

Having children earns benefit, start competing for dominance in the world by marrying a wife

#Chapter 71 - 71: Should We Seek Aid from the Imperial Court?_i - Read Having children earns benefit, start competing for dominance in the world by marrying a wife Chapter 71 - 71: Should We Seek Aid from the Imperial Court?_i

Chapter 71: Should We Seek Aid from the Imperial Court?_i

Upon hearing Li Rui's question, Lu Chen did not answer directly. He glanced at the crowd, then turned to Qin Yushan and said, "Commander Qin, you speak."

When the crowd heard Lu Chen's words, their gaze collectively fell on Qin Yushan.

Li Rui and the others were somewhat curious. Commander?

What position was that?

When did such a position come to exist at the Prince's Mansion?

At that moment, Qin Yushan stepped forward out of the crowd and approached Lu Chen's table. He first paid his respects and said, "Yes, my Prince."

Afterward, Qin Yushan addressed the crowd, "Our people intercepted a summoning order on the plains. The Barbarian Tribe is preparing to gather three hundred thousand cavalry to head southward, conquer North City, and establish a nation there, choosing Yan County as their capital."

Hearing Qin Yushan's words, everyone's faces went pale.

The Barbarian Tribe, North City's greatest threat. North City's impoverishment stemmed from those periodic southern incursions by the Barbarian Tribe.

It had not occurred to anyone that the Barbarian Tribe would bypass petty looting and go straight to conquering North City, even going so far as to form a nation there.

Anxiety seized the people in the study room.

Especially Li Rui, who owed his role as Prefecture Governor to the demise of his predecessors at the hands of the Barbarian Tribe; otherwise, it wouldn't have been his turn to hold the position.

He had hoped to enjoy some days of peace, but after just over a year, the Barbarian Tribe was heading south again.

And it wasn't a mere looting expedition. Were it only for grain, Li Rui wouldn't have been so concerned, given that the Barbarian Tribe typically raided other cities to the north of Yan County, seldom venturing to Yen County, being further south.

After snapping back to reality, Li Rui hastily asked, "That, Commander Qin, is your intelligence reliable?"

A southern invasion by the Barbarian Tribe was a major event, not to mention three hundred thousand cavalry marching south to attack North City. Reporting it to the imperial court, and doing so promptly, was imperative.

To those present, North City's thirty thousand soldiers stood no chance against the Barbarian Tribe's three hundred thousand cavalry; they could only hope for assistance from the imperial court's forces.

In truth, North City had always relied on the imperial army to fend off the Barbarian Tribe's invasions, the local thirty thousand soldiers merely meant to deal with lesser threats.

At that point, Qin Yushan said, "The intelligence we've gathered has been verified. Our people infiltrated the Barbarian Tribe's royal court, personally acquiring this piece of news directly from the mouth of a Barbarian King."

This...

Upon hearing Qin Yushan's words, disbelief painted the faces of everyone present.

Who exactly was this Commander Qin by the Prince's side?

The Prince's men had infiltrated the Barbarian Tribe's royal court?

At that moment, Li Rui came to a stark realization. He had always assumed Lu Chen to be an indolent Prince who shirked responsibilities, but now he understood that everything had been a facade for others to see.

The North Prince secretly possessed a force of his own, a force that had already permeated various places within North City and even penetrated the Barbarian Tribe.

Sweat beaded on Li Rui's forehead at the thought; fortunate was he that he had never tried to trip up the North Prince upon his arrival in North City.

Otherwise, it wasn't just his official's cap at jeopardy—whether he'd even still be alive was in question.

At this juncture, Mu Changtian spoke, "Prince, what's your plan? Will you seek assistance from the imperial court?"

Thirty thousand versus three hundred thousand, there's not a chance of victory, and we must have the court send a large army here, or North City is done for.

Lu Chen said, "I plan to send someone to inform the court about this situation later, but it will take at least three months for the court to assemble a large army, while the Barbarian Tribe can complete their assembly in about two months. North City will still need us to defend it for a while."

Although Lu Chen was confident he could have his thirty thousand soldiers hold North City and even defeat the thirty thousand cavalry of the Barbarian Tribe, such a matter was inevitably to be reported to the court, given that, at least in name, North City was territory of the Great Xia Dynasty.

If we didn't inform the court about the foreign invasion, whether we ended up winning or losing the battle, the court would suspect us of having a rebellious heart for not reporting such a critical matter.

However, the assembly of Great Xia's large army wasn't as swift as that of the Barbarian Tribe; mobilizing a large army would take at least two to three months.

There's a saying that troops and horses do not move without the supply of grains first, and certainly, Great Xia's army could not be as fast as the Barbarian Tribe's cavalry.

Moreover, this is North City, where the roads are exceptionally poor, so it would take even more time for Great Xia to move a large army here.

Upon hearing Lu Chen's words, Li Rui's complexion turned even paler.

If the Barbarian Tribe made their way southward, they could probably take the whole North City in less than a month, and with Great Xia's army taking such a long time to assemble, by the time they arrived, all thirty thousand of their soldiers might well be dead.

What would become of Yan County by that time was too dreadful to imagine.

Lu Chen continued, "I plan to evacuate all the civilians north of Yan County to the south of Yan County and then concentrate all our forces in Yan County to hold off the

Barbarian Army's thirty thousand. General Mo, you have previously engaged in combat with the Barbarian Army; what do you think of this plan?"

Upon hearing Lu Chen's question, Mu Changtian paused for a second, his brow furrowing slightly.

Then he glanced at the map and asked, "Scorched earth is not a problem, but if we evacuate all the civilians north of Yan County, the Barbarian Army will march straight in, reaching Yan County. It will be difficult for thirty thousand soldiers to hold it."

Mu Changtian knew all too well the strength of the Barbarian cavalry. Most of them were elite soldiers; it was virtually impossible for thirty thousand soldiers to hold off an opposing thirty thousand cavalry.

Lu Chen continued, "What if I told you I have a weapon that can instantly break the cavalry's formation?"

Upon hearing Lu Chen's words, Li Feng and the others' eyes lit up instantly.

Those who had followed the North Prince from the start knew that he possessed some mysterious weapons, like those explosive stones and the black sticks that could kill a Ninth Grade martial artist in an instant.

Rumors had already spread throughout the army that the North Prince had received the legacy of an Immortal.

Whether or not he had the legacy of an Immortal was beside the point; as long as the North Prince had a weapon capable of annihilating the Barbarian Tribe or could mass-produce such a weapon, it would suffice.

Just as Mu Changtian was about to ask Lu Chen about the weapon, Lu Chen, looking at the map, continued, "General Mo, I plan to lure the Barbarian cavalry to Wanning Valley and then ambush them from the high ground above the valley. Do you think this plan is feasible?"

Since Mu Changtian had several encounters with the Barbarian Tribe, he was most familiar with their situation, so Lu Chen sought his opinion.

Professional matters should be left to professionals.

After hearing Lu Chen's words, Mu Changtian eyed the map on the table seriously and did not immediately respond.

After a while, Mu Changtian finally spoke, "If the Prince stays in Yan County, luring the Barbarian cavalry to Wanning Valley wouldn't be difficult. The terrain of Wanning Valley

is relatively flat, which is conducive to the cavalry's southward advance directly towards Yan County."

"However, Prince... If you set an ambush in Wanning Valley with just thirty thousand men, I fear they would be utterly incapable of stopping the charge of the Barbarian Iron Cavalry."

Wanning Valley is flanked by high ground on both sides with a wide-open plain in front, so even if the Barbarian Iron Cavalry were to be ambushed in Wanning Valley, they could simply accelerate to quickly clear the valley.

Wanning Valley is not very long; without at least a hundred thousand men up front, blocking the charge of the Barbarian Iron Cavalry seems hardly possible.

What's more, the thirty thousand soldiers of North City still need to set the ambush on the high ground on both sides, leaving even fewer than thirty thousand soldiers to face the enemy in a frontal attack..

Chapter 72:1 Want Him to Be My Slave i

Having heard Mu Changtian's words, Lu Chen looked at the map and fell into deep thought once again.

This was indeed a problem. The Wanning Valley wasn't long, and it wouldn't be a big issue for the Barbarian Tribe's cavalry to pass through quickly.

Once they used the grenade launchers, the Barbarian Tribe's cavalry would surely fall into disarray; they would either charge forward or retreat backward.

No matter if the Barbarian Tribe's cavalry charged forward or retreated, they would need a large number of soldiers to withstand the cavalry.

Of course, if they were only planning to repel the Barbarian Tribe's soldiers, they would just need to hold the front of Wanning Valley.

However, Lu Chen had great ambitions; he wasn't content with just repelling the Barbarian Tribe's cavalry.

If they only repelled the Barbarian Tribe's cavalry, the cavalry, failing to capture Yan County, would likely attack other cities instead.

His aim in this battle was to eliminate the living forces of the Barbarian Tribe, ensuring they wouldn't be able to assemble forces and head south for a long time.

Therefore, these 300,000 men absolutely couldn't be allowed to return.

If they were let go, once those Barbarian Tribe soldiers recovered, wouldn't they head south again to plunder? Lu Chen certainly didn't believe that grenade launchers could completely intimidate them.

Lu Chen had also heard about the situation in the north. Come winter, even North City would see many commoners starve to death, let alone those on the grasslands.

Lu Chen wasn't sympathizing with the Barbarian Tribe; in his view, people on the verge of starvation were capable of anything, and the Barbarian Tribe wouldn't fear heading south just because North City possessed grenade launchers.

Lu Chen sighed and said, "Hurry up with the recruitment."

Upon hearing this, Mu Changtian still looked somewhat worried and said, "Prince, within such a short period, training new recruits to combat the Barbarian Tribe's cavalry seems like a formidable challenge."

Mu Changtian's words were rather conservative; it was simply impossible to train soldiers to fight the Barbarian Tribe's cavalry within two months.

Lu Chen understood this well and immediately said, "I plan to create an Artillery camp. The newly recruited soldiers won't participate in frontal combat; this way, all 30,000 soldiers from North City can enter the frontlines." Artillery camp?

What was that?

Hearing this new term from Lu Chen's mouth, everyone felt confused; they had never heard of an Artillery camp before.

Lu Chen looked at Li Rui and said, "Prefecture Governor Li, I'll have to trouble you with this matter. You need to collaborate with General Li and others and quickly recruit ten thousand new soldiers."

Upon hearing Lu Chen's words, Li Rui immediately said, "Yes, Prince."

Li Rui sighed inwardly; he had intended to suggest that the North Prince should retreat southward, but from the tone of North Prince, there appeared to be no intention to retreat.

If he proposed a southern retreat at this time, wouldn't he offend the North Prince?

Li Rui couldn't help but think, what good would recruiting ten thousand more soldiers do? Not to mention ten thousand soldiers, even if they recruited an additional hundred thousand new recruits, it wouldn't be enough to stop the Barbarian Tribe's iron cavalry.

Although he thought this, Li Rui didn't dare to voice it out directly; after all, the North Prince was a Seignior, and he was merely the lord of North City.

At this moment, Lu Chen looked at the map on the table and said, "After the Artillery camp is formed, this prince will show you the new weapons of North Prince Mansion."

Hearing this, everyone grew even more curious. The North Prince seemed very confident in his so-called new weapons, making one wonder what kind of new weapons they were that gave the North Prince the courage to fight the Barbarian Army at Yan County.

As curious as they were, they didn't keep on asking. The North Prince said he would show them, so the main task now was to hurry up with the recruitment of soldiers and to form the new army as quickly as possible.

In the North Land, among the Barbarian Tribe's royal courts.

Spread across the boundless grasslands, various sizes of felt tents, also known as Mongolian yurts, were scattered.

The closer to the center, the larger the Mongolian yurts became, with the largest belonging to one of the great kings of the Barbarian Tribe.

The Barbarian Tribe was widely dispersed across the grasslands, comprised of seven kings in total. The Sky Wolf King, situated due north of North City, was the one preparing to attack and planning to establish a nation in North City.

At this moment, a woman clad in animal skin rode her horse to the center of the yurt cluster.

Her skin was fair, her face delicately beautiful, a stark contrast to what one would expect of someone living on the grasslands.

After dismounting from her horse, she immediately asked her slave, "Has Wu Yuan returned?"

The slave at her side, whose face bore engraved characters, promptly replied, "He has returned, Princess."

Upon hearing this, the woman hurried excitedly to a smaller Mongolian yurt next to the largest one, lifted the tent curtain, and found the man she had been muttering about just now had indeed returned.

At this point, the man named Wu Yuan was kneeling on the ground, reporting some intelligence to a breathtakingly beautiful woman.

Inside the yurt, an exquisitely beautiful woman lay half-stretched on the bed, her long, fair legs exposed. She wore lavish fur clothing and her entire body was adorned with glittering jewelry, presenting an image of seductive charm.

She was the most important woman within this branch of the Barbarian Tribe, the wife of the previous Sky Wolf King.

According to the customs of the Barbarian Tribe, after the death of the previous Sky Wolf King, she was to marry the current Sky Wolf King.

However, due to certain reasons, she had yet to marry, but she had already promised the current Sky Wolf King that if he could take over North City and establish a nation there, she would marry him and become his queen.

At this moment, the woman who entered the tent greeted respectfully, "My respects to the Queen."

Although the stunning woman before them had not yet married the current Sky Wolf King, everyone recognized her as the Queen.

Yelv Nanyan glanced at Xiao Wen Yao, then said softly, "Rise."

Yelv Nanyan's voice was incredibly gentle, making one feel as if they were basking in the spring breeze.

Xiao Wen Yao, the woman who had entered the tent, was the daughter of the current Sky Wolf King, Xiao Hongbo. Originally, they had no surnames.

But in order to emulate Great Sum, all members of the Sky Wolf King's clan had adopted surnames, and the royal family took the surname Xiao.

The name Xiao Wen Yao was also given to her by the Queen, Yelv Nanyan, not long ago.

Yelv Nanyan's attention returned to the man before her as she asked, "I heard that the Prince of North City is a lecherous man who spends all his days seeking pleasure in the Prince's Mansion, having never involved himself in the affairs of North City since he went there. Is this true?"

Wu Yuan replied, "Indeed, it is so, Queen."

Hearing the man's answer, a smile appeared on Yelv Nanyan's face, "Does this mean then, that for our great king's southern campaign, North City is ripe for the taking?"

Wu Yuan cautioned, “Queen, although the North Prince is incompetent, the armies of Great Sum will not stand idly by. As soon as the great king launches his campaign, Great Sum will surely send a large force northward.”

Yelv Nanyan said indifferently, “By the time the Great Sum army arrives, the great king will have already solidified his foothold in North City. Besides, internal strife is about to erupt within Great Sum, and the Sum Emperor will not have enough resources to deal with us.”

At this point, Xiao Wen Yao interjected, “Queen, if we capture North City and manage to catch the North Prince, may I have him? I’ve heard he is exceptionally handsome, and I would like him to be my slave..”

Having children earns benefit, start competing for dominance in the world by marrying a wife #Chapter 73 - 73 How Handsome is He Really?_i - Read Having children earns benefit, start competing for dominance in the world by marrying a wife Chapter 73 - 73 How Handsome is He Really?_i

Chapter 73: How Handsome is He Really?_i

After hearing Xiao Wen Yao’s words, Yelv Nanyan smiled faintly and then said, “Yaoyao, I’m afraid that won’t work. No matter what, he is still a Prince of Great Xia. If we capture him, we can use him to conduct some trades with Great Xia. He still has some use to us.”

Xiao Wen Yao pouted her lips and didn’t say much, as after all, Yelv Nanyan was the Princess Consort, and she possessed significant influence within the Sky Wolf King tribe.

It was thanks to the leadership of the Princess Consort that the Sky Wolf King tribe had developed to its current size and acquired advanced weapons.

She actively learned from Great Xia and had secretly bought off many from the Great Xia Dynasty; leveraging these people, she had been continuously engaged in commercial trade with the Great Xia Dynasty. Wu Yuan, kneeling before her, was one of them.

Under her leadership, the Sky Wolf tribe had become no weaker than other Barbarian Tribe branches, and even more powerful than some.

The idea of establishing a nation in North City was also a concept proposed by Yelv Nanyan. She noticed that the north became colder each year, and the Barbarian population was rapidly increasing. The current grasslands could no longer support such a large Barbarian population.

In addition, North City was getting poorer and poorer, and even if they were to raid North City for food, the food they plundered wouldn't last long for their tribe.

The best solution was to learn from the Great Xia Dynasty, cultivating food crops to support a larger population.

Moreover, she had found out that a kind of grain crop, which could yield a thousand pounds per acre, appeared to have surfaced in North City. If the Sky Wolf King could conquer North City and establish a nation there, their branch would no longer need to follow the water and grass, and their lives would improve greatly.

The Sky Wolf King tribe owes its present strength and size to Yelv Nanyan's numerous policies, making her an irreplaceable figure within the tribe, so much so that the current Sky Wolf King, Xiao Hongbo, held her in particularly high regard.

Of course, Yelv Nanyan's status wasn't that high from the beginning. She married the former Sky Wolf King when she was just a teenager.

However, the former Sky Wolf King was already an old man at that time, paralyzed in bed, unable to manage the tribe. It was Yelv Nanyan who helped him govern the tribe, and over time, she amassed considerable power in her hands.

After the Sky Wolf King's death, having no offspring, thanks to Yelv Nanyan's mediation, the Sky Wolf tribe chose Xiao Hongbo as the new Sky Wolf King.

The current Sky Wolf King was chosen with the help of Yelv Nanyan, which once again consolidated the power in her hands.

And Yelv Nanyan was a very smart woman. She gave the current Sky Wolf King plenty of respect, letting him make decisions on important matters, making it seem as though she had entirely ceded power.

Even when the Sky Wolf King expressed his desire to marry her, she did not refuse, but rather set a goal for him, promising to marry him upon reaching that goal.

Yelv Nanyan was just a teenager when she married the previous Sky Wolf King, and to this day remains a virgin. She couldn't possibly remain a widow for a man who was already dead, and she was indeed planning to marry at some point.

In the eyes of the current Sky Wolf King, Xiao Hongbo, Yelv Nanyan was irrevocably his woman, which is why he trusted her immensely. As for taking down North City before marrying her, Xiao Hongbo saw it as a gift to Yelv Nanyan.

At this moment, Yelv Nanyan continued speaking to the kneeling Wu Yuan, “Wu Yuan, you’ve had a hard time gathering information in Great Xia this time. Go and have a good rest.”

“Thank you, Princess Consort,” Wu Yuan immediately said.

As his voice fell, Wu Yuan got up and left Yelv Nanyan’s yurt straight away.

Seeing Wu Yuan stand up and leave, Xiao Wenyao quickly said, “Princess Consort, I shall take my leave as well.”

Having said that, Xiao Wenyao then turned and left the yurt as well.

As soon as Xiao Wenyao stepped out of the yurt, she hurriedly called out to Wu Yuan, “Wu Yuan, wait a moment.”

Wu Yuan stopped in his tracks, turned his head, and asked with utmost respect, “Princess, do you need me for something?”

Xiao Wenyao directly asked, “The perfume and soap I had you bring for me, did you bring them?”

Wu Yuan said with a smile, “Since it is Her Highness’s command, I will naturally obey. Those items are still on the carriage, I will go and bring them to Her Highness right now.”

Xiao Wenyao replied, “No need, I will go with you. Tell me about Great Xia on the way.”

Perhaps influenced by Yelv Nanyan, Xiao Wenyao was very interested in all aspects of Great Xia.

As Wu Yuan was from Great Xia, every time he returned from there, she would find him and inquire about various matters pertaining to Great Xia.

For instance, she would ask about any recent fun events in Great Xia, or any gossip about the princes—basically, anything she found interesting, she would ask Wu Yuan about.

Upon hearing Xiao Wenyao’s words, Wu Yuan responded, “Of course, Your Highness. Whatever you wish to know, you may ask me.”

While walking, Xiao Wenyao asked, "People say that the North Prince of Great Xia is extraordinarily handsome. Is he truly that attractive? Could you describe to me just how handsome he is?"

This...

Wu Yuan was taken aback by Xiao Wenyao's first question.

Wu Yuan pondered for a moment without replying immediately.

Seeing that Wu Yuan did not answer right away, Xiao Wenyao turned to look at him, and asked curiously, "What's wrong? Why aren't you speaking?"

After thinking, Wu Yuan said, "Your Highness, I genuinely do not know how to describe the North Prince."

"If judged by the standards of Great Xia's ladies, the North Prince is indeed considered extremely handsome. However, by the standards of the Barbarian Tribe women choosing a husband, I'm afraid the North Prince might seem somewhat slender. The North Prince is not a martial artist; his physique is not robust."

Upon hearing Wu Yuan's answer, Xiao Wenyao's eyes lit up and then she said, "I do not like men who are overly muscular. The men of the grasslands almost all look fat and bulky, hideously so. What is there to like about that?"

Seeing that Xiao Wenyao seemed quite interested in the North Prince, Wu Yuan continued, "Your Highness, you must know that the North Prince is particularly fond of beautiful women. If he were to see Your Highness, he would surely be unable to take his eyes off you."

"If Your Highness is interested in the North Prince, the Great King's southern conquest of North City may present an opportunity for you."

Upon hearing Wu Yuan's words, Xiao Wenyao sighed and said, "As you've just heard, the Queen said that the North Prince is still of use. Even if we capture the North Prince in the southern campaign, she will not hand him over to me." Wu Yuan gave a faint smile, having initially intended to persuade Xiao Wenyao to go directly to North City, but upon reflection, he decided against it. It was a critical period, and extraneous actions could arouse suspicion and lead to more loss than gain.

Soon after, Wu Yuan added, "Do not worry, Your Highness. You will always have the opportunity to be alone with the North Prince."

Xiao Wenyao said, "Let's not talk about that anymore. By the way, do you know how to make perfume and soap?"

“Every time I run out, I have to wait for you to buy it from Great Xia, which is too troublesome. We might as well make it ourselves.”

Wu Yuan explained, “I apologize, Your Highness, but the method for making perfume and soap is only known to the North Prince Mansion. They only sell the finished products and have never revealed the methods for making soap and perfume.”

Hearing Wu Yuan's words, Xiao Wenyao paused.

“The North Prince Mansion?”

Wu Yuan then added, “Yes, it is said that these two items, perfume and soap, were actually invented by the North Prince himself.”

“Moreover, this time I have brought a new item called scented soap for Your Highness, also made by the North Prince Mansion. Scented soap is even better than regular soap; I guarantee that Your Highness will love it after using it..”

Chapter 74: Daughter, Do Not Marry the North Prince

Having heard Wu Yuan's words, Xiao Wenyao became even more curious about the North Prince.

Recently, because her father was planning to attack North City, she often heard rumors about the North Prince.

This was one of the reasons why Xiao Wenyao had suddenly taken an interest in the North Prince.

On one hand, she had heard the name “North Prince” quite frequently, and on the other, she wanted a rather delicate-looking slave, a pretty boy, if you will.

Moreover, she thought the status of her slave should not be too low, as there's no sense of achievement in conquering someone of low status. Since the North Prince was deemed a useless Prince, it gave her an idea.

Originally, she had thought the North Prince was completely a Prince who knew only how to indulge in luxury at the mansion, but Wu Yuan's words made her realize the North Prince might still be of some use.

She was particularly fond of the perfumes and soaps from North Prince Mansion; the perfume helped cover the gamey smell of her fur, and the soap could clean her body thoroughly.

She now found herself completely unable to do without these two items.

Upon hearing that the North Prince had created both, her desire to capture him and turn him into her slave intensified.

Xiao Wenyao then commented, "So the North Prince isn't entirely useless after all."

Curiously, she asked, "By the way, what exactly is perfume soap?"

Wu Yuan explained, "Perfume soap is used specifically for bathing. After washing, it leaves a fragrance on the body that lasts a long time."

Xiao Wenyao asked, "Isn't that the same as perfume?"

Wu Yuan replied, "Your Highness, perfume can be applied at any time, but it can't clean the body. Soap, however, is different; it cleans dirt from the body."

Seemingly understanding yet not quite, Xiao Wenyao said, "So it's like soap."

Wu Yuan, somewhat speechlessly, said, "Your Highness, soap is actually used for cleaning clothes, not for bathing."

Xiao Wenyao completely ignored Wu Yuan's explanation and blurted out, "Who cares, as long as it cleans the dirt off the body, it works."

Seeing Xiao Wenyao so determined, Wu Yuan couldn't be bothered to correct her any further; as long as she was happy, it was fine.

As they walked on, they arrived in front of Wu Yuan's caravan.

At that moment, Wu Yuan's caravan was loaded with a variety of goods exchanged from Great Sum.

Ever since Yelv Nanyan had won over the merchants of Great Sum, some of the Sum's caravans had been trading with the Barbarian Tribe.

Initially, they only traded common items like salt and tea. Gradually, as trade became more frequent, the Barbarians began buying iron directly from Great Sum, and later, they started trading for weapons and armor.

The Sky Wolf Tribe's current strength was inseparable from these merchants of Great Sum.

Wu Yuan quickly approached one of the carriages, rummaged through it, and then brought out a piece of fragrance soap to present in front of Xiao Wenyao.

“Princess, this is the bath fragrance soap.”

“Your Highness, please make sure not to bathe with soap in the future; it’s bad for the body and can harm the skin.”

Hearing Wu Yuan’s explanation, Xiao Wenyao took the fragrance soap from his hand, curious.

Before she could even bring the soap to her nose, she smelled a fragrance and eagerly brought the soap under her nose to sniff it, then excitedly exclaimed, “It actually smells nice!”

“It seems the North Prince pays special attention to women’s products. If I can make him my slave, perhaps he could create even more useful items for women in the future.”

Wu Yuan wanted to say that the soap was for both men and women, but he didn’t say more; as long as the naive princess was happy, it was all that mattered.

At that moment, a man approached Xiao Wenyao.

“Princess, the Great King summons you,” said the messenger.

Upon hearing this, Xiao Wenyao paused, then asked, “What does my father want with me?”

The man replied, “I don’t know, Your Highness. You will find out once you’re there.”

Xiao Wenyao then handed the soap to Wu Yuan, “Wu Yuan, deliver these items to where I’m staying.”

Wu Yuan responded respectfully, “As you wish, Your Highness.”

As soon as Wu Yuan finished speaking, Xiao Wenyao cheerfully proceeded to the King’s tent, which was the largest yurt of the Sky Wolf Tribe.

Upon entering the yurt, Xiao Wenyao noticed many people she had never seen before sitting inside.

Sitting at the center was a tall and burly middle-aged man, with a distinctively protruding forehead, who was none other than Xiao Wenyao’s father, Xiao Hongbo, the current Sky Wolf King.

As Xiao Wenyao walked in, just as Xiao Hongbo was about to speak, she immediately asked, “Father, what is the matter you wished to discuss with me?”

Seeing Xiao Wen Yao take the initiative to ask, Xiao Hongbo didn't beat around the bush and directly said, "Yaoyao, you have grown up, and it is time for you to marry."

These words struck her like a bolt of lightning, leaving Xiao Wen Yao completely stunned.

After a long moment, Xiao Wen Yao came to her senses and quickly said, "Father, I am still young, I cannot bear to leave you, I wish to continue staying by your side."

Xiao Wen Yao might have been a bit naive, but she wasn't a fool. For someone of her status, it was likely that she would only marry into another tribe, becoming a tool in a political union.

One only need look at the Queen to understand, married to a disgusting old man, tending to his every need, and Yelv Nanyan was one of the luckier ones, as she had managed to amass significant power for herself.

The fate of other women was different; Xiao Wen Yao still remembered several who had married the previous Sky Wolf King, many of whom had been tormented to death.

If Yelv Nanyan had married the previous Sky Wolf King while he was still healthy, her fate would likely not have been much better.

Xiao Wen Yao was profoundly fearful of marriage.

Seeing Xiao Wen Yao so averse to the idea of marriage, Xiao Hongbo immediately said, "Yaoyao, it is customary for women of the plains to marry at your age. Even though you are my daughter, you are not exempt from this tradition!"

Hearing her father speak so firmly, Xiao Wen Yao knew that no amount of talk would be useful, so she resigned herself to her fate, saying, "Father, I understand."

Upon hearing her consent, Xiao Hongbo's stern face instantly brightened as he said with a smile, "Since you agree, once I conquer North City, you shall marry the North Fre King and become his queen."

At these words, Xiao Wen Yao turned deathly pale.

The North Fre King was a recent arrival in the North Land, the ruler of a Barbarian Tribe.

With the disintegration of a centralized authority like the Great Chanyu, the barbarians had split into seven tribes, each with their own royal court and king.

Naturally, every tribe, including Xiao Hongbo's, harbored the ambition to reunify the Barbarian Tribes as in the past.

After conquering North City, he planned to establish his own nation, then win over the North Fre King through marriage, subsequently declaring himself the Great Chanyu and demanding the other tribes' allegiance.

Xiao Hongbo was a very ambitious king of the Barbarian Tribe.

At that moment, Xiao Wen Yao knelt with a thud, "Father, I beg you, I do not want to marry the North Fre King!"

Xiao Wen Yao had heard of who the North Fre King was. His tribe was unlike theirs, which, due to frequent interaction with Great Sum, had adopted many of its customs.

Never mind that the North Fre King's tribe was impoverished, they still practiced cannibalism, and the North Fre King himself was an extremely brutal man.

Xiao Wen Yao could not bear to think of the inhuman treatment she would endure once married to the North Fre King..

Chapter 75: I know a friend of mine can help y°u_i

Although Xiao Wen Yao was a princess in the Sky Wolf Tribe, with a relatively high status, it would be quite different once married into the North Pre King's tribe.

In the Barbarian Tribes, women's status was generally low.

Xiao Wen Yao's high status in the Sky Wolf Tribe was mainly because she had a father who was king of the barbarians.

And Empress Yelv Nanyan had not achieved her position overnight; she, too, had benefited from the previous Sky Wolf King's ill health, which had allowed her to gradually accumulate some power in her hands.

Every time Xiao Wen Yao thought about the torture she would endure from the North Pre King after getting married, her delicate body involuntarily trembled.

Continuing to cry, Xiao Wen Yao said, "Father, I've heard that the previous queens of the North Fre King all died unnatural deaths. I'm still young and don't want to die so soon!"

Hearing her words, Xiao Hongbo flew into a rage, "Nonsense! The North Fre King is a king of the Barbarian Tribe after all; he is entirely worthy of you. What more could you be dissatisfied with!"

"That's settled then. Once I conquer North City, you shall marry over there; there's no room for discussion!"

Seeing her father finalize the decision, Xiao Wenyao instantly got up from the ground and ran out crying.

Xiao Wenyao ran wildly across the grassland, not knowing how long it had been before she finally slowed down.

At that moment, Wu Yuan came to Xiao Wenyao's side, "Your Highness, what has happened to you?"

Wu Yuan had just been instructing others to unload supplies when he suddenly noticed Xiao Wenyao run out of the royal tent, crying as she did so. Guessing there must be some new intelligence, he hurriedly pretended to comfort Xiao Wenyao, approaching her.

Wiping away her tears, Xiao Wenyao said, "Father is making me marry the North Fre King, but I refuse to marry that ogre!"

This...

Wu Yuan's brain paused.

The North Fre King?

Could it be that the Sky Wolf King and the North Fre King were going to join forces in the attack on North City?

Wu Yuan thought for a moment. True, if it was just the Sky Wolf Tribe, it would indeed be unlikely to muster an army of three hundred thousand, but with two Barbarian Kings joining forces, they could have such a huge army.

If the Sky Wolf King was asking for help from the North Fre King to attack North City, he would naturally have to offer some benefits, and Xiao Wenyao was probably one of them.

Seeing Wu Yuan silent, Xiao Wenyao turned her head to look at him and said, "Wu Yuan, can you help me escape to Great Sum? I can't marry the North Fre King no matter what, I don't want to die yet."

"Uh, Your Highness, I'm afraid nobody dares to agree to such a request," Wu Yuan said.

Actually, Wu Yuan was also conflicted inside because he was just a spy, and he didn't know what kind of decisions would be made in North City or by the North Prince.

If he took it upon himself to bring a daughter of a Barbarian King to North City, to Great Sum, it could provoke the barbarians to attack sooner, which would be very bad for the strategic arrangements in North City.

With this in mind, Wu Yuan said, “Your Highness, I know a friend who might be able to help you, but I need to ask his opinion first. I may have to wait until my next return to give you an answer.”

Hearing this, Xiao Wenyao was instantly filled with hope, “Wu Yuan, are you telling the truth? Can your friend really help me?”

Wu Yuan said, “Yeah, as long as he is willing, he can definitely help you.”

Xiao Wenyao then said, “Please do that for me. When will you depart for Great Sum?”

Wu Yuan replied, “Your Highness, I have just returned today; I need to rest for at least two days.”

Xiao Wenyao said, “Oh, okay, then when you come back next time, you must tell me your friend’s response as soon as possible.”

Wu Yuan said, “Of course, Your Highness.”

While they were talking, a rugged male voice came from behind them.

“Yaoyao, are you alright?”

Hearing that, Wu Yuan and Xiao Wenyao both turned around to find Xiao Pengthian behind them, then Wu Yuan immediately said, “Your Highness, I shall take my leave now. You two talk.”

After he finished speaking, Wu Yuan turned and went back to his carriage to continue unloading the cargo.

Xiao Pengthian was Xiao Wenyao’s uncle, which is to say, he was the brother to Xiao Hongbo’s legitimate wife.

Originally, Xiao Pengthian should not have had the Xiao surname since Yelv Nanyan stipulated that the Xiao surname was reserved for the royal family, but Xiao Hongbo bestowed him with the Xiao surname to win him over.

When she saw it was her uncle, Xiao Wenyao asked, “Uncle, do you need something from me?”

Xiao Pengthian sighed and said, “Yaoyao, I have already heard about your situation.”

Xiao Wenyao was momentarily stunned.

Xiao Pengthian continued, "Xiao Hongbo is getting out of hand, first he caused the death of my sister, and now he wants to marry you off to that uncivilized tribe!"

Hearing Xiao Pengthian's words, Xiao Wenyao immediately picked up on the key phrases. She looked at Xiao Pengthian and urgently asked, "Uncle, what did you just say?"

"Did my father cause the death of my mother?"

With righteous indignation, Xiao Pengthian said, "Who else but him? Your mother had always been in good health. How could she possibly die suddenly if not for Xiao Hongbo wanting to marry the empress, thus causing her death."

Hearing this, Xiao Wenyao felt as if her entire worldview had collapsed. She could hardly believe that her father could do such a thing.

At that moment, Xiao Wenyao was still holding onto a sliver of hope, and she continued, "Uncle, these are just your suspicions."

Seeing Xiao Wenyao's disbelief, Xiao Pengthian sighed again, "Yaoyao, you are still young and don't understand these things."

"Your father has become just like those emperors of the Central Plains Dynasty, willing to sacrifice anything for power in their hands, including their own wives and daughters."

"Alright, let's not talk about this now. Yaoyao, don't worry. I will do my best to persuade your father not to marry you off to the North Fre King. If he really won't listen, then your uncle will think of other methods."

Gratefully, Xiao Wenyao said, "Thank you, Uncle."

Half a month later.

Great Sum, Capital city.

Xuanzheng Hall.

In the court, the ministers were discussing some trivial matters, when suddenly a loud shout came from outside the hall.

"Urgent news from North Land, Barbarian Tribe is stirring!"

Upon hearing these words, the ministers in the hall, who had been arguing over matters of protocol, fell instantly silent.

Soon, a soldier bearing three red flags on his back entered the hall, kneeled halfway, and lifted the bamboo tube in his hands high above his head, declaring, "Your Majesty, the Barbarian Tribe is stirring, North City is in danger!"

The eunuch quickly took the bamboo tube from the hands of the messenger and approached the Sum Emperor, opening the tube and handing the intelligence report to the Emperor.

The Emperor received the parchment scroll and read the text written by Lu Chen carefully.

At this moment, Xuanzheng Hall was exceptionally quiet, with all the ministers' eyes riveted on the Emperor, creating an extraordinarily heavy atmosphere within the hall.

The Barbarian Tribe had always been a thorn in the side for Great Sum. Great Sum had dispatched troops to fight the Barbarian Tribe many times, with the outcome mostly being losses.

Even when Great Sum won, the Barbarian Tribe could utilize the advantage of their cavalry to quickly withdraw from the battlefield.

Thus, no matter the battle, Great Sum had not been able to completely eradicate the Barbarian Tribe.

Upon seeing that three hundred thousand Barbarian cavalry were about to march south, the Emperor's expression darkened in an instant.

The Barbarian cavalry could have come at any other time, but they chose to move south precisely when he was about to deal with the Aristocratic Family..

Chapter 76: How Does He Know the Barbarian Tribe is Moving South?_i

The Sum Emperor was no fool. Upon seeing Lu Chen's letter stating that the Barbarian Tribe's cavalry was about to head south, he realized that this was definitely linked to the Aristocratic Family, and that even among his sons, someone might have been involved.

As a seasoned politician, bringing in external enemies and then using them to seize benefits was something he had done as Emperor.

Seeing the Sum Emperor's face grow so dark, the ministers in the Xuanzheng Hall didn't dare to breathe loudly, this being the first time that year they had seen the Sum Emperor with such an ugly expression.

After a long moment, the Sum Emperor said with a cold laugh, "The Barbarian Tribe really knows when to pick their moment."

The tall, thin man standing at the very front on the left side of the hall asked, "Your Majesty, do we have any news about the situation in North City?"

As soon as the man finished speaking, the Sum Emperor said, "The North Prince has sent a letter, saying that his men intercepted a summons from the Barbarian Tribe on the plains. The Barbarian Tribe plans to gather 300,000 cavalry to head south, occupy North City to establish their nation, and use Yan County as their capital."

Upon hearing the Sum Emperor's words, a wave of chatter erupted among the courtiers.

"300,000? My goodness! How could there be so many?"

"Establishing a nation! If we let the Barbarian Tribe establish a nation in North City, wouldn't Great Sum always be under the threat of the Barbarian cavalry?"

"We must not let the Barbarian Tribe head south!"

"The Barbarian Tribe has such wild ambitions, Great Sum must not let them off easily this time!"

Hearing the discussions of the ministers, the Sum Emperor stayed silent for a long time without speaking.

Some time later, Prince Lu Shuyun stood up and said, "Father Emperor, your son believes that the North Prince may have exaggerated the military situation. To my knowledge, since the North Prince arrived in North City, he has been indulging in pleasures within his mansion all day long, without properly managing North City."

"How would he know the Barbarian Tribe was heading south?"

"Besides, the Barbarian Tribe is further north of North City. Even if the Barbarian Tribe issued a summons, how could his men possibly intercept it unless they had infiltrated the land where the Barbarian Tribe lives?"

Hearing Prince Lu Shuyun make such a statement, the ministers started to react.

Right, how could the North Prince, that lazy and useless Prince, who hasn't been managing affairs since he went to North City, have possibly sent men to infiltrate the land where the Barbarian Tribe lives, and even intercepted their summons?

He doesn't seem to be the kind of person who could do such a thing.

Could it be that the North Prince truly exaggerated the military situation?

At this moment, Prime Minister Lin Gaoyuan spoke, "Prince Lu Shuyun, you claim that the North Prince exaggerated the military situation, do you have evidence other than deducing from the North Prince's behavior?"

Hearing this, Lu Shuyun paused.

Then Lu Shuyun continued, "Prime Minister Lin, isn't this point alone sufficient? Or do you believe that the North Prince truly sent men to the land where the Barbarian Tribe lives?"

Lin Gaoyuan replied indifferently, "This official does not know whether the North Prince has sent men to the North Land where the Barbarian Tribe resides. This official only knows that the North Prince sent a Red Ribbon Messenger with the letter."

In the Great Xia Dynasty, a Red Ribbon Messenger signified the most urgent military intelligence, not to be dispatched lightly at any time.

In Prime Minister Lin's view, even if the North Prince were foolish, he could not possibly be unaware of the significance of a Red Ribbon Messenger.

As for exaggerating the military situation, the North Prince would not be able to withstand the punishment that would follow.

If the North Prince was truly an ineffectual Prince, would a Prince who spends his days in pleasure within his mansion have the gall to exaggerate the military situation? And not fear the Sum Emperor stripping him of his Prince position?

Therefore, Lin Gaoyuan believed that there was a high probability that the Barbarian Tribe was indeed exhibiting unusual activities. As for whether they had 300,000 soldiers, that was uncertain.

It was also possible that the North Prince exaggerated the number of the Barbarian cavalry to gain support from the royal court.

In summary, the Barbarians were indeed likely to move south, but whether they had 300,000 soldiers was not certain; this was Lin Gaoyuan's speculation.

No sooner had Lin Gaoyuan finished speaking than Prince Lu Yi said, "Father Emperor, your son wishes to lead troops northward to resist the Barbarians!"

Right after the Crown Prince had spoken, Prince Wu Ming said sarcastically, "Big brother, aren't you in a bit of a hurry? It is not yet certain whether the Barbarians are moving south, but you wish to lead troops northward—do you assure us that it will truly be to resist the Barbarians once you've taken command?"

Even during a Barbarian invasion, mutual recriminations in the court were commonplace, let alone when the invasion had not yet occurred.

If a prince led troops northward and gained renown within the military, it would be greatly beneficial for the struggle of succession. Therefore, every prince sought to seize the opportunity to lead the troops, while also not wanting other princes to do so.

Hearing Prince Wu Ming's words, Prince Lu Yi scoffed coldly, "What do you mean, second brother? Resisting the Barbarians is the duty of our royal family's offspring. Are you suggesting that I have ulterior motives?"

Just as Prince Wu Ming was about to say more, the Sum Emperor, seated on the Dragon Throne, interrupted the two, "Enough."

Seeing that the Sum Emperor had spoken, the hall that had been as noisy as a marketplace instantly fell silent.

"Whether the Barbarians are truly moving south will be confirmed by my Shadow Guards. What you need to discuss now is how to respond if the Barbarians move south," he decreed.

Hearing the Sum Emperor speak thus, everyone stopped discussing the veracity of the matter.

At this moment, Lu Shuyun's expression was somewhat unpleasant. He had thought the Barbarian invasion would catch the North Prince off guard or cover up the matter of the North Prince being assassinated by the Blood Moon Tower assassin.

Unexpectedly, the North Prince had preemptively noticed the Barbarians' southward movement.

But it didn't matter much now; the North Prince likely didn't have many days left to live. By this time, the Blood Moon Tower should have already reached Yan County.

He believed that under the leadership of a Grandmaster from the Blood Moon Tower, even with the Mysterious Grandmaster present, they wouldn't be able to protect the North Prince.

What he needed to consider now was how to secure the authority to lead troops northward.

If he could lead troops north, as per his agreement with the Barbarian Tribe, he could then gain some concessions from them. Additionally, he could build prestige in the military, which would greatly increase his chances of success in the succession struggle.

As for ceding the North City to the Barbarian Tribe, Lu Shuyun didn't care in the slightest. What he cared about was securing his position as Crown Prince.

North City was nothing but a poor place. Since the Barbarian Tribe wanted it, he was willing to concede it to them.

At this point, Prince Lu Yi spoke again, "Father Emperor, your son believes that we should immediately assemble a large army and march north."

"If the North Prince has resorted to using a Red Ribbon Messenger, it means the Barbarian southward movement is urgent. If the court sends troops too late, the 30,000 soldiers of North City will surely be unable to withstand the Barbarians' 300,000 cavalry."

No sooner had Prince Lu Yi finished speaking than Prince Si also spoke in agreement, "Father Emperor, your son also believes that troops should be dispatched northward immediately!"

This opportunity to lead troops was one no prince wanted to miss. It had been many years since Great Xia had such an opportunity, a chance for them to establish prestige in the military, and none of the princes wanted to miss out.

However, in that moment, Lu Shuyun spoke, "Father Emperor, in your son's opinion, since the North City is already the North Prince's fiefdom, naturally it should be his responsibility to resist the invasion of the Barbarians."

"If the royal court must send troops every time foreign invaders encroach upon the border, then what is the role of the Seignior?"

No sooner had Lu Shuyun finished speaking than the man standing to the upper right of the officials said, "Your Majesty, this minister agrees with what Prince Lu Shuyun has said. The Seigniors on the frontiers already have the duty to resist foreign enemies; we should not always be depending on the royal court to send troops for every incursion.."

Chapter 77: Military Expansion Order i

Upon hearing the words of Right Minister Zhao Wenhan, Left Minister Lin Gaoyuan chuckled and said, "Indeed, the Seignior of the border provinces has the duty to ward off foreign enemies' invasions, but North City has only thirty thousand troops. Does Prime Minister Zhao truly believe that the North Prince can repel the Barbarian Tribe's invasion with these thirty thousand men?"

Zhao Wenhan immediately replied, "I never said that."

At this point, Zhao Wenhan looked towards the Sum Emperor on the Dragon Throne, then continued, "Your Majesty, North City has always been the first line of defense against the barbarian invasions. The customary thirty thousand troops are no longer sufficient to defend against the barbarian incursions, therefore, in my opinion, now is the time to issue a Military Expansion Order for North City."

As soon as Zhao Wenhan finished speaking, the court instantly became abuzz with discussions.

Ever since the Sum Emperor ascended to the throne, in order to prevent the Seigniors from rebelling, he had issued an edict limiting their troops.

In the territories of a Seignior, based on the size of their lands, there is a maximum number of soldiers they could maintain.

For North City, the upper limit of troops was fifty thousand, which is why when Lu Chen talked about recruiting new soldiers, he was only recruiting ten thousand.

Zhao Wenhan's suggestion seemed reasonable; after all, as North City was in the frontline against the Barbarian Tribe, granting the North Prince additional soldier quotas was appropriate.

But...

Once this precedent was set, other Seigniors of the border regions would also use the same excuse to expand their armies.

Defending against the barbarians is to defend against foreign invaders, and there are several other great dynasties in other directions of the Great Xia Dynasty. Although it has been many years since any wars broke out among these dynasties, there's no guarantee that one won't attack someday.

If North City expands its army, then undoubtedly the other Seigniors will also request to expand their forces.

This would clearly lead to a domino effect.

Moreover, once North City expanded its troops, other dynasties might suddenly decide to attack Great Sum.

Seigniors are not always docile; colluding with foreign enemies and then using it as leverage to demand a Military Expansion Order from the court is not impossible.

The Sum Emperor was no fool; he was also well aware of the potential consequences of issuing a Military Expansion Order for North City.

Nevertheless, at that moment the Sum Emperor spoke up: "Draft the edict, North City is the first line of defense against the barbarian invasions, and the thirty thousand soldiers there are no longer sufficient for this purpose. Effective immediately, the soldier limit for North City shall be increased to one hundred and fifty thousand. Additionally, the North Prince, as the Seignior of the North City territory, must not flee in the face of battle, regardless of the circumstances, and shall steadfastly hold North City!"

Hearing the words of the Sum Emperor, Zhao Wenhan promptly bowed and said, "Your Majesty is wise!"

The Sum Emperor coolly glanced at Zhao Wenhan, then continued, "Minister Wang, Minister Chu, Prime Minister Lin, Prime Minister Zhao; the four of you stay, everyone else is dismissed from the court."

Having spoken, the Sum Emperor rose from the Dragon Throne, his dragon robe fluttering as he turned and left.

Clearly, the matter of North City's army expansion was a discomfort to the Sum Emperor, but it was something he had no choice but to do.

Nowadays, undercurrents were swirling within Great Sum; it was not feasible to send hundreds of thousands of troops northward to defend against the barbarians.

To dispatch such a vast force north would be to shake the very foundations of the nation.

The Sum Emperor also understood that the probability was high that the aristocratic families were involved with the barbarian incursion; whether any Princes were entangled in it remained to be seen.

Now was not the time to focus on these matters.

Politics lies behind warfare, and if, as the North Prince claimed in his letter, the Barbarian Tribe was intending to establish a nation in North City, that was absolutely unacceptable.

North City is the gateway to Great Sum, and once captured by the barbarians, their spears would then be pointed directly at the Capital City.

The Sum Emperor knew he had to compromise with both the barbarians and the aristocratic families to resolve this crisis.

This was a considerable frustration for him; ever since he took the throne, this was the most stifling predicament he had faced.

The main issue was he had just begun to reorganize the Great Sum army. The barbarians' descent from the north had been too sudden, leaving no time to catch his breath.

If only he had another year, once the reorganization of the Great Sum army was complete, those barbarian cavalries would amount to nothing.

But there was no room for so many what-ifs.

The pressing matter was to discuss how to resolve the crisis at North City.

The Sum Emperor, having called the four individuals to his study, discussed the matter of the barbarian descent in earnest.

In the end, they decided that the best course of action was to pursue peace through negotiation. Sending troops was certainly necessary, but not in the hundreds of thousands.

As for ceding the entirety of North City, that was out of the question, but there was still room to negotiate, perhaps ceding a portion of North City's territory to the barbarians.

X %

After all, North City is the North Prince's fiefdom, and the North Prince is nothing but a useless Prince, unable to manage such vast lands.

After discussing the specifics of what to do, Lin Gaoyuan left the Sum Emperor's study directly.

His expression was very ugly, clearly dissatisfied with the outcome they had discussed.

The Sum Emperor had summoned a total of four people, yet one was an Aristocratic Family's Minister of Revenue, another was an Aristocratic Family's Minister of War, and there was also a Right Minister who was nothing more than a power-hungry arch traitor.

What good plan could the three of them come up with when gathered together?

It was nothing more than the same old strategy of ceding land for glory.

After Lin Gaoyuan returned to his residence, he brooded in silence for a long while.

At this moment, a man clad in armor entered the hall.

As the man stepped into the hall, he immediately asked, "Father, I heard that thirty thousand from the Barbarian Tribe are marching southward. Is this true or false?"

The Barbarians marching south was a major event, and the ministers could not help but discuss it everywhere right after leaving the court, so it wasn't long before Lin Xiuming, who was in the military, heard about it.

Lin Xiuming, now the commander of the Qilin Army, took such matters of war very seriously.

Upon hearing his son's question, Lin Gaoyuan came to his senses and sighed, "It's still uncertain whether it's true or false, but the North Prince has used the Red Ribbon Messenger, so it's likely true."

Lin Xiuming continued to ask, "Then, what are His Majesty's plans?"

Hearing this question, Lin Gaoyuan let out a cold laugh, "Plans? Heh, he wants you to lead seventy thousand elite troops northward to assist the North Prince and fight against the Barbarian Tribe's thirty thousand strong army."

What?

Upon hearing his father's words, Lin Xiuming was stunned.

Lead seventy thousand elite troops to fight a thirty thousand strong Barbarian army?

What kind of joke was that?

If they are called elite troops, then surely they must be soldiers fit for combat, but even seventy thousand combat soldiers, together with North City's thirty thousand, would only amount to one hundred thousand.

A hundred thousand soldiers to withstand the thirty thousand cavalry of the Barbarian Tribe?

Lin Xiuming frowned, clearly puzzled; didn't the Great Xia Dynasty have around five hundred thousand troops available at the moment? Why then send only seventy thousand northward?

Lin Xiuming then asked, "Father, didn't His Majesty reorganize the army to have around five hundred thousand soldiers available for deployment?"

Hearing his son's naive question, Lin Gaoyuan scoffed again and then said, "Five hundred thousand? Does His Majesty dare to mobilize these five hundred thousand soldiers? If he does, it might well lead to chaos in Great Xia."

Lin Gaoyuan didn't go into deeper reasons, he simply told Lin Xiuming, "I don't want to say too much; wait for the Emperor's edict, then immediately lead the troops to North City and meet with the North Prince."

“During the battle, just try to hold off the Barbarian Cavalry as much as you can. There’s no need to fight them to the death. The real battlefield is not in North City, but in the royal court.”

Taking note of Lin Gaoyuan’s reminder, Lin Xiuming seemed to understand something, and immediately said, “Understood, father. I get what you mean.”

North City, Yan County.

A woman dressed in black, holding a Longsword, was slowly moving along the streets of Yan County.

Her face was as cold as frost, yet she was incredibly beautiful, like a Goddess who didn’t partake in the mundane world.

Just then, a speeding carriage passed by her side.

The wind blew open the curtains of the carriage, revealing a heavenly beautiful woman dressed in white to the onlookers.

The woman in black on the roadside just so happened to lock gazes with the woman in white.

But it was only for an instant.

The carriage continued on its way, leaving behind the woman in black standing there, indifferently watching the carriage’s receding figure.

Chapter 78: Lin Wanyun i

North City, Yan County.

On the carriage.

Chen Wanrong thought of the black-clad woman she had just seen and immediately said to the beautiful woman in purple Cloud Attire beside her, “Madam Lin, did you see that woman just now?”

Lin Wanyun promptly replied, “I saw her.”

Chen Wanrong, with an expressionless face, said, “If I’m not mistaken, that person should be someone from the Sum Emperor’s side.”

A few years ago, Chen Wanrong had infiltrated the Imperial Palace for a lengthy period of time, so she had some understanding of the Shadow Guards of the Sum Emperor. She recognized at a glance that the black-clad woman had once crossed hands with her.

After pondering for a moment, Lin Wanyun then said, "I've seen this woman in Prince Chu Yue's travelling palace. This woman is very likely one of the Sum Emperor's Shadow Guards."

Chen Wanrong continued, "Judging from the aura she emits, she must have at least the strength of a Master Realm. The Sum Emperor actually sent a master to protect such a worthless prince—Madam Lin, don't you find that strange?"

Hearing Chen Wanrong's words, Lin Wanyun didn't immediately respond. Naturally, she also found it very strange, but she couldn't figure out why the Sum Emperor would send a master to protect a worthless prince.

After a while, Lin Wanyun finally spoke, "Does that mean the so-called Mysterious Grandmaster at the Prince's Mansion is that woman?"

Chen Wanrong fell silent.

She had thought that coming to North City this time would allow her to easily take down the North Prince and then use him to create the Subtle Dragon Spell, to deal with the Sum Emperor later.

Unexpectedly, she encountered someone from the Sum Emperor's side here. If that was the case, their plan might not be as easy to implement as they had hoped.

Although she didn't know why the Sum Emperor would protect a worthless prince, since he had done so, there must be a reason for it.

Two hours later.

At the North Prince Mansion.

Chu Yuqin was patrolling the inner courtyard when suddenly, a female guard entered the yard and said to her, "Madam Chu, someone from the Mysterious Moon Palace has arrived."

Hearing this, Chu Yuqin was momentarily stunned, not immediately understanding what was happening.

After a while, she regained her senses, looked at the female guard before her and asked, "The Mysterious Moon Palace? What are the people from Mysterious Moon Palace doing at the North Prince Mansion?"

The female guard replied, "I'm not sure either, but one of the women mentioned she knows you and wishes to meet."

As the female guard spoke, Chu Yuqin had a flicker of a woman's image in her mind.

Then Chu Yuqin said, "I understand, I'll head over right now."

Following the female guard, Chu Yuqin soon arrived at the mansion's entrance.

There was a carriage parked at the entrance of the North Prince Mansion, and the people inside had not yet alighted.

Not long after Chu Yuqin reached the mansion's entrance, the carriage curtains were finally pulled back, and a beautiful woman in purple Cloud Attire stepped down from the carriage.

Upon seeing that the visitor was Lin Wanyun, Chu Yuqin's mind went blank for a moment; then, she asked in surprise, "Lin, how come you're in North City?"

While speaking, Chu Yuqin approached Lin Wanyun. Lin Wanyun didn't immediately answer Chu Yuqin's question but instead greeted her with a gentle smile, "Yuqin, it's been many years since we've seen each other, hasn't it?"

Chu Yuqin reminisced, "Yes, we haven't seen each other since you went to the Mysterious Moon Palace."

Chu Yuqin glanced at the carriage, then asked again, "Lin, your visit to North City is for...?"

Lin Wanyun replied, "The Palace Master and I are passing by North City. I heard that you were also here, so I wanted to come and see you."

Upon hearing Lin Wanyun's answer, Chu Yuqin was surprised.

Then, she looked at the carriage and asked, "Is the Palace Master of the Mysterious Moon Palace inside the carriage?"

Lin Wanyun nodded, "Yes."

The Palace Master of the Mysterious Moon Palace usually does not wander around; leaving the palace generally means there's some significant matter.

Chu Yuqin had not expected to encounter the Palace Master of the Mysterious Moon Palace in North City.

At this moment, Chu Yuqin quickly said, "Sister Lin, please wait a moment, I'll go and let Chen'er know you've arrived."

Having said this, Chu Yuqin prepared to turn around and find Lu Chen.

Even though Chu Yuqin knew she held a high invisible status in the Prince's Mansion, and that Lu Chen respected her greatly, she would not make the decision to let people into the Prince's Mansion without Lu Chen's permission.

To invite people into the Prince's Mansion, one must either inform the princess consort or tell Lu Chen, the Prince.

Just as Chu Yuqin turned around, Lu Chen happened to come out of the main gate of the Prince's Mansion, "Madam Chu, I heard we have visitors?"

Just now, the guard at the door had not only notified Chu Yuqin but had also informed Lu Chen about the arrival of guests at the Prince's Mansion.

Curious upon hearing this, Lu Chen wondered what kind of guests the North Prince Mansion could have and promptly made his way to the entrance to see for himself.

Seeing Chu Yuqin speaking with a beautiful woman, Lu Chen's eyes lit up.

The beautiful woman was dressed in a purple Cloud Attire with her hair swept up high, resting on her fragrant shoulders, and placed in front of her chest. The woman looked dignified and elegant, with a grand and graceful demeanor, and her beauty was on par with Chu Yuqin's.

Lu Chen immediately used the system to identify her.

[Name: Lin Wanyun]

[Identity: Adopted daughter of the Left Minister of the Great Xia, Lin Gaoyuan, who later left the Lin Family to join Mysterious Moon Palace, a Half-step Grandmaster, 31 years old this year. She came to North City following the Palace Master Chen Wanrong, intending to use the blood of the North Prince to refine the Subtle Dragon Spell to counter the Sun Emperor.]

[Rating: 95]

[Favorability: 60 (because you are her friend's son)]

Seeing the prompt in front of him, Lu Chen was somewhat surprised, not expecting a beautiful woman with a rating of 95 to arrive at his doorstep, and she was a friend of his mother's?

No wonder she seemed so familiar with Chu Yuqin.

However...

Although this woman's favorability towards him was reasonable, her visit likely had an ulterior motive.

Even though Lu Chen did not know what the Subtle Dragon Spell was, the system's description showed that she intended to use his blood to refine it, and it was meant to target his father, the Emperor.

Clearly, the Mysterious Moon Palace was an enemy of the Great Xia Dynasty.

At this moment, Lu Chen's gaze fell upon the carriage cabin.

Since Lin Wanyun had followed the Palace Master here, then the Palace Master must be inside the carriage. Judging by the name that appeared in the system's introduction, the Palace Master of the Mysterious Moon Palace seemed to be a woman as well?

As he pondered this, Chu Yuqin's voice brought Lu Chen back to the present.

"Chen'er, it's good you are here, let me introduce you. This is your mother's sworn sister, her name is Lin Wanyun, an elder of the Mysterious Moon Palace. She joined the palace not long after you were born, so you have not met her."

Hearing this, Lu Chen quickly approached the two women.

Upon seeing Lu Chen, Lin Wanyun immediately performed a curtsy and said, "This humble woman pays respects to the Prince."

Lu Chen smiled faintly, then responded, "There's no need to be so formal, as you are my mother's sworn sister, according to our relationship, I should call you Madam Lin."

Hearing this, Lin Wanyun's favorability immediately increased by five points.

Seeing this happen, Lu Chen couldn't help but think, is it really that easy to increase this woman's favorability?

It seems, then, that winning her over should be relatively easy?

A woman with a 95 rating coming to him on her own accord, Lu Chen was certainly not going to be polite.

Just then, the curtains of the carriage cabin slowly opened, and a figure in white clothing stepped down from the carriage..

Having children earns benefit, start competing for dominance in the world by marrying a wife #Chapter 79 - 79 Is This Really the Useless Prince from the Rumors?_i - Read Having children earns benefit, start competing for dominance in the world by marrying a wife Chapter 79 - 79 Is This Really the Useless Prince from the Rumors?_i

Chapter 79: Is This Really the Useless Prince from the Rumors?_i

Upon seeing the woman descend from the carriage, Lu Chen stood completely still on the spot.

The woman's exquisite face was as cold as ice, dressed in white garments that outshone the snow. Her skin was smooth and delicate, her hair tied in a cloud bun with a plum blossom mark on her forehead. Her figure was graceful and elegant, radiating a sacred glow, just like a fairy who had descended to the mortal world.

It wasn't until the woman spoke that Lu Chen snapped back to reality.

"This commoner pays respects to the Prince."

Although Chen Wanrong was the Palace Master of the Mysterious Moon Palace, formally, the palace was still under the jurisdiction of Great Sum, so upon meeting a Prince of Great Sum, it was necessary for Chen Wanrong to show her respects.

Chen Wanrong's voice was crisp and quiet, possessing a unique allure that inadvertently stirred one's heart.

Regaining his composure, Lu Chen stammered, "Dispense... dispense with the formalities."

Afterward, Lu Chen immediately used the system to identify the information about the woman before him.

[Name: Chen Wanrong]

[Identity: Scion of Chen Family, Princess of Chen Nation, Palace Master of the Mysterious Moon Palace, 21 years old, Master Realm, coming to North City mainly to get close to the North Prince, to control him with a Love Worm, and then use the blood of the North Prince to concoct the Subtle Dragon Spell against the Sum Emperor, to take revenge for Chen Nation.]

[Rating: 98]

[Favorability: 10]

Seeing the score of 98, Lu Chen realized the significance. A score of 98, he thought she deserved a full hundred for her beauty.

Chu Yuqin only had a score of 97.

Considering this, did a score above 95 mean that with each additional point, the beauty of a woman increased tremendously?

Of course, Lu Chen didn't think Chen Wanrong could be much more beautiful than Chu Yuqin, it was her aura that was like that of a fairy, which truly captivated him the most.

After the excitement, Lu Chen quickly calmed his emotions and then, smiling to Chen Wanrong, he said, "It is my honor to have Master Chen visit my Prince's Mansion; Madam Lin, Master Chen, please come inside."

As Lu Chen gazed intently at Chen Wanrong, Lin Wanyun sighed quietly to herself.

She knew that the North Prince had been smitten by Chen Wanrong's beauty.

Probably within a few days, Chen Wanrong would be able to use the Love Worm on the North Prince, who would then be completely under her control, ultimately becoming a tool to concoct the Subtle Dragon Spell.

As the sister of Chu Yue, who was once sworn sisters with Lin, Lin Wanyun felt somewhat reluctant to see Lu Chen in trouble, but they needed to use the Subtle Dragon Spell to deal with the Sum Emperor.

Following this, Lu Chen led Chen Wanrong and Lin Wanyun into the Prince's Mansion.

Once they entered the main courtyard of the Prince's Mansion, Lu Chen immediately had a servant brew a pot of Dragon and Phoenix Tea.

When the tea was served, Lu Chen personally poured a cup for Lin Wanyun and Chen Wanrong, then said, "Madam Lin, Master Chen, you must be tired from the journey. This is a special tea from the mansion, which can refresh the mind and relieve fatigue. Please have a taste."

Hearing Lu Chen's words, Lin Wanyun immediately picked up the teacup, took a sip, and then used her inner strength to check if there was anything added to the tea she just drank.

After confirming that the tea was clean, Lin Wanyun took another sip.

Lin Wanyun's actions were subtle and would usually go unnoticed, but Chen Wanrong was able to see and became convinced after Lin Wanyun's second sip that there was nothing added to the tea.

Even though they were in the North Prince Mansion, as the Palace Master of the Mysterious Moon Palace, Chen Wanyong still remained cautious.

Assured that the tea was safe, Chen Wanrong also lifted her delicate hand, took up a cup of tea, and gently sipped a small mouthful.

In an instant, Chen Wanrong felt a coolness spread into her body, then throughout her whole being, making her feel extremely comfortable.

Chen Wanrong was somewhat surprised; she hadn't expected the North Prince Mansion's tea to actually have a refreshing and invigorating effect.

Seeing Lin Wanyun and Chen Wanrong drink the Dragon and Phoenix Tea, Lu Chen's smirked slightly and then asked, "Miss Chen, Madam Lin, what brings you to North City this time?"

Upon hearing this question, Lin Wanyun replied, "We are just passing through North City by chance."

Lu Chen feigned a look of regret and said, "So you're just passing through North City? It seems then that you will be leaving North City very soon."

Lin Wanyun smiled and said, "Although we are passing through, the Palace Master and I plan to stay in North City for a while."

Lu Chen said indifferently, "I'm afraid that's not going to be possible, as you'll have to leave North City soon."

Lin Wanyun asked curiously, "Why is that?"

Chu Yuqin interjected from the side, "Sister Lin, the Barbarian Army will soon head south, and Chen'er's wives, concubines, and children are about to leave Yan County for Anping City."

This wasn't a secret; the Prince's Mansion was about to announce it to all the common people of North City—soon, everyone there would know about the barbarians heading south, so Chu Yuqin just said it outright.

Hearing Chu Yuqin's words, Lin Wanyun and Chen Wanrong were both momentarily stunned.

They hadn't expected that their arrival would coincide with such an inopportune time as the barbarians heading south.

However, the barbarians moving south didn't seem to have much impact on their plans, did it? After all, the North Prince, such a worthless Prince, should be afraid of death, and with the barbarians moving south, he would likely flee to the south as well, they just needed to follow the North Prince.

At that moment, Lin Wanyun asked, "Will the Prince also be heading south with the common people?"

Lu Chen smiled faintly, and then said, "North City is my fief, and I am its Prince; how could I possibly leave North City? I will fight a decisive battle against the barbarians in Yan County and defend North City!"

Hearing Lu Chen's words, Chen Wanrong and Lin Wanyun were stunned once again.

They didn't expect the North Prince to have such a spirit.

Wasn't the outside world filled with rumors that the North Prince was a worthless Prince who only knew how to indulge in pleasures within his mansion every day?

How could such a worthless Prince have this level of enlightenment? Or could it be that the barbarians' southern invasion was just a small force as usual, perhaps only coming to plunder and steal some food, and that the North Prince was not concerned about the barbarian cavalry attacking Yan County, and thus was fearless?

At this point, Chen Wanrong spoke up, asking, "Prince, may I know how many soldiers the Barbarian Tribe has dispatched this time as they head south?"

Lu Chen replied, "Based on the intelligence we have gathered, this time the barbarians intend to found a nation in North City, thus they have sent three hundred thousand cavalry. They plan to occupy North City and make Yan County their capital."

Upon hearing this, Chen Wanrong's eyebrows furrowed slightly.

Three hundred thousand troops!

From what she knew of the intelligence, North City had only thirty thousand soldiers.

In such a situation, the North Prince wasn't planning to flee south, but instead claimed he would fight a decisive battle against the barbarians in Yan County?

Thirty thousand against three hundred thousand was a war with no chance of victory!

Was this truly the worthless Prince of rumor?

Just by his spirit alone, he was already much better than those high-ranking officials and nobles in the Capital City who knew only of indulgence and revelry every day.

Having just met the North Prince, Chen Wanrong's heart had already undergone a significant change in opinion towards Lu Chen.

She believed that the intelligence at Mysterious Moon Palace might have been flawed. The North Prince surely couldn't be the man from the rumors who only knew how to seek pleasure in his mansion every day..

Chapter 80: I'll definitely treat you well when the time comes i

After hearing Lu Chen's words, Lin Wanyun couldn't help but ask, "Prince, I heard that North City only has thirty thousand soldiers, yet you said that the Barbarian Tribe has sent an army of three hundred thousand to march south. Can North City's thirty thousand soldiers hold against an army of three hundred thousand?"

Hearing this question, Lu Chen displayed a fearless demeanor, "Even if we can't hold them, we must try. I am the Prince of North City, if even the land of North City were to be lost, then could I still call myself the Prince of North City, the Seignior of Great Sum? How would I have the face to return to the Capital City to see my father, the Sum Emperor, or face the common people of North City!"

This...

Chen Wanrong and Lin Wanyun found what Lu Chen said to be unbelievable upon hearing his words.

This surely didn't seem like the North Prince they both knew, did it?

At this moment, Chu Yuqin was looking at Lu Chen with a resentful expression on her face. She was no fool and immediately noticed that Lu Chen was putting on a performance for Chen Wanrong and Lin Wanyun.

Although Lu Chen indeed possessed such boldness and was truly planning to resist the southward march of the Barbarian Tribe at Yan County, Lu Chen typically didn't talk like this, nor would he act so exaggeratedly.

His righteous and dignified demeanor was clearly a performance for those girls-

What did this imply? It implied that Lu Chen had taken an interest in the Palace Master of the Mysterious Moon Palace and wanted to show off in front of her, to demonstrate his manly valor.

In fact, Chu Yuqin overlooked one point—Lu Chen was not only performing for Chen Wanrong's sake; he was equally interested in Lin Wanyun.

Chen Wanrong raised her eyebrows slightly at this time, falling into thought.

Originally, she thought that this trip to North City would be an easy execution of their plan, but they hadn't anticipated so many unexpected developments. First, they encountered the Sum Emperor's Shadow Guard while entering the city, and now they've discovered that the North Prince is nothing like the man they had in their minds.

It seemed that using the Love Worm on the North Prince wouldn't be an easy task either.

In any case, they would have to wait until after the invasion of the Barbarian Tribe was repelled.

But if the North Prince insisted on a fight to the death with the Barbarian Tribe at Yan County, then the likelihood of the North Prince dying in battle was quite high.

If the North Prince died, they wouldn't be able to use his blood to create the Subtle Dragon Spell anymore.

Could it be that they would have to give up on the North Prince?

At this time, Lu Chen said to Lin Wanyun with a smile, "Madam Lin, why don't you and Madam Chu travel south to Anping City in a few days? Once I repel the invasion of the Barbarian Tribe, if you wish to travel around North City, you can come back then."

"I will be sure to treat you both well."

Lu Chen was very confident in the effects of the Dragon and Phoenix Tea. Under its influence, he believed that Chen Wanrong and Lin Wanyun would surely return to Yan County.

Besides, they still needed his blood to create that Subtle Dragon Spell; their goals had not yet been met, so they couldn't possibly leave North City just like that.

This made Lu Chen think of a sentence that had flashed in his mind when he was dealing with Wang Qingci.

The hunter often appears in the guise of the prey!

At the moment, he might seem like prey, but once the crisis with the Barbarian Tribe was resolved, he would immediately turn into the hunter.

Lin Wanyun didn't respond to Lu Chen's words and instead turned her head to look at Chen Wanrong. As the Palace Master of the Mysterious Moon Palace, it was up to her to make a decision.

Chen Wanrong said expressionlessly, "Fine."

Under the current circumstances, it indeed was no longer suitable to stay in Yan County.

Actually, Chen Wanrong was also contemplating whether they should take advantage of the Barbarian Tribe invasion to fake the North Prince's death and then kidnap him to the Mysterious Moon Palace. Then, they could use his blood to slowly create the Subtle Dragon Spell.

But she quickly discarded that idea, as the North Prince was still a Prince after all. Even if they managed to fake his death, it was very possible that someone might notice something amiss.

If the Sum Emperor found out that the Mysterious Moon Palace had kidnapped a Prince, it could potentially alert the Sum Emperor.

Of course, that wasn't the most critical point; the most crucial aspect was that this might precipitate a conflict between the Great Sum and the Mysterious Moon Palace before the Subtle Dragon Spell was created.

Unlike the Aristocratic Families of Great Sum or the imperial court's officials, the Mysterious Moon Palace was well aware of what the bottom line of the Sum Emperor was. Before they could break through that bottom line, the Mysterious Moon Palace would definitely not take the risk of confronting the Sum Emperor head-on.

To outsiders, the Sum Emperor was nothing more than a Grandmaster, but the Mysterious Moon Palace was well aware of his terror. Now that one of the Sacred Artifacts of the Mysterious Moon Palace had fallen into the hands of the Sum Emperor because of Chu Yue, they were even less of a match for him.

All the powers within the territory of Great Sum dreaded the State Preceptor Situ Ce, but only the Mysterious Moon Palace regarded the Sum Emperor as their true adversary.

After hearing Chen Wanrong's words, Lu Chen stood up and said, "Then Madam Chu, Madam Lin, Miss Chen, please continue your conversation at your leisure. I shall take my leave now, so as not to disturb you further."

With that, Lu Chen turned and left the pavilion.

Once Lu Chen had left, Lin Wanyun immediately took Chu Yuqin's hand and said, "Yuqin, everyone outside is saying that the North Prince is an ignorant lecher, but why do I feel like he isn't that kind of person?"

Hearing that, Chu Yuqin said with a smile, "After Chen'er arrived in North City, he has matured quite a bit. Maybe it is because he saw the hardships of the people's lives that he was inspired to feel a sense of responsibility in his heart."

"As for his being licentious..."

Chu Yuqin paused mid-sentence and then continued,

"I don't think any man is without lust, and I don't see anything wrong with Chen'er being lustful."

"If he weren't lustful, how would he be able to carry on his lineage?"

Hearing Chu Yuqin's words, Lin Wanyun felt somewhat doubtful in her heart. Had the North Prince really changed after coming to North City?

But how had they heard that after the North Prince arrived in North City, he kept a bevy of beautiful concubines in his mansion, indulging in hedonistic pleasures day and night, with no regard for the life or death of his subjects?

However, now was not the time to be tangled up in these matters.

At the moment, Chu Yuqin gave Chen Wanrong, who was quietly sitting aside, a once-over. Chen Wanrong's beauty blended into the surroundings, and just one glance could make a person feel delighted.

Chu Yuqin couldn't help but reflect inwardly: It's no wonder she is the Palace Master of the Mysterious Moon Palace; it's also no wonder that little rascal was staring at her all the time.

Unfortunately...

The Palace Master of the Mysterious Moon Palace could not simply marry someone off; that little rascal could only watch, without any chance to touch.

At this time, Lin Wanyun said with a smile, "Yuqin, could you talk to me about what has happened in the Capital city over these past years? It has been a long while since I returned to the Capital city."

Chu Yuqin replied, "Of course."

Then, the two beautiful women sat side by side, chatting intimately in earnest.

In the evening.

A woman in black, holding a Longsword, appeared at the entrance of the North Prince Mansion.

Seeing someone at the gate of the mansion with a sword, the trusted aides of the mansion immediately surrounded her.

“Who goes there!” they demanded.

The woman did not move. In a chilling tone, she said, “I seek Madam Chu.”

Upon hearing this, the soldiers looked at one another, unsure of how to proceed.

Then, the team captain said, “Please wait, Miss. I will notify Madam Chu immediately.”

Since two women had visited the mansion earlier in the day, the team captain, fearing that this woman was also a guest of the mansion, quickly entered the mansion to report to Chu Yuqin.

Upon hearing that another woman had arrived at the gate, Chu Yuqin was suddenly filled with confusion.

What was going on today?

Why were all the visitors arriving at once?