

Es. Benefits 171

Chapter 171 Could it be that I was being paranoid?_i

Currently, roughly 500,000 Great Yu Remnants reside in Great Yu City, these are the subjects the system assigned to Lu Chen. However, these subjects each have their own thoughts, and although they are fully loyal to him as the North Prince, it does not necessarily mean they are willing to leave the land where their ancestors have lived for generations.

After defeating the Sky Wolf King, Lu Chen immediately communicated his ideas to Xuanyuan Chen and General Wenren, two Black Cavalry generals, hoping they would convey his thoughts to the people of Great Yu City.

If those 500,000 people are willing to relocate to North City, then the development of North City's wastelands would become much easier by comparison.

Hearing Lu Chen's query, Xuanyuan Chen stepped forward and said, "Prince, I have conveyed your intentions to the people of Great Yu City, but to the best of my knowledge, most of the common folk are unwilling to leave Great Yu City." "Moreover, I believe, Prince, that there is no need to relocate the people of Great Yu City to North City. In the future, your territory will extend even further into the North Land, and Great Yu City will guard every inch of land for you in the North Land."

Upon hearing Xuanyuan Chen's response, Lu Chen fell into thought for a moment.

Xuanyuan Chen's words weren't without merit; Lu Chen had already planned to incorporate the entirety of the North Land into his feudal state, and Great Yu City would become a frontier city in his territory.

If it was going to be his land, it naturally needed to be defended, and the topography of Yan'an Mountain, where Great Yu City was situated, was easy to defend and hard to attack, making it an excellent location to station troops.

Consider this, Great Sum with its population of over ten million could only train twenty thousand Heavy Cavalry, while Great Yu City, with a mere population of 500,000, boasted fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry.

Although Great Sum also had to support several hundred thousand regular troops, an area where Great Yu City couldn't compare,

the fact that Great Yu City could train fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry alone spoke volumes about its potential for warfare.

After some consideration, Lu Chen ultimately decided not to relocate those 500,000 people to North City. Instead, he resolved to let them remain in Great Yu City and would send troops there later to garrison and defend the entire North Land.

While Lu Chen was lost in thought, General Wenren stepped forward and said, "Prince, I've heard that you plan to build a direct road connecting Yan County with all the counties and cities in North City. I believe, now that Great Yu City has become part of your territory and its inhabitants part of your subjects, a direct road should also be built to connect Great Yu City."

"With such a road joining Great Yu City, North City's soldiers would be able to quickly reach Great Yu City, and henceforth, the entire North Land would be under your control."

After thinking it over, Lu Chen then said, "General Wenren's suggestion is good, and I accept it."

If Great Yu City was to be treated as a military stronghold, it was indeed necessary to build a direct road there so that Lu Chen could swiftly dispatch troops to the North Land.

Most importantly, this would encourage interaction between the people of Great Yu City and those from North City, and in the future, Great Yu City would no longer remain isolated.

Lu Chen then said, "Alright, let's end this topic here. Does anyone else have anything else to discuss?"

Commander Qin Yushan then stood up and said, "Prince, currently the various kingdoms are frequently mobilizing troops. Great Yue has stationed 200,000 troops at the border with North City, but intelligence from the Brocade Guard has become outdated and we cannot ascertain the specific movements of the other kingdoms in realtime. I believe it is time to expand the Brocade Guard, we should recruit more agents to infiltrate the other kingdoms and gather intelligence."

A Brocade Guard force of five thousand, if solely tasked with gathering intelligence within Great Sum, would face no problems. However, collecting intelligence from other kingdoms, or states, would prove more challenging.

The most critical issue is that the languages and scripts of the various countries are not necessarily the same; Brocade Guards from within Great Sum might not understand a word upon arriving in another kingdom, let alone gather intelligence.

Lu Chen responded, “Commander Qin, stay behind after this meeting to discuss this matter with me separately; we will not discuss it further at this moment.”

After all, the Brocade Guard was a sharp knife in Lu Chen’s hand, and he didn’t intend to discuss matters pertaining to the Brocade Guard in front of everyone else, so as not to alarm others, especially Li Rui and the others who were not summoned through the system.

Hearing Lu Chen’s words, Qin Yushan immediately replied, “Yes, Prince.”

As the sound of his voice faded, Qin Yushan returned to his place.

Lu Chen asked again, “Any other matters? If not, then today’s meeting is adjourned. You may all leave.”

Subsequently, everyone, in unison, voiced, “We take our leave, may the Prince live for thousands, ten thousands of years!!!”

Afterward, everyone left the study, leaving only Qin Yushan behind.

In the following half an hour, Lu Chen and Qin Yushan discussed the expansion of the Brocade Guard.

Meanwhile, elsewhere.

In a courtyard of the North Prince Mansion.

Two exceedingly beautiful women were sitting in a pavilion, watching the people who were about to leave the North Prince Mansion from the outside of the pavilion.

This spot was not part of the inner court but was situated perfectly to observe the officials from North City as they passed by after leaving Lu Chen's study.

The Mysterious Moon Palace had little presence in North City; Chen Wanrong and Lin Wanyun had been in North City for quite some time, yet Chen Wanrong had still not managed to administer the Love Worm to Lu Chen.

At this moment, Lin Wanyun spoke, "Palace Master, it seems the North Prince has all but forgotten about the two of us."

They had been living in the North Prince Mansion for quite a long time, yet aside from some initial conversation, the North Prince had since had no further interactions with them.

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After spending this period of time lying low in the North Prince Mansion, they had essentially figured out Lu Chen's daily routine.

Lu Chen would rise early in the morning and go straight to his study to attend to various matters, occasionally leaving the North Prince Mansion to inspect the construction of the military forces.

Once the day had ended, Lu Chen would randomly choose one of his wives or concubines' rooms to enter, and with that, his day would come to a close.

Lu Chen's days were almost always like this.

As such, it became even less likely for Chen Wanrong and Lin Wanyun to have any interactions with Lu Chen. They were still in the North Prince Mansion, but whether Lu Chen was in his study or in his inner court with his wives, the two guests couldn't possibly just barge into his study.

The key issue was that they couldn't find an excuse to spend time with Lu Chen.

Of course, the most important point was that the North Prince had never personally sought them out.

Logically, given the North Prince's fondness for beauty, evidenced by his nightly efforts to cultivate relationships with his women, it should be clear that he couldn't live without the company of women. And yet, Chen Wanrong, a woman with the grace to bring a nation to its knees, failed to stir his heart in the slightest?

Chen Wanrong even began to doubt if she was considered beautiful at all.

If she continued to have no interaction with Lu Chen, how could she deploy the Love Worm? With Great Sum on the cusp of civil unrest, this was the prime time to strike against the Sum Emperor. If they didn't hurry to develop the Subtle Dragon Spell, they could miss the chance to kill the Sum Emperor.

Chen Wanrong softly said, "We can't continue to wait like this."

Instantly grasping Chen Wanrong's intent, Lin Wanyun realized that she was planning to take the initiative to seek out Lu Chen. However, this was far from an easy method. Lin Wanyun then spoke, "Palace Master, if you personally go to seek the North Prince, he might very well be guarded against you." "Why not use my relationship with Chu Yuqin to seek her out first and see what the North Prince has been up to lately? If the North Prince has any problems he can't solve, we from the Mysterious Moon Palace could extend a helping hand. This might allow us to bridge the gap with the North Prince," she suggested.

By now, both understood all too well that although the North Prince was lustful, he was by no means mindless; his desires were restrained by his rationality.

If he were the type to covet every beautiful woman he saw, he certainly wouldn't have refrained from actively seeking out the two of them for so long. Clearly, the North Prince was wary of them, so their next move was quite straightforward: they needed to make the North Prince lower his guard against them, against the Mysterious Moon Palace.

Only then could Chen Wanrong truly get close to the North Prince and have a chance to place the Love Worm on him. Otherwise, their presence in the Prince's Mansion would serve no purpose.

Upon hearing Lin Wanyun's suggestion, Chen Wanrong thought for a moment, then replied, "Alright, let's do as Madam Lin said."

They certainly couldn't keep waiting; they had to take the initiative to find opportunities to get close to Lu Chen.

At dusk.

Lu Chen, after finishing a day's work, rose from his chair and stretched, then prepared to head to the main courtyard for dinner.

As he was leaving the study, he noticed under the red glow of the sunset, two beautiful women holding hands, chatting and laughing about something.

Seeing Chu Yuqin and Lin Wanyun talking, the corners of Lu Chen's mouth lifted slightly in a subtle smile. It seemed the two fairies from the Mysterious Moon Palace finally couldn't wait any longer.

Then, Lu Chen glanced at Lin Wanyun's favorability towards him, which had already surpassed ninety, indicating it was almost time for the next step.

With that in mind, Lu Chen walked directly towards Lin Wanyun and Chu Yuqin. Approaching the two women, Lu Chen smiled lightly and asked, "Madam Lin, Madam Chu, what are you discussing?"

Seeing that it was Lu Chen, Lin Wanyun felt a surge of joy within her heart, finally having an opportunity to converse with the North Prince.

Lin Wanyun quickly said, "Greetings, Prince!"

Lu Chen immediately responded, "Hey, Madam Lin, I've already addressed you as 'aunt'. There's no need for formalities in the Prince's Mansion, the North Prince Mansion isn't so strict."

Lin Wanyun replied, "How can that be? One must not neglect etiquette. You are the Prince, and if a common woman must pay respects, then she should."

Lu Chen said, "Madam Lin, you wound me with such words. You're the sister of my mother's sworn sister, Jin Lan. I consider you my aunt, yet you seem to think we have no such connection. Could it be that my affections are all one-sided?"

Madam Lin was slightly taken aback.

She had not expected the North Prince to say such a thing.

At that moment, Chu Yuqin cast a faint glance at Lu Chen. All this talk about Madam Lin, she didn't believe for a second that Lu Chen truly saw Madam Lin as an aunt.

Just thinking about what he had done with his so-called Madam Chu, it was clear that the little rascal was always handsy with her, never treating her like an aunt.

Given that even she, a woman who had lived by Lu Chen's side for so many years, was treated this way, how could Lu Chen possibly treat Madam Lin as an aunt?

However, Chu Yuqin did not interrupt at this time.

Once she came to her senses, Madam Lin said, "It's the commoner woman's lack of understanding, failing to appreciate the Prince's kindness. From now on, in the Prince's Mansion, I will no longer perform courtesies to the Prince." Hearing this, Lu Chen replied with a smile, "That's more like it. Also, stop referring to yourself as a commoner woman in the future. Just calling yourself 'Aunt' will do."

Madam Lin felt somewhat at a loss. Unlike Chu Yuqin, although she too was a close sister to Lu Chen's mother, she had not lived with Lu Chen for decades. Suddenly having to refer to herself as 'Aunt' in front of Lu Chen made her uncomfortable.

Nevertheless, since Lu Chen had said so, she had no choice but to pluck up her courage and say, "Alright then, Aunt understands."

Lu Chen continued, "By the way, Madam Lin, are you and Miss Chen settling well in the Prince's Mansion? Is there anything you lack? If you need anything, feel free to inform the staff of the Prince's Mansion."

Madam Lin responded, "Thank you for your concern, Prince. The Palace Master and I have settled well into the North Prince Mansion. The servants and maids have been very kind to us and we lack nothing."

"That's good," said Lu Chen.

At this point, Chu Yuqin spoke up, "Chen'er, I was just discussing with your Madam Lin about having her join the inner court's defenders as well."

Hearing this, Lu Chen paused for a moment, then turned with a smile to

Madam Lin, "Madam Lin, you belong to the Mysterious Moon Palace. Will becoming my inner court defender affect you?"

Lu Chen had also realized that this was the second time the Mysterious Moon Palace was testing him. If he allowed Madam Lin, an elder from the Mysterious Moon Palace, to become an inner court defender, it would signify his acceptance of the Mysterious Moon Palace. After all, the inner court of the Prince's Mansion is where his closest confidants and he himself lived.

Once he agreed to let the people of the Mysterious Moon Palace into the inner court of the North Prince Mansion, they could fully commence their collaboration.

Madam Lin quickly said, "It won't affect me, not at all."

"The Palace Master has noticed that Yan County has seen an influx of unwelcome guests lately, most aiming for the North Prince Mansion and you, Prince. Since we reside here, it's only right that we contribute to the security of the North Prince Mansion."

Lu Chen then showed an innocuous smile, "I'm pleased that Miss Chen has such thoughts. Very well, from now on, the safety of the North Prince Mansion will be entrusted to both Madam Lin and Madam Chu."

Seeing Lu Chen's approval, Madam Lin felt a rush of excitement, having made another step forward.

Now, it would be much easier for them to interact with the North Prince. Moreover, the fact that the North Prince had asked her to be an inner court defender also meant that he had accepted assistance from the Mysterious Moon Palace. It looked like their Palace Master would soon have the opportunity to connect directly with Lu Chen.

At this point, Lu Chen said, "Alright, I won't keep you from your conversation any longer, I'm off to have my meal."

Madam Lin promptly replied, "Ok then, Prince, take care."

Lu Chen then headed straight to the main courtyard.

By this time, Mu Zixuan along with Dazhou and Xiaozhou had already been waiting with the children for Lu Chen's arrival.

Seeing his three beautiful wives and their children in their arms, Lu Chen's face once again broke into a smile.

After a long day's work, the feeling of having someone waiting for you at home was truly pleasant, especially when it's three beautiful wives.

Chapter 173 Mu Zixuan Is Pregnant Again_1

Seeing Lu Chen return, Mu Zixuan and the other two ladies quickly handed the children in their arms to the nannies and maids by their sides and immediately came over to attend to Lu Chen.

Zhou Xiaoxiao hurriedly pulled out a chair, while Zhou Youyou brought over a basin of water for Lu Chen to wash his hands, and Mu Zixuan fetched a towel.

Normally, these were tasks for the maids; the three of them, as Lu Chen's wives and concubines, didn't need to personally attend to him.

However, they liked to serve Lu Chen this way because they believed attending to their man was a method of closing the distance between them.

After Lu Chen had washed his face and hands, he sat down to eat.

At this time, Mu Zixuan spoke up, “Prince, Wang Qingci came to me earlier and said that in the future, the goods produced by the Prince’s Mansion could be sold to other dynasties and countries through the Rain-listening Pavilion.”

Mu Zixuan merely mentioned this matter without asking about the relationship between Lu Chen and the Rain-listening Pavilion.

Currently, not many people were aware that the Rain-listening Pavilion belonged to the Prince’s Mansion; even those within the mansion knew very little about it, as it was an organization Lu Chen used to gather intelligence—the fewer who knew, the better.

However, upon hearing Wang Qingci’s mention of the Rain-listening Pavilion’s partnership with the Prince’s Mansion to sell goods, Mu Zixuan roughly guessed to whom the Rain-listening Pavilion belonged.

Wang Qingci herself was one of Lu Chen’s women, and clearly, the Rain-listening Pavilion was associated with Lu Chen. Moreover, since their arrival in North City, a Brocade Guard agency had suddenly appeared, along with fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry. Another establishment like the Rain-listening Pavilion didn’t seem surprising at all.

While eating, Lu Chen said, “The Prince’s Mansion can do business with the Rain-listening Pavilion, but it must be done through public accounts.”

Hearing Lu Chen’s words, Mu Zixuan instantly understood his intention and immediately replied, “I understand.”

Clearly, Lu Chen did not want people to know that the Rain-listening Pavilion was an extension of North Prince Mansion’s power. By dealing through public accounts, future transactions between the Rain-listening Pavilion and the Prince’s Mansion would seem like business dealings with any other merchants.

At this point, Lu Chen asked, “By the way, how is the business in the Capital City doing now?”

Some time ago, with Mu Changtian's family being exiled, North Prince Mansion's businesses in the Capital City were left unattended. As a result, many of their shops were smashed, forcing them to close temporarily.

Who was behind it, Lu Chen knew very well—the perfume and soap business had made many people envious.

Mu Zixuan answered, "Since the end of the conflicts in North City, no one has vandalized the shops in the Capital City anymore. Now, the soap and perfume from the Prince's Mansion are in such high demand that the shops often run out of stock to sell."

Hearing this, Lu Chen set down his chopsticks and fell into thought.

Although perfume and soap were selling well, the business of the Prince's Mansion was still too narrow in scope. Most importantly, it was possible that other Aristocratic Families would be able to replicate these products before long. Moreover, the profit from these items was insufficient to sustain his large-scale development of North City.

Despite having earned millions of silver taels, that money couldn't even produce the armor for twenty thousand sets of Heavy Cavalry if it were all invested in that endeavor.

Of course, if he weren't so ambitious, several million silver taels would be more than enough for Lu Chen to live lavishly in North City.

But how could he not be ambitious? Now with the system at his disposal, and with internal turmoil brewing within Great Sum, the era of many competing lords was approaching.

There's a saying, "Rowing against the current: if you don't advance, you will be pushed back." He must strive forward; his feudal state had to become strong. Otherwise, even if he had no desire to be Emperor, trouble would find him someday.

Lu Chen thought to himself that indeed, he needed to have Mu Zixuan and the others bear him more children—surely the system rewards would then grant him methods to make more money.

With this in mind, Lu Chen said, "Then we'll just have to recruit more workers."

Upon hearing Lu Chen's words, Mu Zixuan expressed her concern, "Prince, I have recently heard that other Aristocratic Families are already replicating soap and perfume. Although their products are not as good as those produced by North Prince Mansion, they are cheaper. If we continue recruiting workers and our business later falters, these people might find themselves without a place to go."

In North City, the concept of "workers," a term coined by Lu Chen, referred to "people who labor." Nowadays, both the Prince's Mansion and the merchants of North City referred to those manufacturing perfume and soap for the North Prince Mansion as workers.

Most of these workers had previously been poor commoners, even including many displaced people. Initially, to ensure these individuals didn't sell the formulas of the North Prince Mansion, Lu Chen had them sign servitude contracts.

Even with a contract of servitude, these workers lived better than the average commoner: guaranteed lifelong employment and daily provisions. In ancient times, this was already more comfortable living than most common folks.

This group of workers, in fact, were servants of the North Prince Mansion, and what Mu Zixuan was considering was the mass recruitment of workers during good business times. But what to do with these workers if business declined later? They couldn't possibly all be accommodated within the North Prince Mansion, which didn't need that many servants.

Hearing Mu Zixuan's concern, Lu Chen smiled lightly and then said, "My beloved, you need not worry about this issue. Just go ahead and recruit the workers. I have even bigger business for you to manage in the future, and even if our business can't continue, there will always be a need for people to cultivate new fields in North City."

Upon hearing Lu Chen's words, Mu Zixuan remembered that a few days ago, while in bed, Lu Chen seemed to have mentioned acquiring a new crop called "sweet potato," which, like potatoes, yielded an extremely large harvest.

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Now that Lu Chen had obtained such crops, he would definitely have the land reclaimed for fanning. Considering this, no matter how many workers the North Prince Mansion recruited, there was currently no need to worry about not having a place to arrange them.

With this in mind, Mu Zixuan said, “This concubine understands. I will continue to recruit workers tomorrow.”

After the topic ended, they chatted about some household matters while eating.

Once dinner was finished, Dazhou and Xiaozhou took the children and left.

After dinner, it was time for Lu Chen to bathe, and as for whose room Lu Chen would visit after the bath, that was entirely up to his mood and did not require any deliberate arrangement.

Lu Chen usually spread his attention evenly, and even though he had been visiting Yelv Nanyan every day recently, Mu Zixuan and the others were not at all worried that he would stop visiting them because of his favoritism for Yelv Nanyan.

Any woman who knew Lu Chen was aware that Yelv Nanyan alone couldn't withstand Lu Chen's passion, even if she was a Martial Artist.

Bai Qingqing and Wang Qingci were Martial Artists too, yet every time the duty of attending to him in bed was mentioned, they could not help trembling. Yelv Nanyan was already in her thirties; she could not hold up.

Lu Chen did not go to Yelv Nanyan's room tonight. After his bath, he came out of his room and happened to see Mu Zixuan taking care of the child.

Lu Chen approached Mu Zixuan and, observing Lu Changfeng in her arms, said with a fatherly smile, “Feng'er, tonight Daddy is going to compete with you for Mother's attention again and even for the food. You won't be angry with Daddy, will you?”

Hearing this, Mu Zixuan, who was coaxing the child, looked up at Lu Chen with a grievance in her eyes, “Prince, what are you saying? Feng'er is still young; he cannot understand these things.”

Lu Chen raised his hand and wrapped his arms around Mu Zixuan's waist, then chuckled, “I'm not only speaking to Feng'er. What do you think, my consort?”

Hearing what Lu Chen had said, a blush appeared on Mu Zixuan's face. The implication of Lu Chen's words was that he intended to spend the night here. As one of Lu Chen's women, how could she not understand?

At this moment, Lu Chen glanced out of the window at the night sky and then continued, "My consort, it's late. Let's send Feng'er to sleep, and we can talk about other matters."

With a hum in agreement from Mu Zixuan, she called the wet nurse to take the child to the next room.

After the wet nurse left, Lu Chen stood behind Mu Zixuan, hugged her slender waist tightly, and pressed against her back, whispering in her ear, "My consort, I have something I'd like to discuss with you."

Seeing that Lu Chen was interested in her but did not take immediate action, instead saying that he had something to discuss, Mu Zixuan's curiosity was piqued.

With the atmosphere as it was, what could there possibly be to discuss at this time?

Mu Zixuan then asked curiously, "Prince, what is it that you want to talk about?"

Lu Chen leaned in close to Mu Zixuan's ear and breathed into it, speaking in a low, magnetic voice, "I feel that Feng'er is too lonely by himself; he should have another brother or sister."

This...

If one were to be realistic, Lu Changfeng could never be lonely. After all, there were Dazhou and Xiaozhou's children in the Prince's Mansion, with Lu Huanhuan and Lu Changsheng both being his siblings.

Furthermore, Mu Zixuan had a sisterly relationship with Dazhou and Xiaozhou, and they all got along very well, spending every day together. When Lu Changfeng grew up, he would certainly not be lonely.

Besides, in the royal family, having too many brothers and sisters wasn't always a good thing.

But Mu Zixuan quickly realized that Lu Chen was not at all concerned about Lu Changfeng being lonely; he clearly wanted her to bear another child.

In other words, Lu Chen was speaking words of affection to her.

She thought to herself, how could Lu Chen still be in the mood to discuss such matters at this time? This was nothing serious at all.

Suddenly, Mu Zixuan, with her face flushed, said, “Prince, whatever number of children you wish for me to bear, I have no objections.”

Upon hearing Mu Zixuan’s response, Lu Chen’s hand moved to the sash around Mu Zixuan’s waist, and, while he untied it, he walked towards the bed.

“Since my consort has agreed, let us not waste any more time.”

Hearing Lu Chen say this, Mu Zixuan felt completely weak, letting Lu Chen have his way with her.

[Host and Mu Zixuan cultivated their relationship once – Qi Refinement Mantra experience value increased by 40, Rejuvenating Skill experience value increased by 40, Dragon-Phoenix Yin-Yang Spell experience value increased by 40.]

[Congratulations, Host has made Mu Zixuan pregnant – awarded with an advanced explosive formula and the technology to manufacture red artillery.]

[The pregnancy reward is an encouragement award. Please make an effort to ensure the child’s birth, as the child’s birth will lead to even richer rewards.]

Seeing the system notification in front of him, Lu Chen did not feel surprised at all.

Ordinary women are indeed different from Martial Artists. For ordinary women, as long as he wishes to make them pregnant, they can easily conceive his children.

Lu Chen was surprised that the system rewarded him with the formula for gunpowder and the technology to produce red-coated cannons.

Previously, the weapons that the system had rewarded were given by the system itself, such as grenades, Barretts, and 122mm howitzers.

Though these modern weapons were handy, there was one significant issue: ammunition and shells were limited. Once they were used up, there were none left except for waiting for the system to reward him again.

Especially the howitzers—if he ran out of ammunition, all he could do was let them gather dust in a cave.

But having the formula for gunpowder and the technology to produce red-coated cannons changed everything. Even though homemade red-coated cannons surely weren't as effective as the 122mm howitzers rewarded by the system, shells could be produced without limitation in this world.

With the gunpowder formula, from now on, he could manufacture as many shells as he wanted, and even simple explosives were usable.

With gunpowder, he had the confidence.

At that moment, Mu Zixuan was lying in Lu Chen's arms, her fair arms wrapped around his neck. Seeing Lu Chen stroking his belly and seemingly deep in thought, she asked, "Prince, what are you thinking about?"

Lu Chen had just used the Rejuvenating Skill to help Mu Zixuan recover, and now she was much more spirited, without the weariness that followed intercourse.

Lu Chen said directly, "Consort, you're pregnant with my child again."

Hearing this, Mu Zixuan was startled.

It wasn't that she minded carrying her husband's child; it just seemed too soon to her. Not long ago, Lu Chen had expressed his desire for her to bear another child, and now, just two hours later, she was pregnant?

Of course, Mu Zixuan never doubted Lu Chen's words. After all, Lu Chen was an immortal who knew the Immortal Law and could easily check her condition.

Then Mu Zixuan asked, "Prince, are you telling the truth?"

As Lu Chen caressed Mu Zixuan's beautiful cheek, he smiled and said, "Of course it's true, my love. You will have to endure another year's hard work."

Resting on Lu Chen's broad chest, Mu Zixuan tenderly said, "Giving birth to children for the Prince is my duty. It's not a hardship."

As Lu Chen stroked Mu Zixuan's hair and comforted her, the two of them soon fell asleep.

The next morning.

After getting up and having breakfast, Lu Chen went straight to the study.

Once in the study, he immediately sent for Qin Yushan, Wenren Lie, and Xuanyuan Chen to come.

As the Commander of the Brocade Guard, Qin Yushan spent most of his time near the Prince's Mansion and arrived quickly. Soon after, he appeared in Lu Chen's study.

Upon entering the study, Qin Yushan first paid his respects.

"Greetings, Prince."

Then Qin Yushan asked,

"Prince, you wanted to see me?"

Lu Chen did not beat around the bush and said directly, "Commander Qin, I am entrusting you with a very important task."

Hearing this, Qin Yushan was taken aback.

For the North Prince to use the words “very important,” it suggested that the matter held significant weight in the North Prince’s heart.

Qin Yushan immediately said, “Please instruct me, Prince. Even if it means climbing a mountain of swords or descending into a sea of flames, I shall not shirk death and will spare no effort to complete the task you assign to me.”

Lu Chen, somewhat speechless, said, “There is no need for a mountain of swords or a sea of flames. I simply need you to call back a thousand Brocade Guards to help me supervise the production of a type of weapon.”

Hearing this, Qin Yushan’s first thought was the howitzers. Carefully, he asked, “Prince, could it be the howitzers?”

Lu Chen replied, “It’s not the howitzers, but it is similar and also a weapon with immense destructive power. The principles behind it are not so different.”

“Naturally, the method to produce this weapon is also simpler.”

The reason Lu Chen wanted the Brocade Guard to supervise the production of gunpowder and red-coated cannons was that he was worried about the technologies leaking out.

The Brocade Guards were summoned through the system and were his steadfast loyalists; they would never betray him. Having them oversee the production was the only way for Lu Chen to feel assured.

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Upon hearing Lu Chen’s reply, Qin Yushan couldn’t help but think that it indeed sounded like a big killer weapon similar to artillery.

Just imagining the shrapnel from artillery exploding, instantly blasting a Grandmaster into several large pieces, sent a chill down Qin Yushan's spine.

Once such weapons were mass-produced, from then on, Grandmasters might not be much different from ordinary people, since even ordinary people using artillery could kill a Grandmaster.

As a Grandmaster in the Martial Arts World, Qin Yushan was unwilling to see such weapons being mass-produced, as it would shake the very foundation of the Martial Arts World and the status of Grandmasters.

However, as a subordinate of the Son of Destiny, he of course wanted to see the North Prince wielding these big killers to slaughter enemies far and wide, and then unify the entire continent.

At this point, Qin Yushan said, "Please rest assured, my prince. I will dedicate all my efforts to supervising the production of the weapons you mentioned and will absolutely prevent the manufacturing methods from being leaked to anyone."

Qin Yushan was well aware of the importance of such a weapon, after all, it was capable of killing a Grandmaster in an instant. The method for making this kind of big killing weapon absolutely couldn't be known by any power, otherwise, it would be a disaster for North City and the North Prince.

But at this moment, Qin Yushan suddenly thought of something and then asked, "My prince, the Brocade Guard doesn't have the craftsmen capable of manufacturing the weapon you mentioned. May I know from where these craftsmen should be summoned?"

Lu Chen said, "Don't worry about that for now, the craftsmen will be available soon."

No sooner had Lu Chen finished speaking than the voice of a maidservant came from outside, "Your Highness, General Wenren and General Xuanyuan have arrived."

"Let them in."

The next moment, Xuanyuan Chen and Wenren Lie entered the study. Both men paid their respects simultaneously, saying in unison, "Greetings, Your Highness."

Lu Chen gave a slight nod, "Rise."

Xuanyuan Chen asked, "Your Highness, may I know the reason for summoning us?"

Lu Chen said, "Great Yu City can forge fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry. I believe Great Yu City must have a lot of craftsmen, right?"

Hearing this, Qin Yushan at his side was momentarily taken aback, immediately understanding the meaning of Lu Chen's earlier statement that craftsmen would be available soon.

At that time, Xuanyuan Chen replied, "Replying to Your Highness, one can say that everyone in Great Yu City is a craftsman. Once children reach a certain age, they need to learn a craft, even girls are no exception."

Hearing Xuanyuan Chen's words, Lu Chen was somewhat surprised; the people of Great Yu City's thinking was quite advanced indeed, demanding that everyone learn a craft, making him feel as though the Great Yu Remnants were all from the Mohist school.

Lu Chen then said, "It's like this. I plan to summon some of Great Yu City's craftsmen to North City to manufacture some weapons for me. I know the people of Great Yu City are reluctant to leave, but making these weapons, I must have trustworthy craftsmen."

"The only craftsmen I can trust are in Great Yu City. Next, I'll trouble the two generals to write a letter to Great Yu City and dispatch one thousand craftsmen skilled in metal smelting to Yan County."

The five hundred thousand commoners of Great Yu City were also granted by the system and were absolutely loyal to Lu Chen, so for the manufacture of the artillery, he certainly would choose them over the craftsmen of North City.

Besides, North City did not have many craftsmen who could assist Lu Chen in making the artillery.

Hearing Lu Chen's words, Xuanyuan Chen immediately said, "I will write to Great Yu City presently. Please rest assured, Your Highness, within one month, Great Yu City will send craftsmen to Yan County."

Lu Chen then said to Qin Yushan, Wenren Lie, and Xuanyuan Chen, “The task of making the artillery is entrusted to you three. You must remember, the manufacturing of such a weapon must not be known by anyone outside of those involved, not even the Mu family members.”

Qin Yushan and the others immediately said, “Please be assured, Your Highness, we will keep silent on the matter.”

At that point, Lu Chen took out the gunpowder formula from the system space and placed it on the desk, “Commander Qin, before the craftsmen from Great Yu City arrive, you can have the Brocade Guard collect the materials listed on this paper. Remember one thing, you must absolutely prevent anyone from knowing that it’s you collecting these items.”

Qin Yushan picked up the formula for making gunpowder that Lu Chen had given him and said, “Understood, Your Highness. I will act cautiously and ensure that no other powers detect that it is the Prince’s Mansion collecting these items.”

Qin Yushan clearly understood what the contents of the paper he held signified; it was the materials for making artillery shells, and if others learned that the Prince’s Mansion was collecting these items, even if they didn’t know the formula for gunpowder, there might still be someone who could deduce the formula based on the materials being collected extensively by the Prince’s Mansion.

In short, the manufacturing of the artillery needed to be extremely cautious.

“Well then, you three may depart to make the preparations.”

As Lu Chen’s words fell, Qin Yushan and the others said in unison:

“We take our leave, Your Highness!”

Following this, the three of them left Lu Chen’s study.

Meanwhile.

Spring Sound Court.

This courtyard originally had no name, but every time the maidservants and servants from the Prince's Mansion passed by outside this courtyard, they would hear a certain kind of sound, and gradually, someone named it the Spring Sound Court, and thus it was called by everyone.

After Xiao Wenyao woke up, she was dressed by her maidservants, freshened up, and enjoyed a hearty breakfast.

Chapter 176 Confused Xiao Wenyao_2

Afterwards, she just sat in her room, with nothing to do.

As she looked at the empty room and the monotonous courtyard outside, Xiao Wenyao felt somewhat lost.

Ever since she arrived at the North Prince Mansion, Xiao Wenyao had regarded herself as the North Prince's Female Slave, believing that she would serve Lu Chen just like those slaves she had in the past.

She was to serve Lu Chen, and also be tormented by him, just like he tormented

Yelv Nanyan.

But as the days passed, Xiao Wenyao realized that Lu Chen hadn't come to look

for her even once.

Furthermore, she discovered that her position as a Female Slave seemed to have a certain status in the Prince's Mansion.

Even though she was a Female Slave, the Prince's Mansion actually arranged servants and maids to take care of her daily needs. Shouldn't she be taking care of Lu Chen's daily needs along with these maids? Why did it seem like she had become the mistress of the Prince's Mansion now, with such good treatment?

If the Female Slaves of the North Prince always received such treatment, then perhaps being the North Prince's Female Slave wasn't so bad?

However, Xiao Wen Yao used to ride horses and roam freely on the grasslands. She was accustomed to the life on the grasslands, and now, suddenly being confined to a courtyard, she was finding it very hard to adapt.

She longed to get out, to be free.

Xiao Wen Yao was not unaware of her situation; she knew she was now Lu Chen's Female Slave and without the permission of her master, she could not roam around as she pleased. However, deep inside, she just couldn't let go of the feeling of freely galloping across the grasslands on horseback.

Thinking of this, Xiao Wen Yao couldn't help but let out a sigh.

At that moment, Xiao Wen Yao rose from her seat.

She went straight to the room next door where Yelv Nanyan was staying. Although she still harbored some resentment towards Yelv Nanyan, in the entire North Prince Mansion only the two of them were from the Barbarian Tribe. She felt so alone and isolated, the only way to alleviate her loneliness was to talk to Yelv Nanyan.

At that time, Yelv Nanyan was sitting on a stool, learning needlework. Seeing Xiao Wen Yao enter, Yelv Nanyan put down her work and greeted her with a warm smile, "Yaoyao, are you getting used to life in the North Prince

Mansion?"

If you were to ask if Yelv Nanyan felt any guilt towards Xiao Wen Yao, of course, she did. She was indirectly responsible for the death of Xiao Wen Yao's mother, but it was just a sliver of guilt since she was not the one who had poisoned Xiao Wen Yao's mother.

Yelv Nanyan had always been kind to Xiao Wen Yao, treating her like a younger sister, especially after coming to the North Prince Mansion. Now that there were only the two of them from the Barbarian Tribe, she felt even more fond of Xiao Wen Yao. They shared a bond of mutual pity.

Hearing Yelv Nanyan's question, Xiao Wen Yao sat down at the table and, bowing her head, let out a sigh before saying, "I suppose I'm getting used to it, but Lady Yelv, are we truly the North Prince's Female Slaves?"

Upon hearing Xiao Wen Yao still address her as Lady Yelv, Yelv Nanyan quickly replied, "Yaoyao, I'm no longer the Sky Wolf King's consort. You can't call me that anymore."

"There can only be one consort in the North Prince Mansion. If others heard you say that, they would certainly think we harbor ulterior motives. Then, both of us would be punished!"

Seeing Yelv Nanyan's seriousness, Xiao Wen Yao realized she had misspoken and her face instantly turned pale.

Yelv Nanyan continued, "Yaoyao, from now on, just call me Nanyan Sister." Stumbling over her words, Xiao Wen Yao responded, "Oh, alright, Nanyan Sister."

Yelv Nanyan then added, "Strictly speaking, we're not really the North Prince's Female Slaves. Have you ever seen slaves who are taken care of by maids and servants?"

Xiao Wen Yao agreed, "That's true."

Yelv Nanyan said, "From now on, we will both be concubines of the North Prince. Compared to Female Slaves, we do hold a certain status in the North Prince Mansion."

"But remember, Yaoyao, never think that our status allows us to act recklessly. After all, we are captives, and you must always regard yourself as the North Prince's Female Slave, not always as his concubine."

Xiao Wen Yao responded, "Nanyan Sister, I understand what you mean." Then Xiao Wen Yao glanced at the doorway and the courtyard, and asked in a low voice, "Nanyan Sister, did the Prince not come to your room last night?" Since Xiao Wen Yao hadn't heard any noise coming from Yelv Nanyan's room the night before, she assumed that Lu Chen hadn't visited. She knew that in the preceding days, she could almost always hear noises every night, and they would often last for several hours, even the whole night.

Hearing Xiao Wen Yao's words, Yelv Nanyan's delicate body could not help but tremble involuntarily.

At first, Yelv Nanyan very much enjoyed the feeling of being with Lu Chen.

But as Lu Chen visited every day, Yelv Nanyan began to feel overwhelmed, even though she discovered that Lu Chen was using a special cultivation technique to heal the wounds on her body, which made her feel almost no discomfort at all. However, these last few mornings when she got up, Yelv Nanyan still felt her mind was a mess, and her walking was all hazy, with legs that could hardly stand. She was always trembling.

Yelv Nanyan now felt a deep fear of Lu Chen.

Coming back to her senses, Yelv Nanyan replied, “No, he hasn’t, what’s wrong?”

Xiao Wen Yao continued to ask in a whisper, “Nanyan, I have a question for you, and I’m wondering if it’s okay to ask.”

Seeing Xiao Wen Yao so cautious, Yelv Nanyan asked curiously, “What’s the question?”

Xiao Wen Yao leaned in and then whispered into Yelv Nanyan’s ear, “Nanyan, I’ve heard your voice every night these past few days, but I always feel there’s something strange about it. Is it really painful to be tormented by the Prince? Why do I feel like your voice doesn’t seem to be from pain?”

At this, Yelv Nanyan couldn’t help but laugh out loud.

Unlike the women of Great Sum, the women of the grasslands knew little about matters between men and women before they got married, usually exploring such matters only after marrying their men.

Xiao Wen Yao was still ignorant and knew nothing about these things.

Yelv Nanyan replied, “Yaoyao, you don’t need to worry. The day the Prince goes to your room, you will understand what it’s all about. But rest assured, I can tell you plainly, there is no pain involved.”

After hearing Yelv Nanyan's answer, Xiao Wenyao was dumbfounded.

Tormented by the North Prince but feeling no pain at all?

Was that possible?

Was Yelv Nanyan deceiving her?

If there was no pain, would she really have screamed so miserably?

Seeing the confusion on Xiao Wenyao's face, Yelv Nanyan said, "Yaoyao, you've never been with a man, so it's normal that you don't understand some things, but you can trust what I'm saying. Sometimes, people shout not because they are in pain."

"As a woman of the grasslands, you should know very well that sometimes, when we grassland people achieve some kind of victory, we often shout loudly. Do you say that's because they are in pain? They shout and cheer because they're happy, it's a joyful noise, not out of pain."

Hearing Yelv Nanyan explain this, Xiao Wenyao seemed to understand something.

Xiao Wenyao remembered that after the Sky Wolf King's tribe defeated other smaller tribes, those soldiers often yelled at the top of their lungs. They shouted and roared because they had achieved victory. They were cheering, shouts of joy, not because of pain.

Xiao Wenyao couldn't help but think, so, Yelv Nanyan's moans were because she had achieved some kind of victory with the North Prince, and that's why she was shouting loudly?

Some kind of victory?

Xiao Wenyao now thought of the scene she had secretly witnessed before. Could it be because Yelv Nanyan had trapped the North Prince with her body? So, Yelv Nanyan felt victorious, and that's why she had been shouting loudly?

Yes, that must be it.

With that thought, Xiao Wenyao finally felt a stone lift from her heart, just then, a maid came in and said, “Lady Yelv, Lady Xiao, the princess has invited both of you to the North Courtyard for tea.”

Hearing this, both of them were stunned.

Chapter 177 This King Intends to Attack North City in Winter

Mu Zixuan had been extremely kind to Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wenyao from the day they entered the Prince’s Mansion, not treating them in the least as captives.

She not only sent them delicious food every day, but also instructed the maids to take great care of them, especially to Yelv Nanyan, who almost received supplements from Mu Zixuan every morning.

Sometimes Yelv Nanyan also wondered if Mu Zixuan’s gifts were due to Lu Chen visiting her so often, perhaps arousing Mu Zixuan’s dissatisfaction, and thus the supplements were a reminder for her to be mindful of her own status.

However, as time went by, Yelv Nanyan realized that there was no sarcasm intended in Mu Zixuan’s act of sending supplements; even the maidservants attending to her blushed as they assured her that the Princess Consort’s gifts were sincerely meant.

By now, Yelv Nanyan had thoroughly accepted Mu Zixuan’s kindness and had come to understand why the Princess Consort was so good to her.

Yelv Nanyan had initially thought that the harem of the Great Xia Emperor or that of the princes were full of intrigue, but such was almost non-existent in the North Prince Mansion, mainly because the master was too formidable, and no woman could withstand the love of the North Prince on her own.

If a woman were to bewitch the North Prince completely, then her death would probably not be far away.

At that moment, Xiao Wenyao whispered to Yelv Nanyan, “Nanyan, should we go over?”

Hearing this question, Yelv Nanyan reminded Xiao Wen Yao, “Yaoyao, you must always remember one thing: in the North Prince Mansion, aside from the North Prince, the Princess Consort has the utmost authority. Whatever the Princess Consort asks you to do, you must do it. If the Princess Consort invites us to tea, there isn’t a special reason we could refuse—do you understand?”

Hearing Yelv Nanyan’s reminder, Xiao Wen Yao immediately nodded, “I understand.”

Afterward, Yelv Nanyan set aside her embroidery, stood up, and walked toward the door, saying as she went, “Let’s go, we’re heading to the north courtyard.”

Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wen Yao then proceeded to the north courtyard.

When the two arrived at the north courtyard, they found that many ladies were already gathered inside the pavilion; Lu Chen’s women were practically all there.

Seeing Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wen Yao arrive, Mu Zixuan greeted them warmly, “Nanyan, Yaoyao, you’re here; please take a seat quickly.”

Even though Mu Zixuan was enthusiastic, Yelv Nanyan still led Xiao Wen Yao in a formal greeting, “We’ve seen the Princess Consort.”

Mu Zixuan smiled faintly and then said, “Nanyan, there aren’t so many formalities in the North Prince Mansion; you don’t need to greet me with such ceremony.”

The atmosphere in the inner courtyard of the North Prince Mansion was much more relaxed compared to the outer courtyard. There was no need for constant formalities upon meeting, perhaps influenced by Lu Chen; once inside the inner courtyard, the sense of ritual in Mu Zixuan and the others immediately lessened significantly.

After all, in the inner courtyard, the North Prince was supreme, and the others were his women.

Yelv Nanyan said nothing further; she and Xiao Wen Yao sat down in the pavilion, where a maid poured each of them a cup of tea.

Mu Zixuan, smiling, said, "This is a unique tea of the Prince's Mansion. Give it a try."

Since it was the Princess Consort offering tea, it certainly had to be tried. Without a second thought, Yelv Nanyan picked up her teacup and took a gentle sip.

Seeing Yelv Nanyan lift her teacup, Xiao Wenyao hurried to do the same, tasting a sip of the tea.

Upon this first sip, both of them realized at once that their bodies felt much lighter, as if the tea could greatly relieve fatigue and anxiety.

Yelv Nanyan then said, "Thankyou for the tea, Princess Consort. This tea must be quite precious, mustn't it?"

Both Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wenyao, being martial artists, sensed immediately the effect the tea had on them. Drinking this tea while practicing martial arts would be highly beneficial for them.

This tea was certainly a priceless treasure, and they had not expected the Princess Consort to serve them with such tea.

Mu Zixuan, with a smile, replied, "The tea trees are planted right here in the mansion's garden. It's not considered precious for us. Of course, the Prince has a rule that this tea can only be drunk by his women or the Prince's most valued guests."

Yelv Nanyan responded, "I see."

Mu Zixuan continued, "If Nanyan likes this tea, you can have the maids pick leaves from the main courtyard to brew it. You are now one of the Prince's women too, so you can drink it freely."

Yelv Nanyan replied, "Thankyou, Princess Consort."

Mu Zixuan then said, "Nanyan, you're still not at ease, a bit too courteous. From now on, we are all one family; there's no need for such formality."

With that, Mu Zixuan glanced at Xiao Wenyao and asked, "Yaoyao, are you getting accustomed to life in the Prince's Mansion?"

Xiao Wen Yao, about to reach for the pastries on the table, withdrew her hand quickly upon Mu Zixuan's call, looking almost guilty.

"Yes... I'm getting used to it, thank you for your concern, Princess Consort."

Mu Zixuan said, "That's good to hear."

Afterward, they chatted over tea and pastries about various household matters, appearing to be particularly close.

Yelv Nanyan wasn't sure if it was just her perception, but she found the harem of the North Prince to be even more harmonious than she had imagined. The children of Mu Zixuan and those of Dazhou and Xiaozhou were reared together, even helping to look after one another's children.

Chapter 178 This King Intends to Attack North City in Winter_2

This also made Yelv Nanyan once again feel the charm of the North Prince, a man who could keep the harem so harmonious was rare, not to mention Great Sum, even the harems of the Barbarian Tribes on the steppes were full of intrigue and strife.

It reminded Yelv Nanyan of her childhood, when her mother, as a member of the Barbarian Tribe's harem, would often suffer the insults of other Barbarian women.

Enduring insults from other Barbarian women was one thing, but even the Barbarian Tribe's King would beat and kick her.

At that moment, the harmonious scene in the North Court made Yelv Nanyan wish time could stop at this very instant.

A few days later.

In the camp of the North Fre King, the royal court.

An old man with a large beard, wearing a fur coat, his skin layered with grime, sat upon the throne.

This throne had been brought back by the soldiers of the North Fre King from the former royal court of the Sky Wolf Tribe.

And the man sitting on the throne was none other than the North Fre King.

At this time, the North Fre King had an extremely ugly look on his face; it was as if he was constipated, with dark skin reddening with anger, an appearance of furious indignation.

The North Fre King was roaring at this moment.

“I lent so many soldiers, and to think they were defeated, defeat is one thing, but they even moved the entire Sky Wolf Tribe to North City!!!”

“What do they take me for!!!”

He had originally felt some schadenfreude upon hearing the news of the Sky Wolf King’s defeat, as he had long set his sights on conquering the Sky Wolf

Tribe.

The Sky Wolf King had always been dominant in the North Land, and his tribe would have to take a detour upon encountering the Sky Wolf Tribe. Now, seeing the decline of the Sky Wolf Tribe, he had wanted to consume it and become the most powerful Barbarian Tribe in the North Land.

Most importantly, the North Fre King had always been fixated on the Sky Wolf

King’s wife and Xiao Wen Yao.

Just the thought of those two great beauties made the North Fre King’s mouth water uncontrollably, and the moment he heard of the Sky Wolf King’s defeat, he had already considered the two women his own.

But when his soldiers arrived at the Sky Wolf King's royal court, the people of the Sky Wolf Tribe had vanished without a trace. Moreover, he heard that Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wenyao had been captured and taken to the Prince's Mansion by that brat from the south.

Knowing well what those two great beauties would face in the Prince's Mansion, how could the North Fre King, as a man, be oblivious to that? The thought of the cooked duck flying away left the North Fre King especially infuriated.

At that time, one of his subordinates in the royal tent suggested, "Great King, why don't we attack North City, and make that little whelp hand over the Sky Wolf King's wife and the Sky Wolf King's daughter!"

As soon as these words were spoken, another Barbarian General also chimed in, "Exactly, not only should we make that brat hand over those two women, but we should also get them to hand over all the people from the Sky Wolf Tribe!" Hearing what his General had said, the North Fre King snorted coldly, "Three hundred thousand troops were defeated, and you want me to attack North City? If you want to die, that's your business, but I don't want to die!"

Although the North Fre King verbally scorned the Sky Wolf Tribe as worthless, he was no fool; North City was clearly not something their Barbarian Tribe could afford to provoke right now. To attack North City at this point would be courting death.

However, at this moment, a General voiced a particularly unique opinion. "Great King, think about it, although North City has won, to eliminate the Sky Wolf King's three hundred thousand troops, they must have suffered heavy losses themselves!"

"Even if they won, it must have been a pyrrhic victory, and Great Sum also paid a great price. Moreover, they might still be immersed in the joy of defeating the Sky Wolf Tribe, certainly letting down their guard about the North Land. Right now, if we suddenly launch an attack on North City, they won't have time to

react."

Considering the Barbarian General's analysis, the North Fre King suddenly felt there was a lot of sense to it.

After all, the Sky Wolf King had led three hundred thousand troops to attack North City; it was impossible for Great Sum to have suffered no losses at all.

Great Sum must have also lost many soldiers.

At this moment, if they suddenly launched troops to attack North City, Great Sum's military wouldn't be able to send reinforcements to North City for a while.

However, speaking of which, they initially gave the Sky Wolf King tens of thousands of soldiers, and now their tribe has hardly any able-bodied fighters left.

If the soldiers from the North Fre King's tribal lands were all mustered together, the estimate is that only about tens of thousands of soldiers could be assembled.

The North Fre King pondered for a long time, then said, "Currently, the royal court only has tens of thousands of soldiers. If we send troops now, it would be disadvantageous for us. Issue a summoning order immediately, gather the Barbarian Warriors from the small tribes to the royal court. Two months from now, we will attack North City!"

At that time, a Barbarian General said, "My King, two months from now will be deep winter, taking troops south during winter might be very unfavorable for

us."

Usually, when the Barbarian tribes raid southward, it is before winter begins, mainly to prepare enough food for winter.

It is rare for them to attack Great Sum during the deep winter.

Once winter arrives, fierce snowstorms hit the plains first. The cold is one thing, but being easily lost on the grasslands is another, even for the Barbarians who live there year-round, not to mention the challenge of dealing with the harsh winter.

It can be said that heading south in winter is a poor choice.

The North Fre King, undeterred, said, “This King intends to attack North City during winter. By winter, that whelp in Great Sum and North City will certainly think we won’t advance southward. If we strike southward unexpectedly at this time, we can catch them unprepared.”

“Then, the Great Sum imperial court will also be unable to support North City in time. Taking North City will be an easy task for us.”

“If you ask me, the Sky Wolf King is a fool, always rushing to attack North City so early every year. The people of Great Sum must have made preparations having been raided at the same time annually. They deserve to have their entire army decimated. This King will not follow in his footsteps.”

Seeing the North Fre King speak so, his Generals had no choice but to stay silent.

A few days later.

North Prince Mansion.

Today, the North Prince Mansion was festooned with lights and decorations. Upon hearing that the North Prince was to take a wife, many of the well-to-do from North City made their way to the North Prince Mansion to congratulate him.

Most people already knew that the North Prince was to marry Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wenyao. Some thought that the North Prince was avenging the Great Sum people, since it had always been the Barbarian Tribe seizing the women of Great Sum, and at last, it was the turn of the Great Sum people to take the women from the Barbarian Tribe.

Yet others thought that the North Prince was disgracing the royal family; after all, he is a Prince, how could he marry two Barbarian women? This was clearly against the rites and rituals.

This wedding was personally managed by Mu Zixuan. Once the banquet was over, Lu Chen first went to Yelv Nanyan’s room.

Yelv Nanyan was dressed in a red robe, sitting quietly by the bed, not wearing a bridal veil.

She glanced around at the room decorations, feeling as though she was in a dream. She had never imagined that one day she would have such a wedding. From a young age, she had heard from her mother about the wedding scenes of the Great Sum people and had longed for it, too. But she also clearly understood that what she longed for was just a pipe dream, almost certainly never to happen.

What she never expected was that she would ultimately have the wedding she dreamed of.

In a soft voice, Yelv Nanyan said, "Is this really not a dream?"

No sooner had Yelv Nanyan finished speaking than Lu Chen pushed open the door and entered the room, smiling as he said, "This is definitely not a dream."

Seeing Lu Chen enter, a blush crept across Yelv Nanyan's face.

Lu Chen immediately came to the bedside and embraced Yelv Nanyan's soft body, though he did not immediately proceed to the next step.

Lu Chen had spent the night with Yelv Nanyan the evening before, and he would usually leave only after exhausting all his energy with her, so at the moment, he was not in the mood for such activities.

With his arms around Yelv Nanyan, Lu Chen said with a smile, "Nanyan, from now on you are my woman, and you must bear me many children.

Hearing this, Yelv Nanyan replied with some embarrassment, "Mmm, that is my duty."

For Yelv Nanyan, being held by this man who was over a decade her junior still felt strange, even though they had already consummated their marriage, and it still seemed odd to her.

At that time, Yelv Nanyan suggested, "Prince, since you spent last night with me, why don't you spend tonight with Yaoyao?"

Chapter 179 Xiao Wen Yao's Plan Succeeds

Seeing the blushing beauty, Lu Chen suddenly felt an urge to tease her. He stared into Yelv Nanyan's eyes and asked with a smile, "Nanyan, what do you mean? Today is our wedding day. Are you trying to drive me away?"

Hearing Lu Chen's voice by her ear, Yelv Nanyan felt a bit restless inside. She quickly said, "Prince, I didn't mean that, it's just..."

Yelv Nanyan wanted to say that Lu Chen had been busy all night yesterday, and he shouldn't still be here today, but she couldn't bring herself to say it.

Seeing Yelv Nanyan's flushed face and shy demeanor, Lu Chen's previously tranquil heart was suddenly filled with ripples.

His arm then tightened further around her, hugging Yelv Nanyan closely, and from time to time, he whispered into her ear, making her incredibly uncomfortable under his seduction.

Nonetheless, Yelv Nanyan persisted, "Prince, I have already enjoyed your favor, but Yaoyao has not. She has just married you, and she must be eagerly waiting for you to dote on her."

Hearing this, Lu Chen smiled slightly and then said, "Don't worry. I just came to sit here for a while. I will go over there in a bit."

When Yelv Nanyan heard Lu Chen's words, she finally breathed a sigh of relief. Lu Chen had left her room only in the morning; if he were to come again, she couldn't bear to think what she would feel like tomorrow.

At that moment, Lu Chen asked, "Nanyan, how do you feel about the wedding I prepared for you today? Did it meet the wedding you imagined?"

Yelv Nanyan replied, "Thank you, Prince, for treating me, a captive, so well. I will definitely bear more heirs for the Prince in the future, to repay you." Hearing Yelv Nanyan's words, Lu Chen was very pleased. Finally, a Martial Artist understood, and he raised his hand, gently patting her buttocks, and then said, "Nanyan understands better than the bitch next door, who has deceived me of so much affection, and still, to this date, hasn't conceived my child."

The “bitch” Lu Chen was referring to was naturally Wang Qingci. Every time Lu Chen left her room, she would quickly expel all the impurities from her body, as if terrified of carrying Lu Chen’s child.

For Lu Chen, impregnating female Martial Artists had always been a challenge. Setting aside the fact that it was difficult for female Martial Artists to conceive, the bigger issue was that female Martial Artists could easily prevent pregnancy. Take Wang Qingci and Bai Qingqing, for example; if they didn’t want to bear Lu Chen’s children, no amount of his efforts would be useful.

He certainly couldn’t use his status as Prince to order them to get pregnant. If he really did that, it would probably be pointless.

Since Martial Artists naturally had a hard time getting pregnant, they could easily claim it was due to their constitution, leaving Lu Chen uncertain if it was true or false.

If female Martial Artists had the awareness of Yelv Nanyan and proactively wanted to bear children for Lu Chen, then the trouble would be halved.

After hearing Lu Chen’s words, Yelv Nanyan’s face felt a bit hot. Being a woman in her thirties and being held in the arms of a younger man, being called “my Nanyan” felt utterly embarrassing.

Then, the two of them cuddled together, talking about the grassland and Barbarian Tribes migrating into North City. Although Lu Chen was flirtatious throughout, he did not take things any further with her.

Meanwhile.

In the next room.

Xiao Wen Yao, dressed in a red bridal gown, sat on the edge of the bed, pricking up her ears to eavesdrop on the neighboring room.

Xiao Wen Yao felt puzzled; she had clearly heard the maid outside say “Greeting, Prince,” indicating that Lu Chen must have arrived and gone to Yelv Nanyan’s room.

But why was there still no sound after so much time? This didn’t make sense.

If it were the past...

Forget the past; even last night Lu Chen had gone to Yelv Nanyan's room, and there was a significant commotion.

Strange...

Could it be that Yelv Nanyan had succumbed to Lu Chen?

Affected by Yelv Nanyan before, Xiao Wenyao had developed a unique line of thinking, believing that if she heard Yelv Nanyan's voice, it meant that Yelv Nanyan had bested Lu Chen and was cheerfully celebrating.

Now, without any sound, did it mean that Yelv Nanyan was, in a sense, defeated by Lu Chen?

That Yelv Nanyan was now undergoing torment?

With this thought, Xiao Wenyao couldn't help but shudder.

Xiao Wenyao consoled herself that she was, after all, a Seventh-Rank Martial Artist. Although Lu Chen was a Grandmaster, as long as he was human, he had weaknesses, and Lu Chen had his. Yelv Nanyan had successfully trapped Lu Chen's weakness, and she should be able to do the same.

Later, if Lu Chen dared to come to her room, she would also trap Lu Chen like Yelv Nanyan did and show Lu Chen how formidable she was.

In her nervousness, she didn't know how long she waited, but finally, Xiao Wenyao heard the voice of a maid at the door.

"Greeting, Prince."

The next moment, the door was pushed open, and Lu Chen entered the room.

Seeing the exceptionally handsome Lu Chen, Xiao Wenyao's heartbeat raced, and she instantly became extremely nervous, feeling as if even breathing had become difficult.

Xiao Wenyao took a deep breath quickly.

Steady, steady.

Stay calm; you must stay calm.

Nanyan has trapped him; I can too!

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As long as I use the method Nanyan suggested, even the North Prince's strength will be useless when the time comes.

With this thought, Xiao Wenyao calmed down slightly. Then, she began to speak with a stammer, "Prince... Prince, you have arrived."

Though she was much calmer than before, Xiao Wenyao's heart was still incredibly nervous.

Seeing Xiao Wenyao's face flushed with nervousness, Lu Chen smiled faintly and then said, "Yaoyao, I heard that the women of the grasslands are particularly bold. Why are you so nervous to see me? Do you think I'm going to devour you?"

Xiao Wenyao immediately denied, "Prince... Prince, I... I'm not nervous."

Lu Chen chuckled, then walked straight to the bedside.

Seeing Lu Chen suddenly draw near, Xiao Wenyao felt her heart begin to race again. Her body involuntarily wanted to flee the place, but just as she was about to move, Lu Chen's strong arms wrapped around her.

In an instant, Xiao Wen Yao caught a whiff of a unique masculine scent, strange but at the same time intoxicatingly pleasant to her.

Her body unconsciously wanted to get even closer to Lu Chen.

At that moment, Xiao Wen Yao asked, "Prince... Prince, did you... did you go to see Nanyan?"

Lu Chen replied, "I just came from her place. Why? Are you unhappy because I didn't come to see you first?"

Xiao Wen Yao quickly said, "I... I'm not unhappy."

Xiao Wen Yao was still sensible enough not to express any dissatisfaction with what Lu Chen did. Although she was now married to Lu Chen, she was very aware that she was still his captive, still a female slave of the North Prince.

Only by humbling herself could she survive better in the North Prince Mansion -a reminder Nanyan had given her, which Xiao Wen Yao always held close to her heart.

At this time, Lu Chen held Xiao Wen Yao in his embrace and then pinched her body, laughing as he said, "It seems you're quite different from Nanyan. Your muscles are more developed, making you appear stronger."

Although Nanyan was a Ninth Grade Martial Artist, thanks to the Martial Arts she practiced, her body didn't have too many evident muscles. Her body was primarily covered with fat, which was evenly distributed.

An even distribution of body fat had a big advantage for a woman: it preserved beauty by making her look voluptuous without appearing fat. The entire body felt incredibly soft to embrace, and with fat being a good insulator, it gave a warm and passionate sensation.

In comparison to Nanyan, Xiao Wen Yao didn't have as much fat on her body, which felt inferior to the touch.

However, because of her habitual horseback riding, the muscles on her body were particularly firm, especially her long legs.

Hearing Lu Chen's assessment of herself, Xiao Wenyao quietly said, "I... I often ride horses, so my body is more toned... more solid."

Lu Chen smiled and said, "Being a bit toned is good too."

At that moment, blushing, Xiao Wenyao said, "Prince... Prince, let... let me serve you and help you rest."

Then, Xiao Wenyao tried to assume the role of a female slave, even changing the self-referential "I" to "slave." Among her Barbarian Tribe, slaves referred to themselves in this way.

Xiao Wenyao couldn't wait to ensnare Lu Chen. She feared he would torment her, and only by capturing his weak spot could she avoid being tormented by Lu

Chen.

Suddenly, she felt that Nanyan's method was excellent, even admiring Nanyan

a little.

Although Lu Chen was a Grandmaster and their strength certainly couldn't match his, there was no doubt about it. But as long as they trapped Lu Chen, he would be powerless against them.

To trap Lu Chen, she had to lower her stance and let Lu Chen drop his guard. At this moment, Lu Chen was completely unaware that the woman in front of him was already plotting how to deal with him, still thinking Xiao Wenyao was just an innocent girl from the grasslands.

Seeing Xiao Wenyao so proactive, Lu Chen said with a smile, "Alright. He then laid Xiao Wenyao down on the bed, and she actively began to unbuckle his belt, thinking about quickly deceiving Lu Chen and then seizing the opportunity to learn from Nanyan's ways.

Soon, Lu Chen "fell into the trap."

Xiao Wenyao's plan was successful.

But at the moment her plan succeeded, she finally realized something was amiss.

"Mmm... liar..."

"[Congratulations, host, for acquiring another concubine. You have been rewarded with the breeding techniques of sorghum and the production methods of sorghum wine.]"

" [Host has cultivated a relationship with Xiao Wenyao once, Qi Refinement Mantra experience has increased by 60, Rejuvenating Skill experience has increased by 60, Dragon-Phoenix Yin-Yang Spell experience has increased by

60.]"

At the same time.

Outside the Prince's Mansion.

Qin Yushan was hurriedly entering the Prince's Mansion, and upon seeing the lights and decorations, he hesitated.

Today was a day of great joy for the Prince's Mansion; was it really suitable for him to seek out the Prince at this time?

Upon seeing Qin Yushan's arrival, the ice-cold beauty Bai Qingqing said indifferently, "Commander Qin, what's the matter?"

Seeing Qin Yushan's genuinely anxious appearance, it must be something important requiring Lu Chen's attention. As Lu Chen's personal guard, it was natural for Bai Qingqing to inquire.

Qin Yushan quickly said, “I have intelligence from the North Land to report to the Prince, but today is his day of great joy.”

Bai Qingqing, with a poker face, said, “If it is intelligence that will not endanger North City within a day or two, just deliver it to the study.”

After thinking it over, Qin Yushan then said, “Guard Bai, I understand. However, when the Prince comes out later, please remind him that there is intelligence from the North Land in the study, and ask him to take a look.” Bai Qingqing coldly uttered a “Fine,” and then fell silent once more.

Right after, Qin Yushan immediately delivered the intelligence he had just received to Lu Chen’s study.

In this moment.

Great Sum, Capital city.

Residence of the Eighth Prince.

After leaving North City, Wang Yong did not return to the Wang Family but instead went straight to the Capital city, staying by Prince Lu Shuyun’s side. Today, the Eighth Prince’s Mansion was once again filled with people. Although last time, Lu Shuyun’s staff and servants were wiped out to the last, Lu Shuyun was, after all, a prince, and it didn’t take long for a large group of staff and visitors to gather around him again.

Inside the council hall, everyone’s expressions were serious, as if they were discussing something important.

Right then, Wang Yong spoke to Lu Shuyun, “Your Highness, to my knowledge, the State Preceptor visited North City not long ago. Although this news isn’t widely known, and there don’t seem to be any special movements from the Imperial Palace, there are still whispers in the wind.”

Situ Ce is a National Pillar of Great Sum, the foremost defender of Capital city’s security and the most crucial person protecting the Imperial Palace. Should he leave the Palace, normally, the Palace would go under martial law and there would be significant commotion.

But the Sum Emperor isn't foolish-if the Palace really did so, it would be tantamount to telling everyone that Situ Ce had left the Imperial Palace.

To avoid disclosing Situ Ce's departure, the Capital city and the Imperial Palace have had no major personnel movements, maintaining an appearance of calm and tranquility.

However, there are no walls in the world that do not let any wind through. After all, Situ Ce is a Grandmaster, and moreover, he had gone to the Imperial Army's camp in North City to meet Lin Xiuming.

Those always watching the Capital city could find certain traces, and piecing together these traces, deduce that Situ Ce had left for North City.

Of course, by now Situ Ce has most likely returned from North City.

After all, as the State Preceptor and a National Pillar of Great Sum, he could not be away from the Capital city for too long.

However, Situ Ce's visit to North City was enough to draw attention.

Upon hearing Wang Yong's words, Lu Shuyun's brow furrowed. He then said, . "Could it be that my royal father is really considering giving the Crown Prince's position to my dear brother?"

Lu Shuyun's tone clearly carried malice. Ever since the news of North Prince's victory against the thirty thousand-strong barbarian horde at Yan County reached the Capital city, Lu Shuyun had been suppressing his inner turmoil.

At first, he truly believed that Lu Chen had been concealing his strength and was poised to leap high, taking the Crown Prince's position for himself. However, as time passed, Lu Shuyun gradually "came to his senses." Even if Lu Chen had always been concealing his strength, with his capabilities and the resources of North City, it was simply impossible to build an army of fifty thousand Heavy Cavalry.