

Es. Benefits 121

Chapter 121: Chen'er is a Man Capable of Creating Miracles_2

This also led them to misunderstand the approaching cavalry, believing Xuanyuan Chen's men to be from the Barbarian Tribe.

Fortunately, Mu Jingwu was also in Xuanyuan Chen's group, so the misunderstanding was easily cleared up.

Just when the defenders of Anping City had readied themselves for battle, the Black Cavalry suddenly all stopped, with only one rider charging straight for the city gates.

When that person approached, some soldiers on the city wall quickly recognized him, "It's Captain Mo! Thank goodness, it's not an enemy!" "Could this be the Prince's heavy cavalry?"

"Since when did the Prince have heavy cavalry? Weren't we just a few hundred light cavalry when we left Yan County?"

"Yes indeed, where did the Prince get heavy cavalry from?"

"Could it be the heavy cavalry of the royal court?"

The soldiers on the city wall relaxed instantly upon seeing Mu Jingwu, but Chu Yuqin did not relax. She was still frowning, watching Mu Jingwu closely.

North City did not have heavy cavalry, and now suddenly there were several thousand heavy cavalymen; this was bound to raise suspicion.

In the current situation, it was not possible to rule out the likelihood of Mu Jingwu having surrendered to the Barbarian Tribe.

They needed to keep watching to see what would happen.

At this moment, Mu Jingwu arrived below Anping City.

He then shouted loudly, “Great victory in Yan County! The North Prince led the soldiers of North City, and within one night killed two hundred thousand from the Barbarian Tribe and captured another hundred thousand. The Prince has sent me to welcome back the Princess!!!”

Upon hearing Mu Jingwu’s words, the soldiers on the tower were stunned.

Killed two hundred thousand Barbarian soldiers in one night???

And captured another hundred thousand???

This...

Is this even possible???

Even Chu Yuqin was taken aback.

She knew that Lu Chen had chosen to stay behind because he was confident, but she had not anticipated this outcome.

At this moment, Chu Qingli on the side of Chu Yuqin murmured, “Impossible, how could North City have such strength? This is clearly false, the one under the wall must be a spy sent by the Barbarian Tribe, deliberately spreading false news to get you to open the gates.”

Chu Qingli had been thinking that once that useless North Prince died, she could take her sister and leave North City for a life of leisure and joy, yet now she was told not only had Yan County not fallen, but North City had actually defeated the Barbarian soldiers, and it was a crushing victory. This instantly shattered her fantasy, and there was no way she could accept this result.

After all, this news sounded too unreal.

The state of North City was well known to the people of Great Sum, and Chu Qingli had also heard on her way to North City that the royal court had only dispatched seventy thousand soldiers to support the North.

Putting aside whether that army of seventy thousand could reach North City in such a short period of time, even if they really arrived at North City, together with the soldiers of North City they would only number around a hundred thousand.

A hundred thousand soldiers expecting to defeat the Barbarian Tribe's three hundred thousand heavy cavalry?

If it were merely to hold off the Barbarian Tribe and prevent them from moving south, there might be a slim possibility.

But to kill two hundred thousand from the Barbarian Tribe and even capture another hundred thousand, how could anyone believe such an unprecedented military achievement in the history of Great Sum?

However, no sooner had Chu Qingli finished speaking than a Commander of the Brocade Guard on the city tower said, "I believe what Captain Mo has said, the Prince is the Son of Destiny; what are three hundred thousand Barbarian soldiers to him? They are nothing but chickens and dogs!"

Just after the Commander of the Brocade Guard finished speaking, other soldiers echoed, "Exactly, the Barbarian soldiers are nothing in front of the Prince, what Captain Mo has said must be true!"

After hearing the soldiers on the wall, Chu Qingli was utterly astonished. Although there was no change in her expression, she could hardly believe that the soldiers of North City held the North Prince in such high regard.

Wasn't the North Prince a loser?

These soldiers actually said that three hundred thousand Barbarian heavy cavalry were no more than chickens and dogs in front of the North Prince?

To say what, that the North Prince is the Son of Destiny?

What kind of bewitchment has the North Prince cast on these soldiers!

This reminded Chu Qingli of Chu Yuqin; Chu Yuqin must have been fed a bewitching potion as well.

After contemplating for a moment, Mu Xingping directly said, “Open the city gates!”

Mu Xingping knew his elder brother well; even if Mu Jingwu truly betrays Great Sum, he would only consider joining another dynasty, not the Barbarian Tribe with whom they shared a deep-seated hatred, not to mention there were still their own Mu Family members within the city.

Upon hearing Mu Xingping’s orders, the soldiers opened the city gates without hesitation.

Chu Qingli thought to herself that this was hopelessly foolish of them; they would regret it when the Heavy Cavalry outside stormed in shortly.

However, she had no intention of interfering, for to her, this was actually an opportune moment-if the Heavy Cavalry really did storm into Anping City, she could simply take her sister and leave North City.

For her, escaping was never a difficult task.

Yet, the scenario Chu Qingli envisaged did not occur. Once Mu Jingwu entered Anping City, the Black Cavalry remained in place.

They not only refrained from attacking but turned around and faced south, as if on alert.

At this moment, Mu Xingping and Chu Yuqin came down from the city tower to greet Mu Jingwu.

As Mu Jingwu entered the city, Mu Xingping hurried over and asked, “Elder brother, is all that you’ve said true? Did the Prince really slay two hundred thousand Barbarian soldiers and capture another hundred thousand?”

Mu Jmgwu replied, “Yes, it’s all true. After you all left, a force of fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry arrived at Yan County. It is said that this Heavy Cavalry was secretly formed by the Prince, who also introduced a tremendously powerful secret weapon. Yan County had only a little over ten thousand casualties!”

Upon hearing Mu Jingwu’s words, Chu Yuqin instantly thought of the mysterious weapon in Lu Chen’s possession that could instantly kill Martial Artists and Grandmasters of Ninth Grade.

If Lu Chen had an even more terrifying weapon with greater power, then dealing with the Barbarian Tribe wouldn’t be that difficult.

But when did Lu Chen train a Heavy Cavalry?

This was something she knew nothing about at all.

Even the Brocade Guards could be overlooked, but this was an army!

Maintaining a fifty thousand-strong Heavy Cavalry required many resources; surely the Prince’s Mansion had to provide these soldiers with resources. Yet, Chu Yuqin had seen no expenditure related to this

At this time, Mu Xingping cocked his head and glanced through the city gate at the distant Heavy Cavalry before asking, “Elder brother, are those Heavy Cavalry under the command of the Prince?”

Yes,” Mu Jingwu confirmed. “They played a significant role in this battle. The combat power of these Black Cavalry is extremely fearsome, easily overpowering a hundred enemies each.”

Out of curiosity, Mu Xingping asked, “Why would the Prince send so many

Heavy Cavalry to pick up the sisters?”

Mu Jingwu glanced around, then whispered, “The Prince was concerned that the south would learn of his victory and take the sisters there, so he deliberately had me bring five thousand Heavy Cavalry.”

Although Mu Jingwu didn’t specify whom they were guarding against, Mu Xingping instantly grasped his implication.

‘South’ referred to none other than the Capital city.

Now that the North Prince had defeated the three hundred thousand-strong Barbarian iron cavalry and made a name for himself, coupled with tens of thousands of Heavy Cavalry in his command, he had become the most militarily powerful Seignior in Great Sum in practice, and the court could not but guard against him.

To secure the obedience of the North Prince, the court would likely take his children to the Capital city as hostages.

Hearing Mu Jingwu’s words, Chu Yuqin also felt that Lu Chen had taken the right action; it was indeed important to send someone to bring Mu Zixuan back to Yan County in a timely manner.

At this time, Chu Yuqin said, “You two catch up first; I must hurry back and inform Zixuan about this so they don’t worry.”

No sooner had she finished speaking than Chu Yuqin mounted her horse and immediately sped towards the temporary Prince’s Mansion.

Seeing this, Chu Qingli was taken aback for a moment.

She quickly followed suit.

After catching up with Chu Yuqin, Chu Qingli immediately asked, “Sister, do you really believe what that man said is true?”

While riding, Chu Yuqin smiled and responded, “I know you suspect it’s false, but in fact, Chen’er is someone who can create miracles. Once you accompany your sister to Yan County, you’ll understand.”

This...

Chu Qingli was at a loss for words.

She could only feel that Chu Yuqin was beyond help.

Chapter 122: Queen of North Prince Heads North

Mu Zixuan and the others were still anxiously waiting in the courtyard, unable to believe that Yan County had been captured just like that.

Of course, they also didn’t dare to believe it.

If something really happened to Lu Chen, then their sky would have fallen.

At this moment, Zhou Youyou sobbed and said, “Wuwuwu, Queen, the Prince will be fine, right?”

Mu Zixuan sat on the stone bench with a vacant gaze, absentmindedly saying, “I believe in the Prince. The Prince is an Immortal, and Immortals won’t die so easily.”

As the three ladies were beside themselves with worry, a maid rushed in and said, “Queen, Madam Chu and the others are back!!!”

Mu Zixuan immediately got up from the stone bench and then headed for the entrance of the courtyard, but before she reached the gate, Chu Yuqin walked in.

Mu Zixuan immediately asked, “Madam Chu, what’s the situation, are those cavalry from the Barbarian Tribe?”

Chu Yuqin replied, “Zixuan, you don’t have to worry anymore; those cavalry are not from the Barbarian Tribe, but were sent by Chen’er to escort you back to Yan County.”

Hearing this, a huge weight lifted off the hearts of the three women. Zhou Youyou, while wiping her tears, said, “Wuwuwu, that’s such a relief. I thought Yan County had been captured by the Barbarian Tribe.”

Unlike Xiaozhou and Dazhou, Mu Zixuan quickly sensed that something was amiss and immediately asked, “Madam Chu, since when did North City have thousands of cavalry?”

As a general’s successor, even if Mu Zixuan didn’t understand military affairs well, she was still sensitive to such information. When she left Yan County, she was very aware of the military situation there.

The cavalry in Yan County were still being organized; there wasn’t even a significant number of horses that could be used as warhorses, let alone thousands of cavalry.

Where did these cavalry come from?

Upon hearing Mu Zixuan’s question, Chu Qingli felt somewhat pleased within. She couldn’t help thinking that at last she had met someone sane.

Unexpectedly, it was the Queen of North Prince who kept a clear head in the end. Indeed, only the person closest to someone can truly understand them. Everyone else had been bewitched by the North Prince.

Just as Chu Qingli was looking forward to the Queen exposing the lies, Chu Yuqin said, “Zixuan, have you forgotten about the Brocade Guard?”

Upon hearing Chu Yuqin’s question, Mu Zixuan snapped back to reality.

That's right; she didn't even know when Lu Chen had created the Brocade Guard. The Brocade Guard was a massive intelligence organization; establishing such a structure couldn't have been done without a few years' time.

If Lu Chen had a secret organization like the Brocade Guard, it meant that he had been organizing the cavalry for quite some time; they simply didn't know about it.

The North Prince was always a man of mystery; it was normal for there to be a few little secrets she didn't know about.

Thinking this, Mu Zixuan said, "Madam Chu, I understand what you mean. Let's get ready then, we'll set off for Yan County today!"

Upon hearing this, Chu Qingli was stunned, her face betraying no emotion even as she felt extremely perplexed and confused internally.

The Queen understood her sister so quickly?

The Brocade Guard?

What was that? Why did the mention of the Brocade Guard make the Queen accept the existence of thousands of cavalry in North City?

Chu Qingli had thought that Mu Zixuan would come to her senses and see through the "Barbarian Tribe's" scheme, but even Mu Zixuan ended up believing it in the end.

Chu Qingli felt uneasy.

If the North Prince Mansion really went with those outside cavalry, they might end up at the Barbarian Tribe's court instead of Yan County.

Since all the women of the North Prince Mansion were somewhat beautiful; the Barbarian Tribe could have deliberately sent people to pose as North Prince's soldiers to deceive them into going to Yan County.

Chu Qingli believed her guess was the correct one; after all, the North Prince was just a waste, how could he possibly defeat the great army of the Barbarian Tribe.

Just as Chu Qingli was worrying that this was a trap set by the Barbarian Tribe, she had a sudden brainwave and realized something.

If this was indeed a trap by the Barbarian Tribe, it might actually be a good thing for her. What did she have to be afraid of?

When the time came, she could just take her sister and flee far away. Although thousands of Barbarian cavalry were daunting, they were all Heavy Cavalry, and her Qinggong was excellent; it's not certain they'd be able to catch up with her.

She had the capability to whisk away someone amidst a myriad of troops.

With this thought, Chu Qingli couldn't help feeling a bit excited, looking forward to the women of the Mansion heading north, so she would have her chance.

Meanwhile, Chu Yuqin said, "Hmm, let's hurry up and prepare. Chen'er has achieved a great victory in North City. If we delay and the news spreads to the south, the south will send people."

Mu Zixuan wasn't aware of the extent of Lu Chen's military exploits yet, but she understood what Chu Yuqin meant.

Immediately, she instructed the maids in the courtyard, "Notify everyone in the Prince's Mansion at once, pack up your belongings. We're setting off for Yan County before dusk."

Meanwhile.

Inside a room of the temporary Prince's Mansion.

A woman dressed in a red long skirt was tossing and turning uncomfortably on the beauty couch, her long, shapely legs seeming to have no place to rest, at one moment, the left leg over the right, soon after, the right leg over the left.

The woman was wriggling her buttocks on the couch, reclining with her delicate hand propping up her head, displaying her shapely figure perfectly. It was a pity that her graceful figure had no admirers at this moment.

Wang Qingci remained completely oblivious to everything happening in the yard, and hadn't experienced the panic that Mu Zixuan and the others just went through.

Chapter 123: Queen of North Prince Heads North_2

Ever since she followed Mu Zixuan and the others on their journey south, she spent almost every day inside her own room. Although she was Lu Chen's female slave, her relationship with Mu Zixuan and the others was still quite good.

It was only that Chu Yuqin had always looked at her with displeasure, and Wang Qingci couldn't be bothered to compete with Chu Yuqin for favor in Lu Chen's absence, so she simply avoided joining them for chats and tea.

At this moment, Wang Qingci lifted a hand, her fingers as delicate as jade, and raised the hem of her long red silk dress, revealing her snowy white legs, then she sighed and said, "My Young Prince, when will this servant be able to see you again? I can no longer bear it."

Wang Qingci felt that her current life was extremely dull. She used to fear that Lu Chen would be harsh with her, but now that she hadn't seen him for so long, she actually felt uncomfortable.

She began to think that she was truly lowly, that if Lu Chen didn't torment her severely, she felt uneasy inside.

Just then, the voice of a maid rang outside the door.

"Miss Wang, the Queen of North Prince has ordered that everyone in the Prince's Mansion start packing immediately. We will return to Yan County by evening!"

Upon hearing this, Wang Qingci was momentarily stunned, then suddenly rose from her couch.

She quickly walked to the door, opened it, and asked, "What? Pack our luggage?"

The war has ended?"

The maid responded, "It is said to have ended. Everyone in the Prince's Mansion is talking about how the Prince killed two hundred thousand soldiers from the Barbarian Tribe in North City, and also captured another hundred thousand."

Hearing this, Wang Qingci was stunned once more.

Was the Young Prince so fierce?

She had always thought that his fierceness was only in bed.

To have slain two hundred thousand from the Barbarian Army and captured another hundred thousand, how did he accomplish that?

But then again, the Young Prince has always been a mysterious man. Since he dared to remain in Yan County, it meant he was confident from the start that he could hold back the Barbarians.

Although the victories achieved were somewhat unbelievable, considering the Young Prince was behind it all, even the impossible seemed possible.

With this thought, Wang Qingci's admiration for Lu Chen suddenly deepened, and for a moment, she felt her delicate body warming up. She even involuntarily squeezed her legs together, wishing she could be by her Young Prince's side right now.

At the same time.

In a pavilion of the temporary Prince's Mansion.

Chen Wanrong and Lin Wanyun were meditating when they felt the maids and servants around the mansion becoming busy, turning the once quiet Prince's Mansion lively.

Both opened their eyes simultaneously.

Chen Wanrong looked at the maids bustling in the courtyard and turned to a nearby maid to ask, "What's happening?"

The maid said, "This servant is not sure, I will go and find out immediately." After that, the maid left the pavilion to inquire among other servants and maids. She soon returned to Chen Wanrong's side.

With a joyful expression, the maid excitedly said, "Miss Chen, Miss Lin, the Queen has ordered us to pack quickly. We will be returning to Yan County before sunset."

Upon hearing this, Lin Wanyun asked with confusion, "We're returning to Yan County so soon? Has the war already ended?"

The maid replied, "It is said to have ended, and not just that, the Prince led the soldiers of North City to slay two hundred thousand Barbarian soldiers and captured another hundred thousand!"

Upon receiving the maid's answer, both Lin Wanyun and Chen Wanrong were taken aback.

They looked at each other, seeing confusion in each other's eyes. To have slain two hundred thousand from the Barbarian Army?

And captured another hundred thousand?

Even if they were exaggerating their military achievements, this seemed too audacious, right?

Even if the North Prince had indeed defended Yan County and North City and held back the Barbarians from advancing southward, it was still improbable that he had killed two hundred thousand Barbarians.

The situation in North City was well known to their Mysterious Moon Palace.

What was the North Prince up to?

Such an exaggeration of military achievements, wasn't he afraid of the imperial court's blame?

Of course, more astonishing to Chen Wanrong than the exaggerated achievements was the fact that the North Prince had actually managed to hold back the Barbarian Tribe with the meager forces of North City.

One should know that the Barbarian Tribe had three hundred thousand soldiers, and all of North City combined with the seventy thousand soldiers supported by the imperial court totaled only over a hundred thousand. Moreover, the Barbarian soldiers were more fierce and valiant in battle. Apart from relying on the walls of Yan County, the soldiers of North City had no significant advantage.

At that moment, Lin Wanyun said to Chen Wanrong, "Palace Master, this news hasn't been confirmed yet. I will have the disciples of the Mysterious Moon Palace investigate the specifics."

Chen Wanrong simply hummed in response, not saying much else.

This news was indeed shocking and definitely warranted a thorough check to ascertain the truth.

After all, the intelligence network of their Mysterious Moon Palace was quite formidable, and they would soon find out what was really happening.

After that, Lin Wanyun left the temporary Prince's Mansion to let the disciples of the Mysterious Moon Palace in the city investigate the matter.

About half an hour later, the disciples of the Mysterious Moon Palace delivered the collected intelligence neatly compiled into a booklet to Chen Wanrong. Looking at the booklet in her hands, Chen Wanrong fell into deep thought.

The North Prince had sent five thousand Heavy Cavalry to welcome the Queen back to Yan County?

Since when did the North Prince have Heavy Cavalry?

Could North City, so poor, afford to maintain five thousand Heavy Cavalry? One should know that the entire Great Xia had only just over twenty thousand Heavy Cavalry!

Also, their Mysterious Moon Palace had never heard about Heavy Cavalry in North City, where even regular Cavalry were scarce, let alone Heavy Cavalry.

Chapter 124: Queen of North Prince Heads North_3

Where did these five thousand heavy cavalry suddenly come from?

Are they truly soldiers under North Prince?

Seeing Chen Wanrong holding the intelligence report yet remaining silent, Lin Wanyun spoke up, “Palace Master, could those heavy cavalry be Barbarian Tribe members in disguise? Perhaps Yan County has already been captured, and they are masquerading as North Prince’s soldiers, intending to lure the women of North Prince Mansion into Yan County, into the Barbarian Tribe’s royal court.”

Any normal person, upon learning of the arrival of heavy cavalry to Anping City, would naturally think these were Barbarian Tribe members in disguise.

That’s because North City doesn’t have heavy cavalry at all, and it simply can’t afford to maintain such a large number of them—this is a force that has appeared out of nowhere.

Could this heavy cavalry be deployed by the royal court for North Prince?

This is even more improbable. In order to defend against the Barbarian Tribe moving southward, the court is only willing to deploy seventy thousand troops northward, so how could they possibly send heavy cavalry to North Prince, let alone five thousand of them?

The twenty thousand heavy cavalry of the Great Xia Dynasty are the sharpest sword in the hands of Sum Emperor, and he would absolutely not use such a weapon for national defense at this time.

After hearing Lin Wanyun's words, Chen Wanrong came back to her senses. With a calm expression, she put down the intelligence report and said softly, "If the Barbarian Tribe wants to deceive women of North Prince to Yan County, there's no need to send so many heavy cavalry to Anping City, at most two thousand cavalry would be enough."

Currently, there are five thousand heavy cavalry stationed outside Anping City. Let's not even discuss whether the Barbarian Tribe of the North Land can forge so much armor needed by such a large cavalry. Even if the Barbarian Tribe truly had five thousand heavy cavalry, they wouldn't dispatch such an important force to this location just to deceive a woman from the Prince's Mansion.

This clearly doesn't make sense.

This whole affair is shrouded in mystery from beginning to end.

Chen Wanrong continued, "Once we return to Yan County, we will know what this is all about."

Upon hearing Chen Wanrong's words, Lin Wanyun expressed her concerns, "Palace Master, we don't yet know if there is deceit with these five thousand heavy cavalry. If we simply follow the people of North Prince Mansion northward, I fear there may be danger."

Chen Wanrong, with an expressionless face, said, "If there is danger, we will leave the convoy at the first opportunity. Five thousand heavy cavalry can't hold us back."

Lin Wanyun thought for a moment, feeling there was some truth to this. It indeed seemed unlikely that five thousand heavy cavalry could detain a Grandmaster, especially the Palace Master of Mysterious Moon Palace.

Lin Wanyun then said, "I understand, I'll have someone pack our luggage right away."

By evening.

The sun was gradually setting, the sky filled with evening clouds of various shapes, as a massive convoy slowly made its way out of Anping City.

The common folk of Anping City had already heard the news of North Prince slaughtering two hundred thousand of the Barbarian Tribe and capturing another hundred thousand.

At first, the common folk didn't believe it, as the achievement seemed too exaggerated. Moreover, their prince was deemed incompetent, and the military forces of North City were also not impressive.

The limited military forces of North City capable of slaughtering two hundred thousand from the Barbarian Tribe? Even in dreams that didn't happen!

However, when the common folk saw the convoy of the Prince's Mansion really leaving Anping City, preparing to head north, they suddenly felt that North Prince must have achieved great military success in Yan County.

Even if they hadn't slaughtered two hundred thousand of the Barbarian Tribe, they likely held off the Barbarian Tribe's attack, or perhaps the Barbarian Tribe's forces had already left North City. Otherwise, how could the Queen and the others possibly head north at this time?

The common people who had followed North Prince Mansion south were now again picking up their belongings and following North Prince Mansion northward.

In the eyes of the common folk, North Prince wouldn't allow his women to be in danger. Since the Queen was heading north, it was certain that the crisis in North City had been resolved.

As for slaying two hundred thousand of the Barbarian Tribe and capturing another hundred thousand—that was something to be taken with a pinch of salt and enjoyed as a pleasant fiction.

Chapter 125: Good News Arrives in the Capital City_i

When the convoy from the North Prince Mansion left Anping City, some people from the Prince's Mansion were actually a bit tense, as they all worried that the cavalry outside of Anping City were actually the cavalry of the Barbarian Tribe.

However, once they left the city gate, they saw that the cavalry was still stationed in place, keeping guard, and had not done anything to the Prince's Mansion's convoy; only then did everyone feel relieved.

At this time, the curtain of a carriage within the convoy was lifted, and Lin Wanyun and Chen Wanrong carefully examined the heavy cavalry dressed in black armor through the carriage window.

Seeing that the commander leading the troops was a Grandmaster, Chen Wanrong's eyebrows slightly lifted.

Then, Lin Wanyun said, "These people indeed do not look like those from the Barbarian Tribe, but they also do not resemble the heavy cavalry of Great Xia." Chen Wanrong did not speak; she, of course, also noticed this point.

The Barbarians and the people of Great Xia have some differences that make them easy to distinguish.

The soldiers of this cavalry looked very much like people of Great Xia, but Great Xia apparently did not have heavy cavalry with black standard-issue armor.

The heavy cavalry of Great Xia used silver gleaming armor, not black, so it was very likely that these heavy cavalry were not those of Great Xia either.

This was strange.

A heavy cavalry force of five thousand men, neither belonging to the Barbarian Tribe nor to Great Xia, where did they emerge from?

Could the North Prince manifest an army out of thin air?

Lin Wanyun again put forth a bold conjecture, “Could these cavalry be from another dynasty?”

Since they were not from Great Xia, nor from the Barbarian Tribe, and certainly not from North City, then there was only one other possibility, these cavalry were foreign reinforcements invited by the North Prince from another dynasty!

At this time, Chen Wanrong softly said, “Madam Lin, the Barbarian Tribe is to the north, Great Yue to the west, Great Xia to the south, and the great ocean to the east.”

Chen Wanrong did not directly deny Lin Wanyun’s conjecture, but her words clearly indicated that Lin Wanyun’s guess was also unlikely.

Firstly, besides Great Xia, the only dynasty bordering North City, the Da Yue Dynasty, did not have heavy cavalry; they were so poor they could barely survive, let alone lend heavy cavalry to North City. If this cavalry truly were borrowed by the North Prince from another dynasty, they would necessarily have to pass through either Great Xia or Great Yue.

A heavy cavalry of five thousand men passing through any dynasty would certainly attract attention.

This was fully armored heavy cavalry, not merely a force of five thousand regular soldiers; as soon as heavy cavalry were deployed, the surrounding countries or dynasties would quickly become aware of the movement of heavy cavalry.

The North Prince surely couldn’t have covertly transported this heavy cavalry force to North City across the sea, could he?

Just at this moment, the commander of the Black Cavalry suddenly left the formation and headed straight for the convoy.

Seeing this scene, Lin Wanyun immediately became nervous.

The commander of this cavalry seemed extraordinary, as if he were a ferocious soldier who had stepped out of the underworld, his body laden with a heavy murderous aura, signifying the countless lives he must have taken.

Fortunately, the Grandmaster level commander did not come to their carriage but instead went to the carriage of Queen Mu Zixuan.

General Xuanyuan Chen dismounted and knelt in front of Mu Zixuan's carriage, saying, "This lowly general, Xuanyuan Chen, pays his respects to the Queen!"

Watching through the carriage window, Mu Zixuan immediately said, "General Xuanyuan, please rise quickly!"

At this moment, those in the carriages in front of and behind Mu Zixuan opened their curtains, poking their heads slightly out of the windows to look towards Mu Zixuan's side.

After Xuanyuan Chen said "Thank You, Queen," he stood up from the ground.

Curiously, Mu Zixuan then asked, "General Xuanyuan, I heard that the Prince led the soldiers of North City to slay two hundred thousand Barbarian Tribe soldiers, is this true?"

Xuanyuan Chen immediately replied, "In response to the Queen, this matter is absolutely true."

"Not only that, we have also captured one hundred thousand soldiers of the Barbarian Tribe."

Upon hearing Xuanyuan Chen's reply, Chu Qingli, originally expressionless inside her carriage, couldn't help but frown.

From Xuanyuan Chen's attitude towards Mu Zixuan, it was as if Xuanyuan Chen truly was a general under the North Prince's command?

Even if the Barbarian Tribe intended to deceive the Queen into heading north, now that the convoy of the North Prince Mansion had already left the city, they would have no need to continue the charade.

Moreover, this appeared to be a General of Master Level.

Chu Qingli could sense the killing intent on him and the daunting aura of a Martial Artist.

Did a Grandmaster level Barbarian Tribe general need to act in front of the Queen of the North Prince?

"The warriors of the Barbarian Tribe" typically do not kneel to women, this was common knowledge even the people of Great Xia were aware of.

But just now, Xuanyuan Chen knelt before Mu Zixuan, proving that Xuanyuan Chen was very likely not a general of the Barbarian Tribe.

Chu Qingli's heart grew cold.

She had been ready to flee with her sister, but then Xuanyuan Chen knelt directly in front of the Queen.

Also surprised were Lin Wanyun and Chen Wanrong.

The moment Xuanyuan Chen knelt before the Queen of the North Prince, it signified that the heavy cavalry belonged to the North Prince Mansion, otherwise, the general would not perform a half-kneel ritual before the Queen.

“In this era,” generally only soldiers who especially acknowledge a female head would perform a half-kneel in front of her.

Speaking plainly, if Xuanyuan Chen had only acknowledged the North Prince, he had no need to offer a half-kneel to Mu Zixuan. Other generals of Great Xia, upon meeting Mu Zixuan, likewise did not need to offer a half-kneel but merely needed to bow and salute.

By performing this ritual, it was to some extent as though he was saying, “Seeing the Queen of the North Prince is as though I am seeing the North Prince.”

At this time, Chen Wanrong murmured to herself, “It seems the entire Great Xia has been deceived by the North Prince.”

Lin Wanyun said worriedly, “Palace Master, we should just leave North City directly. The North Prince is no fool; he must have realized that we are getting close to him with ulterior motives.”

That the North Prince has amassed such a huge force in secret is enough to show his deep scheming. How could such a person not see that the Mysterious Moon Palace’s approach is purposeful?

If the North Prince learns that the Mysterious Moon Palace intends to control him with the Love Worm, he might deal with them harshly.

At this time, Chen Wanrong spoke, “People are easier to control when they have desires. He has amassed such an enormous force, surely for that position in the Capital city.”

“The Mysterious Moon Palace should indeed help him at this time.”

Lin Wanyun instantly understood Chen Wanrong’s meaning—Chen Wanrong intended to use Lu Chen as a puppet and have him fight a life or death battle with the Sum Emperor, allowing the Mysterious Moon Palace to reap the benefits in the end.

Chen Wanrong's idea was simple: since the North Prince had already accumulated such a tremendous force, they should first control him, and then let him and the Sum Emperor duke it out.

This would not interfere with their use of Lu Chen to refine the Subtle Dragon Spell either.

Originally, Lu Chen was only valuable for refining the Subtle Dragon Spell, but now, in Chen Wanrong's mind, his value had risen to a new height.

After hearing Chen Wanrong's words, Lin Wanyun sighed inwardly and said no more.

At that moment, the caravan continued onward.

The Great Xia Dynasty.

Capital city, Xuanzheng Hall.

Today, as usual, the Sum Emperor was again in a thunderous rage in the court.

"You've been investigating for so long and still haven't found a trace of the assassin, what use is the Ministry of Criminal Justice to Me!!!"

Hearing the Sum Emperor's bellow, officials from the Ministry of Criminal Justice shivered and didn't dare to breathe a word.

The Sum Emperor had given the Ministry only a few days to investigate the massacre at Prince Lu Shuyun's residence. Days had passed, and they hadn't found a bit of news about the assassin. Later, who knows who the brilliant one was who framed an assassin from Blood Moon Tower, alleging that the assassin harbored hatred against Prince Lu Shuyun and thus sought to kill him.

But the Sum Emperor was not so easily duped; he soon received news that the Tower Master of Blood Moon Tower had already died in North City. Although it was unclear how he died, the existence of Blood Moon Tower in the Capital city was now in name only.

Obviously, the Ministry of Criminal Justice had not found the real assassin, so they pinned the blame on Blood Moon Tower.

Afterward, the Sum Emperor disposed of a group of officials from the Ministry and gave the remaining officials some more time to continue the investigation. Yet, there was still no trace to be found.

The Ministry officials were all aware of the conflict between the North Prince and Prince Lu Shuyun, but the North Prince was useless; they couldn't just push the blame onto him. If they were to shift the blame onto the North Prince, they feared it would only incite further rage from the Sum Emperor.

Just then, Left Minister Lin Gaoyuan said through gritted teeth, "Your Majesty, finding the assassin who attempted to kill Prince Lu Shuyun is certainly important, but the current situation in the North Land is of the utmost importance."

Lin Gaoyuan cared more about the situation in the North Land than anyone else in the court, as his own son was the one leading the troops to battle.

Upon hearing Lin Gaoyuan's reminder, the Sum Emperor calmed his emotions and then said to the officials from the Ministry of Criminal Justice, "I will give you three more days. If you still can't find anything, you'll have to consider the consequences."

At this point, the Sum Emperor was ready to sit down when suddenly, a soldier's voice came from outside Xuanzheng Hall.

"Victory in the North Land!!!"

Upon hearing this, the ministers within Xuanzheng Hall were all stunned.

A great victory?

How could there be a great victory at this time?

The Capital's seventy thousand soldiers, along with the handful of old, weak, and sick from North City—merely holding North City would have been an impressive feat.

How could there possibly be a great victory?

It was obvious that the frontline generals were fabricating the good news to falsely report military achievements.

Thinking that the person leading the troops to the north was the son of Left Minister Lin Gaoyuan, those associated with Right Minister Zhao Wenhan swallowed hard and moistened their throats, immediately preparing to impeach Lin Xiuming for falsifying military reports.

However, when the Red Ribbon Messenger entered the hall, one statement from the messenger silenced the entire court, plunging it into a deathly quiet. After entering Xuanzheng Hall, the Red Ribbon Messenger immediately knelt down, holding up the battle report with both hands and shouting with all his might, "Your Majesty, the North Prince led the soldiers of North City in a valiant battle, slaying two hundred thousand Barbarian Tribe soldiers and capturing another one hundred thousand!"

Upon hearing this, it was like a bomb had dropped; the entire court erupted with commotion.

All the ministers were dumbstruck.

They had seen falsified battle reports, but they had never seen one so blatantly fabricated!

Slaying two hundred thousand of the Barbarian Tribe?

What a joke!

The mere forces from North City were already doing well just to withstand the Barbarian Tribe's invasion.

And now to claim they had slain two hundred thousand Barbarian Tribe soldiers?

It would be more believable if two hundred thousand civilians had been slaughtered by the Barbarian Tribe!

Who on earth wrote this battle report?

This was not a battle report; this was akin to involving one's ten clans in the matter!

Chapter 126: Sum Ancestor Climbs Out of the Imperial Mausoleum???_i

For the ministers in the court, to what extent had the Red Ribbon Messenger's military report become fake?

It had become so fake that they all dared not even open their mouths to question it!

This was the first time in the history of Great Sum that someone had dared to report such a fake military report.

If the Red Ribbon Messenger's report had claimed they killed tens of thousands and defeated the Barbarian Tribe, right now the ministers of Right Minister Zhao Wenhan's faction might have already started impeaching Lin Xiuming, accusing him of falsely reporting military achievements.

But to say that the North Prince had slain two hundred thousand barbarians... With such an obviously fake report, did they even need to impeach him? They didn't even dare to speak.

This was not twenty thousand; it was two hundred thousand!

And just now the Red Ribbon Messenger also claimed that North City captured a hundred thousand barbarian soldiers.

What did this indicate? To a certain extent, it indicated that North City had annihilated the entire barbarian army of three hundred thousand marching south!

If the North Prince truly accomplished this, then his contribution would already be on par with the Sum Emperor, and it could even be said that he overshadowed his sovereign!

But was that possible?

What kind of person was the North Prince, and who in the Capital city didn't know?

That weak, incapable, greedy, and lustful waste could lead the army of North City to annihilate a barbarian army of three hundred thousand?

What a joke!

Why didn't the report say that Sum Ancestor climbed out from his mausoleum and killed two hundred thousand barbarians?

If you said Sum Ancestor climbed out from his tomb, perhaps some would believe this military report to be true.

At this moment, the entire court was silent; one could even hear people breathing. It took who knows how long before the court eunuch finally came to his senses. He stumbled over to the Red Ribbon Messenger, took the military report, and then proceeded to the Emperor, delivering the report to him.

At this moment, the Emperor's face was dark, his complexion extremely unsightly.

This was the fakest military report he had ever heard.

He truly couldn't believe how Lin Xiuming dared to send back such a false military report to the Capital city.

Even though Lin Xiuming's father was the Prime Minister of the court, no one could save him for fabricating such a blatantly false report, not even if Lin Gaoyuan was the Prime Minister.

Lin Gaoyuan couldn't only not save his son Lin Xiuming; rather, his entire household was likely to be implicated by Lin Xiuming's actions.

Seeing the military report handed over by the eunuch, the Sun Emperor came back to his senses. He promptly picked up the report and directly started to read it.

Even if the report was false, he had to seriously read it; he wanted to see what Lin Xiuming was up to.

As the Emperor started to carefully read the report, all the ministers' gazes were fixed on his face, eager to see his reaction.

At this moment, some people in the court had begun to take pleasure in Lin Xiuming's misfortune. They had been pondering ways to take down Lin Gaoyuan and had not expected Lin Gaoyuan's son to make a mistake so quickly.

And it was the mistake of falsely reporting military intelligence!

Most importantly, this was military information that couldn't be faked!

This time, even if the Lin Family were not exterminated and their property confiscated, they would at least be exiled, right?

Using a Red Ribbon Messenger to report such a terrible fake piece of military intelligence, the Emperor simply could not overlook Lin Xiuming's action.

Meanwhile.

Lin Gaoyuan in the great hall was already sweating profusely; he had never dreamed that his own son would make such a grave mistake.

Reporting false military intelligence was one thing, but to fabricate such an exaggerated report... how could anyone believe it? Was he taking everyone to be a fool?

Lin Gaoyuan couldn't help but think, his son shouldn't be that kind of person, so what was going on with this military report? Could it have been tampered with? Was someone out to harm the Lin Family?

This seemed not entirely impossible.

Once this thought occurred to him, Lin Gaoyuan immediately knelt down, "Your Majesty, I have failed in educating my son and am willing to accept punishment!"

In front of the Emperor, whether you are right or wrong, it's better to kneel and admit your mistake first. Admitting wrong could give a glimmer of hope; but if you were stubborn, what awaited the Lin Family could only be a fate like that of the Duke Mu Residence.

At this moment, the Emperor paid no attention to Lin Gaoyuan. His gaze was still fixed on the military report in his hands. After flipping through the report for quite a while, the Emperor finally handed it to the eunuch and said, "Read it out loud!"

The eunuch nearby, trembling, took the military report and began to read aloud.

"On the seventh day of the twelfth month, I led a force of seventy thousand to Yan County, where the battle had already ended. The North Prince had fought bravely, commanding several tens of thousands of soldiers from North City to slay two hundred thousand of the barbarian tribe overnight and capture over a hundred thousand more. In Wanning Valley, barbarian corpses littered the fields, and their blood dyed the entire Wanning River red. As I learned, during the attack on Yan County, the Sky Wolf King of the Barbarians was shot dead by an arrow from the North Prince. Three days later, the North Prince will send someone to deliver the head of the Sky Wolf King to the Capital city."

Lin Xiuming's military report was rather simple, just describing the military achievements of North City.

As the eunuch finished reading the military report, the ministers in the court were instantly dumbfounded.

When they previously heard the Red Ribbon Messenger say that the North Prince led the soldiers of North City to kill two hundred thousand barbarians, they thought “the soldiers of North City” meant that the North Prince led the Imperial forces and then added North City’s troops, which could total over a hundred thousand.

But according to Lin Xiuming’s report, the Imperial army had not yet arrived at Yan County when the North Prince defeated the barbarian army of three hundred thousand with just North City’s troops???

That means the Imperial Army of seventy thousand didn’t even play a role???

Not even liberating the auxiliary forces???

What a joke!

The handful of troops from North City could defeat a barbarian army of three hundred thousand?

So Sum Ancestor has really risen from his mausoleum, is that it?

Chapter 127: Sum Ancestor Climbs Out of the Imperial Mausoleum???_2

For a moment, the court ministers were dumbfounded.

If the North Prince, that incompetent, had such ability, he might as well already be the Crown Prince by now, and he would not be in North City but atop the court and even standing at the forefront of all officials.

A worthless prince being able to hold North City would have been more than enough, and now they were actually saying that he led the troops of North City to defeat the Barbarian Tribe’s army of three hundred thousand.

Moreover, according to the battle report, they killed two hundred thousand barbarians overnight, which clearly was an overwhelming victory!

What's most absurd was the battle report mentioning that the North Prince shot and killed the Sky Wolf King of the Barbarian Tribe with a single arrow!!!

Although people were not very familiar with the current Sky Wolf King, the officials knew that at least every Sky Wolf King would be at the Master Realm.

The North Prince, who couldn't even truss a chicken, who had been hollowed out by wine and lust, was able to shoot and kill a Grandmaster with one arrow?

Bluffing shouldn't be this ludicrous!!!

Although the officials were all stunned by this battle report, at this moment, one person breathed a sigh of relief. Lin Gaoyuan thought to himself, fortunately, Lin Xiuming did not take all these military credits for himself, but pushed them all onto the North Prince instead.

Even if Lin Xiuming lied about the military situation, he would not be punished too severely, and they could also push everything onto the North Prince.

After all, when Lin Xiuming arrived at North City, he was to be controlled by the North Prince. Once Lin Xiuming returned, he could fully claim that the battle reports were forced by the North Prince.

Although the royal family might have Lin Xiuming take the blame to preserve the royal face, as a general and also the son of the Prime Minister, the Sum Emperor would likely punish him lightly, considering the stability of the court.

After the eunuch had finished reading the battle report, the entire court was still silent as death, the officials looked at each other, no one daring to speak out.

They also didn't know what they should say at this time.

Such a fabricated battle report, no one believed it, nor would the Sum Emperor possibly believe it.

The Sum Emperor at this time was likely already in a towering rage, and if they said anything now, it might very well provoke the Sum Emperor's ire; they did not want to take that risk at this time.

At this moment, the Sum Emperor stood on the Dragon Platform, looking down at the ministers with an indifferent gaze.

Seeing the ministers still as cicadas in winter, the Sum Emperor coldly said, "Usually you all argue non-stop in the court, how come today you've all turned mute?"

No minister spoke up after the Sum Emperor dropped his words, not even the princes, and not even Prince Lu Shuyun, who was hostile towards Lu Chen, said a word.

All of them simply bowed their heads, quietly waiting.

They were waiting, and so was the Sum Emperor.

They were waiting for the Sum Emperor to speak about how to deal with this matter.

And what was the Sum Emperor waiting for?

He was waiting for another battle report.

In the imperial army, there was a Military Supervisor, generally a eunuch trusted by the Sum Emperor.

Besides the eunuch, there were Shadow Guards, and he was also waiting for news from the Shadow Guards.

Lin Xiuming's battle report was so shocking that even the Sum Emperor doubted its authenticity.

If Lin Xiuming had claimed to have killed tens of thousands of barbarian soldiers, with the others fleeing in disarray, he might still believe Lin Xiuming was exaggerating his military achievements.

But to claim twenty thousand barbarians were slain bordered on absurdity, it

was so false it couldn't possibly be true.

Lin Xiuming wasn't writing a battle report, he was writing fantasy!

At this moment, the atmosphere in the great hall was exceptionally oppressive, and people could even hear their own thudding heartbeats.

After who knows how long, finally a voice broke the silence outside the great hall.

“North City has achieved a great victory!!!”

Hearing this voice, the ministers' hearts skipped a beat.

Generally speaking, the first battle report is sent by the front-line general, and the second is from the Military Supervisor. Although the Military Supervisor and general are both on the front line, they do not see face to face.

The Military Supervisor represents the eyes of the Emperor. Although there are occasional collusions between Military Supervisors and generals, such cases are rare in Great Sum because the eunuchs are very aware of how powerful the Shadow Guards beside the Sum Emperor are; most Supervisors dare not conspire with front-line generals.

The first battle report was of a great victory; the second one from the Military Supervisor also mentioned a great victory???

Does that not mean that North City truly achieved remarkable battle results?

How could this be possible?

Could it be that Lin Xiuming's battle report was true?

No! Impossible! Absolutely impossible!!!

They would rather believe that the Sum Ancestor had crawled out of the imperial tomb than believe the North Prince was capable of such a feat!!!

Soon, the Red Ribbon Messenger sent by the Military Supervisor arrived in the great hall. He knelt on the ground and loudly proclaimed, “Great victory in North City! The North Prince led the soldiers of North City, fought valiantly, and slew countless enemies! He has elevated the might of our Great Sum Country!!!”

This time, the Red Ribbon Messenger did not specify the number of slain Barbarian Tribe soldiers, but from the second Red Ribbon Messenger’s words, it was basically possible to judge that North City had truly achieved a great victory!

The ministers nearly dropped their jaws in shock-had North City truly had a great victory?

Had the Barbarian Tribe become so weak?

However, it didn’t take long for the ministers to recover. Killing a thousand Barbarian soldiers could be considered a great victory, as could killing ten thousand Barbarian soldiers!

The second Red Ribbon Messenger did not mention how many Barbarian Tribe soldiers were killed this time, so it couldn’t prove Lin Xiuming’s battle report was true.

Perhaps Lin Xiuming had really exaggerated the number of dead Barbarian soldiers!

Moreover, Lin Xiuming said that the war had ended before they even reached Van County; what kind of great victory could the North Prince have achieved with his meager troops? It would be good enough if they managed to kill a few thousand Barbarian soldiers.

At this moment, an eunuch quickly took the battle report from the second Red Ribbon Messenger at the foot of the Dragon Platform, then walked over to the Sum Emperor and handed it to him.

The Sum Emperor did not hesitate to pick up the battle report and read it carefully.

At this time, the ministers once again looked up, watching the Emperor's face, wanting to see how angry he would become.

However, the scenario the ministers had anticipated did not occur. As the Sum Emperor's eyes moved across the battle report, his brows furrowed more and more, quickly forming a "JU" character.

At this moment, the ministers did not see anger on the Sum Emperor's face; his expression showed more shock, confusion, and puzzlement.

This time, the Sum Emperor did not have the eunuch read the battle report aloud.

Unlike Lin Xiuming's concise report, the Military Supervisor accompanying the troops had described in detail what they had seen in their report.

The Military Supervisor stated he saw Barbarian corpses everywhere, which matched Lin Xiuming's report, and he also mentioned in the battle report that he saw North City possessing at least fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry.

Upon reading this, the Sum Emperor instantly felt that something was amiss. Where had these fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry come from?

just then, a Shadow Guard clad in black armor suddenly appeared at the foot of the Dragon Platform, and the ministers didn't know how he had arrived.

Under normal circumstances, the Shadow Guards would not appear in the court; they would report to the Sum Emperor in private after the court session had ended.

Unless it was a matter of great importance!

At this point, the Shadow Guard spoke up, “Your Majesty, an urgent report from North City!”

The eunuch immediately took the report from the Shadow Guard and presented it to the Sum Emperor.

After reading the Shadow Guard’s report, the Sum Emperor felt completely uneasy.

From Lin Xiuming’s battle report, to the Military Supervisor’s report, and finally the Shadow Guard’s intelligence, all had confirmed that the North Prince indeed had a force of nearly fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry and that the North Prince was no ordinary man.

As for the matter of killing two hundred thousand Barbarians and capturing over a hundred thousand Barbarian prisoners, that was naturally true as well.

The Sum Emperor suddenly felt that his worldview had been seriously shaken. His least favored son was now becoming his biggest threat?

Seeing the Sum Emperor’s grim expression, Right Minister Zhao Wenhan could no longer stay silent. He tentatively asked, “Your Majesty, may I ask what the second battle report says?”

Upon hearing Zhao Wenhan’s voice, the Sum Emperor came back to his senses. He adjusted his emotions and once again his expression turned icy cold.

“After corroboration from multiple sources, it is confirmed that the North Prince indeed led the army of North City, slaughtered two hundred thousand Barbarians, and captured an additional hundred thousand or more as prisoners.” As soon as these words were spoken, the entire court exploded into turmoil.

My heavens!!! So it’s true!!!

How is this possible!!!

The North Prince, that good-for-nothing, has actually achieved the greatest military feat in the history of Great Sum!!!

Not even the Sum Emperor himself had achieved such a feat when battling Chen Nation!!!

And the North Prince was up against a Barbarian Army of three hundred thousand-a force whose combat power was generally stronger than Great Sum's!

With the mere troops of North City, how had the North Prince managed to defeat the Barbarians!!!

Could it be that the Sum Ancestor really crawled out of the imperial tomb and helped the North Prince defend Yan County???

Chapter 128: Why is everyone mute today?_1

After hearing what the Sum Emperor had to say, all the ministers couldn't believe it because it completely overturned their understanding of the situation.

Even if the North Prince wasn't useless, with the meager soldiers of North City, defending Yan County would be very difficult.

And now they were being told that not only had the North Prince managed to hold Yan County, but he had also annihilated the Barbarian Tribe's army of three hundred thousand!!!

Who would believe that?

At this moment, the princes at the court were utterly dumbfounded!!!

Wasn't Prince Lu Chen supposed to be the most worthless among them, his body hollowed out by alcohol and women?

Could he really lead the meager soldiers of North City to defeat the Barbarian Tribe's army of three hundred thousand?

Was this something this waste could accomplish???

Everyone at the court began to wonder if they were still dreaming, which is why they were witnessing such an absurd event.

The court was comprised of people from Great Sum, who should have been overjoyed to hear such a world-shaking report of victory, but at the moment, not a single person in the court could feel happy.

If what the Sum Emperor had said was true and could be confirmed, then it would mean Great Sum was about to undergo a massive change!!!

Slain were two hundred thousand of the Barbarian Tribe's warriors, with an additional hundred thousand captured—this achievement was comparable to the Sum Emperor's own feat of annihilating Chen Nation!

With such a great merit, who would dare deny the North Prince the position of Crown Prince?

The North Prince's achievement had even reached the level of overshadowing his sovereign!

At that moment, everyone had one question on their minds: how exactly did the North Prince do it?

Secondly, the ministers were very worried; the North Prince, who had always been deemed useless by them, couldn't really return to the Capital city to become the Crown Prince, could he?

In the court, there was a faction for Prince Lu Shuyun and one for Prince Lu Yi, as well as other princes' power bases, but there were no officials from Prince Lu Chen's faction.

Now even the officials from the Chu Family at court were with Prince Lu Shuyun's faction.

And at this time, they were being told that Prince Lu Chen might return to the Capital city to become the Crown Prince! This was like throwing all the ministers' investments down the drain.

They absolutely wouldn't allow such a thing to happen.

Seeing on the ministers' faces disbelief or, rather, unwillingness to believe, the Sum Emperor continued, "According to various reports, the North Prince has at least fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry at his disposal; a few days ago, the North Prince sent five thousand Heavy Cavalry southward to bring back his wives, concubines, and children to Yan County."

As the Sum Emperor spoke these words, the court exploded once again.

Fifty... fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry???

How could that be possible!!!

How could the North Prince possibly have so many Heavy Cavalry!!!

The ministers knew all too well what Heavy Cavalry represented.

When the Sum Ancestor was conquering the land, three thousand Heavy Cavalry chased down an army of a hundred thousand peasant soldiers.

Now the entire Great Sum only had twenty thousand Heavy Cavalry. Heavy Cavalry required a vast amount of resources; each cavalryman needed at least three high-quality horses.

Besides horses, the most important thing for Heavy Cavalry was their armor.

It might take a craftsman a month to make a set of Heavy Cavalry armor, at least three months at the minimum.

How could the North Prince have fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry when he had been in North City for such a short time?

What did having fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry imply?

It meant that the North Prince could declare independence from Great Sum and proclaim himself emperor without any problem!

And if the North Prince truly had a hundred thousand Barbarian Tribe prisoners, it would mean that even if the court knew of his possible intent to rebel, at this moment they would still not dare to act against him; instead, they would have to prioritize appeasement.

Logically, the North Prince hadn't had the time or resources to build fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry, so where did they come from?

Since intelligence from various sources has already confirmed the existence of these 50,000 heavy cavalry, the issue has indeed become critical.

Once the North Prince displays his 50,000 heavy cavalry, it means that he is not only capable of rebellion but also possesses the intention to rebel.

Within Great Sum's borders, especially when the Sum Emperor curtails the power of the regional kings each year, for a Seignior to build up 50,000 heavy cavalry can only mean an intent to rebel, can it not?

At that moment, Zhao Wenhan could no longer hold back and directly asked, "Your Majesty, may your servant boldly ask if it's true that the North Prince has 50,000 heavy cavalry?"

The Sum Emperor replied coldly, "This intelligence was relayed back by General Wang and has also been confirmed by my Shadow Guard."

Hearing this, the ministers all gasped in shock.

Does this mean that the report is true?

The North Prince actually has 50,000 heavy cavalry?

No wonder the previous battle report mentioned that the North Prince led the soldiers of North City to slaughter 200,000 members of the Barbarian Tribe overnight!

However, come to think of it, North City certainly cannot be so simple as to only have 50,000 heavy cavalry.

Heavy cavalry hold overwhelming advantage against infantry, especially conscripted peasants, but their superiority is not as clear against the cavalry of the Barbarian Tribe and might even be at a disadvantage.

Because heavy cavalry are clumsier than the Barbarian Tribe's light cavalry, making it difficult to catch up with them. If the Barbarian Tribe's soldiers wanted to flee, they could do so with ease.

If the battle report about the North Prince leading his soldiers and slaying 200,000 Barbarian Tribe soldiers is true, then there must be something else in the North Prince's hands.

As for whether this 'something' is weapons or an army, that is hard to say.

At this moment, the imperial court fell into the silence of death once more.

Logically, some should now impeach the North Prince for contemplating rebellion, but the timing of North City's heavy cavalry's emergence was just too perfect, coinciding with the Barbarian Tribe's 300,000 soldiers marching southward.

Just as the North Prince has led the soldiers of North City to defeat the Barbarian Tribe, if someone steps forward now to accuse the North Prince of plotting rebellion, wouldn't that be akin to seeking death?

Who would dare accuse the North Prince at this time?

This is the greatest military achievement since Great Sum's founding!

Who can accuse the North Prince?

Seeing that none of the ministers spoke up again, the Sum Emperor said coldly, "What now, did none of you eat breakfast before coming to court, not even having the strength to speak? You're usually so lively, so why is everyone mute today?"

No sooner had the Sum Emperor's words fallen than Zhao Wenhan immediately knelt down and then kowtowed to the Sum Emperor, saying, "His Highness Prince Lu Chen, brave and adept at war, has led the soldiers of North City to slay 200,000 Barbarian Tribe soldiers and captured another 100,000. He is indeed the third person since the venerable Sum Ancestor to achieve such a feat. With such a significant contribution from His Highness Prince Lu Chen, rewarding him with ordinary things would certainly not be fitting. I humbly request Your Majesty to allow Prince Lu Chen to return to the Capital City and to establish him as the Crown Prince!"

Hearing Zhao Wenhan's words, some ministers inwardly cursed him as a sly fox, well aware that the young and robust Sum Emperor has been reluctant to appoint a Crown Prince for fear of the Crown Prince harboring other ambitions.

Zhao Wenhan's move to propose the appointment of a Crown Prince at this juncture was clearly not about making the North Prince the Crown Prince. He was simply trying to sicken the Sum Emperor and to sow discord between the Sum Emperor and the North Prince, his son.

After hearing Zhao Wenhan's words, the Sum Emperor did not immediately reply, instead, he scanned the ministers in the court.

He was waiting.

Waiting for someone else to speak.

Lin Gaoyuan, kneeling on the ground, instantly understood the Sum Emperor's intention and immediately said, "Your Majesty, although His Highness Prince Lu Chen has made a tremendous contribution, the matter of appointing a Crown Prince is of significant importance and should not be made hastily."

The Sum Emperor still did not speak; his gaze fell upon the several princes in front of him.

At that moment, the princes were sweating profusely, not daring to breathe loudly.

Especially Prince Lu Shuyun.

He was utterly awake now.

At last, he understood why each of his assassination attempts had failed and who was responsible for the massacre at his residence.

This younger brother of theirs had hidden too deeply!

He had deceived everyone in Great Sum!

Chapter 129: I Intend to Make Him Crown Prince i

The Sum Emperor glanced over the crowd and, seeing that no one seemed to have anything more to say, he spoke up, "The matter of the Crown Prince concerns the very foundation of our nation and requires careful deliberation. We shall not discuss it today."

Upon hearing the Sum Emperor's words, Zhao Wenhan did not continue to speak either; he had only been talking for the sake of it, and besides, he could not possibly support the North Prince.

There were only a few court officials who would support the North Prince.

Ordinary princes, even those not involved in the struggle for succession, might have some interactions with the ministers, but the North Prince was an oddity; he had no dealings with any minister, so who would support him?

Apart from the Chu Family possibly being tempted, the support base of the other princes remained largely unchanged.

After all, the North Prince did have blood ties with the Chu Family, and although they now supported Prince Lu Shuyun, that was because Prince Lu Chen was initially too weak to stand on his own.

Now that Prince Lu Chen had made such great military achievements, even to the point where his merits overshadowed his sovereign, how could they not be moved?

They might even support Prince Lu Chen once again.

Of course, this presented a significant challenge to the other princes.

First and foremost, the fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry from North City!

Without addressing the fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry of North City, the North Prince would forever be a sword hanging over their heads.

Even if they seized the throne in the future, such a formidable military power in North City could just as likely dethrone them.

Without eliminating the fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry, without eliminating the North Prince, no Prince could rest easy!

Almost instantly, all the princes involved in the struggle for succession united on the same front — that the North Prince was their greatest threat and must be brought down.

At this point, the Sum Emperor continued, “My esteemed ministers, the North Prince has made such great contributions, how do you think the court should reward him?”

In the end, the Sum Emperor still left the question to the ministers.

The North Prince’s merits were indeed too substantial; even the Sum Emperor himself was at a loss as to how he should be rewarded; the position of Crown Prince was definitely not an option.

He had never intended to appoint a Crown Prince so soon, let alone one who was the North Prince, a prince of whom, he wasn’t even certain whether he was his own child; how could he possibly make him the Crown Prince.

After hearing the Sum Emperor’s question, the ministers looked at one another, unsure of what to do.

The merit was simply too great; it seemed that only the position of the Crown Prince could match this achievement; any other reward would seem insignificant by comparison.

But obviously, the Sum Emperor was not going to give the position of Crown Prince to the North Prince, so what should be used to reward the North Prince? Certainly, it couldn’t be nothing.

To give nothing would not sit well with the people of Great Sum if they were to find out, and it would be unjustifiable.

After all, the North Prince had been killing the Barbarian Tribe!

The same Barbarian Tribe with which the people of Great Sum had deep-seated hatred.

How could the people of Great Sum accept it if the North Prince killed so many Barbarians, and yet the court showed no sign of acknowledgment?

At this moment, Lin Gaoyuan spoke up, “Your Majesty, I believe that due to the North Prince’s enormous achievements, ordinary rewards can no longer compare.”

Hearing this, Zhao Wenhan immediately retorted, “Prime Minister Lin, isn’t that just stating the obvious? His Majesty needs a concrete reward, not to hear you rattling on pointlessly.”

Lin Gaoyuan ignored Zhao Wenhan and continued, “I believe the Order of Expansion could serve as a reward for the North Prince’s contributions this time.”

This statement caused an uproar in the court.

The Order of Expansion, as the name suggests, means to expand territories.

When Great Sum was founded, Sum Ancestor granted many seigniors with the Order of Expansion, and the territories they conquered belonged to those seigniors.

But soon, subsequent emperors of Great Sum realized this posed a huge threat because some seigniors’ territories were growing too large and were nearly surpassing the actual territories controlled by the Sum Emperor.

After the efforts of several generations of Sum Emperors, the Order of Expansion was eventually abolished, and several wars even erupted as a result of abolishing it.

To the current Sum Emperor, further reduction of seignior power was achieved; nowadays, seigniors are basically assigned to fiefs by the court, and even if they conquered territories from other nations, those belong to the court, to the Sum Emperor, seigniors have no right to claim them as their own.

If the Order of Expansion were to be granted to the North Prince, then in the future, his territory in North City could expand indefinitely, provided he had the strength.

For the court, this wasn’t necessarily a good thing; if the North Prince possessed too much territory, his power could likely increase further, posing an even greater threat to Great Sum.

However...

Upon hearing Lin Gaoyuan's suggestion, the Sum Emperor did not immediately reject the idea because he found it somewhat useful.

Once the North Prince held the Order of Expansion, he would likely wage wars to enlarge his territory.

Wars require money and resources; they need to consume strength.

Besides, the North Prince was in North City, and if he wanted to expand his territory, there was only one choice: to expand northward.

The north was the realm of the Barbarian Tribe, which meant that the North Prince's wars against the Barbarian Tribe would continue.

For Great Sum, this weakened North City's strength and also mitigated the threat posed to Great Sum by the southward advances of the Barbarian Tribe to some extent.

It was a good strategy.

Just that once the Order of Expansion was used, it would likely only be reclaimed through war or by making the North Prince the next Sum Emperor.

Once the North Prince held the Order of Expansion and expanded territory, he would certainly not surrender the land to the court; there was no need to even think about this.

Chapter 130: I Intend to Make Him Crown Prince_2

The Sum Emperor pondered for a moment.

Then he said, “Draft an edict: North Prince has slain 200,000 from the Barbarian Tribe, captured more than 100,000, and has shot the Sky Wolf King on the battlefield. For his great achievement, he is especially rewarded with two million taels of silver, 200,000 bolts of cloth, and the Order of Expansion.” Seeing the Sum Emperor simply awarding the Order of Expansion like that left the ministers somewhat flabbergasted. It had not been easy for the previous generations of Sum Emperors to reclaim the Order, and now the current one was giving it away again.

However, at this time, none of the ministers said anything because, compared to the Order of Expansion, people were more concerned with the position of Crown Prince.

If they could exchange the Order for the position of Crown Prince, then they would still find it acceptable. After all, the north was the territory of the Barbarian Tribe, and the North Prince could only expand his territory further north.

If he moved south, it would not be expanding his territory, but rebelling.

As long as North Prince did not become Crown Prince, everything was negotiable, and there was no issue with giving him the Order of Expansion. At the same time.

At the northern gate of the Capital city, a soldier bearing a small red flag was loudly shouting while riding a horse: “Great victory in North City!!!”

North Prince led the soldiers of North City to slay 200,000 of the Barbarian Tribe and captured another 100,000!!!”

The soldier rode his horse towards the direction of the Imperial Palace, shouting as he went.

This kind of great victory had to be shouted out, it had to be let known to the common people.

It’s just that Lin Xiuming and the Military Supervisor had instructed the Red Ribbon Messengers before dispatching them not to shout it out in the Capital city and to wait until they reached the Imperial Palace.

Because the merits of North Prince were too significant, it was best for the common people to find out after the royal court had discussed and decided on how to reward North Prince. Otherwise, public opinion could definitely exert some pressure on the royal court.

But Lu Chen didn't think so much about it. He figured that the common people were bound to learn of it sooner or later anyway, so he dispatched the Red Ribbon Messenger, instructing him to shout vigorously along the way and even specially prepared dozens of water bottles for him.

Only when the common people of the Great Sum knew about North Prince slaying 200,000 from the Barbarian Tribe in North City would the royal court not dare to do anything to him.

Such a great achievement, if the royal court did not reward him but thought instead of reducing his fief or accusing him of rebellion, it would surely lose the hearts of the people.

At this moment, the common people of the Capital city, hearing the war report from the Red Ribbon Messenger, were stunned.

Had they heard wrong?

North Prince led the soldiers of North City to slay 200,000 of the Barbarian Army?

Was it true?

Wasn't North Prince a useless Prince?

An effete Prince, his body hollowed out by indulgence in wine and women, could obtain such military exploits?

This was so outrageous they dared not doubt its falsehood.

Although the common people lacked political acumen, they were also aware that a war report so outrageously fake was actually unlikely to be false, because no one would dare transmit such a blatantly false report.

Moreover, it was a message brought back to the Capital city by the Red Ribbon Messenger!

For a time, all the common people in the Capital city were in a frenzy. Of course, most commoners were questioning the authenticity of the news. After all, the news seemed too preposterous to believe.

A universally recognized useless person, merely changing his location, had undergone such a dramatic transformation—it was obviously impossible.

At the same time within the Capital city, spies from other nations or dynasties also heard the news delivered by the Red Ribbon Messenger. Although they were highly skeptical, their reaction was not the same as that of the common people.

Upon hearing the news from the Red Ribbon Messenger, spies from other countries immediately made use of various connections to inquire about the movements on the high court.

Those ministers would surely know if the event was true or not.

Soon, spies from other countries found out that the war report delivered by the Red Ribbon Messenger was indeed true, which dumbfounded them.

Having collected intelligence in the Great Xia Dynasty for so many years, they had never considered North Prince seriously, dismissing him as just a useless Prince not worth understanding. Such a worthless prince was never expected to become the Crown Prince of the Great Xia Dynasty.

The result...

Once the war report was confirmed, it meant that all the intelligence they had collected about North Prince over the years was false. They had all been deceived by

North Prince, who turned out to be the most promising and cunning Prince of Great Xia!

Although some found it hard to accept this reality, the spies from various countries quickly relayed the intelligence they had gathered about North Prince back to their respective capitals.

At the same time.

Imperial Palace, Royal Garden.

After arriving at the pavilion where Situ Ce was, the Sum Emperor asked, “The State Preceptor should already know everything, correct?”

Situ Ce replied, “Yes, I’m aware.”

When Situ Ce learned about what North Prince had been doing in North City, just like everyone else, he couldn’t believe it. But after a Shadow Guard showed him the intelligence they had gathered, he gradually came to accept the news.

At this moment, Situ Ce said, “Congratulations to Your Majesty for having Prince Lu Chen, such a brave and skilled warrior.”

Hearing this, the Sum Emperor coldly said, “State Preceptor, are you mocking me?”

Situ Ce immediately replied, “This subject would not dare! ”

The Sum Emperor snorted and then said, “Chen really hid his capabilities deep enough. Fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry, even the court can’t afford to maintain so many Heavy Cavalry, yet somehow North City has suddenly produced fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry, just like that!”

At this time, Situ Ce said, “Your Majesty, it looks like Vice Commander Bai’s intelligence wasn’t wrong. It is highly probable that Prince Lu Chen did not collaborate with Mysterious Moon Palace, because he simply doesn’t need to rely on them.”

The Sum Emperor then said, “Has the State Preceptor not considered where Chen’s Heavy Cavalry came from?”

“You should be well aware of what North City is like. He has only been there for a short while, so how could he possibly create fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry?” Situ Ce asked, “Could it be that Your Majesty suspects Prince Lu Chen of collusion with other dynasties, and that these Heavy Cavalry came from another dynasty?”

“However, as far as I am aware, apart from Great Xia, North City only borders the Da Yue Dynasty. If such a large force of Heavy Cavalry had passed through Da Yue, the Shadow Guard would certainly have some information.”

Hearing Situ Ce’s words, the Sum Emperor fell silent.

What Situ Ce said was right; Heavy Cavalry are of great interest to all major dynasties. Any dynasty using Heavy Cavalry would be known to the others, and it wouldn’t go completely undetected.

Furthermore, no dynasty would willingly give away fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry to others; that’s simply an impossibility. That leaves only one possibility left—that the fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry truly were created by the North Prince.

But no matter whether it’s time or resources, North City couldn’t possibly have manufactured fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry.

Could it be that this son of mine can summon soldiers out of thin air?

At that moment, Situ Ce said, “Your Majesty, I think this could very well be a good thing for you.”

The Sum Emperor asked, “Why does the State Preceptor think so?”

Situ Ce answered, “You do not know the origin of these fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry, nor do the court ministers, nor the Aristocratic Families.”

At these words from Situ Ce, it dawned on the Sum Emperor.

It meant he could pretend that the North Prince was someone he had supported since, after all, no one else knew how the North Prince had come by the Heavy Cavalry.

The North Prince was appointed by him to North City, and it could be said that it was thanks to the Sum Emperor himself that the North Prince could achieve the military exploits he has today.

Therefore, the Sum Emperor might have known what kind of person the true North Prince was, and also known that the North Prince had always been concealing his true abilities. Assigning the North Prince to North City was likely part of an important mission.

Perhaps all of this was the Sum Emperor's grand scheme!

Creating Heavy Cavalry requires a lot of resources, and it is not something that can be done in a day or two. North City didn't have those resources, and right now in the entire Great Xia, only one person could support the North Prince having fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry!

That would be none other than the current Sum Emperor!

At this time, the Sum Emperor asked, "The State Preceptor thinks I can use Chen's Heavy Cavalry to confound the Aristocratic Families?"

Situ Ce said, "Yes, Your Majesty. Currently, only you could enable North City to have fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry. No family or dynasty could have the capability to do so, and it was also you who personally sent the North Prince to North City."

With hands clasped behind his back, the Sum Emperor stared at the lotus pond in front of him, deep in thought for a long time.

The fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry of North City could indeed be of some use, but after utilizing them, the question of how to deal with them afterwards would be another troublesome matter.

After a long while, the Sum Emperor spoke, “State Preceptor, I need you to make a trip to North City.”

Situ Ce, expecting this, immediately replied, “Yes, Your Majesty.”

The Sum Emperor continued, “After you arrive in North City, tell Chen that I am considering making him the Crown Prince and hope he will not let me down.”

Situ Ce said, “Your servant understands.”

The Sum Emperor then turned around and said, “Very well, State Preceptor, prepare for your journey to North City.”

“Yes, Your Majesty. This old servant shall take his leave.”