

## Es. Benefits 151

### Chapter 151: Great Ambition, But Uncertain If The Strength Matches

Xiao Pengthian was the Great General of the Sky Wolf King's tribe and also a candidate for the Sky Wolf King.

At this time, Lu Chen dared to let him return to the Sky Wolf King's tribe, something Yelv Nanyan could never have imagined.

The audacity of the North Prince really didn't seem like something a sixteen- or seventeen-year-old child could possess, and for a moment, Yelv Nanyan's gaze involuntarily followed Lu Chen's figure, unable to move away.

Honestly, Yelv Nanyan didn't have much confidence in Xiao Pengthian; now that the Sky Wolf King had died in battle and she, as the core of power in the Sky Wolf King's tribe, had been taken away by the North Prince.

Once Xiao Pengthian returned to the Sky Wolf King's tribe, he would be the next center of power.

He could very well lead the Sky Wolf King's tribe away from the North Land or choose to join the North Fre King's tribe, refusing to relocate to North City.

Daring to release Xiao Pengthian back to the Sky Wolf King's tribe at this time took a kind of audacity not just anyone could muster.

Yelv Nanyan saw absolute confidence in Lu Chen.

This young man was the most confident and audacious man she had ever seen!

Xiao Wenyao came back to her senses at this moment, and she cautiously asked, "Uncle, does the North Prince plan to let you go back?"

Xiao Pengthian nodded and said, "The North Prince has entrusted me with the responsibility of relocating the tribe to North City."

Yelv Nanyan's eyes moved away from Lu Chen, and she looked at Xiao

Pengthian, saying, "General Xiao, it seems the North Prince holds you in high regard."

On hearing Yelv Nanyan's words, Xiao Pengthian felt a mix of emotions.

He gave a wry smile and said, "I suppose that's an honor.

With that, Xiao Pengthian looked at Xiao Wenyao and reminded her, "Yaoyao, the North Prince Mansion is not a royal court; when you get there, you can no longer be as wilful as before."

Xiao Pengthian knew of Xiao Wenyao's penchant for mistreating slaves – a practice that, within the royal courts, would not garner any criticism.

But the North Prince Mansion was different; it was populated by people of Great Sum, and even the maids and servants were from Great Sum, while Xiao Wenyao was merely a hostage from the Barbarian Tribe. If she continued to mistreat the servants as she used to, she might very well provoke the North Prince.

Xiao Wenyao said, "Don't worry, Uncle, I know what to do.

In her heart, Xiao Wenyao had already resigned herself to being the North Prince's slave, and with her past experience of having so many slaves, she naturally knew how a slave should behave.

After reminding Xiao Wenyao, Xiao Pengthian then looked at Yelv Nanyan and said, "Madam, take care!"

As his voice faded, Xiao Pengthian turned and walked towards where the Barbarian Tribe elders were located.

Seeing Xiao Pengthian's return, seemingly also having recovered his strength, the elders of the Barbarian Tribe were extremely excited for a moment. Unbidden, some undue thoughts arose in their hearts, but Xiao Pengthian's words promptly chilled the elders.

Elders, I have pledged my loyalty to the North Prince, and I will take full responsibility for the relocation to North City.”

The High Priest sighed, turned, and said, “Let’s go, prepare to go back.

He didn’t want to say more; the Sky Wolf King’s tribe was already on a path of no return, and Xiao Pengthian’s return could do nothing to change that.

Now the North Fre King was probably already leading his army all over the North Land in search of them, and even though Xiao Pengthian had returned, their tribe’s small numbers were no match for a direct confrontation with the North Fre King.

Moving south was their only way to avoid the North Fre King.

Or they could directly join the North Fre King’s tribe.

However, most people from the Sky Wolf King’s tribe likely would not join the North Fre King’s tribe.

Under Yelv Nanyan’s leadership over the years, the lifestyle and habits of the Sky Wolf King’s tribe had become more aligned with those of Great Sum, whereas the North Fre King’s tribe was still one that had not fully civilized.

Of course, there were those who still preferred the life on the grasslands.

Upon hearing the High Priest’s words, everyone fell silent. On the way back to their tribe, no one spoke a word. On the grasslands where the north wind howled, only the sound of the wind and horse hooves could be heard.

Meanwhile.

Lu Chen also set off for home with Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wenyao.

On the journey, Lu Chen often found himself attracted to Yelv Nanyan, wanting to deal with her during their rest stops.

Yelv Nanyan's mature beauty had an extremely powerful effect on men, and Lu Chen found that even though he had reached the Master Realm, he struggled to control himself in front of her.

Yelv Nanyan's ability to maintain her integrity for decades within the Barbarian Tribe earned Lu Chen's deep respect.

If Yelv Nanyan had not been using some skill or strength, she could not have preserved her integrity for so many years within a Barbarian Tribe.

Fortunately, Lu Chen always had his personal guard Bai Qingqing by his side. Whenever he felt he couldn't control himself, he would go and chat with Bai Qingqing to cultivate their relationship.

Even though Yelv Nanyan now belonged to Lu Chen, and he could completely possess her, they were still on the road home. Lu Chen elected to wait until they reached Yan County so his servants could properly take care of Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wenyao first.

Before long.

Lu Chen and his entourage finally arrived at Yan County.

When the common folk of Yan County saw that Lu Chen had brought back the wife and daughter of the Sky Wolf King, they were ecstatic.

In the eyes of the common folk, the North Prince had not only conquered the Sky Wolf King's tribe but also subdued the Sky Wolf King's women.

Although this thought was somewhat indecent, for the simple commoners, it was indeed a very thrilling affair.

In the past, it had always been the Barbarians coming south to snatch women from Great Sum, and now their Prince had finally vented some spleen and captured the Sky Wolf King's women and daughter.

The idea of the North Prince fiercely tormenting the Sky Wolf King's women and daughter every night gave the common people great satisfaction.

Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wen Yao, riding their horses, felt somewhat at a loss as they watched the cheering common folk on both sides of Yan County.

The reason the common people were cheering was because the North Prince had brought the two women with him, which immediately made them feel humiliated.

Fortunately, it was not long before they reached the North Prince Mansion.

When Lu Chen rode back to the North Prince Mansion, Mu Zixuan had already been waiting with Great Xiaozhou and Little Xiaozhou at the mansion's gateway.

The Brocade Guard had long since informed Mu Zixuan of Lu Chen's return with two women, so she had arranged rooms for Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wen Yao in advance, and also prepared some maids and servants for them.

After dismounting his horse, Mu Zixuan immediately approached, "Prince, you've returned."

Lu Chen gave a slight smile, then spoke, "This half-month, with your lordship away from the Prince's Mansion, you have managed everything on your own. You've worked hard."

Mu Zixuan replied, "It's this concubine's duty, not at all difficult."

At that moment, Mu Zixuan turned her head towards Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wen Yao.

With a beaming smile, Mu Zixuan asked, "Prince, are these the two women that you had the Brocade Guard send a message to this concubine about?"

Lu Chen turned his head towards Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wen Yao, then introduced them to Mu Zixuan, "This is the wife of the Sky Wolf King, and this is the Sky Wolf King's daughter."

Hearing this, Mu Zixuan immediately went up to Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wen Yao.

Yelv Nanyan promptly said, “I’ve seen the princess.

When a princess meets a princess, there’s generally no need for such formalities, but Yelv Nanyan knew her status was no different from that of a prisoner. If she wanted to have a good life in the North Prince Mansion in the future, she had to get along well with the wife of the North Prince.

Seeing Yelv Nanyan paying her respects, the slow to react Xiao Wen Yao quickly followed suit and said, “I’ve seen the princess.”

Mu Zixuan smiled slightly and then, holding the jade hands of Yelv Nanyan and

Xiao Wen Yao, said, “You two need not be so formal. From now on, we are family.”

Then something seemed to occur to Mu Zixuan, who then asked, “Right, I still don’t know your names or your ages?”

Since Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wen Yao had entered the North Prince Mansion, they would have to forsake their previous titles. It wasn’t possible to still refer to them as “princess” or “queen.”

Yelv Nanyan immediately responded, “Returning to the princess, my name is

Yelv Nanyan, and I am thirty-two years old.”

Xiao Wen Yao also hurriedly said, “My name is Xiao Wen Yao, and I am eighteen years old.”

Mu Zixuan, with a smile, said, “Thirty-two years old, much older than me. So from now on, I will call you Sister Nanyan.”

Yelv Nanyan quickly replied, “Princess, this is inappropriate. I am merely the prince’s hostage, I am not worthy of you calling me sister.”

Mu Zixuan said with a smile, “There’s nothing inappropriate about it. The

North Prince Mansion does not have so many rules.”

Compared to the many formalities of Great Xia, the North Prince Mansion clearly did not have as many. Even Mu Zixuan, a princess, called Chu Yuqin “Madam Chu” following Lu Chen’s example, so calling Yelv Nanyan “sister” was not a big deal.

The most important thing was that Yelv Nanyan was the wife of the Sky Wolf King. Though Yelv Nanyan had now left the Sky Wolf King Tribe, her status was still politically very important to Lu Chen.

In the meantime, Mu Zixuan continued, “By the way, I’ve had someone prepare rooms for the two of you. Please, come with me.”

This...

Seeing the princess being so hospitable, Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wen Yao were both a bit stunned.

The two of them were merely prisoners, and they had not expected the North Prince’s wife to treat them with such courtesy.

However, being older and having experienced more, Yelv Nanyan knew this was Mu Zixuan’s way of winning people over. She just couldn’t quite understand why Mu Zixuan would bother to win over her, the wife of the Sky Wolf King.

At this moment, Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wen Yao both turned to look at Lu Chen.

They were now Lu Chen’s women, and naturally, they had to read his mood.

Lu Chen, with a smile, said to Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wen Yao, “You two follow my beloved consort inside.”

Seeing that Lu Chen had spoken, Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wen Yao in unison said, “Yes, Prince.”

Then the two followed Mu Zixuan into the mansion.

Lu Chen patted Bai Qingqing’s bottom, signaling her to follow inside as well.

Bai Qingqing's face flashed with a blush, but she said nothing and promptly went inside.

Yelv Nanyan was a Ninth Grade Martial Artist, and Xiao Wenyao was a Seventh Grade Martial Artist. Until he had completely secured control over the two women, Lu Chen remained a bit worried they could pose a threat to his people, so he still had to take precautions.

Lu Chen certainly did not wish for unrest in his harem.

After Mu Zixuan led Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wenyao into the mansion, Lu Chen went straight to his study.

Meanwhile.

At the gates of Yan County.

An old man with graying hair, dressed in coarse cloth, lingered in front of the city's notice board, quietly listening to the conversations of the passersby.

The prince has indeed avenged us! It used to be the barbarians stealing our women, but today, it was finally our turn to take theirs!"

The Sky Wolf King's wife is truly beautiful; the prince is fortunate indeed!

And the Sky Wolf King's daughter is not bad either – not only pretty, but also with a good figure and especially strong legs!"

You lot, your heads are full of women. Don't you know that the North Prince is planning to relocate the Sky Wolf King Tribe to North City?"

If you ask me, those uncivilized brutes should all be killed. The North Prince actually intends to move them to North City."



Kill? You understand nothing. Haven't you heard that the North Prince is planning to greatly expand construction, build roads and fortify towns? If those barbarians were all killed, who would do the heavy labor?"

"Tsk, the Sky Wolf King Tribe has already surrendered to the North Prince. If they are to move to North City, so be it."

I've heard that the North Prince's plans aren't just about relocating the Sky Wolf King Tribe to North City. He intends to turn the entire North Land into his domain. Before long, all the barbarian tribes of the North Land will become the prince's subjects. Anyone who dares not submit will be attacked by his army!"

The North Prince really has guts. Before, we wouldn't even dare to dream that the barbarians could have such a day."

Listening to the townspeople's discussions, the old man muttered to himself, "Great ambition, but it remains to be seen if he possesses the corresponding strength."

## Chapter 152: State Preceptor, What Brings You to North City?\_i

Situ Ce arrived in North City half a month ago, but he didn't go directly to Prince's Mansion to find Lu Chen. He stayed in Yan County for half a month, looked around, and inquired about the local people's opinion of Lu Chen.

As he expected, North Prince's reputation had completely reversed; now, the common people of North City greatly supported the North Prince.

This was within Situ Ce's expectations and he didn't find it too surprising.

During this time, Situ Ce heard an interesting opinion from the mouths of the locals in North City. Many of them said that the North Prince was the "Son of Destiny," a man blessed by immortals.

After some investigation, coupled with intelligence collected by the Shadow Guard, Situ Ce quickly understood why the people thought the North Prince was the "Son of Destiny."

Rumors said that on the day the Barbarian Tribe attacked North City, countless Heavenly Thunders fell from the sky, striking the Barbarian Army into a chaotic retreat.

Although the common folk hadn't been on the battlefield, they had heard numerous accounts of what happened there.

Of course, Situ Ce did not believe the rumors were true just because they were circulated among the people, but their persistence indicated that something related to Heavenly Thunder indeed occurred that day.

At that moment, Situ Ce turned away from the notice board at the city gate and headed directly to the campsite where the Imperial Army was stationed.

The Imperial Army was about to return to the Capital city, and Situ Ce planned to speak to Lin Xiuming before he led the Imperial Army back, in order to understand what they had seen after arriving in North City.

At this time, Lin Xiuming was in his tent preparing the report about North City that he needed to present after returning to the Capital. Then, a soldier entered the tent and reported, "General, there's an old man with white hair outside holding a jade pendant, claiming he has an urgent matter for you."

If it were an ordinary old man, the soldiers would generally not take notice and would likely send him away.

However, since the man had produced a jade pendant granted by the Emperor, the soldier did not know whether it was real or fake and decided to show it to Lin Xiuming.

The sound of the soldier's voice faded as he placed the jade pendant on the desk.

Lin Xiuming, who was initially curious about who would come looking for him with a jade pendant, froze immediately upon seeing it.

Ordinary people did not have the privilege to meet the State Preceptor, nor had many seen him, including some high-ranking ministers who had never met Situ Ce.

But Lin Xiuming was different. As the son of the Left Minister, he had met the State Preceptor, Situ Ce, several times.

And he also happened to know the jade pendant worn by Situ Ce. With one look at the pendant, Lin Xiuming knew it was Situ Ce coming to see him.

However, he was extremely puzzled, as the State Preceptor was a pillar of Great Sum and usually would not leave the Capital city. How could he have come to North City in person?

Coming back to his senses, Lin Xiuming immediately said, "Please invite that old man in!"

Lin Xiuming refrained from revealing Situ Ce's identity to the soldier. Since Situ Ce had come to North City, he must be on an important mission, and Lin Xiuming did not intend to expose his identity.

Seeing Lin Xiuming's change in expression upon seeing the jade pendant, the soldier knew the old man's identity must be extraordinary. He immediately said, "I'll invite the old man in at once!"

As the soldier's voice fell, he turned and left the tent. Soon after, Situ Ce appeared in Lin Xiuming's tent.

Lin Xiuming instantly instructed the soldier, "Leave us for now, and have the soldiers outside move twenty steps away from the tent!"

"Yes, General."

Once the soldier had left the tent, Lin Xiuming promptly bowed and said, "Greetings, State Preceptor!"

After the formalities, Lin Xiuming walked forward, holding out the jade pendant with both hands to give it back to Situ Ce, then asked, "State Preceptor, what brings you to North City?"

Stroking his beard, Situ Ce replied with a smile, "I have come to North City on important matters, General Lin need not inquire further."

Hearing this, Lin Xiuming instantly realized that the State Preceptor had likely come for the North Prince. It was probable that the Sum Emperor had given the State Preceptor a task, which indeed was beyond a general's scope to inquire.

Lin Xiuming quickly shifted the topic and asked, "I overstepped. May I know the reason for your visit?"

Situ Ce said, "I would like to know what you all have seen after your arrival in North City."

Upon hearing this question, the vision of the gruesome scene outside Yan County flashed in Lin Xiuming's mind. Lin Xiuming had led the Imperial Army to stay in North City for almost two months and had strictly forbidden his soldiers from investigating, fearful of provoking the North Prince's wrath.

Lin Xiuming was no fool; he could immediately tell that those huge craters and the horrific state of the barbarian corpses were caused by some sort of weapon.

Obviously, it was not something he could get involved in. They were still in North City, under the scrutiny of the North Prince. If they made any misstep that was discovered by the North Prince, it might be uncertain whether he could even return to the Capital city.

Thus, Lin Xiuming had instructed the soldiers in the camp to avoid discussing the scene they had witnessed since their arrival in North City.

At this moment, Lin Xiuming looked a bit pale, but he replied solemnly, "Upon our arrival at Yan County, we saw that the area outside the city was full of enormous craters, and the ground was littered with the limbs and body parts of the Barbarian Tribe. Those craters had a width of at least six or seven steps."

Hearing this, Situ Ce continued to ask, "According to your judgment, General Lin, what caused those craters?"

Chapter 153: State Preceptor, What Brings You to North City?\_2

Lin Xiuming replied, "I also can't think of anything that could have caused such a huge crater, but it must have been some kind of special weapon."

“Judging from the distribution of the barbarians’ corpses, the fifty thousand heavy cavalry of North City played a significant role. However, without that mysterious weapon that routed the barbarian army of three hundred thousand, it would have been very difficult for the fifty thousand heavy cavalry alone to defeat the barbarian army.”

Lin Xiuming, a general and a veteran of battlefields, needed only a glance at the distribution of the barbarians’ remains to largely reconstruct the events that had taken place during the barbarians’ attack on North City.

The only thing he could not determine was the nature of that mysterious weapon, which was also the cause of his ongoing concern.

At that moment, Lin Xiuming suddenly thought of something else and added, “By the way, I heard that on the day the barbarians attacked Yan County, the common people there heard continuous booming thunder, so I suspect that those craters might be closely related to the sounds heard by the people of Yan County.”

Upon hearing Lin Xiuming’s words, Situ Ce pondered for a moment.

To create a crater six to seven steps wide, even a grandmaster wouldn’t be able to do it—it would require a great grandmaster like himself to exert such destructive force.

With this thought, Situ Ce asked, “Is it possible that a great grandmaster appeared in North City that day, and those craters were created by that great grandmaster?”

Lin Xiuming said, “I had considered that initially, but upon closer examination of the craters, I found they don’t resemble the handiwork of a great grandmaster. The craters are very uniform in width, and what’s more important, there is a large number of them, scattered from Yan County all the way to Wanning Valley.”

“If you were to strike, I believe you could indeed create craters like those, but to create hundreds of them... I’m not sure.” Lin Xiuming trailed off, knowing that Situ Ce was a great grandmaster, but not the specifics of his capabilities since Situ Ce rarely showed his power in front of others and had always been enigmatic.

Yet Lin Xiuming still did not believe that Situ Ce could create hundreds of craters the likes of those in the Wanning Valley by human power alone.

At this point, Situ Ce said, “Indeed, the skill within me is insufficient to create so many large craters.”

“If these craters were not formed by human effort, then that presents a problem. If North City truly possesses a terrifying weapon with destructive power comparable to that of a great grandmaster, and word of this spreads, it may not be long before the major kingdoms join forces against Great Sum.” Nowadays, a grandmaster serves as the public pillar of each kingdom, and no matter how intense the war between nations becomes, they absolutely refrain from deploying anyone stronger than a grandmaster to the battlefield.

But if a weapon emerged with killing power on par with a grandmaster’s force, then the status of grandmasters would be completely undermined, and the balance among the great kingdoms would be disrupted.

Once the other kingdoms learned of this, it was certain they would unite against the nation possessing such a mysterious weapon—it was inevitable.

After hearing Situ Ce’s words, Lin Xiuming’s expression turned even more solemn, as he naturally understood the implications.

Then Lin Xiuming asked, “I have been troubled about how to report the battle of Yan County to the imperial court. Please advise me, State Preceptor.”

As he said this, Lin Xiuming bowed in respect to Situ Ce.

Although the Imperial Army led by Lin Xiuming had not arrived in time for the major battle between North City and the Barbarian Tribe, they had come to North City nonetheless.

As the commander in charge of leading the Imperial Army northwards, Lin Xiuming would inevitably have to report his observations from North City to the imperial court, which made him feel quite uneasy.

The heavy cavalry was less of a concern; the imperial court probably already knew about the North Prince's control over the heavy cavalry. But as for the mysterious weapon in the North Prince's possession, Lin Xiuming truly did not know whether to report it or not.

A weapon with destructive power comparable to a grandmaster's strike—if the imperial court were to learn of it, not only would the court itself be in an uproar, but it was likely that all the great kingdoms would immediately be thrown into turmoil.

While Lin Xiuming was merely a military general, as the son of the Left Minister, he possessed a certain political savvy and realized the gravity of the situation.

Well, now that the State Preceptor had arrived, he surely knew how to report it, didn't he?

After some thought, Situ Ce said to Lin Xiuming, "General Lin, do not mention those craters in your official report. Just state that a great grandmaster may have taken action in North City."

"As for those craters, once I return to the Capital City, I will speak to His Majesty about them personally."

Lin Xiuming's eyes brightened, and he bowed again, saying, "Thankyou, State Preceptor!"

Situ Ce nodded slightly and continued, "Has General Lin noticed anything else unusual during your time in North City?"

Lin Xiuming responded, "Not for the moment. I've been cautious not to let the soldiers pay excessive attention to what has been happening in North City, fearing it might provoke the North Prince's displeasure."

Situ Ce stated, "Mm, General Lin's approach is correct. Indeed, at this time, the Imperial Army cannot afford too many small movements."

With that, Situ Ce turned and said, "That will be all for today, General Lin. I must now make my way to the North Prince Mansion."

Upon hearing this, Lin Xiuming felt a jolt in his heart; the State Preceptor was indeed heading for the North Prince.

“Safe travels, State Preceptor!”

Situ Ce quickly left the encampment where the Imperial Army was stationed and went straight to the North Prince Mansion.

#### Chapter 154: State Preceptor, What Brings You to North City?\_3

Meanwhile,

At the North Prince Mansion.

After returning to the North Prince Mansion, Lu Chen did not rush to seek out his woman for a romantic rendezvous. Instead, he sat on the stone bench in the pavilion of the outer courtyard, earnestly examining the new map of the North Land recently drawn up by the Brocade Guard.

Since he intended to bring the entirety of the North Land under his domain, making it thoroughly his territory, it was certainly necessary to understand the extent of the North Land and its terrain.

Just then, a young maid with flushed cheeks entered the outer courtyard. “Prince, a white-haired elder has arrived at the entrance of the Prince’s Mansion; he says he wishes to see you,” she reported.

Upon hearing this, Lu Chen was momentarily taken aback.

“A white-haired elder? Is he alone?”

Under normal circumstances, Lu Chen, the Prince, was not someone whom just anyone could meet on a whim.

Surely, Lu Chen couldn’t personally receive every commoner who came to the Prince’s Mansion’s gates insisting on an audience; otherwise, he’d have no time for anything other than greeting commoners all day long.



Ever since defeating the Barbarian Tribe's army of three hundred thousand, there had always been some who brought gifts to the mansion hoping for an audience with him—most of these people were from the various powers within Great Xia.

For example, members of Aristocratic Families, or envoys from certain Seigniors.

However, Lu Chen had basically ignored them; he might accept the gifts, but there was no need to meet the bearers. He didn't have so much time to watch them flatter him to his face.

Learning someone was looking for him, Lu Chen's first thought was that yet another power was sending someone to flatter him. But then, his focus shifted to the words "white-haired elder."

If it was someone sent by a certain power to deliver a gift or to flatter him, it was unlikely they would send an old man.

The young maid then said, "Yes, he's by himself."

Lu Chen continued to inquire, "He's not carrying any sort of token?"

If an ordinary person came to the Prince's Mansion without a token or didn't state their identity and intentions, the servants of the mansion wouldn't bother informing Lu Chen of the visit; they would instead simply turn the visitor away.

The maid answered, "No."

At this point, the maid suddenly realized her mistake and quickly added, "Prince, it was Commander Bai who instructed me to come and report to you."

The newly arrived maid, whose training was inadequate, had now realized that ordinary people didn't have the privilege of seeing the Prince, so she hurriedly mentioned that it was Bai Qingqing who had sent her to make the report.

Bai Qingqing's position had not been removed; she was still the Guard Commander, although she no longer managed the inner courtyard on a daily basis.

When Lu Chen heard the maid say that it was Bai Qingqing who had sent her, he immediately understood that the visitor must not be someone ordinary, otherwise Bai Qingqing wouldn't have allowed the maid to report to him.

Glancing at the young maid before him, Lu Chen then said, "Bring him to see me."

The maid promptly responded, "Yes, Prince."

She then quickly turned and made her way to the exterior of the courtyard.

Watching the maid's departing figure, Lu Chen felt somewhat reflective. Back in the Capital City, his residence only had a few maids.

Now, his residence probably had countless maids and servants.

As one's status rises, indeed, everything else becomes easier to obtain.

That young maid was clearly new, and she wasn't just any commoner's child.

Lately, quite a few families had been thrusting maids toward the North Prince Mansion, attempting to get them into his bed.

But his bed was not so easily climbed upon. It seemed he had to have a proper talk with his consort; they should not be accepting just any maid from now on.

Putting aside whether those maids had nine out of ten marks in terms of quality, just by looking at their naive appearances, he wasn't the least bit interested. He preferred mature beauties like Chu Yuqin and Yelv Nanyan.

## Chapter 155: What a Big Pie 1

Lu Chen waited in the pavilion for a while before an old man with white hair dressed in coarse clothes, followed a young maid into the courtyard. Seeing the white-haired elder before him, Lu Chen was taken aback for a moment.

This old man looked just like an ordinary commoner and did not seem to be someone with a special identity.

However, Lu Chen was no fool. Since Bai Qingqing had specifically sent the maid to inform him of this person's arrival, it was clear that this old man was not as simple as he appeared.

Lu Chen then used the system to identify the old man.

[Name: SituCe]

[Identity: State Preceptor of the Great Sum Dynasty, one of the National Pillars, currently visiting North City partly to test the North Prince, and partly to deliver a message from the Sum Emperor.]

[Strength: Grandmaster]

[Loyalty: 50]

Seeing the introduction from the system, Lu Chen frowned.

A State Preceptor?

As one of the National Pillars and a State Preceptor, what was he doing wandering around North City instead of staying properly in the capital city? At that moment, Situ Ce said to Lu Chen, "This humble one pays his respects to the Prince. May the Prince live thousands and thousands of years!" Hearing this, Lu Chen let out a chuckle and then said, "State Preceptor, why are you wandering around North City pretending to be an ordinary old commoner? You don't think I wouldn't recognize you, do you?"

Seeing that Lu Chen had recognized him at a glance, Situ Ce was a little surprised.

The princes of the Sum Emperor, with the exception of Prince Lu Yi, had not seen him, so theoretically the North Prince should not know that he was the State Preceptor.

With a smile, Situ Ce then asked, "How did the Prince recognize me?"

Lu Chen calmly replied, “Although you’ve concealed your presence, in front of me, a master who is neither humble nor arrogant and can even pose a threat to me, there’s probably no one else but you, a Grandmaster, in the entire Great Sum.

At this, Situ Ce was taken aback once more.

A master!

The North Prince had actually reached the Master Realm!

How was that possible?

He remembered that when the North Prince left the capital city, he did not even have any Inner Strength and was just an ordinary person.

Practicing martial arts is not the same as maneuvering through politics; a person can conceal their thoughts when involved in political intrigue, but it’s different with martial arts. Whether you have Inner Strength or have trained in martial arts, it’s easy for others to see through.

Especially in front of someone whose realm is higher than your own, a martial artist of lower realm finds it difficult to hide their true strength.

Just as Situ Ce doubted whether he had heard wrong, he sensed the martial aura emanating from Lu Chen.

The martial aura on Lu Chen was very faint; an average person, or someone of the same realm as Lu Chen, would not be able to detect Lu Chen’s realm.

But Situ Ce was different; he was a Grandmaster. Even if Lu Chen had hidden his aura and strength, attempting to cover up the Inner Strength within his body, it would still be perceived by Situ Ce.

That’s why Lu Chen revealed right away that he was a master. There was nothing to hide in front of Situ Ce, the Grandmaster, and for the time being, he could not conceal his strength in front of a Grandmaster.

Situ Ce quickly regained his composure and praised, “Worthy of being the North Prince who defeated the thirty thousand-strong army of the Barbarian Tribe. At only seventeen, you’ve broken through to the Master Realm. It seems that before long, the Great Sum will have a Celestial at the Heavenly Human Realm to stand guard.”

Two hours ago, Situ Ce was still at the city gates, questioning whether the North Prince’s personal strength could support his ambition-of course, the ‘strength’ he considered was the military strength of the entire North City as well as the personal strength of the North Prince himself.

Now that he knew the North Prince had reached the Master Realm, Situ Ce instantly understood the confidence that underlay the North Prince’s claim to the entire North Land as his personal territory.

A seventeen-year-old master; this was a rare occurrence in the entire world, or rather, it had never happened before-there was no martial artist who had become a master before twenty, at least, not publicly known.

To become a master at seventeen indicated that the North Prince possessed an extremely terrifying martial arts talent. Judging by the rate at which he was advancing through the realms, it was possible that he could become a Grandmaster before the age of twenty-five. He has great potential to become a Celestial in the Martial Arts World.

This was even more terrifying than the Sum Emperor’s martial arts talent Situ Ce had always believed the Sum Emperor to be the most talented martial artist he’d ever seen, but he never imagined that the Sum Emperor’s son would surpass him in talent.

Keep in mind that when the North Prince was in the capital city, no one knew he knew martial arts.

If the North Prince hadn’t practiced martial arts while in the capital city but started learning martial arts after arriving in North City, then he could be said to be the most talented martial artist the Martial Arts World had seen in a thousand years.

He couldn’t be described merely as a “genius.”

He was a prodigy!

After hearing Situ Ce’s words, Lu Chen replied with a smile, “I don’t believe the State Preceptor would travel a great distance to North City just to praise me with a few words.”

“If you have something to say, State Preceptor, please be straightforward.” Hearing this, Situ Ce immediately said, “Before I discuss official matters, I would like to ask the Prince how he views the current state of the world?” Hearing this question, Lu Chen instantly realized that Situ Ce was testing him. Situ Ce was the State Preceptor and also a pillar of Great Xia; even the Sum Emperor held him in great respect. Indeed, he had the qualifications to test any Prince.

Lu Chen then countered with a question, “Does the ‘world’ referred to by the State Preceptor mean Great Xia, or does it include the other dynasties as well?” Hearing Lu Chen’s question, Situ Ce’s mind paused for a moment.

Clearly, he meant just Great Xia.

Situ Ce had not expected anyone to step outside the scope he had envisioned; when people usually referred to “the world,” they meant Great Xia, not the ‘other dynasties or nations.

After a moment, Situ Ce continued to ask, “Does the Prince really think that all the dynasties and nations in the world combined constitute ‘the world’?” Hearing this question from Situ Ce, Lu Chen was somewhat perplexed. Why did everyone in Great Xia think that ‘the world’ referred only to “Great Xia”?

It might be understandable for ordinary people to think this way, but Situ Ce was after all the Great Xia’s State Preceptor, and they clearly knew there were many other dynasties and nations beyond Great Xia.

Lu Chen then said, “It’s somewhat difficult for this prince to understand why the State Preceptor would ask this question. Are not other dynasties and Great Xia under the same world, the same sky? Naturally, ‘the world’ should include all dynasties and nations.”

Hearing Lu Chen’s words, Situ Ce showed a smile. He suddenly bowed to Lu

Chen and said, “This old man has learned a lesson.”

This...

Lu Chen was taken aback.

Just learned a lesson like that?

He had merely explained his own understanding of ‘the world.’

Situ Ce continued, “The Prince’s thoughts have far surpassed this old man.” The North Prince’s view of ‘the world’ was not Great Xia but the whole world. The North Prince’s ambition was much greater than he had imagined! Even the former Sum Emperor did not have such ambition.

Lu Chen felt that Situ Ce’s words were somewhat baffling; he could not help thinking that perhaps it was due to Situ Ce’s old age that his words seemed incomprehensible.

At this moment, Situ Ce posed another question: “This old man has one more question for the Prince. With such insight and martial arts talent, why did you choose not to participate in the struggle for succession when in the capital city? With the Prince’s insight and martial arts talent, it wouldn’t be too difficult to obtain the position of Crown Prince.”

Indeed, with Lu Chen’s martial arts talent, his insight, and the backing of the Chu Family, it would be very easy for him to acquire the title of Crown Prince; there was no need for him to come to the cold and barren North City to grow his influence.

Hearing this from Situ Ce, Lu Chen asked with a smile, “Does the State Preceptor think it is easier for a painter to create the desired effect on a blank canvas or to modify someone else’s painting to achieve that effect?” Upon hearing Lu Chen’s analogy, Situ Ce instantly understood his meaning.

Then, Situ Ce said, “So that’s the reason. No wonder you agreed without hesitation when His Majesty asked you to come to North City.”

Today’s Great Xia was controlled by powerful aristocratic families. Any reform or order from the Sum Emperor would face their obstruction, but North City was different. It was too poor to have any significant aristocratic families, at most some minor clans. The North Prince’s edicts could pass unimpeded in North City.

The North Prince could do as he pleased in North City, like painting on blank canvas however he wished.

Lu Chen said, “Your words are not quite accurate; it wasn’t for this prince to decide whether to come to North City or not, but His Majesty’s decision.” Situ Ce acknowledged, “The Prince speaks the truth.”

Lu Chen continued, “Alright, let’s end the idle talk here. The State Preceptor must be here on behalf of His Majesty. Please tell this prince directly what His Majesty’s command for me is.”

Situ Ce said, “His Majesty has instructed this old man to inform the Prince that he intends to make you the Crown Prince. You should strive hard and not fail His Majesty’s expectations.”

Hearing this from Situ Ce, Lu Chen chuckled. That was quite an offer, one that he was afraid he couldn’t accept.

Although that was his thought, Lu Chen did not say it in front of Situ Ce. Instead, he said, “Thank you for coming all the way to North City to convey my father’s words. Please tell him that I will certainly work harder and definitely not disappoint his expectations.”

With a smile, Situ Ce said, “Of course, this old man will definitely convey your words to His Majesty.”

“However, before I leave North City, I would like to say something from the heart to the Prince.”

Lu Chen said, “Please speak, State Preceptor.”

Situ Ce said, “It is indeed not easy to achieve the desired effect when painting on someone else’s canvas, but if someone is willing to offer the Prince a larger blank canvas, I hope the Prince has enough patience to wait. Surely then, the Prince’s brush will more easily outline the ‘world’ envisioned in his heart on that canvas.”

Hearing Situ Ce’s veiled hint, Lu Chen glanced at his Loyalty value, discovering that it had actually reached eighty-five.

That was a bit outrageous.

Just after a few words, the loyalty of a Grandmaster toward himself had increased so much.



Lu Chen then said, "Thank you for the reminder, State Preceptor. This prince will certainly keep it in mind."

Originally, Situ Ce wanted to probe into matters about those great pits, but in the end, he gave up.

After hearing Lu Chen's responses, what had caused those great pits no longer mattered.

## Chapter 156: Unrest in the Major Dynasties i

Situ Ce arrived at the Prince's Mansion and exchanged a few words with Lu Chen before leaving directly, without lingering too long at the North Prince Mansion.

Lu Chen suspected that Situ Ce's visit to North City was not as simple as just conveying a message; he had seen in Situ Ce's file that another purpose of his trip was to test him.

With just a few questions asked, how could he probe his secrets?

Lu Chen suspected that Situ Ce might have been in North City for some time without his knowledge, so he immediately summoned Bai Qingqing to the courtyard.

Bai Qingqing, the Deputy Commander of the Shadow Guard, certainly would have received intelligence from other Shadow Guards upon her return to Yan County; asking her would likely reveal how long Situ Ce had been in North City.

After a short while, Bai Qingqing arrived in the courtyard, and upon entering, she performed a courtesy and said, "This servant pays respect to the Prince."

Lu Chen directly took Bai Qingqing's jade hand, helped her up, and said, "Bai, do you know how long the State Preceptor has been in North City?"

Bai Qingqing answered expressionlessly, "Around half a month."

Hearing this, Lu Chen thought that it was indeed as he had suspected: Situ Ce had arrived in North City much earlier.

However, he couldn't blame Situ Ce, as he himself had been away negotiating with the Sky Wolf King's tribe in the Northern grasslands for over half a month.

At this time, Lu Chen continued to inquire: "Since he has come to Yan County, he must have brought you a new mission as well."

While saying this, Lu Chen wrapped his arm around Bai Qingqing's slender waist and stood behind her, his hand wandering over her body.

Being held like this by Lu Chen, Bai Qingqing's body involuntarily began to tremble, and a blush appeared on her usually cool face.

"The State Preceptor has instructed this servant to investigate evidence of Prince Lu Shuyun colluding with the Barbarian Tribe and then to send the collected evidence back to the Capital city."

Hearing this, Lu Chen smirked slightly. As expected, after the threat from the northern Barbarian Tribes had ended, his father, the Sum Emperor, was preparing to take action against the Aristocratic Families.

Once the evidence of these families colluding with the Barbarian Tribes was obtained, it was likely that his father would use it as an excuse to directly purge their influence within the court.

Situ Ce had also hinted to him earlier that Situ Ce's intention was clear: he hoped that Lu Chen would not rebel when the Sum Emperor dealt with the Aristocratic Families, as the position was likely to be his in the future, so Situ Ce was reminding him that purging the families would benefit him as well.

In fact, there was no need for Situ Ce to specifically remind him, as Lu Chen had no intention of rebelling while the Sum Emperor was dealing with the Aristocratic Families.

Times make heroes. Great Sum was turbulent under the surface, but it had not yet descended into complete chaos, and if he were to rebel at this moment, it would be suicide.

Moreover, Lu Chen was no fool. He actually hoped the Sum Emperor would swiftly deal with the Aristocratic Families, as if not cleared, they would make a mess of things when he someday took control of the entire Great Sum.

Each dynasty would give rise to powerful families, but many of the Aristocratic Families in Great Sum were no ordinary families; they controlled the court, a vast amount of resources, and could even be said to control the lifeline of Great Sum.

These families were beyond comparison with newly emerging powerful clans.

The families that the Sum Emperor intended to remove were precisely those that held sway in the court, and it was unrelated to some of the emerging clans. On the contrary, the Sum Emperor would not only refrain from suppressing these new powers but would also support them, allowing them to become a force to counter the old Aristocratic Families at court.

After pondering for a moment, Lu Chen decided to put aside the matters of the Capital city for the time being and focus first on the development of North City.

With the ten thousand captives from the Barbarian Tribe and the newly acquired method of making cement, infrastructure development of the major roads in North City could begin.

Just then, a maid came into the courtyard, “Prince, the two ladies have finished washing up.”

Hearing this, Lu Chen came back to his senses. The two ladies the maid mentioned were naturally Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wenyao, who had just entered the North Prince Mansion.

Lu Chen then let go of Bai Qingqing and gave her a pat on the buttocks, “Bai, you can go attend to your matters.”

A sense of shame suddenly washed over Bai Qingqing, and she couldn’t understand why Lu Chen always liked to touch her buttocks.

“As you command, Prince.”

Having spoken, Bai Qingqing quickly left.

At that moment, Lu Chen said to the maid who had made the report: “Which courtyard are the two ladies in? Lead me there.”

The maid immediately responded: “Yes, Prince. Please follow this servant.”

Following that, the maid led Lu Chen to the courtyard of Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wen Yao.

Their rooms were both located in the same courtyard, which was not very large, having only two rooms. Next door was the courtyard where Wang Qingci resided.

At that moment, Wang Qingci was sitting above the courtyard wall, openly scrutinizing the two Barbarian beauties that Lu Chen had brought back.

Then, as a man’s figure appeared in the courtyard of Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wen Yao, the two promptly rose from the stone bench in the pavilion.

“We pay respect to the Prince.”

Seeing the new attire of Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wen Yao, Lu Chen was momentarily dazzled.

They had exchanged their clothes for those of Great Sum and, after the maids had carefully dressed them, looked significantly different from before.

Yelv Nanyan wore a sheer long gown embellished with lotus patterns, with a belt cinched at the waist, perfectly showcasing her voluptuous figure. The sheer fabric clung to her skin, suggesting more than it revealed. As it tightly hugged her body, her shapely buttocks were even more pronounced, making the beautiful matron look seductive, noble, and opulent.

## Chapter 157: Unrest in the Major Dynasties !

Lu Chen took another look at Xiao Wen Yao. She was dressed in a white gown inside with a dark green robe over it, her black hair shining and draped at her waist, her head adorned with a single hairpin. She looked no different from a sheltered young lady from Great Xia.

Standing together, Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wenyao resembled a mother and her daughter.

Coming back to his senses, Lu Chen smiled slightly before saying, “I didn’t expect you two to become even more beautiful after getting dressed up. It seems I am quite fortunate.”

Hearing this, both Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wenyao’s cheeks flushed with a hint of red.

This was the first time they had dressed completely in the style of Great Xia, and they hadn’t expected to become more beautiful in the attire of Great Xia.

When they had looked at themselves in the bronze mirror earlier, they were immediately astounded by their own beauty.

Previously, they would wrap themselves tightly in fur coats and occasionally wear fur hats, which totally concealed their figures and beauty.

At that moment, Wang Qingci, sitting on a wall of the courtyard and brimming with a smile, said, “Congratulations, Prince, on acquiring two new beauties!”

Hearing this, Lu Chen turned to look at Wang Qingci, who was sitting atop the courtyard wall, and replied, “Mr. Wang isn’t busy managing the affairs of the Rain-listening Pavilion and instead comes here for entertainment?”

With an air of someone who couldn’t be scalded by boiling water, Wang Qingci said, “The Prince is so fierce; I am very scared.”

“I heard that the Prince took in two female slaves, so I wanted to come and see what my sisters look like.”

Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wenyao felt somewhat astonished by the dialogue between Wang Qingci and Lu Chen.

The red-clothed woman, sitting so casually on the courtyard wall, was actually a female slave of the North Prince?

Are the female slaves of the North Prince Mansion so bold as to speak to their master, the North Prince, in such a manner?

Xiao Wen Yao thought of the slaves at her own royal court; if any slave dared to speak to her in that way, they would not need to wait for her to act, as the other slaves would beat that disrespectful slave half to death.

At this time, Wang Qingci glanced at Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wen Yao, continuing with a smile, “It seems the Prince still remembers what I mentioned before—that the royal court of the Barbarian Tribe has beautiful women.”

When Lu Chen first arrived in North City, he had asked if there were any beautiful women in North City. At that time, Wang Qingci informed him that there were beautiful women in the royal court of the Barbarian Tribe.

At that time, Wang Qingci was the Tower Master of the Hundred Flowers Tower and the Saintess of the Misty Pavilion, dealing with a huge amount of information every day, so she had some understanding of the Barbarian Tribe’s royal court and knew that the Sky Wolf King’s wife was especially beautiful.

Upon meeting them today, Wang Qingci was also amazed by Yelv Nanyan’s appearance, feeling completely incomparable to her.

The mature charm that Yelv Nanyan exuded was something she did not possess, and she was well aware that Lu Chen particularly fancied this kind of beauty, like that of Yelv Nanyan and Chu Yuqin.

Whenever Chu Yuqin was mentioned in front of Lu Chen, he became as excited as if he’d been injected with rooster’s blood, turning extremely ferocious.

Wang Qingci then hopped down from the wall, her light figure gracefully touching the ground; she then approached Lu Chen and whispered in his ear, “Prince, has the Brocade Guard received any news about the Great Jue Dynasty? There have been some movements from the Great Jue Dynasty recently.”

Wang Qingci came here not simply to idle chat with Lu Chen. As the Tower Master of the Rain-listening Pavilion, she was responsible for collecting intelligence on various dynasties and nations for Lu Chen—she didn’t have time to come here and chat about women with him.

Startled by Wang Qingci's words, Lu Chen paused for a moment.

At present, most of the Brocade Guard were distributed within the territory of the Great Xia Dynasty, with few members in other dynasties, and he indeed had not heard about any unusual activities from the Great Jue Dynasty.

The Great Jue Dynasty was close to North City, located in the southwest corner. Although it was a newly founded dynasty and quite poor and weak, it was still a neighbor to North City, and Lu Chen was bound to keep track of their movements.

Lu Chen had been dealing with the affairs in North City recently and had almost paid no attention to the Great Jue Dynasty. Unexpectedly, the Rain-listening Pavilion had managed to infiltrate the Great Jue Dynasty in such a short time, reflecting Wang Qingci's high efficiency.

Lu Chen then asked, "I haven't sent any Brocade Guards to the Great Jue Dynasty yet. Tell me directly whatever movements they have."

Wang Qingci replied, "The Great Jue Dynasty has been mobilizing troops continuously for half a month, and now they've stationed two hundred thousand troops at the border between Great Xia and North City."

Hearing this, Lu Chen chuckled and then said, "Is the Great Jue Dynasty under the impression that I want to attack them?"

Lu Chen didn't believe that the Great Jue Dynasty would invade Great Xia at this time. The Barbarian Tribe's army of three hundred thousand had just been annihilated by North City. As a recently established dynasty, the Great Jue Dynasty would not dare make a sudden move against Great Xia.

The actions of the Great Jue Dynasty were most likely defensive against North City.

With such a colossal entity appearing to their north, it was impossible for them not to be concerned at all.

It wasn't just the Great Jue Dynasty's stationing of two hundred thousand troops—inside Great Xia itself, the various seigniors were also stationing troops in areas adjoining North City.

For instance, the Qi Prince had, just over a month ago, upon hearing that five thousand Heavy Cavalry sent by Lu Chen to pick up Mu Zixuan and the others had just left Anping City, immediately moved the fifty thousand troops from his territory to the northern border overnight.

#### Chapter 158 Unrest in the Major Dynasties\_3

The fifty thousand-strong army made no moves, simply remaining across from Anping City, monitoring North City.

Clearly, the appearance of the fifty thousand heavy cavalry had deterred all dynasties, especially the powers surrounding North City. They feared that Lu Chen would suddenly send troops to attack them, so they hastily dispatched troops northward to guard against North City.

Seeing that Lu Chen seemed unfazed, Wang Qingci said, "Prince, I believe that Great Jue's troop movements northward are not only about defending against North City."

Hearing this, Lu Chen was taken aback. In his view, once the fifty thousand heavy cavalry of North City were deployed, there certainly wouldn't be any powers nearby daring to trouble him.

If the Da Yue Dynasty's troop movements northward weren't for defending against North City, what were they for?

Could it really be that they intended to attack North City?

Lu Chen then said, "Share your thoughts."

Wang Qingci promptly said, "To my knowledge, it's not only Great Jue that is moving troops. The other major dynasties are secretly doing the same, and they are all stationing troops near the border with Great Sum."

"Therefore, I believe it's unlikely that the Da Yue Dynasty's troop movements are solely for defending against North City. It's more like the major dynasties have reached some tacit agreement and are preparing to take action against Great Sum."



Lu Chen fell into deep thought. He had been paying attention to the happenings within Great Sum's borders, nearly unaware of the news of the major dynasties mobilizing troops.

It's also possible that since he went to the North Land for half a month, the intelligence reports were piling up in his study.

However, speaking of which, this was a good test of the Rain-listening Pavilion's ability to collect information.

At this point, Wang Qingci continued, "After the fifty thousand heavy cavalry from North City appeared, the major dynasties probably believe that these heavy cavalry belong to His Majesty. Coupled with the court's existing heavy cavalry, Great Sum now commands nearly eighty thousand heavy cavalry, which likely led the other dynasties to mistakenly think that His Majesty has ambitions for outward expansion."

Lu Chen thought for a moment and agreed with Wang Qingci's words. Although these fifty thousand heavy cavalry were the Great Yu Remnants he had summoned through the system, others were not privy to these matters.

What other dynasties saw was that Great Sum now had nearly eighty thousand heavy cavalry.

The sudden addition of fifty thousand heavy cavalry by Great Sum surely signified something obvious.

When the major dynasties are evenly matched and one suddenly begins to massively bolster its military forces, unbeknownst to others, they can only assume you are gearing up for war.

Consequently, the major dynasties would tacitly think about eliminating the strongest one first.

Thinking this, Lu Chen showed a hint of a smile. Then he said to Wang Qingci, "Mr. Wang's intelligence work is well done. Continue the good work in the future, and pay more attention to the movements of the major dynasties."

Wang Qingci immediately responded, "Yes, Prince."

At this point, Wang Qingci lightly leapt up and landed directly on top of the courtyard wall, "Prince, if there's nothing else, I'll take my leave now."

Lu Chen said, "Hmm, alright."

Afterward, Wang Qingci's figure quickly disappeared from view.

At this moment, Lu Chen came back to his senses and looked at Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wen Yao.

Yelv Nanyan then spoke with neither humility nor arrogance, "Prince, I would like to go see our Barbarian Tribe soldiers, if that's permitted?"

Lu Chen said, "No problem, come with me."

Lu Chen had intended to take Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wen Yao to meet those Barbarian Tribe soldiers anyway, to help them calm down completely and avoid harboring any inappropriate thoughts in their minds.

## Chapter 159: The Brutal Sky Wolf King and the Merciful North Prince i

Lu Chen quickly arrived at the camp holding the Barbarian Tribe captives alongside Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wen Yao.

There were a hundred thousand captives from the Barbarian Tribe, and North City had put in a substantial amount of effort just to manage these captives.

The camp for the Barbarian captives was stationed with ten thousand Heavy Cavalry men; aside from them, there were also regular soldiers responsible for managing the captives.

Essentially, one North City soldier had to be responsible for more than a hundred Barbarian captives, which put significant pressure on the North City soldiers in charge of management.

The majority of officers and soldiers from North City believed that killing these Barbarian captives would be the simplest solution.

However, keeping these captives was an order from the North Prince, so the officers and soldiers did not comment further.

As soon as Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wenyaoyao descended from their carriage, the laboring Barbarian captives exploded into commotion upon seeing them.

“Princess... Princess!!!”

“Look, everyone, it’s the Princess!!!”

“What’s happening! Why is the Princess showing up in Yan County!!!”

“Could it be that our tribe has been annihilated by the North Prince and even the Princess has been captured by him!!!”

“No... it can’t be! The Princess is so wise; once she knew we were defeated, she would surely have moved the royal court immediately. How could the North Prince so easily find the specific location of our tribe!!!”

“That person cannot be the Princess!!!”

Seeing that the Barbarian captives could not believe the Princess of the Barbarian Tribe had come down from the carriage, a North City soldier looking after the captives sneered and said, “You probably don’t know yet, but your Princess has already agreed to marry our Prince. She is now our Prince’s woman.”

” What’s more, soon your Sky Wolf King tribe will be re-settled in North City. It’s only because our Prince is merciful. If it were someone else, they would have slaughtered all you barbarians long ago.”

Upon hearing the soldier’s words, the Barbarian captives were stunned.

How could their Princess choose to marry the North Prince? Had their royal court truly been located by the North Prince?

Without the Princess with the Sky Wolf King tribe, did the Sky Wolf King tribe still have a future?

For a moment, the mood among the Barbarian captives turned very somber, and the atmosphere at the scene was incredibly oppressive.

At this time, a guard from the Prince's Mansion came before the captives, "Those from the Sky Wolf King tribe stay behind; everyone from the North Fre King tribe may leave now."

Among these hundred thousand Barbarian captives, many were soldiers from the North Fre King tribe. Hearing the guard's words, quite a few North Fre King tribe captives turned and left, and soon only those from the Sky Wolf King tribe remained on the scene.

By now, Yelv Nanyan, with a serene pace, approached the soldiers. Seeing not only the Princess but also the daughter of the Sky Wolf King, Xiao Wen Yao, the soldiers had to accept reality.

It seemed that the royal court of the Sky Wolf King tribe had indeed been found by the North Prince, otherwise their Princess and Princess wouldn't be here together.

At that moment, the Barbarian captives knelt down one after another, saying, "Greetings, Princess!!!"

Witnessing this scene, Lu Chen felt somewhat moved, astonished by the high regard the Barbarian captives held for Yelv Nanyan. Indeed, capturing her had been the right decision.

Even if Yelv Nanyan had not been beautiful, without a ninety-grade beauty score, her strong political value made capturing her essentially the same as controlling the entire Sky Wolf King tribe.

Of course, it must be said that he was lucky; Yelv Nanyan was indeed beautiful, surpassing a score of ninety, and what mattered most was that Yelv Nanyan was still pure, exactly his type.

Yelv Nanyan, looking at the kneeling captives, felt a mix of emotions and sighed, "I am no longer a Princess. Stand up, everyone. Like you, I am but a prisoner."

After hearing Yelv Nanyan's words, the Barbarian captives still did not rise.

At this moment, one of the captives looked up and asked, “Princess, has the Sky Wolf King tribe really been annihilated by the North Prince?”

Yelv Nanyan replied, “The North Prince is merciful and has allowed the Sky Wolf King tribe to settle in North City. Your relatives will live in North City as citizens of Great Sum. In a sense, from now on, there will no longer be a Sky Wolf King tribe.”

After Yelv Nanyan said this, the Barbarian captives had a hard time believing it.

Weren’t they attacking North City to claim its lands?

Now that the North Prince had defeated them, not only did he refrain from destroying their royal court but also relocated their tribespeople to North City? Turning them into citizens of Great Sum?

Then, what was the point of their initial attack on North City?

Not only had they lost so many lives, but now they had also become captives, and their tribe was no more.

In the end, the blood of two hundred thousand men was spilled in a completely meaningless war.

At this moment, the Barbarian captives were silent, unsure of what to say.

Yelv Nanyan sighed softly, then continued, “The North Prince has asked me to tell you that you will labor in North City for ten years. If any of you perform well, the North Prince will allow you to visit home and may also offer you a chance to finish your labor early.”

“After the labor is over, whether you choose to stay in North City as citizens of Great Sum or return to the grasslands to continue a nomadic life, the decision will be yours to make.”

Hearing these words, the captives of the Barbarian Tribe each lifted their heads, visibly reinvigorated.

One of the soldiers then asked, “Princess, is what you are saying true? Can we really return home to see our families?”

## Chapter 160: The Brutal Sky Wolf King and the Merciful North Prince\_2

Yelv Nanyan said, “On the way here, I asked the North Prince, and he said each month he will grant one hundred of you the opportunity to return home to visit your families. However, you’ll have to wait until half a year has passed, but the North Prince won’t restrict your relatives from actively visiting you.”

Upon hearing these words, the captives from the Barbarian Tribe became incredibly excited. They all had thought they would never be able to leave North City or see their relatives again, but unexpectedly, the North Prince was willing to let their relatives visit them.

If that was the case, it probably wouldn’t be long before they could see their relatives.

However, it quickly dawned on some of the Barbarian Tribe captives that they owed this treatment to the sacrifices of their queen.

At that moment, a captive asked, “Queen Yelv, is this a condition you secured by agreeing to marry the North Prince?”

Just as Yelv Nanyan was about to answer, she saw the faces of the Barbarian Tribe captives all intently staring at her, and she immediately fell silent. In reality, this had little to do with her, as she now had no bargaining power in the presence of Lu Chen.

Seeing Yelv Nanyan’s silence, the captives from the Barbarian Tribe took it as her default agreement.

Instantly, the captives held even greater gratitude toward Yelv Nanyan, and her standing in their hearts rose yet another notch.

Just then, another captive from the Barbarian Tribe suddenly asked, “Queen Yelv, does this mean both you and the princess are to marry the North Prince?” Yelv Nanyan answered, “Yes.”

The captive continued, “Then, the princess will become the North Prince’s woman? If I tell the North Prince something about the princess’s mother, would that be considered a meritorious deed?”

Upon hearing the captive’s words, Xiao Wenyao was taken aback for a moment, then immediately said, “Something about my mother? What is it?”

The captive said, “Replying to the princess, back then, your mother was poisoned to death by the Sky Wolf King, and several of his followers, including myself, are aware of this matter.”

Although the Sky Wolf King was already dead, Xiao Wenyao was still alive, and was about to become the North Prince’s woman. If she could be told of some disgraceful acts the Sky Wolf King had committed and grow to hate him, it would, to some extent, be helping the North Prince.

After all, the North Prince was Xiao Wenyao’s father’s sworn enemy. If Xiao Wenyao bore no hatred for the Sky Wolf King, it wouldn’t be good for the North Prince, and Xiao Wenyao might not wholeheartedly join the North Prince Mansion.

But if Xiao Wenyao learned her mother was killed by the Sky Wolf King, it was very likely she would no longer care about her father’s death at the hands of the North Prince, and it would be much easier for her to wholeheartedly join the North Prince Mansion.

At that moment, another captive from the Barbarian Tribe spoke up, “Princess, I am also aware of this, and what’s more, I know that the poison used against your mother was personally administered by the Sky Wolf King!”

At these words, Xiao Wenyao’s complexion instantly turned deathly pale.

She had long heard this suspicion from her uncle, but it was after all just speculation without evidence. She hadn’t expected that, after her father’s death, his former followers would stand up as witnesses.

Her mother had indeed been poisoned by her own father!

With that thought, Xiao Wenyao couldn’t help but shudder.

Her father’s heart was so malicious!

To take another queen, he didn't hesitate to poison the wife who had always been by his side.

If it weren't for her mother convincing her uncle to step down back then, her father might not have been able to become the king of the Barbarian Tribe. Yet, the first thing he did after becoming the Sky Wolf King was to poison her mother.

Initially, Xiao Wenyao had felt a hint of sorrow over Xiao Hongbo's death, as he was her biological father and they were related by blood.

But after hearing the revelations of her father's former subordinates, the last bit of kinship she felt for Xiao Hongbo vanished. She merely thought that Xiao Hongbo deserved to be killed by the North Prince—it was as if the North Prince had avenged her mother's death for her.

Meanwhile, Lu Chen approached from a distance. Seeing Xiao Wenyao's tears streaming down onto the ground, he said with a smile, "What's the matter, little princess, is your heart aching for the suffering of your tribal warriors?" Xiao Wenyao did not reply, merely wiping away her tears continuously. At that time, Yelv Nanyan spoke up from her side, "Prince, a few former subordinates of the Sky Wolf King just confessed to Yaoyao that he had poisoned Yaoyao's mother to death."

Upon hearing Yelv Nanyan's words, Lu Chen was taken aback. He had already heard about this matter in the intelligence collected by Wu Yuan, but he had only regarded it as a tidbit of gossip—it didn't have much to do with him after all.

But seeing Xiao Wenyao crying so heartbrokenly, she must have had an extremely close relationship with her mother.

In that case, did he help Xiao Wenyao avenge her mother's death?

Thinking of this, Lu Chen glanced at Xiao Wenyao's favorability and found that it had indeed increased by quite a lot, almost reaching eighty.

At that moment, Lu Chen suddenly thought of something, then he turned to the captive Barbarian Tribe members and said, "The Sky Wolf King, for his own ambition, did not even spare his wife's life. Not only did he kill his own wife, he also led you to North City to pillage and slaughter, committing so many sins." "Since some of you were once the Sky Wolf King's subordinates, you



must know even more about the wrongs he committed. As long as you stand forward and reveal all his crimes, I will give you a chance to return home and visit your families!”

The war had ended; there had to be a war criminal onto whom all the blame could be directed. This would facilitate Lu Chen’s conquest of the entire Sky Wolf King’s tribe.

By then, the people of the Sky Wolf King’s tribe would only think that it was their king’s fault. Their king, driven by his own ambition, had led the entire tribe into an abyss.

Compared to the Sky Wolf King, it was North Prince who was truly good to them. North Prince didn’t just refrain from killing them; he also gave them a chance to redeem themselves, and he even relocated their families to North City.

As time passed, these Barbarian Tribe members would only grow to hate the Sky Wolf King more and more.

Lu Chen thought to himself that since the Sky Wolf King was already dead, let him serve a purpose one last time.

Just as Lu Chen had anticipated, as soon as he finished speaking, a Barbarian Tribe captive stood up and said, “I know that the Sky Wolf King would secretly imprison Great Sum women he had looted and torture them in a tent! He pretended to want to marry the Queen, claiming he loved her, but in truth he only coveted her beauty and the power she wielded. He was scum!”

Upon hearing the captive’s words, Lu Chen frowned slightly, feeling as if he had been implicated. Was it his imagination?

However, since the captive was talking about the Sky Wolf King, Lu Chen did not pay too much attention to it.

Once one came forward, others followed. Quickly another Barbarian Tribe soldier stood up and said, “I know that Xiao Hongbo, to become the chieftain of our tribe, secretly murdered an elder who opposed him, and even cooked and ate the elder’s entrails. Xiao Hongbo is a demon!”

“I know...”

“I also know...”

For a time, the captive Barbarian Tribe members stood up one after another, exposing the crimes Xiao Hongbo had committed. At first, their statements were plausible, but as they continued, some began to fabricate outrageous tales.

Such as Xiao Hongbo enjoying eating children, having relations with men, and even a taste for excrement came up.

This was exactly the effect Lu Chen wanted. After all, the more the Sky Wolf King was despised by members of his tribe, the easier it would be for the Barbarian Tribe captives to submit to North City.

When it felt about right, Lu Chen turned to Qin Yushan and said, “Commander Qin, later on have someone list all of the Sky Wolf King Xiao Hongbo’s crimes and then issue a proclamation to be distributed throughout all the cities in North City.”

Qin Yushan immediately said, “Yes, Prince.”

Having said this, Lu Chen looked at Yelv Nanyan and said, “Queen Yelv, it should be enough by now, we can head back.”

Yelv Nanyan glanced at the Barbarian Tribe captives present, then looked at Xiao Wen Yao, who was in a state of stupor and sighed softly, “Yes, Prince.” Shortly afterwards, they returned to the Prince’s Mansion.

After Yelv Nanyan returned to the Prince’s Mansion, she sat on the wooden stool in her room, gazing out of the window at the courtyard, lost in thought. Just then, the voice of a maid from the Prince’s Mansion came from outside the courtyard.

“My respects to the Prince!”

Hearing the maid’s voice, Yelv Nanyan was momentarily taken aback, then she quickly stood up. Just as she did so, Lu Chen pushed the door and entered the room.