er got out of here, the better.

Everyone disguised themselves before departing the sacred land in the dark of night.

Upon traveling a few dozen miles out, Jiang Chen frowned slightly. His unease hadn't abated a single bit. They traveled a bit more before he quietly called everyone to a stop. "Hold on, everyone. Looks like someone's tailing us."

"Someone's after us?" Yan Qingsang was among the company as well. He wasn't heading to the human domain himself, but he did want to accompany them. Jiang Chen had seen no reason to refuse.

"They latched onto us as soon as we left the sacred land." Jiang Chen's expression was as black as his tone. "But it's fine. The people following us aren't particularly strong. Perhaps we've been taken for normal disciples of the sacred land."

"Oh? How strong?" Yan Qingsang brightened when he heard this. He wanted to practice on someone his own level.

"We're not far from the sacred land. They're not exactly going to make a move here. Let's head on out another thousand miles or two." Jiang Chen didn't mind taking them out if their stalkers stubbornly followed.

Being followed was hardly a good thing. There was something inherently wrong about being shadowed starting from the sacred land's outskirts. That meant someone was observing the sacred land's activities. To send stalkers after a few likely insignificant characters could mean nothing else.

It was clearer than ever that the Eternal Sacred Land could no longer exercise its authority of rulership.

In the past, who would dare monitor anything within several hundred miles of the sacred ground? Doing so was tantamount to a death wish.

A thousand miles or two was quite close for an empyrean cultivator. It didn't take long at all for Jiang Chen to notice that the group was still on their tail. They behaved as if they wouldn't relent.

He was rather upset at the unwanted attention.

"Take care of Huang'er and sister senior Bi'er, Qingsang. I'll send these blind fools to hell myself."

Regardless of who it was, a group of secret pursuers could only mean ill. Jiang Chen didn't want a horde of unwanted ghouls at his back. It would affect the speed of their trip as well as risk revealing their destination.

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

#### **Chapter 1783: Closing Off Escape and Doling Out a Beating**

There were serious consequences for Jiang Chen's anger.

The group trailing them was uniformly composed of middle-aged cultivators, empyrean, one and all. The man at their head had sallow skin and a sickly complexion, but was the strongest: he was a mid empyrean expert.

“These guys are small fry, Elder Xu. Is there even a point to following them?” A man with a split lip complained.

“Shut up, Ole Split-Lip! The boss told us to follow even the smallest fly. We can’t let anyone get away for any reason!” The sallow man was Elder Xu.

Split-Lip was a bit upset. “I think it’s better just to kill them. Saves both time and energy.”

“Ridiculous. If we kill them now, we’ll alert the sacred land’s executives. If the boss’ plans don’t work out, our heads will roll. How many heads do you have, eh?”

The split-lipped man sighed, evidently vexed. “What’re we supposed to do, then? Just follow ‘em? Until when?”

“Hmph, not much longer. When the order is given and the others start their mess, we’ll be able to deal with these kids. Right now? Better to lay off our prey.” Elder Xu was surprisingly disciplined and methodical.

There were four in this group as well. Not a large number, but a single glance was enough to show that their combat ability was at least respectable.

“Stop dawdling. It’s shameful to lose track of small fry,” Elder Xu was spurred to remind his slacking comrades.

The group accelerated, flying off into the distance. As they flew, they encountered a vast wasteland.

“Where’d those brats go?” Split-Lip scanned his surroundings. Their quarry was gone?!

Elder Xu paled as well. “We’re in the right place,” he sniffed the air. “I can smell their presence. We haven’t lost them, but...” As he was about to continue, his expression colored once more. “Careful!”

Before he could finish, the scenery drastically shifted. The wasteland was gone, replaced by an infinite, chaotic realm.

“Where... where is this?” The split-lipped man was green in the face and trembled in fear.

Elder Xu suddenly recalled something. “It... it’s that Shao Yuan kid,” he called out, “he used this formation diagram against Xiahou Zong!”

As the strongest among his fellows, the elder reacted the quickest also.

A cool laugh rang at their ears. “So you’re not all stupid after all! You know this is the formation used against Xiahou Zong, huh?”

The voice naturally came from Jiang Chen.

Elder Xu’s expression instantly became very ugly. “Careful,” he growled, “each man to a corner. Don’t let the enemy catch you unawares.”



Xiahou Zong had died barely two days ago. A shadow still hung over their heads. Thus, all four of the cultivators were terrified when they found out they were in the exact same formation diagram.

“Stop struggling. Your cultivation level isn’t bad, but can you measure up to Xiahou Zong? I crushed his four summoned demons. Do you think yourselves stronger than them?” Jiang Chen tried a psychological attack.

The strongest of the four was Elder Xu. He was fifth level empyrean as well, but his combat ability was a far cry from Xiahou Zong’s.

Two Elder Xus wouldn’t necessarily be able to win against Xiahou Zong, while the three others combined were definitely incapable of winning against Elder Xu. That meant the four of them added up couldn’t rival a single Xiahou Zong.

The quartet glanced among themselves, discomfort rising in their heart.

“Shao Yuan, young friend Shao Yuan, is that really you? If so, we must have a misunderstanding here! We are all fellow cultivators of Eternal Divine Nation. My surname is Xu, and I bear you no ill will. I only respect and admire you. My brothers and I were just talking about how you were going to be the young genius that leads your generation. Xiahou Zong is a joke before you!”

“That’s right, young friend Shao Yuan, we’re not bad people. You’re scaring us old codgers by treating us like this.”

These people didn’t belong to House Xiahou, but were rather from the Cloudwave Sect.

Though Cloudwave was no House Xiahou, it was markedly stronger. These four men weren’t at the top of their sect, but they were reasonably important. However, their fate at this moment was completely in Jiang Chen’s hands. If he wanted to, he could take their lives on the spot.

Jiang Chen smiled a little. “You’ve followed us all this time, and you tell me you don’t mean us harm? So I’ve wronged you somehow?”

“You have, you have! We didn’t know you were the famous Shao Yuan. We had some business to take care of ourselves. Maybe we happened to go the same way, which might cause a misunderstanding. If we knew it was you, we would’ve come right up to make your acquaintance!”

The four men were incredibly proficient at shamelessly playing dumb.

If Jiang Chen hadn’t known about them from the outset, he would have quite possibly been tricked or swayed. Flattery was one of the most useful forms of communication, after all.

He might’ve been numbed by their praise, if not knowing where they came from. Thankfully, he was privy to their sinister intentions beforehand.

He’d heard what they said when they entered the range of his formation. ‘Lose track’ and ‘that Shao Yuan kid’ were hostile phrases. Who would believe their cover of of coincidentally taking the same road after that?

Not Jiang Chen, that was for sure.

The young man chuckled leisurely. "So it's a misunderstanding then! Where do you gentlemen come from, if I may ask?"

Split-Lip was about to respond, but Elder Xu cut him off. "We are executives of House Beigong, a first-rate faction in this nation. Brother Shao Yuan, why not come visit us sometime? We would be glad to receive you."

Jiang Chen nodded, then suddenly laughed. "What an odd explanation. I would've believed you if you said you were from some sect. Shouldn't House Beigong's executives carry that surname? I haven't heard of anyone with the last name Xu."

Elder Xu's heart skipped a beat. In his haste, he had come up with a faulty lie, one that he now regretted.

If he had pretended to be from the Starlight or Jade Lake Sects, he would've been able to explain himself better. Purporting to be an executive of an aristocratic house was unnecessarily stupid.

The elder was a little stuck. Still, he tried his best to back out of his corner. "House Beigong has elders with foreign surnames as well. We are simply much lower in status. Why else would we be out here in the middle of the night?"

It turned out he was pretty good at making up things on the spot.

Jiang Chen snickered. "Elder Xu, it must be trying for you to come up with such an elaborate ruse. I'm not here to hear your lies, though. Last chance: will you tell me the truth, or die in my labyrinth?"

His attitude turned instantly.

Elder Xu and company began to panic. They were usually an unruly bunch, but they tasted real fear today. They could feel the hostility radiating off of the young genius.

"Young friend Shao Yuan, really..."

Elder Xu was halfway through his sentence when an arrow soared through the air without warning. One of the cultivators was hit before he had time to react.

The arrow shattered its victim's skull with crushing force. He collapsed, having died on the spot.

"Alright, let's see if I'm going to hear another lie." Jiang Chen's tone was cool. It was easy for him to kill initial empyrean experts now.

He was far beyond that level now. Though he was only mid empyrean, he could fight as well as any advanced empyrean expert. Even someone of Xiahou Zong's strength had been destroyed. These small fries were almost too insignificant to mention.

Now three men and a mutilated corpse remained.

Their vicious natures didn't prevent the color in their faces from disappearing. Elder Xu, Split-Lip, and their comrade were uniformly terrified.

"Elder Xu, I'm asking once more: who are you? Why did you follow us? Another lie means another death. You can tell three more lies." Jiang Chen was cool and composed.

Within the space created by the Nine Labyrinth Formation, those with insufficient cultivation were as good as trapped beasts.

Elder Xu stuttered, but had no idea where to start.

“You have fifteen minutes to put the question off. After that, one more will die.” Jiang Chen didn’t feel like wasting any more time.

A quarter-hour was quite short.

Split-Lip roared. “Elder Xu, we should die on our feet. We’ll fight him to the death! Let’s try to break out together. If even one of us lives, it’ll be worth it!”

Everyone knew that breaking out was a solution, but actually executing it was rather difficult. Xiahou Zong had failed in that department already as a past example.

The allotted time ticked down very quickly.

“Seems like you want to squander your opportunity,” Jiang Chen smiled faintly.

He fired another arrow, using his Evil Golden Eye to lock down his target this time.

Whoosh!

The cultivator wanted to flee.

Alas, he couldn’t escape an arrow that was locked onto him. His cultivation was insufficient to do so, but he wouldn’t be able even if he were on the same level as Jiang Chen.

A shrill cry and a shower of blood followed his crumpling to the ground.

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

#### **Chapter 1784: An Uprising Brews**

Two out of four of the group were dead by now, leaving only Elder Xu and Split-Lip panicking in the formation. The deaths of their companions pulled the rug out from beneath them and sapped their will to fight back.

Split-Lip exclaimed, “We surrender! We surrender!”

Elder Xu’s face turned grey in despair. He silently agreed to his companion’s show of submission.

Their fates were in Jiang Chen’s hands. He wasn’t going to let them off the hook just because they’d surrendered.

“It’s wise of you to recognize your failure. Now, tell me, which faction do you belong to?” he asked nonchalantly. “Remember, you can’t afford to lie to me.”

Split-Lip raised both his hands in the air and yelled, “I’ll tell you! We’re from the Cloudwave Sect.”

“The Cloudwave Sect?” Jiang Chen frowned as he thought back to Shen Fan, his opponent in the third round of the sword competition. He had been from the Cloudwave Sect as well and hadn’t bothered to conceal his hostility towards Jiang Chen. His sect seemed to share the sentiment.

However, this group of men hadn’t appeared to know his identity at first. Why had they followed him?

Perplexed, Jiang Chen scoffed. “The Cloudwave Sect? You didn’t see through my disguise. Why would you follow me?”

Split-Lip spilled the beans without holding back. “We weren’t targeting you, but the entire sacred land. Our superior ordered us to follow anyone leaving the place. No one is to escape our surveillance.” Jiang Chen frowned. “What do you mean exactly?”

“I mean...” Before Split-Lip could continue, Elder Xu cut in, “Let me. Let me explain. The truth is...”

“Shut up!” snapped Jiang Chen. He could tell that Elder Xu was much more slippery than his companion. The old man wouldn’t give out as much information.

“You talk,” Jiang Chen said to Split-Lip.

“Alright, I’ll talk. Please show us mercy, Sir Shao, please. We didn’t want to make you our enemy. We were just following orders.”

“Orders? Whose orders? Give me all the details and don’t try to trick me. I’ll see right through it.” Jiang Chen warned them severely.

His threat compelled the man to obediently admit, “We’re following the imperial family’s orders and our sect’s instructions.”

“Why are you following people from the sacred land?” Jiang Chen interrogated in a low voice.

“Because... because...” stuttered Split-Lip. “We don’t know the details. I hear they... they’re...” “Staging an uprising!” Jiang Chen raised an eyebrow. “Am I right?”

Split-Lip shrank in on himself like he was worried Jiang Chen would shoot him. He continued to stammer, “I don’t know for sure, but the signs suggest that they’re going after the sacred land. Our sect isn’t the only one making a move. Senior executives from many of the first-tier factions seem to have reached an agreement. I think House Xiahou is the one leading everything.”

Jiang Chen’s expression darkened. His concerns had been proven right. He’d wanted to send Huang’er away in case civil unrest broke out in the nation. Now it seemed a storm was right on the horizon, and a strong and fierce one at that. “House Xiahou, the imperial family... are they trying to uproot the sacred land?” muttered Jiang Chen, the look in his eyes turning razor-sharp. “The sacred land has a venerated forefather in the divine realm. Do you think the factions’ concerted effort will be enough to defeat the sacred land? Besides, even if it’s toppled, the ambitious House Xiahou isn’t going to give the Cloudwave Sect the opportunity to rise. You’re making a deal with the devil!”

These men were just doing what they’d been told. Simply put, they were nothing more than pawns. They might hold a high position in the Cloudwave Sect, but they weren’t part of the decision making process.

Split-Lip scratched his face, rendered speechless. He didn't know much about politics. He was just carrying out what he thought was a simple mission. Who would've thought it would put him in fatal danger? "Tell me, when are the imperial family and House Xiahou going to strike? Which factions are involved? Remember, you better be honest. I don't like being lied to!"

"We haven't received any notice about when the operation will be, but it should kick off in a couple of days," hurried out the man. "As for the factions involved, they're all first-tier factions. I think there are six or seven of them. All three of the biggest sects have joined in the operation, along with many houses, such as Houses Xiahou, Feng, and Beigong. Oh, and House Yan too."

The three sects were the Cloudwave, Starlight, and Jade Lake Sect. Other than the three sects, seven aristocratic families were involved as well. The remaining houses were most likely the sacred land's diehard followers. If over seven of the ten first-tier factions had banded together, things weren't looking too good.

The first-tier factions were no fools. They must have found a way to deal with the venerated forefather for them to be bold enough to stage an uprising. Perhaps some of the factions had their own divine realm forefather as well.

Those forefathers may not be able to rival the sacred land's venerated forefather in a one-on-one fight, but they had a chance of winning if they had strength in numbers.

Moreover, the sacred land had suffered long-term attrition in the offworld battles. Taking into account factors both for and against the sacred land, it was difficult to predict the outcome of the impending battle.

Jiang Chen was conflicted. Should he take Huang'er and his friends to Winterdraw Island immediately, or should he report back to the sacred land? Would he even be able to return? If the major factions had surrounded the sacred land, he'd be intercepted before he could enter. It'd be next to impossible for him to get in.

"The first prime has been busy lately. Perhaps the sacred land has been preparing for this potential unrest?"

He wasn't sure if that was the case.

After repeated deliberation, he decided to first escort his companions to Winterdraw Island and locate the ancient portal to make sure they could leave Myriad Abyss Island.

He suspected he wouldn't be able to return to the sacred land given the circumstances. And he didn't think it was necessary to send a message. He had a feeling the senior executives were already in the know. The venerated forefather had been the one to tell him about the risk of an uprising, which proved the faction had long since been prepared.

Jiang Chen asked his captives a few more questions, finding out that the sacred land had indeed been surrounded. Anyone leaving would be followed, while no one was allowed to enter. "Alright, we'll go to Winterdraw Island first. Then we'll see how things go." Jiang Chen had always been the decisive sort. He wouldn't hesitate after making up his mind. "You two are on the wrong side of history. Although you've

been honest about who you are, that's not enough to redeem you. I'll execute you on behalf of the sacred land!"

Without hesitation, he activated the Confounding Puppets to restrain them and drew the Holy Dragon Bow, easily killing the two men as they wailed and howled for mercy. Once the four men from the Cloudwave Sect had been dealt with, Yan Qingsang and the two girls walked out from the shadow. Their change of mood was clear on their faces.

Yan Qingsang was especially affected. He was pale as a sheet as he struggled to find words. Guilt poked at him for dismissing Jiang Chen's suggestion that Huang'er leave the sacred land. He'd thought that Jiang Chen was overreacting. After hearing what the men from the Cloudwave Sect had to say, he realized that Jiang Chen was right.

"A storm is coming. Let's not waste any time. The Cloudwave Sect will find out about their deaths sooner rather than later. I worry that more of them will come after us."

He summoned Starfate without hesitation, the ancient treasure he'd acquired from Winterdraw Island.

Fate was sending them to the island again, and they would travel there on an airboat left by Pei Xing, the island's first master. Jiang Chen hadn't been able to look into the heritages within the airboat after acquiring it. Now was a good time to do so. For the four, it felt like a dream to be in the airboat. "This seems to be even better than the House Yan airboat, brother," Yan Qingsang said curiously. "Is this a gift from the sacred land?"

"It isn't. I found it at the core of Winterdraw Island when I destroyed its foundations. It's a treasure left by the island's first master, who was also the one to develop the island. There are many other heritages here that I haven't had the time to study."

Jiang Chen had been very busy ever since arriving at Myriad Abyss, too busy to devote time to studying the heritages.

There was a vast ocean between the island and Eternal Divine Nation, which would take at least half a month to cross even on Starfate at full throttle.

"Brother Chen, if we just go like this, what about the nation...?" Huang'er wasn't so much worried about Eternal Divine Nation as worried about what would happen to Jiang Chen for not returning to the sacred land as one of its geniuses. Jiang Chen smiled faintly. "If the sacred land is going to be in danger, it's better that I live to fight another day than stay on a sinking ship."

Huang'er nodded after a bemused pause. "You're right. It's like the time when we were in the Regal Pill Palace."

"The sacred land isn't the Regal Pill Palace. Its heritage won't be destroyed so easily. House Xiahou and the imperial family may get lucky and defeat the sacred land, but they don't know what they're actually dealing with. If they win, it'll be Myriad Abyss Island's loss. They may bring unimaginable disaster to Myriad Abyss or even the entire Divine Abyss Continent!"

There was a mess of emotions underlying his words.

## Sovereign of the Three Realms (WN)

### **Chapter 1785: An Unexpected Visitor**

Jiang Chen hadn't overexaggerated the problem one bit.

If the ten sacred lands fully lost control of Myriad Abyss, the descendants of the ancient war's deserters would take over. Myriad Abyss would lose its fervor then, leaving a bunch of self-serving cultivators to lord over the land.

Under a culture like that, who would enter the offworld battlefield to fight off invaders? Certainly not the new rulers!

Of course, Jiang Chen didn't point all of this out clearly.

Technically, Yan Qingsang and Huang'er were descended from deserters of the ancient demon-sealing war as well. Though they had more fire than the rest, they were too unimportant to affect the grand scheme of things.

Moreover, they had been kicked out from House Yan. They could no longer call themselves its scions.

Because Jiang Chen had a ton of free time within the airboat, he took time to read the various works that Senior Pei Xing had left behind. The texts were quite enlightening.

Pei Xing had been an incredible formation master. The ones he'd set up on Winterdraw alone were enough to evoke Jiang Chen's respect. The more he got perused the senior's works, the more praise he had. The old master deserved nothing less when it came to his mastery over formations.

"I didn't expect Senior Pei Xing to have been so amazingly proficient. No wonder he was qualified to work together with the two formation masters from Ancient Crimson Heavens and Earth Bodhisattva on the Great Formation."

Jiang Chen brimmed with excitement. Faced with row after row of Pei Xing's books, he was eager to study every single one of them thoroughly.

There had to be information on the Great Formation of Heavenly Soul Confinement too. Though Senior Pei Xing had been responsible for only a part of it, his knowledge was invaluable to consult regardless. If he could find the text concerning the formation, he would understand it much better.

After some hard work, he was rewarded with his prize. In ten days, he discovered a text that contained an ocean of information on the Great Formation of Heavenly Soul Confinement.

There were tens of thousands of characters detailing the formation and its design.

It described not only the part Pei Xing had been responsible of, but his assessments and various details concerning the entire formation as well. There was nearly everything Jiang Chen had wanted.

His newfound prize was precious beyond belief.

"After all my efforts elsewhere, that was almost too easy!" Jiang Chen had always worried about the Great Formation. He'd grasped the portion the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect had been responsible for,

and now Pei Xing's knowledge was his as well. In fact, the solitary cultivator's experience was richer than the sect's.

"Pei Xing must have been a true ancient master of formations. A prodigious genius in his art." The more he learned, the more he respected the great man of the past.

Starfate traveled for nearly twenty days before approaching the Rejuvenation Isles. Jiang Chen made sure to keep a much lower profile once he was in Rejuvenation territory.

Evidently, Rejuvenation had languished since last he was here. When the three houses of Polylore had caused a severe ruckus, Rejuvenation had suffered heavy losses in both money and men. Right now, it maintained an honest, low-key front.

Jiang Chen was in no hurry to head to Winterdraw yet. He paid a visit to Six Leaf City first instead.

Among the bandits he'd first met upon arrival on Winterdraw, he'd promised the big man surnamed Fang that he would give a storage ring to his daughter.

Jiang Chen hadn't forgotten about the request. The woman in question was named Fang Yingying.

His last departure from Winterdraw had been in a bit of a hurry. Thus, he hadn't the time to go to the city and deliver the item. The danger was now past; no one could possibly know he and Jiang Huang were the same, and nobody asked after the joint bounty on his head.

Actually, it'd been so many years that the bounty was no longer in effect.

It took a bit of effort after entering in the city to find Fang Yingying. She was a cultivator of a reasonable level, with a dao partner accompanying her.

Jiang Chen gave the storage ring to her, quite astonishing the woman. When she made to ask after her father though, the young man was already gone. He didn't stay long in Six Leaf City before leaving directly for Winterdraw Island.

The island had been abandoned. It had been rather remote originally, and Rejuvenation had given up on it altogether after finding the formations were irreparable. The island was, for all intents and purposes, totally forsaken now.

Winterdraw had become a nightmare for Rejuvenation that no one wanted to visit. A deserted island so far out in distant waters wasn't interesting at all.

That suited Jiang Chen's purposes just fine. He was unhindered by anything on his trip.

The first thing he did once Starfate landed was to send out the Goldbiter Rats. "Ole Gold, scout out the entire island. Report on anything still alive back to me."

The Goldbiter Rats were particularly suited for tasks like these. Their vast numbers could cover the entirety of Winterdraw with ease, ensuring that no suspicious tidbit escaped his grasp.

After so many years, Winterdraw had become an uninhabited island. The Goldbiter Rats' comprehensive efforts failed to seek out any man still residing here.



Those who could escape already had. Those who'd failed were long dead at the bottom of the surrounding seas. No one would stay on an isolated island for long.

The lack of inhabitants here was perfect.

Jiang Chen hadn't destroyed the formations on the island. Instead, he'd refined the item that was its core, the obelisk Pei Xing had left to control Winterdraw's operations.

If Jiang Chen wanted to, he could restore the formation anytime to restore the island to its former vitality. Still, he was hesitant on whether or not that was the right choice.

When he voiced his concerns to his companions, Yan Qingsang was the first to enthusiastically respond. "Do it! Why shouldn't you? If you fix the formation here, the island will be our territory!" He was a bit overexcited. One of his youthful dreams was to have an island to call his own.

Huang'er was rather intrigued as well. "Brother Chen, it would be a wonderful thing if we could take this island for ourselves. If there's an ancient formation here that allows travel between Winterdraw and the human domain, this would make a great base for us."

Jiang Chen realized the appeal himself. If he could make Winterdraw his own, he would be able to travel freely between Myriad Abyss and the human domain. That would be an enormous boon.

He was extremely conflicted for a time.

"Manpower... I need manpower. Without people to stand guard here, I'm worried that..." Restoring the formation would attract outside attention. Unwanted visitors were, of course, undesirable.

Though Winterdraw's formation formed a harmonious whole that shunted out the average interloper, a top-level expert would have a chance at getting in past the outer, thinner defenses.

With someone at the nexus of the formation controlling it, that would be much more unlikely; but preventing such a possibility was nearly impossible.

Suddenly, his consciousness shifted. His Evil Golden Eye pointed towards the sky, even as color drained from his face. "Get into the airboat!" he barked to Yan Qingsang and company.

He took out the Holy Dragon Bow and summoned the Confounding Puppets around himself.

The unanticipated visitation placed him on the highest of alerts.

He could feel the incredible strength of the hidden observer. This wasn't an existence he could necessarily defeat as of yet.

"Hahaha..." A slightly aged voice echoed forth from the void. "Well done, young man. I'm surprised you noticed me."

Yan Qingsang and Huang'er were astonished when they heard who it was.

"Grandpa?" The former blurted out, stunned by the turn of events.

A figure stepped out of the air, landing before the group. It was none other than Yan Wanjun, who had left Mount Cloud Camel to avoid further danger.

The old man's appearance here was the last thing Jiang Chen would've anticipated. He trained his Evil Golden Eye on Yan Wanjun a long while before he could ascertain that the man was indeed genuine.

With that, he relaxed. "Elder Wanjun, you caused quite a scare. Aren't you worried that you'll frighten us youngsters by creeping up on us like this?"

Yan Wanjun roared with laughter. "No one can match your daring, Shao Yuan. There's no way I could scare you! Where is the domination from when you killed those cultivators from the Cloudwave Sect?"

Jiang Chen blinked. "You..."

"I've been following you all this time. I was hidden in the capital during this time, near the sacred land."

"How did you know it was us?" Jiang Chen smiled wryly.

"My grandson and granddaughter are here. It's not unreasonable to feel some sort of connection, no? Plus, my intuition told me something about your intentions when you left the sacred land. That's why I came. That you killed the useless guys from Cloudwave without my help was quite a surprise though."

As a venerated elder of House Yan, Yan Wanjun was an advanced empyrean cultivator. Killing Elder Xu and his lackeys would've been trivial for him.

However, he'd refrained from doing so after seeing Jiang Chen's remarkable prowess. Instead, he kept an eye on them from the shadows without getting to close.

Since he wasn't radiating any hostile intent, Jiang Chen had ended up not noticing his presence beside the Cloudwave group.

"It seems you can't stop worrying about Qingsang and Huang'er, Elder Wanjun," sighed Jiang Chen.

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

#### **Chapter 1786: Transportation Formation, Parting Once Again**

Yan Qingsang was exuberant to be so lucky as to pick up his grandfather. Since Yan Wanjun's departure, the young man had been concerned about his grandfather's well-being on the road. There was also House Yan's bounty hanging over the elder's head.

To think that his grandfather had been so close all this time, watching over and protecting him all the while!

He was both touched and contrite.

His grandfather had been the one to raise him since childhood. Yan Qingsang had a very strong relationship with the old man. As for his own parents, he didn't know them much at all and felt barely anything for them. They'd long been stationed to some unimportant locale due to their excessively weak martial dao talent, and didn't have many opportunities to meet with their son.

Therefore, Yan Qingsang thought of his grandfather as a parent much more than his actual parents.

Huang'er greeted her grandfather graciously as well. "Hello, grandfather."

Tender affection shone forth from Yan Wanjun's eyes. There was some guilt, of course.

"Huang'er, I heard that Shao Yuan killed Xiahou Zong and brought an end to your misfortunes. I am truly sorry for not having been able to do anything for you."

"Each person has their own destiny. If I hadn't been afflicted so, how would I have met Brother Chen?" Huang'er drew on Jiang Chen's arm lightly, her smile tranquil and gratified.

"Brother Chen?" Yan Wanjun was taken aback.

"Hehe, you're still in the dark about it, right grandpa? Shao Yuan is Jiang Chen from the human domain. Didn't Elder Xi mention someone like that in his report when he came back? This is him."

"The human domain?" Yan Wanjun was astounded. "I heard you talking about that place just now and I didn't understand why, but... so you're from the human domain, Shao Yuan?"

Jiang Chen smiled faintly. "It's a long and complicated story. I didn't have time to convey to you the entire truth, Elder Wanjun. Please excuse the impropriety."

"Hahaha..." Yan Wanjun roared with laughter. "Good, good, good! You are a responsible and good man, worthy of Huang'er's love for you. I am satisfied that my granddaughter is in capable hands. There is nothing to regret about a dao partner like this, Huang'er."

He was more animated than usual. Having experienced all that he had in life, he wasn't as hung up on issues of origin as others might've been. What did it matter that Shao Yuan came from the human domain?

In this world, strength meant power!

Jiang Chen was strong enough to slaughter Xiahou Zong. What was there to worry about regarding his granddaughter's choice?

"Right, young friend Jiang Chen. I heard you talking about Winterdraw's formation. What's the story behind that?" Yan Wanjun inquired curiously.

Jiang Chen made no attempt to hide his past. He related all that had happened since his initial arrival on Winterdraw, as well as ensuing events to Huang'er's grandfather.

Yan Wanjun enjoyed the tale, and cracked a crooked smile after he finished. "So you're the Jiang Huang Polylore's joint bounty was created for? It would've been inconceivable without you telling me about it."

"Haha, I consider it the will of heaven," Yan Qingsang laughed. "He and Huang'er were made for each other. No obstacle can possibly stand in their way."

Yan Wanjun made several exclamatory remarks before continuing. "So, Jiang Chen, this island was originally built up by Senior Pei Xing? All the formations and miscellany were controlled by an obelisk? And now that you've refined it, you can choose to become the master of this place?"

"Indeed."

"Then you should take it over without question. If you're worried about putting someone here, I can keep watch for you. Let this place be an outpost here in Myriad Abyss for you."

Jiang Chen's eyes lit up. "You're willing to help, Elder Wanjun? But won't this work be too menial for you?"

Yan Wanjun was a former venerated elder of House Yan and an eighth level empyrean expert in his own right. Though he wasn't the absolute strongest in Myriad Abyss, he was very near the top.

The old man smiled. "I have no responsibilities to drag me down now, nor do I have a home to go back to. This place is a fine one to rest and recuperate."

Yan Wanjun had a very healthy mentality. He had no problem with not being a venerated elder anymore. In truth, he had long grown bored of his responsibilities. Without the ties of blood to attach him to the house, he would have resigned long ago.

Now that the house had completely antagonized him, he felt minimal belonging to the organization. Though he still loved it, there was no way he would have any connection to it as long as the current patriarch was still there.

The only possibility of re-involvement necessitated a potential rebuilding.

Jiang Chen thought it was great that Yan Wanjun was willing to watch over the island. A man of his strength and ability could easily take care of this place. Turning Winterdraw into a base of operations was then very viable.

As a man of action, he began to restore the formation right away. The first act was to return the refined obelisk to its original location, then make a few more helpful preparations.

After that was complete, restarting the formation to return Winterdraw to the way it once was wasn't particularly difficult.

Though the island had weathered some damage, the formation foundations remained entirely intact. Even if they had been partially ruined, he would've been able to fix them without issue.

The desolate Winterdraw Island roared to life once more. Within half a month, the majority of the formations on the island were restored to activity.

Jiang Chen wanted to do the best he could. After finishing with the inner part, he began to ponder what he could do with the defensive measures on the outside. Upgrading them was a pretty good option, all things considered.

Senior Pei Xing had left behind all the formations in and around the island. The people from Rejuvenation had only managed to tap thirty to forty percent of their strength. They lacked knowledge about the true essence of the senior's formations.

The days spent studying Pei Xing's works and improving his formations were quite relaxing for Jiang Chen.

On a day just like any other, he slapped his thigh after making an unexpected discovery.

"Haha, I finally found it!" he laughed with excitement. "Huang'er, I've found the clues for the ancient transportation formation. There was something like this on Winterdraw after all, a well-designed and very well hidden one to boot. No wonder I was having trouble looking for it."

Jiang Chen had begun to wonder whether there was a transportation formation here in the first place. But after all this time, he'd struck gold in the book he was reading.

He followed the clues and the diagrams to what had eluded him for so long. The ancient formation was one with the surrounding waters. No one expected that movement was through a vortex within the sea.

"Senior Pei Xing was a real innovator. As expected of a man considered the foremost ancient formation master!" Jiang Chen had seen men more skilled than Pei Xing in his previous life, but the senior he'd never met possessed unrivaled imagination and incredible scope that he maneuvered with ease.

This was an innate talent to be envied.

If Senior Pei Xing had gone to the heavenly planes, he would have had every right to attempt the highest peaks there. He had more than sufficient potential to do so.

Alas, ancient history was too insubstantial and distant. Whether Senior Pei Xing still lived or how many years it had been since Winterdraw's establishment were totally unknown.

After finding clues to the transportation formation, Jiang Chen looked into the method of activating it. Because the formation was old and had been inactive for a prolonged period of time, it would prove rather difficult to bring back into operation.

Thankfully, Jiang Chen's own skill with formations and his studies from both lives granted him insight into Pei Xing's former work. His inheritance from the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect also provided him with the knowledge needed to carry out the task.

A few more days resulted in his successful reactivation of the transportation formation.

"Hey, brother. If you want my grandfather to watch over Winterdraw for you, why are you sending Huang'er away? Winterdraw is far enough away from the ten sacred lands' impending wars, right?" Yan Qingsang voiced his opinion.

"Winterdraw is in Myriad Abyss still, while the human domain is not." Jiang Chen was very stubborn on this matter. He didn't consider Winterdraw Island perfectly safe.

Right now, the human domain was the safest and farthest place from the worsening instability in Myriad Abyss.

"That's enough, Brother Qingsang. I'm going to the human domain. I like Sacred Peafowl Mountain, and I quite miss being back there. I'm sure the spirit herbs and flowers I planted feel the same way about me. I have friends I've left behind there too.

"Plus, Sister Bi'er has been gone from the human domain for many, many years. She must be really homesick."

Huang'er had little interest in staying on Winterdraw. Though she didn't hate Yan Wanjun, she had no strong attachment to her grandfather.

She preferred going to Sacred Peafowl Mountain, that she might reunite with those old friends who'd once called her the young mistress of the faction.

Yan Qinghuang had nothing more to say upon hearing Huang'er's firmness. "Alright. We'll come see you in a while in the human domain."

"Take care, grandfather, Brother Qingsang. "I'll wait for you in the human domain, Brother Chen." She saved the most important farewell for last.

"Don't worry. I may very well return not long after. Be at ease about your parents. I'll look into it. If I have the chance, I will absolutely rescue them out of the Boundless Prison," Jiang Chen promised seriously.

Huang'er's eyes reddened. She tried her best not to cry. "Let's go, Sister Bi'er!"

The two girls entered the transportation formation.

The formation flared to life. Jiang Chen hardly had time to wave before it took them away, leaving behind only sea salt and sea spray.

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

#### **Chapter 1787: Setting Off Once Again**

Jiang Chen stood at the fringe of the portal and stared at the body of water until it quieted. He sighed softly. They would only be apart temporarily, but it still pained him to send away the woman he loved.

Yan Wanjun smiled slightly. "A man should follow his ambitions. There will be a time for love."

Yan Qingsang snickered, but surprisingly didn't say anything.

"Elder Wanjun, I've upgraded the formation around the island based on Senior Pei Xing's designs. It'll be difficult for even empyrean experts to break in."

"Good." Yan Wanjun nodded. "Myriad Abyss Island is in shambles. Winterdraw Island will make a good operations base."

"I'm entrusting the island to you then, Elder Wanjun."

"I have no place to call home anyways. I'm more than happy to be able to settle down somewhere." Yan Wanjun's tone was mournful. He added, "What's your plans next?"

"Returning to Eternal Divine Nation," Jiang Chen declared with great conviction.

"What?" Yan Wanjun frowned. "Didn't the men from the Cloudwave Sect say the imperial family and House Xiahou are staging a coup? That may have happened already. You'll be walking right into the crossfire."

Jiang Chen smiled faintly. "I'm a member of the sacred land and have enjoyed its support. I can't stay on the sidelines and do nothing in its time of need."

"Well said, I'll go with you," rushed out Yan Qingsang.

"You should stay here with Elder Wanjun. Focus on cultivating and let him temper your personality. That's the right thing for you to do."

Jiang Chen didn't intend to bring Yan Qingsang with him. His reasoning was simple: Yan Qingsang wasn't strong enough to be of much help to the sacred land. He'd only be marching to his death if he returned with nothing but an earnest heart.

Jiang Chen didn't want Yan Qingsang to get himself killed, but he didn't want to spare the effort to protect him, either.

"What is this?" Yan Qingsang asked unhappily. "Am I to be a deserter, while you are loyal to the sacred land?"

Jiang Chen smiled in lieu of an explanation, which further angered Yan Qingsang. "Do you think I'm not good enough for you and will be dragging you down?"

Yan Wanjun slapped the back of his grandson's head. "Enough. What are you yammering on about? Jiang Chen is right. You aren't going to be of much help with that impulsiveness of yours. You'll only be a burden. Stick with me and don't think about going anywhere. If you want to help, improve your cultivation and make yourself useful. Now? It's best that you stay put."

With age came wisdom. Yan Wanjun was experienced enough to tackle an issue in a more holistic manner.

Yan Qingsang's shoulders slumped. He knew there was no changing his grandfather's mind once he'd made up his mind.

Jiang Chen presented them with two pills.

"Elder Wanjun, Brother Qingsang, these are two Crowning Empyrean Pills. They're not easy to come by. You must have heard about the effects already."

Yan Wanjun paused. During the Skymender Festival, the sacred land had mentioned a pill that could advance an empyrean cultivator a level, but didn't they say the pill was still in development?

"Is this... the pill that grants an unconditional level to an empyrean cultivator?" Yan Wanjun asked in an unsteady voice.

"It is. It may be exaggerating to call it a level without cost, but it is very likely to push the user through their limits and into the next level."

It was rare to find anything that could provide a free level for empyrean experts, especially those at advanced empyrean realm.

The extraordinary thing about the pill was that even though it wouldn't necessarily help cultivators break through immediately, it was very likely to achieve that in the long term. A cultivator reaching his limit at seventh level empyrean would be able to ascend to eighth after some time.

"Elder Wanjun, this pill will be of great help in ascending to ninth level empyrean. As for Brother Qingsang, I'd advise you to reach third level empyrean as soon as possible before taking the pill to maximize its benefit."

Reaching fourth level meant ascending from initial empyrean to intermediate empyrean. It'd be a large gap to bridge.

“That’s right. Did you hear that, Qingsang? Jiang Chen has put in so much thought and effort for you.” Yan Wanjun couldn’t be happier. He hadn’t felt this good for a long time. He’d been stuck at eighth level empyrean for years and almost given up on breaking through. The Crowning Empyrean Pill was a wonderful surprise.

Moreover, the grandson he’d devoted everything to had gone through a great transformation over the years, which was another great cause for joy.

Yan Qingsang had been upset about being forbidden from returning to the sacred land, but the pill made it impossible for him to stay mad.

Yan Wanjun slapped his head again upon seeing his grandson’s haughty expression. That wasn’t the face to be pulling now.

“What’s that face for, young man? Let me tell you, you’re lucky Jiang Chen is mild-tempered. No one else would put up with you. You should be asking yourself if you’d be able to reach the same height without his help.”

Jiang Chen was going to be Yan Qingsang’s brother-in-law, but he’d done more than enough for his friend. Yan Qingsang shouldn’t take his kindness for granted.

“I’m not upset with you, brother,” Yan Qingsang finally said. “I’m just angry at myself for not being able to help when it matters. I feel useless.”

“Don’t worry. You’ll be of use once you become powerful enough. Listen to Elder Wanjun and cultivate on the Winterdraw Island. Wait for the right time to make a comeback.”

“Must you go?” asked Yan Qingsang.

“The venerated forefather told me some stuff and we have a deal of sorts. I must go back to the sacred land. Besides, I promised Huang’er I’d save her parents.”

Yan Wanjun flushed red with mortification. That was his son and daughter-in-law.

“Jiang Chen, about her parents...” The elder murmured. “That was my mistake. Let me deal with it myself.”

Jiang Chen smiled. “Elder Wanjun, we’re on the same team now.”

“The Boundless Prison is very complicated, Jiang Chen,” Elder Wanjun boomed. “You won’t be able to enter with your level of cultivation. If I can reach ninth level empyrean, I may have a chance at breaking them out.”

“What’s going on with the Boundless Prison?”

“It’s a sealed prison said to hail from the ancient times, and connected to the Ten Divine Nations. There’s a sealed entrance in every nation leading to the prison. Only those who have committed the most horrendous crimes are imprisoned there, and it’s next to impossible for them to escape. Of course, there are exceptions. Sometimes, spatial storms blow up and create cracks, allowing some luckier inmates to flee. These criminals always stir up great trouble after their escape.”



Yan Wanjun didn't know that much about the prison either. Everything he conveyed was basic knowledge.

Jiang Chen nodded. "I'll be making a trip sooner or later."

"Don't be hasty. Even if you're breaking in, you have to be smart about it. Huang'er has finally become free of her curse and found a good spouse. I don't want her to become a widow at such a young age." He already considered Jiang Chen his future grandson-in-law.

"Fret not, I won't just rush in head-on." Jiang Chen wasn't going to be reckless.

Concern lifted from his chest after sending away Huang'er and Ling Bi'er. He'd also upgraded the formation of the island. It was now time for him to leave.

He didn't have to worry about staying out of sight since there was no human activity within a radius of a couple thousand miles.

He leisurely navigated Starfate over the ocean, his mood light.

On this day, he flew over Warmspring Island, where he'd passed through the last time he was on the run. Unbidden memories about his old friends surfaced. Xing Hui and Xing Tong and Yong Peng's family had all moved here.

It'd been years since he left Winterdraw Island, but he still remembered everything like it was yesterday.

"I may as well make a stop and see if I can find out anything about Eternal Divine Nation."

It'd been a while since he left the sacred land. He was worried about its current situation, but it'd take some time for him to reach it. He decided to ask around first.

No one on the island was going to recognize him. He was way too far from Eternal Divine Nation.

Warmspring Island was even more prosperous than Winterdraw at its peak. He noted its unique culture upon entering the island. People here were more friendly than in other places.

He made his way to where the crowds were. The more people there were, the more cultivators, and the more information he could obtain.

To his disappointment, he didn't hear anyone talk of an unrest even in the most bustling areas.

There were quite a few people raving about the Skymender Festival though. They told the tale with great embellishment, painting Jiang Chen as a legendary figure and Shi Xuan the poor cannon fodder.

Then, a few of them brought up Xiahou Zong.

These incidents had become the topics du jour in Warmspring, but those were the only news about Eternal Divine Nation that had reached the island. There was no mention of any recent development or an uprising.

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

**Chapter 1788: Warmspring Island**

“Have House Xiahou and the imperial family not made their move yet?” Jiang Chen didn’t think that likely. The men from the Cloudwave Sect had said they were going to act in a few days.

A couple of months had passed since then. If there was an uprising, news should have gotten out. He would’ve heard something.

Befuddled, he visited several other bustling locations on the island and lingered to gather intel, but still didn’t hear anything about an uprising.

His train of thought was abruptly interrupted by approaching footsteps. A man called out in a bright voice, “Excuse me, brother.”

Jiang Chen turned and saw a young man with gentle features approaching, hands cupped and lips curved. He had a feminine air to him.

“Do I know you?” Jiang Chen frowned slightly.

The man looked harmless, but Jiang Chen’s instincts told him to stay alert. There was something wrong with this overly effeminate man.

“I am Zhou Yue. I saw you standing tall and alone, looking troubled, so I came to ask if I may have the privilege to buy you a drink?”

“I don’t know you. I’m not interested in a drink.” Jiang Chen hadn’t come to make friends. Besides, he didn’t even like the man.

Zhou Yue responded politely, “We’ve met now. It doesn’t matter if we knew each other beforehand. We’re no longer strangers. Why don’t you set your bias aside and enjoy our time together?”

“Not interested. Leave me alone.” Jiang Chen put great importance on first impressions and he’d taken an instant dislike to Zhou Yue. He wasn’t going to spare the man even a glance, no matter how hard the latter tried to get his attention.

Noting Jiang Chen’s annoyed expression, Zhou Yue’s face clouded. Instead of getting angry, he gave Jiang Chen a meaningful glance and an odd smile before walking away, shaking his head.

The strange encounter took Jiang Chen’s mood further down a notch. He paid for the wine and rose to leave.

The clerk of the tavern snuck a glance at Jiang Chen. He didn’t dare meet Jiang Chen’s gaze, but there was a flash of pity in his eyes.

Within Jiang Chen’s line of sight, even the most minute of changes in patron expressions within hundreds of meters couldn’t escape his powerful consciousness. He could easily read the undercurrents in the clerk’s eyes.

He kept his observations to himself. Perhaps the clerk meant well. He wasn’t going to broach it openly and put the clerk in danger.

Jiang Chen stayed on guard as he exited the tavern. As soon as he turned the street corner, a group of men with an intimidating air rushed him and fanned out to surround him.

“Gu, you’ve disappeared for years after owing our young master millions of spirit stones. Now that you’ve finally fallen into our hands, we won’t let you run off again!”

“It’s right and proper for one to pay their debts. How dare you hide from us? You can’t run forever!”

The thugs cursed out Jiang Chen with abandon. He frowned. He’d thought the men had just mistook him for someone else, but then realized they weren’t actually here to collect debts. They were most likely the local gangsters, and Zhou Yue likely one of them.

If his guess was right, it was their modus operandi to wander around every day looking for easy prey - namely, newcomers who traveled alone. Perhaps they saw him as an easy, fat target.

He was in a bad enough mood already and flew into rage at their attempt of extortion. His frigid gaze swept over the foolish men who clearly had a death wish.

“This is your last warning,” he said in a voice more icy than his gaze. “Get lost, and I might you live.”

“Hahaha, he’s lost his mind. He’s not going to pay up. Let’s get him, boys!”

“Get him!”

Most of them were great emperors. Even the strongest one had only reached half-step empyrean. They had nothing in their favor but numbers.

Jiang Chen had been keeping his aura within himself, masking his cultivation. That was why the thugs had targeted him.

He didn’t know how long it’d been since he was last subjected to such provocation. How dare a few great emperors taunt and holler about taking him down? Were they so confident in themselves that they knew no fear?

Jiang Chen crossed his arms, a frigid smile tugging his lips. He stood as steady and motionless as a mountain, like he was meditating.

“Arrogant prick! Let’s get this fucker!”

“Get him together!”

The eight men charged at Jiang Chen in unison. They were obviously trained and knew how to fight as a team. Instead of coming at him in disarray, they arranged themselves into an appropriate formation and fought like a well-oiled machine.

Even though they were well-coordinated, there was still a large gap in might between them and Jiang Chen.

He flicked his eyes toward the group, shooting a faintly yellow ray of light through the air. The men froze like they’d been paralyzed by a spell. This was far from the full power of the Evil Golden Eye.

Jiang Chen huffed softly and swept with his eyes. The men toppled over and hit the ground like statues, making loud thuds. People like them more than deserved death. Jiang Chen walked away without sparing them a glance.

“Halt!”

A few figures leapt out of their hiding spots and circled him again. This group kept a greater distance from him than the last.

Jiang Chen swept his eyes over every one of them and laughed. “Is Warmspring Island home to robbers? You sure are bold to make a move in broad daylight.”

These were stronger than the last group and were all empyrean experts. One of them was the man who had struck up a conversation with him, Zhou Yue.

Zhou Yue’s feminine and sinister eyes turned venomous, like those of a serpent, as he considered Jiang Chen.

“You are skilled to decapitate so many people without even lifting a finger. However, you should learn to restrain yourself on the Warmspring Island. We - ”

Jiang Chen didn’t want to waste further breath. “So noisy. Hold your tongue and out with it! Are you here to extort me through trickery or force?”

He bludgeoned through the fancy words that Zhou Yue wanted to bandy about. He must’ve been identified as a target since the very beginning. All these tricks were just the bandits trying to make themselves look better.

Zhou Yue laughed after a pause. “Good. You’re direct. My demand is the same. You took out a loan of a couple million spirit stones from the Silversword Gang. Many years have passed...”

“That same excuse again?” Jiang Chen gave him a feral grin. “I’m not interested in your nonsense, but if you’re talking about loans... I’d like to take a lease out on your head.”

He had no respect for people like Zhou Yue, who tried to justify robbery as collecting debts. That was a terrible excuse no one would buy.

“My head?” Zhou Yue smiled lazily. “You can certainly try.”

“I will.” Jiang Chen blurred into motion. At the same time, he deployed the Evil Golden Eye, aiming at Zhou Yue’s eyes.

Over the years, Zhou Yue had committed many atrocities in Warmspring with the Silversword Gang backing him up. He’d almost never encountered any challenges, and he’d never failed.

The gang was essentially the local mafia, specializing in extortion, kidnapping, and murder. There was nothing they wouldn’t do.

Their strength, on top of friends in high places, prompted them to target civilians with abandon. They’d never encountered any setbacks, which was why Zhou Yue was so bold.

They were smart about picking their targets, going after loners who were obviously wandering cultivators. The rule ensured the gang’s success over the long years they ran rampant on the island.

They’d targeted Jiang Chen because he was traveling on his own with no servants, and he didn’t possess the strong presence of a genius from a major faction.

Unfortunately, they'd misjudged this time.

Jiang Chen's Evil Golden Eye emerged as a flash of gold light. He held his fingers together like a sword and, with a flick of his wrist, directed the light at Zhou Yue's eyes.

His powerful consciousness locked down on Zhou Yue, sending a shudder down the latter's spine and depriving him of all strength. He stood rooted to the spot, unable to move a muscle.

Jiang Chen used his hand like a blade and, with a chop of his hand, decapitated Zhou Yue. Formerly attached to his body, Zhou Yue's eyes were still widened in disbelief as he shot up into the sky.

Never had Zhou Yue anticipated such terrifying power from an unassuming prey. His life had been reaped in the blink of an eye. Only once he died did his companions recover from their shock. Their face contorted as they charged at Jiang Chen, howling in anger.

Jiang Chen's ire burned hotter.

He tapped into his full speed, cutting the air with the Galaxy Slash move from the Supernova Point technique.

The others were close to Zhou Yue's level of cultivation, but as soon as they drew close to Jiang Chen, they realized that the area was completely under the young man's command. Their bodies grew as heavy as lead.

Before they could react, Jiang Chen had relieved them all of their heads. They hit the ground one after another.

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

#### **Chapter 1789: The Silversword Gang**

Jiang Chen's seething desire to kill caused a river of blood to flow in the street. The second wave of attackers were decapitated without exception as well.

The bloody scene scared off the onlookers. They fled in terror, worried they would be swept into the slaughter. However, the young man didn't lose his reason and refrained from expanding the scope of his killing to the bystanders. Cutting down those who'd harassed him was enough.

A faint smile hung on his face as he swept his gaze across the crowd. Countless fearful eyes all around involuntarily avoided his.

"You, come here." Jiang Chen beckoned at a young cultivator.

The cultivator in question instantly paled, his teeth chattering.

"Tell me, who are these people?" Jiang Chen turned to consider the corpses.

"T-they... they're f-from the Silversword Gang," the young cultivator stuttered.

The Silversword Gang?

Jiang Chen had never heard of the name before. He knew little of Myriad Abyss' matters; his knowledge was limited to the Ten Divine Nations and some second-rate factions.

The gang ran rampant upon Warmspring Island, but that didn't mean it was important elsewhere. It was a local menace at best. In Myriad Abyss proper, it wasn't even a fifth-rate faction.

"The Silversword Gang belongs to Warmspring Island? How many members does it have? What does it usually do?"

The young cultivator pulled a pained expression. "Please don't make things hard for me, friend. Everyone knows the answers to these questions here on Warmspring, but who dares gossip behind the gang's back? I plead for mercy."

"Oh? You're concerned about Silversword's retaliation?" Jiang Chen frowned.

The cultivator smiled wryly. He was silent, but his meaning was evident. This made Jiang Chen unsure how to respond.

"Get out of here then." He saw no reason to make an innocent's life difficult.

He suddenly produced a pill. "I have a pill here called the Emperor Supremacy Pill. It has a seventy to eighty percent chance of improving a great emperor's level by one. Anyone who provides me information on the Silversword Gang will receive it."

He knew that a hefty reward was more likely to prove a source of courage. There were always people unafraid of death in the world of martial dao.

Moreover, his prize was incredibly enticing. No one had heard of the Emperor Supremacy Pill, but the advertised effect was simply too good to be true. Many great emperors present lit up. They began to consider the pros and cons of taking the bait.

"Friend, is your Emperor Supremacy Pill really that good?" a sallow great emperor asked cautiously.

"If you don't believe me, I can offer another reward," Jiang Chen answered coolly.

"No, no, the pill is fine. You have to guarantee that you haven't over-exaggerated its effects, though."

"I promise you that what I said about it is entirely true. If you're interested, then take a bet. If not, I won't force you."

The cultivator pondered it for a few moments, then grit his teeth. "Come with me, friend."

He'd clearly come to a decision, but was unwilling to complete the transaction in the eyes of the public. He led the way without turning back. Jiang Chen smiled faintly and followed.

It didn't take long for the second cultivator to zigzag around several corners to an out-of-the-way alley and a secluded residence.

"This will do. I think it was abandoned for a while, and barely anyone comes here." The cultivator halted.

Jiang Chen glanced around to ensure nothing was out of place before nodding. "Take the pill. Don't try any tricks."

He tossed the Emperor Supremacy Pill to the cultivator to win his trust.

The cultivator took it in hand and played with it a moment; his eyes burned with desire when he realized how extraordinary it was.

“Don’t worry, the pill is real.” Jiang Chen smiled.

“Alright. What would you like to know about, friend? I’ll tell you everything I know.” The cultivator was very pleased with his new pill.

“The Silversword Gang, that’s all.” Jiang Chen frowned. He felt that it was rather odd they had targeted him in the first place. Was there an ulterior motive?

“The Silversword Gang rose to power in the last hundred years or so here on Warmspring. It’s not particularly strong, but it did expand with alarming rapidity. I hear the head of the gang is a seventh level empyrean expert! He has multiple bodyguards who are sixth level empyrean as well. All in all, his gang is probably the strongest faction on this island.”

In Eternal Divine Nation’s capital, the Silversword Gang would be fourth or fifth-rate at best. On Warmspring Island, it was unrivaled.

“What do they do for business?” Jiang Chen asked again.

“Haha... well, truthfully, the Silversword Gang does a bit of everything. The business it does best at, though, is the criminal kind.”

Wariness flickered in the cultivator’s eyes. “I’ll be frank. After this mutually beneficial exchange, I’m leaving Warmspring Island right away, and I doubt I’ll ever return. I advise you to leave soon, friend, otherwise...”

“What kind of criminal business? Please elaborate.”

“Robbery, extortion, and slave trade. They pick on lone cultivators specifically. Because of the Silversword Gang, the slave market here on Warmspring is the biggest of all its dozen or so neighbors. The most common mode of operation for the Silversword Gang is to strike up a conversation and pretend to be your friend, then lead you into a dark alley or something. You’ll be a lamb to the slaughter at that point.”

Jiang Chen fully understood now. The Silversword Gang appropriated both material goods and their owners, making out like well, bandits, after wringing every last drop of value from their marks.

He’d witnessed Veluriyam Capital’s slave markets in the past, and had been exceptionally disgusted by the practice even back then. Any lingering shred of remorse for his extreme actions earlier was gone.

The Silversword Gang had lost its humanity. For what reason would he not exterminate such a faction, once he’d encountered it?

The cultivator felt the intensity of Jiang Chen’s killing intent. “Friend,” he kindly reminded, “if I were you, I would leave Warmspring Island now. But that’s enough from me. I’ve said my piece. Take care!”

“Hold on.” Jiang Chen called out to the cultivator.

“What else do you need, friend?” the cultivator stopped as requested, but his eyes anxiously darted toward the outside. He was clearly worried that the Silversword Gang would arrive any minute.

“Where is the gang’s headquarters?” Jiang Chen asked.

“You... you’re going to their headquarters?” The cultivator was positively ashen. He looked incredulously at Jiang Chen. “Friend, why are you being so rash? The Silversword Gang may not have a rich history or the deepest coffers, but it has plenty of experts. If you’re going to their headquarters...”

“Enlighten me. Consider this part of the exchange,” Jiang Chen replied evenly.

The cultivator could do little against Jiang Chen’s stubbornness. He thought a moment before answering, “Their headquarters is in the Purple Sun District, I believe. Not far from here.” Having answered, he left unceremoniously, putting on a mask and a change of clothes before striding off hastily.

Jiang Chen was completely liberated after hearing about the Silversword Gang’s misdeeds. The regret at having killed so many had entirely dissipated.

The Silversword Gang!

Though he wasn’t a particularly righteous youth, he disliked the Silversword Gang to his core. A gang could do many things to profit in Myriad Abyss. Only completely malevolent factions that reveled in evil would commit the most heinous of crimes in pursuit of wealth. Such depraved acts invited karmic retribution.

“The Silversword Gang has likely done this for years. Xing Hui and Xing Tong, as well as Yong Fan’s family... I wonder if the gang targeted them when they came here to Warmspring?”

Even if they had, it had been so long that Jiang Chen doubted an investigation now would yield any clues.

Still, he hoped that misfortune hadn’t come to pass. Xing Hui was a prudent man who had enough wisdom to avoid such disaster. As long as Xing Tong’s beauty hadn’t been discovered, they should have been safe from predation. There had been nothing particularly noteworthy about them otherwise.

Yong Fan’s family, on the other hand, would have proven a more desirable targets due to the presence of children.

What could Jiang Chen do but pray, though? He couldn’t change the past. Hopefully, they had all stayed safe.

He left the derelict residence. The situation outside was clearly tenuous. There was chaos everywhere in the street.

The Silversword Gang’s executives had clearly received news that many of its men had been killed in broad daylight. The entire gang boiled over.

Because of this, Warmspring Island was in a state of unease. The Silversword Gang’s wolves searched for the man responsible for killing its own.



Many passages in and out of the island were guarded. Those quicker on the draw would've left the island right away. Those not as quick found it significantly harder to do so now.

Jiang Chen didn't know what to say when he saw the ruckus the gang caused. Did Warmspring Island not have an administration? Why was the Silversword Gang being allowed to run amok?

Perhaps the gang had bribed the local authorities. But if it were allowed to scorn the public peace like this, there would be great disaster in the island's near future.

The gang's activities had begun to seriously affect Warmspring's reputation abroad. If everyone thought that the island was a wretched hive of scum and villainy, who would bother coming here in the future?

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

#### **Chapter 1790: Barging Through the Front Door**

The Silversword Gang's headquarters was in the Purple Sun District. Though Jiang Chen had no intention of killing everyone there, his frustrations would be unrelieved if he departed now.

Therefore, he wanted to go to the gang's headquarters to cause them some more trouble. Even if he couldn't eradicate it totally, he wanted to teach the gangsters a lesson they wouldn't soon forget.

The Silversword Gang was the lowest of the low.

It was trivial for someone of his abilities to sneak into the Purple Light District. Actually finding the headquarters in question was much harder—or rather, it would've been in peacetime. Since the gang had received such alarming news just recently, experts streamed out without cease.

That made it impossible to miss.

Jiang Chen quickly locked onto a reasonably hidden manor that served as the gang's hideout. He swept the outside momentarily before deciding to take a blunter approach.

Raising a hand, he produced a magnetic mountain that instantly expanded to its full size. It crashed down on the huge manor in a burst of golden light.

His technique lacked finesse, but was unquestionably effective.

The impact of the mountain created a colossal crater in the middle of the manor. Jiang Chen wasn't done though. He lifted the magnetic mountain and smashed down three more times.

Each blow was fiercer than the last.

When the Silversword Gang reacted, the attacks were already done. Half of the manor had been reduced to rubble. The gang's hideout had been utterly ruined. There were pained shrieks and wails from all over.

Jiang Chen glared down at the gang's headquarters from above, obviously bent on wrecking the place.

Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh, whoosh!

A dozen experts flew out from the Silversword Gang's headquarters, all of them uniformly empyrean. From their appearances, they were obviously all quite capable.

"Who is it?"

"Who dares intrude and misbehave on Warmspring Island?"

"Did you do this, kid?!"

"It's him! He killed Zhou Yue and the others!"

"You came to your own demise, kid!"

Jiang Chen considered the experts coldly. After a single sweep, he noted that none were advanced empyrean experts. The strongest was sixth level empyrean, alongside four other mid empyrean experts. The rest were only initial empyrean realm.

He would've been very tense at the encirclement if he were an ordinary fourth level empyrean cultivator. In fact, it would have been severely troublesome for him.

However, Jiang Chen was completely unconcerned with his safety against these opponents. All of them added together wouldn't necessarily be stronger than Xiahou Zong had been.

Though Xiahou Zong had only been fifth level empyrean realm, he'd been better at fighting than even peak sixth level empyrean experts.

After cutting Xiahou Zong down in that fateful battle, Jiang Chen's combat instincts had been perfectly honed. These guys before him presented no threat whatsoever.

"Get your boss to come out." Jiang Chen directed an icy look around the crowd. "You lot are too weak to fight me. If you don't want to die, then get the hell out of the away."

"You're crazy, kid!"

"Come on, everyone. Let's kill him together!"

Clearly, Jiang Chen's arrogance had angered the Silversword executives. The sixth level empyrean cultivator frowned and stopped his overexcited colleagues in their tracks.

He gave Jiang Chen the once-over. "Who are you really, friend? To cause trouble on Warmspring Island... don't you think your methods excessive?"

Jiang Chen chuckled. "Excessive? Am I supposed to let you rob me and make me your slave? I suppose only you guys are allowed to take advantage of others, in your logic." His tone chilled. "Listen up, boss of the Silversword Gang. If you don't come out in ten breaths, I'll make mincemeat of everyone else here."

Killing intent blasted forth from his pores.

"Hold on!" A forceful voice boomed from within the manor. A figure in faded silver swept out into the air like a tornado.

The man who'd come out was an expressionless, middle-aged cultivator. He had a few wisps of beard, but nothing particularly lush. His most unique characteristic was his eyes, which were almost entirely sunken into his eye sockets. His features actually imparted the air of an immortal about him.

"Are you the boss of the Silversword Gang?" Jiang Chen considered the man with some indifference. His cultivation level was quite strong, as was his aura.

"Correct. Your impudence despite knowing our name means that you believe we are below you, yes? Name yourself. Let's see we can afford to offend you." The head of the Silversword Gang was no slouch.

A faction able to take root on a place like Warmspring Island and perpetuate so many evil deeds was a faction to be wary of.

Jiang Chen smiled coolly. "My name? I am the young genius Xiahou Jie, of Eternal Divine Nation's House Xiahou!"

He had completely made that name up out of nowhere. He only knew of three people from House Xiahou: the three geniuses who'd died at his hand, Zong, Jing, and Xi. He hadn't even bothered to memorize the patriarch's name.

House Xiahou?

Hearing the name made the Silversword Gang conflicted. Had they encountered someone they couldn't deal with?

"Proof?" The boss of the gang pressed flatly.

Jiang Chen produced an identity token from House Xiahou with a flourish. He had obtained it after slaying Xiahou Jing and had used it once before too.

Borrowing House Xiahou's name to blacken their name via unsavory acts was a good strategy. It couldn't deliver a lethal blow to House Xiahou, but it could nauseate the house's members.

The Silversword Gang began to believe Jiang Chen's claims after seeing the identification. It was impossible to forge tokens like that. Had the gang really angered someone it shouldn't have?

"Boss, Elder, don't listen to that kid prattle on. You can get a token like that anywhere off the street. He's just bluffing and trying to scare you!" Someone was unsatisfied with the evidence.

Jiang Chen cackled menacingly. His enemy's dissatisfaction was an excuse for him to launch a fresh assault.

A hand seal revealed the Heavenly Chalice Sword Formation hidden within the clouds. Countless beams of aureate light burst forth, raining forth death and destruction upon the crowd below.

Whoosh whoosh whoosh!

There was another wave of ghastly shrieking amid the blades' carnage.

"This isn't good! We fell for his trick!" The gang boss hadn't expected Jiang Chen to be so decisive.

He was furious about the loss of so many subordinates. "Surround him and take him down," he roared. "No matter where he comes from, he needs to pay for killing our brothers! Get him!"

That was much easier said than done, however.

Jiang Chen's magnetic golden mountain and incredible speed meant that the gang's numbers served solely to give him opportunities for counterattack. It was more satisfactory to kill multiple enemies at once.

The boss was in great distress after witnessing the continuing deaths of his men. He gritted his teeth, then charged at Jiang Chen with as much ferocity as he could muster.

"Are you trying to uproot the Silversword Gang, you thief?" it was one of the worst things in the world to see one's own underlings die in front of oneself.

The heads of chives could regrow once cut off; not so with the heads of men. Loyal and competent men especially were a rarity in this day and age. Jiang Chen's identity was no longer in consideration. The boss was half-crazed from what the young man was doing to his assets.

"Kill him! Whoever succeeds will be rewarded with a hundred million sky spirit stones!" The Silversword Gang boss was willing to pay dearly to remove his immediate problem.

Unfortunately, the run-of-the-mill cultivator found it nearly impossible to pose any danger to the one who'd defeated Xiahou Zong.

Even the boss of the Silversword Gang couldn't rival Jiang Chen in terms of speed, despite his seventh level empyrean realm cultivation. He got very close at times, but Jiang Chen was always able to evade with the cleverest of dodges.

Furthermore, the young would use the window to cut down another swathe of men

This method of fighting was almost shameless, but the Silversword Gang was beaten into helpless submission.

The boss of the gang felt his heart bleed when he saw his men dying around him. "You bastard," he roared with red eyes, "the Silversword Gang swears vengeance forevermore!"

A vicious declaration, but one that had minimal effect on Jiang Chen. He wasn't going to stop killing just because of an empty threat.

The gang's lack of resources showed itself here.

A house or sect with some history would've had a protective formation around its headquarters. This wasn't the case for the Silversword Gang, to its unfortunate detriment.

"Enough!" The boss recovered a bit of his reason. He knew that if things were allowed to go on, his elite subordinates would be all cut down.

"Who are you, really? Among House Xiahou's younger generation, even Xiahou Zong would not catch us so unawares." The boss was no fool. He could see the terrifying ability of his opponent after fighting for a while.

It was unrealistic to believe that any old genius from House Xiahou could pull off such a stunt. There had to be something more going on.

If Xiahou Zong were here personally, he would eat the loss. After all, the young genius was famous everywhere – one of the top geniuses in Myriad Abyss.

But according to their sources, Xiahou Zong had died in a tournament of geniuses back in Eternal Divine Nation. The young man purporting to be from House Xiahou was quite suspicious. Was he an ancient thing from House Xiahou, with merely a youthful appearance?