

## Es. Benefits 291

### Chapter 291: Wu Junwan Hurries to Leave North Country

Upon hearing Lu Chen's words, Wu Junwan's mouth curved slightly upward, a hint of a smile appearing on her face.

Lu Chen had indeed hit the mark.

She had indeed planned to use the words Lu Chen mentioned as an excuse.

Wu Junwan then said, "Master Chen is right, our Qianhai Commercial Association indeed sees great commercial potential in the North Country, and we also see great commercial value in the products manufactured by the North Prince Mansion."

"Of course, these are not the most important things, the most important is that the products made by the North Prince Mansion are also used by our Princess Junwan, and she likes them very much."

"It is for this reason that we wish to collaborate with the Rain-listening Pavilion to sell the goods of the North Country in the Great Wu Dynasty."

Lu Chen said, "In that case, I wish us a pleasant cooperation."

"As for the details of the collaboration, I'll leave it to Miss Qian and our Vice Tower Master of the Rain-listening Pavilion to discuss, as I have other matters to attend to and must take my leave now."

"Miss Qian, if you need anything during your time in the North Country, feel free to contact us at the Rain-listening Pavilion, and we will do our best to accommodate your needs."

Wu Junwan smiled slightly and said graciously, "Thank you, Master Chen."

Lu Chen said with a smile, "You're welcome, after all, we will be partners from now on, and the Rain-listening Pavilion naturally wants to take good care of Miss Qian during her stay in Great Xia."

Having said this, Lu Chen stood up, ready to leave, “Then Miss Qian, that will be all for today.”

Wu Junwan also stood up promptly, “Master Chen, please take care.”

Lu Chen nodded slightly, without saying anything further, and turned to leave the private room directly.

Even though Lu Chen had left, Wang Qingci did not; Lu Chen’s appearance was merely a formality. As the true owner behind the Rain-listening Pavilion, he naturally did not need to engage in the specifics of business collaboration, especially since the person from Qianhai Commercial Association was not their president.

In name, Wu Junwan was merely the daughter of the President of Qianhai Merchant Association, not the president herself, so her status was a bit lower than that of the Tower Master of the Rain-listening Pavilion. Thus, handing over the task of receiving Wu Junwan to Wang Qingci, the nominal Vice Tower Master, was sufficient, and all Lu Chen needed to do was to make a stance.

After Lu Chen left, Wu Junwan and her party finalized the details of the collaboration with Wang Qingci, establishing a new merchant association called “Tinghai,” which would be mainly responsible for conducting business within the Great Wu Dynasty territory, diverting business from other dynasties to the association.

Once the collaboration was officially established, both parties decided on the two individuals who would manage the Tinghai Merchant Association. In terms of managing the association, Wu Junwan made some concessions, allowing the person appointed by the Rain-listening Pavilion to become the official president, while their representative from the Qianhai Commercial Association would assume the role of vice president.

After everything had been negotiated, the sky had completely darkened.

Nighttime.

Wu Junwan sat in the private room of an inn, adjusting her Inner Strength. After a little while, her beautiful eyes opened, looking at the two elderly people before her.

Hu Shu said at this moment, "Princess Junwan, we should hurry and leave the North Country; it is more dangerous than we anticipated."

As someone sent by the Empress of Da Yue to protect Wu Junwan, she was very concerned about Wu Junwan's safety. If anything happened to Wu Junwan, she would not know how to explain it to the Empress of Da Yue.

Hearing Hu Shu's words, Wu Junwan said indifferently, "We will leave the North Country early tomorrow morning."

Wu Junwan had no intention to prolong her stay in the North Country as she now felt the waters there were a bit too deep. Not only had the Palace Master of Mysterious Moon Palace come to the North Country and stayed for several months without leaving, but now such a young Grandmaster had also appeared in the North Country. In addition, there were the heavy cavalry of the North Country, which made Wu Junwan sense that the North Country was a land fraught with strife.

As the Princess of the Great Wu Dynasty, it was better for her to leave this place of conflict as soon as possible.

Initially, she had planned to stay in the North Country for a while to see what the North Prince was up to and to investigate the situation with the North Country heavy cavalry. Now it seemed that leaving the North Country as soon as possible was the best decision.

Relieved by Wu Junwan's words, both Hu Shu and Pei Hong, the Grandmasters, heaved a sigh of relief. It was good as long as Wu Junwan was willing to leave; the concern was that she might be too confident and unwilling to leave the North Country so soon.

At this moment, Wu Junwan asked, "Grandma Hu, Senior Pei, if you were to confront that Chen Lu, would you be confident in defeating him?"

Upon hearing this question, Hu Shu and Pei Hong were taken aback for a moment. Pei Hong was the first to answer, "Your Highness, without having fought, it is very difficult for us to judge his exact strength, but someone so young achieving the status of a Grandmaster must be extremely profound in the martial arts."

"Furthermore, in his presence, I felt a very strong sense of danger, and if it came to a fight, I very well might not be his match."

Pei Hong had once clashed with Situ Ce, and he had never felt the kind of danger he did in front of Situ Ce as he did just now.

Even though he sensed that Chen Lu's realm was not much different from his own, deep inside he always felt as though he was being targeted, as if a fierce beast had set its sights on him, which made him very uncomfortable.

Therefore, Pei Hong surmised that Chen Lu's strength was likely greater than his own, and if it really came to a fight, he would probably not be a match for the young man, possibly not even able to withstand for half an hour.

Surprised by Pei Hong's words, Wu Junwan had not expected even Pei Hong to lack confidence in defeating Chen Lu.

Her gaze then fell on Hu Shu, who began to speak, "I share the same view as Mr. Pei; if I were to confront that Chen Lu on my own, it is highly likely that I would not be his match."

## Chapter 292: Wu Junwan Hurries to Leave

### North Country\_2

Hearing Hu Shu's words, Wu Junwan also realized the terror of Lu Chen. She was merely an Extreme Realm Master and, while she could sense the powerful presence emanating from Lu Chen, she was unable to determine how strong he truly was, only that he was a Grandmaster.

However, the words of Pei Hong and Hu Shu made her understand that this Chen Lu's strength was even more terrifying than she had imagined. It seemed his background was not simple.

Given the consideration, Rain-listening Pavilion likely had some connection with the power behind North Prince Mansion, though it was unclear what they aimed to achieve in North Country or what they hoped to gain from the North

Prince.

As such, Wu Junwan grew even more intrigued by this North Prince Lu Chen. What sort of value did he possess that warranted such support from so many forces?

But for the near term, answers to these questions would elude her; her only option was to leave the Qianhai Commercial Association in North Country and slowly dig for useful information.

At that moment, Wu Junwan continued to ask, “Elder Pei, Old Madame Hu, do you think that this Chen Lu has realized my true identity?”

Pei Hong answered, “It’s highly likely that he’s aware. Qianhai Commercial Association, despite its wealth, couldn’t possibly have two Grandmasters; however, he may not know that you’re the Princess of Great Wu. He might think you’re someone sent by the princess.”

After all, Wu Junwan was the Princess of Great Wu, a figure with actual authority. Normally she would not stealthily visit another dynasty without prior notice, as that would compromise her stature.

Also, the number of people who had seen Wu Junwan was quite limited, even within the Great Wu Dynasty few knew what their princess looked like. Thus, Pei Hong believed that the Tower Master of Rain-listening Pavilion might not recognize Wu Junwan as their princess. At most, he might guess that the three of them were connected to the Princess of Great Wu.

Of course, this was just what Pei Hong thought.

At this time, Hu Shu also spoke, “Elder Pei is right, I share the same view.”

Wu Junwan fell into deep thought and said no more.

Early the next morning.

As dawn began to break, Wu Junwan journeyed back to the Great Wu Dynasty in a carriage arranged by the Qianhai Commercial Association.

Upon hearing that Wu Junwan had left North Country so quickly, Lu Chen wasn’t surprised in the slightest. After all, given her position as the Princess of Great Wu, her safety was paramount. With a

threat capable of endangering her life now present in North Country, it was natural she wouldn't stay long.

In the morning, after finishing the porridge personally prepared by Mu Zixuan, Lu Chen headed to the Hall of Political Affairs for a minor court meeting.

The topics discussed that day were still related to the arrangements for the refugees of North Country. Lately, nine out of ten minor court meetings had revolved around matters of the refugees.

During the meeting, after discussions on refugee-related matters had concluded, Li Rui stood and said, "Prince, North Country's population is growing too rapidly. The current number of officials is severely insufficient to manage such a multitude. This official suggests increasing their number."

Almost every civil official at the court held several positions. While holding multiple posts meant receiving more subsidies according to North Country's current administrative system, it also meant an overwhelming increase in workload.

Previously they were used to slacking off, but now, overwhelmed with much more work, these officials simply couldn't adapt.

After a recent punitive action as a lesson to others, these officials were loyal indeed, but lacking in capability.

The need to increase the number of officials was now urgent.

Hearing Li Rui's suggestion, Lu Chen replied, "I, too, have been considering adding more officials, but North Country is impoverished, and most common folk are illiterate. Scholars from other areas within Great Xia are unwilling to become officials in North Country, making it difficult to increase the number of officials at present."

Li Rui said, "This official has heard that a branch of the Chu Family has already moved to North Country. The Chu Family, being an Aristocratic Family for a thousand years, has many scholars. This official recommends allowing members of the Chu Family to enter the North Prince Mansion and assume important positions."

Li Rui was well aware of Lu Chen's relationship with the Chu Family and also knew Lu Chen's generally suppressive stance towards Aristocratic Families, but given the dearth of talented individuals in North Country, they had to temporarily employ members of the Chu Family.

If the shortage of officials persisted, it would definitely impede Lu Chen's reform progress.

Upon hearing Li Rui's words, Lu Chen considered for a moment, then replied, "That is possible; however, from now on, anyone seeking an official post must undergo an examination. The questions for the examination will be personally set by me. Only those who pass may qualify to become officials of North Country."

After the matter of the officials was concluded, Li Rui stepped aside, and Lu Chen continued, "I have an announcement to make today. Yan County is too small, too dilapidated, and can no longer satisfy the growing commercial needs of North Country. I intend to build a new city, and henceforth, the North Prince Mansion shall move there."

Hearing these words, the officials in the hall immediately started a buzzing discussion.

Building a new city posed two primary challenges: The first was sourcing the funds, and the second was labor. With so many refugees in North Country, labor was not an issue, but money certainly was.

Lu Chen continued, "You're worried about funding, but many merchant associations will actively participate in the construction of the new city, and most of the major funding will come from the coffers of the Prince's Mansion."

At Lu Chen's words, the officials ceased their discussion, since the Prince's Mansion would be financing the construction, they wouldn't need to worry about raising funds themselves, and that was a relief.

Their greatest fear was that the Prince's Mansion would expect them, the officials, to secure the funding. With North Country being so impoverished, they had no means to raise money, and their only resource was through various taxes.

However, Lu Chen had exempted the agricultural tax, which was a major source, and current tax categories in North Country were strictly defined by the North Prince Mansion, so they didn't have the authority to invent new taxes.

Lu Chen then continued, “The location for the new city has not been decided yet. Discuss among yourselves where the new city should be built.”

Upon hearing this, discussion once again filled the hall.

Meanwhile.

Inside the North Prince Mansion.

After completing her patrol, Chu Yuqin returned to her courtyard, planning to have a proper talk with Chu Qingli.

Chu Qingli was in her room, regulating her Inner Strength. Having been frequently trained by Lu Chen recently, she had significantly improved her skill, but the rapid growth was something she was struggling to adapt to.

Chu Yuqin knocked on the door, “Qing Li, are you in there? Sister is coming in. Hearing Chu Yuqin’s voice, Chu Qingli quickly pulled up her clothes. While practicing, she had been left with only an undergarment that exposed a lot of skin.

Her body was covered in red marks, and if Chu Yuqin saw them, she would surely comment on it later.

After hastily getting dressed, Chu Qingli coldly said, “I’m inside, sister, please come in.”

Responding to Chu Qingli’s answer, Chu Yuqin pushed the door open and saw Chu Qingli meditating, apparently having just been regulating her Inner Strength. Chu Yuqin sighed softly.

In Chu Yuqin’s perspective, Chu Qingli had been training so strenuously lately, probably in an effort to quickly advance her strength to surpass Lu Chen, and then forcibly take her sister away from the North Prince Mansion.

Chu Qingli looked at Chu Yuqin and asked, “Sister, did you need something from me?”



Chu Yuqin replied, "Qing Li, your recent training often leads you to deviate, which shows your mind is in turmoil. If you keep training this way, disaster is inevitable."

"I've already spoken with Chen'er, for the next few months Bai will handle the security work of the Prince's Mansion, so you should take some time to rest." At these words, Chu Qingli was momentarily stunned, then hurriedly responded, "Sister, I'm fine."

Chu Yuqin said, "Fine? Look at those red scars on your body. Chen'er has mentioned that those red scars are very difficult to eliminate. If they deepen further one day and even Chen'er can't remove them, how will you marry?" "Moreover, these scars are the least of the problems. If you deviate and lose all your skill, will you still be able to stay in the North Prince Mansion?"

"I..." Chu Qingli faltered.

She wanted to say the scars had nothing to do with deviation but the lie had already been told, and there was no taking it back.

If she claimed the scars weren't related to her deviation, then how did they come about?

How was she to explain this to Chu Yuqin?

## Chapter 293: The White Wine of the North Prince Mansion

At this moment, Chu Qingli's heart was filled with resentment toward a certain bad thing. If that bad thing hadn't left so many scars on her body, she wouldn't have had to lie that the scars were the result of practice backfiring.

The key point was that the bad thing clearly had the means to erase these scars, but he just refused to help her remove them. He insisted on keeping the scars there as if she were his possession, and he was stamping his mark on her body.

Having no choice, Chu Qingli could only say, "Well, then, I'll take some time to rest."

Seeing Chu Qingli agree, Chu Yuqin immediately said, "Qingli, I've told you before, you are an assassin by nature. You were always on the move in the past, so it's not suitable for you to stay in one place all the time."

“The frequency of your practice backfiring recently is probably related to your constant presence at the North Prince Mansion.

“Why not take advantage of this time to rest, leave the North Prince Mansion, go out for a walk, and relax your mind? Maybe when you come back, your practice won’t backfire anymore.”

Hearing this, Chu Qingli immediately said, “No need.”

She was planning to quickly complete the trade with Lu Chen and then save her sister and leave the North Prince Mansion. How could she leave the North Prince Mansion at this time? How would she trade with Lu Chen if she were not there?

At that moment, Chu Qingli suddenly thought of something, her gaze fixed on Chu Yuqin’s flawless face, and then suspiciously asked, “Sister, are you trying to send me away so you can do something with that lecherous man?”

Chu Qingli often made excuses to send Chu Yuqin away and then engage in secret trades with Lu Chen, so she was very sensitive to such matters.

At this time, Chu Yuqin replied with a guilty conscience, “Qingli, do you really see your sister as such a shameless person in your heart?”

Chu Qingli said, “Then why does Sister always want to send me away?”

Chu Yuqin said angrily, “What do you mean by sending you away? I’m doing this for your own good. You at least call me Sister, how could I bear to see you get hurt?”

Hearing this, Chu Qingli thought to herself: I’m sorry, Sister, but for you, I can’t leave the North Prince Mansion under any circumstances right now.

With that thought, Chu Qingli said, “Sister, I will not leave the North Prince Mansion unless you leave with me. I don’t feel at ease with Sister alone in the North Prince Mansion.”

Seeing how obstinate Chu Qingli was, Chu Yuqin felt helpless, and as expected, Chu Qingli would not leave the North Prince Mansion.

If Chu Qingli did not leave the North Prince Mansion, would the thing she promised Lu Chen keep dragging on? How would Lu Chen view her then? Would he think she was just using Chu Qingli as an excuse and didn't want to attend to him?

Chu Yuqin sighed deeply and then said, "Forget it, you won't listen to me no matter how much I say."

Chu Yuqin decided not to continue persuading. She didn't know how many times she had already tried to persuade Chu Qingli, who refused to leave the North Prince Mansion. She even started to suspect that Chu Qingli had an ulterior motive for staying.

To get Chu Qingli to leave the North Prince Mansion, Lu Chen would have to think of a way. Lu Chen could use the Prince's power to directly transfer Chu Qingli out of the mansion, which would then give her the opportunity to attend to Lu Chen.

She had already discussed this with Lu Chen, and what came next would depend on what he did. It would be best if Chu Qingli were transferred to a location several hours' travel from the mansion, giving her enough time to help Lu Chen relax.

With that thought, Chu Yuqin's cheeks became incredibly hot—she really was a woman without shame, trying all means to drive her own sister out of the North Prince Mansion just to secretly steal some... moments with a man.

At this very moment.

The morning court had already ended.

Lu Chen was coming out of the Hall of Political Affairs and was planning to return to his study when a maid from the inner court approached and said, "Prince, the Princess Consort would like you to visit the inner court when you're free. The sorghum wine is ready."

Hearing this, Lu Chen's heart leaped for joy, and he replied, "I'll go right away."

Then, Lu Chen hurried to the inner quarters of the mansion.

In the main hall, Lu Chen's wives and concubines were gathered around a half-meter-tall jar of wine, discussing something.

Soon, Lu Chen entered the hall.

Seeing Lu Chen return, Xiao Wenyao and Yelv Nanyan quickly made way.

Lu Chen walked up to the wine jar, looking at the clear white liquor inside and smelling the strong fragrance in the air, and then he said, "It's indeed strong!"

At that moment, Mu Zixuan, who was pregnant, said with a smile, "Prince, with this wine, the Prince's Mansion will have another profitable venture. Soon the treasury of the mansion may not be able to hold all the silver."

Hearing Mu Zixuan's words, Lu Chen chuckled and then said, "That's not necessarily the case. The silver from the mansion is about to be spent. I have decided to build a new city, and the little silver in the mansion might not even be enough for that."

Hearing Lu Chen's words, Mu Zixuan was stunned. She hadn't expected Lu Chen to build a new city, which meant that the silver earned by the mansion would likely be spent very quickly.

After all, it was money they had earned, and Mu Zixuan felt somewhat reluctant to part with it, but soon she let go of these feelings.

After all, silver is meant to be spent. What use is there in keeping it in the treasury?

This silver could be used where it's meant to be, only then her earnings would truly be meaningful.

At this moment, Lu Chen picked up a bamboo tube scoop beside the wine jar and scooped out a ladle of white liquor from inside. He brought the scoop closer, sniffed the fragrance of the alcohol, and while sniffing, he asked, "Is there a bowl? Give me a bowl, I'd like to taste how this liquor is."

Hearing this, Xiao Wenyao immediately passed over a bowl, "Prince, the bowl."

Just as Lu Chen was about to take the bowl from Xiao Wenyao's hands, her body swayed, and Lu Chen ended up grabbing at thin air.

Lu Chen was taken aback for a moment, and as he turned his head to look at Xiao Wenyao, he realized only then that her face was flushed red, reeking of alcohol, with some of her hair sticking out.

This...

Lu Chen said with a smile, "Yaoyao, did you fall into the wine vat or something?"

Upon hearing this, Xiao Wenyao, face redolent of alcohol, responded, "Prince... Prince, I just had a little..."

At this point, Xiao Wenyao's body started to sway again, and Yelv Nanyan, who was nearby, quickly supported her.

Lu Chen suddenly noticed that not only was Xiao Wenyao affected, but even Yelv Nanyan's cheeks were rosy, and it was clear that the two of them had been drinking.

At that time, Zhou Youyou, covering her mouth, giggled from the side, "Prince, just now Yaoyao and Nanyan said they are from the grasslands, champions of drinking, claiming that no liquor could intoxicate them. So the two of them downed a bowl each in one go, only to find themselves tipsy within a few breaths."

Hearing Zhou Youyou's words, Lu Chen chuckled and then said, "You actually dared to drink such strong liquor straight from a bowl?"

The beautiful Yelv Nanyan felt exceedingly embarrassed, her cheeks turning even more crimson. She hadn't expected the liquor to be so potent, nor its potency to have such a strong aftereffect. It had been too long since she had drunk liquor at the Prince's Mansion, and the rich aroma overwhelmed her restraint – she hadn't anticipated this liquor was nothing like the grain alcohol they used to drink.

In the meantime, Xiao Wenyao once again extended the bowl towards Lu Chen, “Prince... Prince, the bowl.”

Lu Chen took the bowl, then poured the liquor from the scoop into the bowl and took a gentle sip.

A burning sensation instantly surged through his throat; this liquor was evidently extremely strong – it was best diluted. Not many could withstand it straight.

However, thinking it over, Lu Chen realized that once the liquor entered his stomach, it would evaporate immediately. The alcohol did not enter his bloodstream to circulate.

This...

Lu Chen instantly understood what was happening – clearly, his Poison Immunity Body was at work.

The alcohol was regarded as a toxin by his Poison Immunity Body, so as soon as it entered his stomach, it was neutralized. The alcohol had no effect on him whatsoever.

That meant, from now on, no matter how much he drank, it wouldn't be an issue.

Lu Chen wasn't sure whether this was good or bad.

The primary effect of alcohol is to numb the nerves, but now that the alcohol he drank wouldn't enter his blood circulation, he wouldn't even know what getting drunk felt like in the future.

After seeing Lu Chen take a sip of the liquor before him, Mu Zixuan asked with concern, “Prince, how do you find the taste?”

Lu Chen pursed his lips and replied, “It has a high alcohol content, not really suitable for consumption as is. It's best to dilute it to lower its alcohol content.”

Hearing this, Mu Zixuan responded, “I understand, my lord. I will speak with the workers who brew the liquor and tell them to lower the alcohol content of the liquor.”

The method of sorghum liquor brewing was provided by Lu Chen, so Mu Zixuan had learned many things about it – and not just her; even the Prince’s Mansion’s workers knew what “alcohol content” meant. Previously, when people drank liquor, they only spoke of it being strong or mild without the concept of alcohol content.

With the notion of alcohol content, from now on they would be able to more accurately describe how strong a liquor was and to what extent it was potent.

After tasting the sorghum liquor, Lu Chen returned to his study to draft content for the officials’ examinations.

A few days later.

The Prince’s Mansion’s newly released sorghum liquor sold like hotcakes, with numerous merchant caravans coming to the North Prince Mansion to place orders. The backlog of pre-orders had already extended three to four months out.

In fact, most people of this era were not accustomed to high-alcohol-content sorghum liquor, yet there was a peculiar mentality at play – wanting to outdo others and feel superior.

As the Prince’s Mansion’s sorghum liquor entered the major taverns, it became the go-to choice for drink-offs, instantly replacing the earlier rice wine, since the sorghum liquor’s higher alcohol content made it easier to get drunk on.

Now in the taverns, a saying was prevalent: only women drink rice wine; a real man drinks the white liquor brewed by the North Prince Mansion.

In the following half a month, even before the North Prince Mansion could name its white liquor, its fame had already spread across Great Xia and the surrounding dynasties.

When Chu Yuqin realized how potent and intoxicating the North Prince Mansion’s white liquor was, an idea flashed through her mind – the white liquor might provide her ample time to attend to Lu Chen.

If she could just get Chu Qingli drunk, then she wouldn’t be able to constantly keep an eye on her, right?

## Chapter 294: Come to Your Aunt's Room Tonight

Chu Yuqin thought of a way to fulfill her promise without being discovered by Chu Qingli, and immediately began to prepare.

She knew that Chu Qingli was a sensitive person, so to get her drunk, she couldn't be too direct; she needed to find a seemingly reasonable excuse.

However, before getting Chu Qingli drunk, she had to ask Lu Chen a question.

Early morning.

Gentle sunlight spilled in through the window, casting a bright patch on the bed.

The person sleeping soundly on the bed gradually began to wake up, and after opening his eyes, Lu Chen buried his head into the soft pillow and took a deep breath.

This pillow had a milky fragrance, quite nice indeed.

When Lu Chen got up, he saw Yelv Nanyan looking at him with a grievance on her face. He raised his hand, stroked Yelv Nanyan's cheek with a smile, and said, "Nanyan, what's with that look? Are you angry with me?"

Yelv Nanyan said, "The Prince is my darling, how could I possibly be angry?"

"Lately, the Prince seems to have an even more majestic aura, I wonder if your realm has advanced?"

As a Ninth Grade martial artist, Yelv Nanyan had vaguely perceived the increase in Lu Chen's martial prowess. With him being stronger and more vigorous than before, she suspected that his realm might have advanced.

But Lu Chen had long been a Grandmaster; if his realm had advanced further, wouldn't that make him a Grandmaster?



A seventeen-year-old Grandmaster? Yelv Nanyan dared not think so.

She had some understanding of the major dynasties and had never heard of a seventeen-year-old Grandmaster.

Hearing Yelv Nanyan's question, Lu Chen looked into her eyes with a smile and answered, "Whether my realm has advanced or not, can't you feel it yourself?"

Hearing Lu Chen's rhetorical question, Yelv Nanyan was stunned for a moment. Had Lu Chen's realm really advanced? Was he a Grandmaster?

A seventeen-year-old Grandmaster?

Good heavens...

Yelv Nanyan's face turned red with astonishment.

No wonder Lu Chen looked more imposing and his body stronger; it turned out he had indeed broken through to the Grandmaster Realm.

It seemed that the next time Lu Chen came to the Spring Sound Court, she would have to bring Xiao Wen Yao along.

But she was getting on in years, and there were some matters she was too embarrassed to mention, afraid that people would accuse her of being shameless.

Seeing Yelv Nanyan momentarily lost in thought, Lu Chen said, "Indeed, I am now a Grandmaster, Nanyan, there's no need to be surprised."

Yelv Nanyan snapped back to reality and tentatively said, "Prince, how about taking a few more concubines?"

If it had been previously, Yelv Nanyan wouldn't have said such a thing, as it was primarily the wife's affair when the Prince took concubines, and as a side concubine, she had no place to say such things.

However, she was already very familiar with Lu Chen, and wasn't as cautious as before. The environment in the Prince's Mansion was quite harmonious, it was unlikely that asking Lu Chen to take a concubine would cause the wife to trouble her.

Even when Lu Chen was still a Master, the women of the Prince's Mansion's inner courtyard could no longer satisfy his needs. Now Mu Zixuan and the other two were pregnant, and Lu Chen had broken through to the Grandmaster Realm.

For Lu Chen's sake, and for the sake of the women of the inner courtyard, Lu Chen should indeed take on a few more concubines.

Hearing Yelv Nanyan's words, Lu Chen smiled and said, "Nanyan, what do you mean by that? Are you saying you no longer want to serve me, so you want me to take concubines, to have someone else serve me?"

As he spoke, Lu Chen reached out and lifted Yelv Nanyan's chin with his thumb and index finger, gently rubbing them together.

Yelv Nanyan said with a flushed face, "That's not what I meant. The Prince is too formidable, and I... I'm somewhat..."

Yelv Nanyan trailed off.

Lu Chen chuckled and then said, "You don't need to worry about the matter of taking concubines. When it's time to take concubines, I will naturally do so."

With that said, Lu Chen patted Yelv Nanyan's plump buttocks with his hand and continued, "If you think you can't handle it, then hurry up and get pregnant with my child, that way you won't have to worry about me coming here every day."

Hearing Lu Chen's words, Yelv Nanyan was somewhat helpless. She too wanted to get pregnant with Lu Chen's child as soon as possible, but it was extraordinarily difficult for high-grade warriors to conceive.

She had been in the Prince's Mansion for so long, and Lu Chen had favored her countless times, yet she had not become pregnant, and neither had Xiao Wen Yao.

At that moment, Yelv Nanyan said, "I understand, I will try my best to conceive the Prince's child."

Then, Lu Chen let go of Yelv Nanyan's body and got out of bed while Yelv Nanyan quickly got up to help Lu Chen dress.

After dressing, Lu Chen prepared to return to the main courtyard for breakfast, but just as he walked out of the Spring Sound Court, he saw a mature and beautiful woman.

Chu Yuqin was wearing a light blue long dress, with a waistband that perfectly showcased her figure. She paced back and forth at the entrance of the Spring Sound Court, looking somewhat nervous.

Lu Chen then said, "Madam Chu, are you waiting for me?"

At the sound of Lu Chen's voice, Chu Yuqin snapped out of her thoughts, her face involuntarily blushing. She looked into Lu Chen's eyes and said, "Chen'er, I wanted to ask you about something."

Curious, Lu Chen asked, "What is it?"

Chu Yuqin inquired, "Can your Immortal Technique help sober someone up?"

Hearing this, Lu Chen paused for a moment.

Chapter 295: Come to Your Aunt's Room Tonight\_2

Why would Chu Yuqin ask such a question for no reason?

Lu Chen looked at Chu Yuqin in confusion and said, "Could it be that Madam

Chu has had some wine this morning?”

Chu Yuqin answered, “No, I’m just asking.”

Lu Chen said, “Of course, my Immortal Technique can sober a person up, but I don’t understand why you are asking this, Madam Chu.”

Chu Yuqin then leaned closer to Lu Chen and whispered in his ear, “Chen’er, come to my room tonight, I have something to discuss with you.”

As Chu Yuqin drew suddenly near, Lu Chen instantly smelled a faint fragrance, which stirred him greatly; it was the scent of an aroused woman.

Lu Chen seemed to understand what Chu Yuqin intended; it appeared she had finally made up her mind. However, her question about sobering up still confused him.

Did their doing that thing have anything to do with wine?

It surely didn’t seem necessarily related, did it?

After Chu Yuqin had spoken, she felt unprecedented shame, her cheeks flushing with redness that spread to her fair, swan-like neck and even her ear tips. Seeing this shy beauty, the fire that had died down the night before in Lu Chen rose again.

Still, Lu Chen did not take advantage of the situation. He controlled the agitation inside him and said, “I understand.”

Chu Yuqin then turned and left, or more precisely, fled the place as if she longed to burrow into a hole and hide.

A widow who had been married, she had actually invited Lu Chen to her room. If word got out, she could not imagine what others would say about her.

Watching Chu Yuqin’s retreating figure, the corners of Lu Chen’s mouth curved slightly upward, indicating that something good was bound to happen tonight.

At this very moment.

Sufeng City.

The Dongfang Family's meeting hall.

In the main seat of the hall, directly facing the door, sat a middle-aged man in a gray robe with a long beard.

To the right of the man sat a recent favorite of the Crown Prince, Wang Yong, known as one of the five talented young masters from the South and also the most likely to become the next Family Head of the Wang Family.

At that moment, Dongfang Yi asked, "May I know the reason for Mr. Wang's visit to our Dongfang Family this time? Does it come with some directive from the Crown Prince?"

Wang Yong picked up a teacup from the side, took a sip, and then smilingly said, "Not exactly. I came mainly to inquire about a matter on behalf of the

Crown Prince."

Upon hearing this, Dongfang Yi asked with curiosity, "Oh, do tell, Mr. Wang." Wang Yong went straight to the point, "Miss Dongfang is still unwed, isn't she?"

Hearing this, Dongfang Yi's brow furrowed and his expression seemed to darken somewhat.

He then asked, "Is the Crown Prince perhaps interested in my daughter?"

Wang Yong continued, "Of course, Miss Dongfang is accomplished in both literature and martial arts; there is no man who wouldn't be fond of her. Ever since the Crown Prince saw Miss Dongfang once at a poetry meeting in the

South, he hasn't stopped thinking about her."

Dongfang Yi said, “Mr. Wang, my daughter is quite vivacious and has a rather difficult personality. I fear she may not be the most suitable match for the

Crown Prince.”

“Being ever in the Capital city, the Crown Prince has no real understanding of her. But you, Mr. Wang, should be well aware, considering how many young talents from the South have had their legs broken by my daughter. I don’t even know how much I’ve had to pay each year to compensate for such incidents.”

Dongfang Yi’s daughter, Dongfang Longyue, was indeed a great beauty, even being called the number one beauty of the South. Not only was she well-versed in poetry and literature, but she also possessed a high talent for martial arts. In Sufeng City, almost any man who had seen her developed some improper thoughts towards her.

Moreover, many had come to propose marriage, but without exception, all were rejected, and directly by Dongfang Longyue herself.

When it came to marriage, even Dongfang Yi, as her father, had no say in the matter, Dongfang Longyue said she wouldn’t marry, and that was that.

Unable to succeed by direct proposal, some elegant scholars tried to use their talents to move Dongfang Longyue. These men tried various ways to get closer to her, but in the end, their attempts to approach her resulted in having their legs broken by Dongfang Longyue.

Of course, even so, many men were still smitten with Dongfang Longyue. Precisely because she was so staunch with other men, those scholars found her even more intriguing, speculating that perhaps her chastity was maintained for someone special.

It could be said that the scholars of the South were utterly bewitched by

Dongfang Longyue.

Of course, the Dongfang Family was the third largest aristocratic family in the South. Even if someone coveted Dongfang Longyue's body, they wouldn't dare to resort to any underhanded tactics.

Dongfang Yi couldn't understand why the Crown Prince would be interested in his daughter; even he found her a headache. If she were to marry into the Crown Prince, she might turn his household upside down.

Moreover, their family was somewhat unique compared to the usual aristocratic families of the South. His daughter was not quite suitable for marriage into the royal family of Great Sum, as their family had a special mission.

Upon hearing Dongfang Yi's words, Wang Yong slightly smiled and then said, "Miss Dongfang is clever and quick-witted. I believe that after marrying the Crown Prince, she will know to restrain herself."

Seeing Dongfang Yi's reluctance, Wang Yong continued, "Dongfang Family Master, although Miss Dongfang cannot be the principal wife after marrying His Highness the Crown Prince, her status will still be far from low. This is a great opportunity for the Dongfang Family."

The Crown Prince's principal wife is generally designated by the Emperor, and on one hand, the Sum Emperor is unlikely to match a woman from the southern aristocratic families with the Crown Prince as the Crown Princess Consort. On the other hand, the Wang Family wouldn't allow Dongfang Longyue to become the Crown Princess Consort.

After all, the Wang Family wished to send a daughter of their own to Lu

Shuyun's side to someday become the Empress.

Hearing Wang Yong's words, Dongfang Yi sighed and said, "Mr. Wang, my daughter is honored by the Crown Prince's affection, but her temperament really isn't suited for the Imperial Palace. If she were to enter the palace, she might one day bring disaster upon the entire Dongfang Family. I hope Mr. Wang can convey this to His Highness the Crown Prince, so he might understand our position."

Dongfang Yi could tell that the Wang Family was so eager to marry Dongfang Longyue to the Crown Prince primarily to firmly ally the Dongfang Family with their own cause.

Although the Dongfang Family was part of the southern aristocracy, they were quite unique. The family's attitude towards the royal family was somewhat fickle, making the Wang Family a bit uneasy.

If they could marry Dongfang Longyue to Lu Shuyun, they would be in the same boat, and then the Dongfang Family would have to move forward or retreat with them.

Wang Yong continued to speak, "Dongfang Family Master, your family relocated to Sufeng City a hundred years ago and doesn't have much land in the South. You've primarily focused on trade, and your foundation isn't stable. Haven't you ever thought about taking your family to the next level, to solidify your family's status?"

"The Crown Prince is very fond of Miss Dongfang. When His Highness succeeds the throne, even if Miss Dongfang cannot be the Empress, he will surely favor the Dongfang Family and grant you many benefits due to his affection for her." "Dongfang Family Master, I know your family has always wanted to enter the court but has lacked an opportunity. Now that the opportunity has arrived, you must seize it."

Hearing Wang Yong's words, Dongfang Yi said, "I need to discuss this matter with my daughter to see what she thinks, as it concerns her lifelong happiness, and naturally, she should make the final decision.

Hearing Dongfang Yi's words, Wang Yong's brows furrowed slightly; it was clear that Dongfang Yi was trying to buy time.

In this era, parents' orders and matchmakers' words were the norm; there was no need to seek a child's opinion, especially in matters of marrying off a daughter, where the woman's thoughts were usually not considered.

Nevertheless, not wanting to offend Dongfang Yi, Wang Yong did not persist in his persuasion and stood up, saying, "Very well, if Dongfang Family Master and Miss Dongfang come to a decision, please send someone to inform me. I will not leave Sufeng City for the time being."

"I shall take my leave today."

With these words, Wang Yong turned and walked out of the hall. At this point, Dongfang Yi called out, "Take care, Mr. Wang. Once my daughter has made up her mind, I will have someone notify you."



Before long, Wang Yong had left the Dongfang residence.

Once Wang Yong's figure had completely disappeared from Dongfang Yi's view, his expression darkened instantly. He then went to the back yard to tell his daughter Dongfang Longyue about the matter.

## Chapter 296: Dongfang Longyue 1

In a certain courtyard of the Dongfang Family, a woman dressed in a purple cloud attire was standing in a pavilion, holding a brush and painting on a sheet of paper.

The woman's hair was styled high into a cloud-like bun, with her black hair cascading down to her waist like a waterfall, making her stand as gracefully as jade, as beautiful as a fairy.

At this moment, Dongfang Yi, who stood to one side, spoke, "Yue'er, tell dad, what are you thinking?"

Dongfang Longyue didn't stop her brush as she continued to paint and asked, "Dad, you should know that he won't be Crown Prince for much longer, right?" Dongfang Yi replied, "Although he won't be Crown Prince for much longer, he is still the Crown Prince now. I estimate there are at least six more months before the Sum Emperor takes action against the Wang Family."

The Dongfang Family is quite special, having knowledge of some insider information, so they were not optimistic about Lu Shuyun, considering his glory to be fleeting.

Once the Wang Family was eradicated, Lu Shuyun's position as the Crown Prince was certain to be revoked.

Dongfang Longyue said, "The Wang Family probably doesn't want to see other aristocratic families marrying their daughters to the Crown Prince, but Wang Yong took the initiative to come as the Crown Prince's lobbyist. This indicates that they have sensed something and want to firmly bind our family with the southern aristocratic families."

“Our family has been involved in commerce for generations, controlling almost all of the Great Xia Dynasty’s economic lifelines. Once we are firmly bound to the southern families, the Sum Emperor will inevitably become even more wary of them.”

Dongfang Yi sighed and said, “I also think the Crown Prince’s declared interest in you is just a pretext, but even if it’s a pretext, it’s not easy for us to refuse.”

If we directly refuse, it could easily arouse their suspicion, which would not be conducive to our dealings with others and, moreover, our family has its own mission; we can’t afford any issues at this time.”

At this moment, Dongfang Longyue put down her brush, looked up at Dongfang Yi, and said, “Dad, how about this: you pretend to agree to the Crown Prince for now, but find an excuse to delay for a while. I will find a way to leave Sufeng City.”

Although the Dongfang Family is one of the southern aristocratic families, they have businesses operating in all the major dynasties. It wouldn’t be a big problem for Dongfang Longyue to leave Sufeng City and find refuge in another dynasty. Later, the Dongfang Clan could claim that Dongfang Longyue had acted on her own volition, not willing to marry, and then secretly fled to another dynasty.

Seeing Dongfang Longyue so decided, Dongfang Yi sighed again and then said, “It seems this is the only option we have for now.”

“Yue’er, sorry to put you through this,” he added.

Dongfang Longyue calmly replied, “It’s what I should do.”

Dongfang Yi then said, “I won’t disturb you any further.”

With that, Dongfang Yi turned and left the courtyard, ready to send a message to Wang Yong.

Night fell.

North Prince Mansion.

The moonlight tonight was cold and enchanting.

The moonbeams spilled onto the ground like water, causing the shadows to ripple and dance in the light breeze like the waves on the water's surface.

At this moment, in Chu Yuqin's room at the North Prince Mansion, Chu Yuqin was kneeling on a mat, with a jar of wine and some food laid out before her.

Chu Qingli and Chu Yuqin sat facing each other.

Chu Yuqin poured herself a cup of wine, then drank it in one gulp before saying to Chu Qingli, "Qingli, this is a new wine brewed by the Prince's Mansion, and it has a very good flavor. The orders from the Prince's Mansion are backed up for months. I managed to get a jar from Zixuan, have a taste."

"They say this wine can help with detoxification and is very beneficial for cultivation. Recently you've been suffering from cultivation deviation, which left so many scars on your body. Those scars are most likely caused by toxins. Why not try a bit and see?"

Hearing this, Chu Qingli didn't suspect Chu Yuqin of any ulterior motive, especially since Chu Yuqin had just had a drink herself.

Moreover, she had indeed heard that the white liquor recently produced by the North Prince Mansion was very popular, and now many guards within the Prince's Mansion were eager to try it.

Chu Yuqin then poured a small cup for Chu Qingli.

Chu Qingli immediately picked up the cup and gently sipped.

After one sip, Chu Qingli found the liquor to be quite strong. Had it not been for her high martial arts skill and the abundance of inner strength that gave her some resistance to strong alcohol, she probably couldn't have handled it.

At that moment, Chu Yuqin poured herself another cup. She slightly shifted her hips and switched her position from kneeling to sitting on the ground, her plump buttocks pressing against the mat below, squeezing the flesh of her hips together.

Chu Yuqin then asked, “Qingli, what do you think of this liquor?”

Qingli replied expressionlessly, “It’s a bit strong, but the aroma is quite rich.”

Hearing Chu Qingli’s response, Chu Yuqin poured her another cup and then said, “If you like it, drink more. Perhaps the alcohol will even help expel some impurities from your body later.”

Chu Yuqin’s plan was simple: to get Chu Qingli drunk. To avoid raising Chu Qingli’s suspicion that she was trying to intoxicate her, Chu Yuqin drank along with her.

She figured that Lu Chen would later come to her room anyway, and his Immortal Technique could sober her up. Once Lu Chen arrived and found her drunk, he’d surely help her sober up willingly.

By then, she would be awake, and her younger sister would be unconscious from the intoxication, allowing her to confidently serve Lu Chen tonight, fulfilling her promise.

Until the morning light, Chu Qingli wouldn’t necessarily notice.

By the time Chu Qingli woke up again, she and Lu Chen would have finished their business.

Seeing Chu Yuqin lift her cup again and take another sip, Chu Qingli suddenly thought of something.

During this time, her sister had grown suspicious of her, especially since Lu Chen was always in her room, and her daily fits of martial frenzy were insufficient explanations.

These past few days, she hadn’t traded with Lu Chen, mainly for fear of being discovered by Chu Yuqin.

Now that the North Prince Mansion suddenly had such strong liquor, her opportunity had arrived. If she could get her sister drunk, she could meet with Lu Chen while her sister was unconscious,

without her sister ever finding out. She wouldn't need to be as cautious and fearful of being caught by her sister as before.

However, to prevent her sister from realizing she wanted to get her drunk, it would be best to drink along with her.

With that thought, Chu Qingli picked up her cup and slowly took a sip.

At this moment, the two sisters, connected in underhanded intentions, each aimed to get the other intoxicated. The pair chatted about trivial things while drinking.

Meanwhile, the lights in Lu Chen's study were still brightly shining.

After an indeterminate amount of time, a cloud drifted in front of the moon, blocking its light.

Lu Chen rose from his seat, stretching leisurely and rotating his neck.

Suddenly remembering that Chu Yuqin had invited him to her room tonight, the corners of Lu Chen's mouth involuntarily curled into a subtle smile.

However, he quickly remembered a troublesome matter.

Chu Qingli was living right next to Chu Yuqin's room, and she had recently taken a leave from her position as Deputy Commander of the Prince's Mansion guards.

If he went to Chu Yuqin's room now, there was a high probability that Chu Qingli would see him or become aware of his presence.

## Chapter 297: An Assassin Enters Chu Yuqin's Room

As soon as he thought of being seen by Chu Qingli, Lu Chen felt utterly confused inside.

Chu Yuqin must have been aware of this, too. As long as Chu Qingli was still in the Prince's Mansion, she would constantly keep an eye on Chu Yuqin.

So, what did Chu Yuqin want him to do in her room?

With Chu Qingli watching over, Chu Yuqin wouldn't allow any mischief, so they couldn't possibly have any proper business to take care of. Could it be they were just going to sit in her room doing nothing?

After thinking it over, Lu Chen still couldn't figure out why Chu Yuqin had asked him to visit her room tonight. However, since it was Chu Yuqin herself who had extended the invitation, it was definitely worth checking out, no matter what it was about.

Soon after, Lu Chen got up and headed to the courtyard where Chu Yuqin's room was located.

Before even entering the courtyard, Lu Chen noticed flickering candlelight coming from Chu Yuqin's room, along with the sound of voices.

This...

Were there other people in Chu Yuqin's room?

This made Lu Chen even more puzzled about why Chu Yuqin wanted him to come to her room.

Weren't there other people in the room?

Lu Chen then approached the door and knocked.

"Madam Chu, may I come in?"

Inside the room at this moment, two women were sprawled on the floor, possibly overheated from too much drink, their Cloud Attire had slipped down, revealing their white necks, delicate collarbones, and a vast expanse of snow-white skin.

After Lu Chen's voice was heard, the room suddenly fell silent, the sounds ceasing altogether.

This...

Lu Chen stood frozen at the doorway for a moment.

He had clearly heard voices in the room just now, so why had they suddenly stopped?

Could something have happened inside?

An assassin?

With that thought, Lu Chen's brow furrowed and he immediately pushed open the door.

As soon as the door swung open, what met his eyes was the erotic scene of two beauties embracing each other.

Seeing this, Lu Chen was taken aback.

The next moment, a strong scent of alcohol drifted into Lu Chen's nostrils.

Lu Chen instantly understood what was going on.

It turned out that Chu Yuqin and Chu Qingli had been drinking in the room, and what they had been drinking was the Prince's Mansion's potent sorghum liquor.

At this time, Lu Chen glanced at the two on the ground; Chu Yuqin was lying down, and Chu Qingli was by her side, still somewhat groggy.

A slight grin appeared on Lu Chen's lips; there were no assassins, the only assassin was himself.

Could it be that earlier today, Chu Yuqin wanted him to visit her room at night to openly disclose their affair to Chu Qingli? He had simply arrived a bit late, and now the two beauties were drunk, both collapsed on the floor.

At this moment, Lu Chen still thought that Chu Yuqin had made her peace with it and no longer intended to hide their relationship. Clearly, Lu Chen hadn't guessed Chu Yuqin's real intentions.

Now, Lu Chen entered the room and closed the door behind him.

Upon hearing the door close, Chu Qingli, who had been in a dazed state, looked up to see who had come in.

When she saw that the big bad guy had entered, her brain suddenly cleared up a bit, but because she had drunk so much, it would take some time for her to force the alcohol out with her skill. She was still in a drunken state, weak all over.

Seeing Lu Chen directly walking toward Chu Yuqin, Chu Qingli tensed up. Chu Yuqin's clothing had completely fallen away, revealing her snowy white shoulders.

In order not to let Lu Chen's eyes see what they shouldn't, Chu Qingli used all her strength to lift her hand and slowly pulled Chu Yuqin's clothes up, while saying to Lu Chen, "Don't... don't look..."

Seeing this, Lu Chen laughed softly.

He hadn't expected Chu Qingli to still be so lucid, refusing to let him get close to Chu Yuqin even in her drunkenness.

Lu Chen then said with a smile, "Chu Qingli, it's cold on the ground. You might catch a cold if you sleep here, let me help you both to the bed."

Chu Qingli hastily put her hand on Chu Yuqin, glaring at Lu Chen with a drunken face, "You... get out..."

She knew all too well what sort of man this devil was. Now there were two drunk beauties right in front of him, completely defenseless, and she didn't believe for a second that he didn't have other intentions.

She had to get this man out of there, otherwise, nobody knew what he might do next.



Seeing that she was trying to prevent him from touching Chu Yuqin, Lu Chen said, “Chu Qingli, that’s too much. It’s one thing for you to sleep on the ground, but how can you let Madam Chu sleep there with you?”

“The ground is so cold, what if Madam Chu catches a cold?”

With that, Lu Chen grabbed Chu Qingli’s hand, removing her arm from Chu Yuqin’s body.

Despite what Lu Chen said, Chu Qingli didn’t trust him at all, and she immediately grabbed his arm, attempting to continue stopping him.

However, she was intoxicated, and her skill was temporarily blocked upon contacting Lu Chen. With her skill disabled and the alcohol taking over, she became even weaker and her head swirled.

Then, she could only watch helplessly as Lu Chen picked up Chu Yuqin’s voluptuous body and walked straight to Chu Yuqin’s large bed. Seeing this, Chu Qingli thought Lu Chen was going to do that sort of thing to Chu Yuqin, and with all her might, she said, “If you... if you dare touch my sister, I’ll cut you...”

## Chapter 298: An Assassin Enters Chu Yuqin’s

### Room\_2

Hearing Chu Qingli’s words, Lu Chen smiled and then placed Chu Yuqin on the bed, covering her with the blanket.

Seeing that Lu Chen didn’t make any untoward move towards Chu Yuqin, Chu Qingli finally let down her guard. But soon she was startled into a cold sweat again as she saw Lu Chen, having put down Chu Yuqin, walking towards her once more.

After reaching Chu Qingli’s side, Lu Chen squatted down, intending to scoop her up in a princess carry. Chu Qingli thought that Lu Chen was going to do something to her right there, so she immediately started to struggle, not wanting to let Lu Chen touch her body.

However, as soon as Lu Chen touched her body, she lost her strength. Even though she continued to struggle, Lu Chen still managed to lift her in a princess carry and walked to the bedside.

After Chu Qingli struggled for a while, Lu Chen reached the bedside and laid her face down on the bed as well.

Seeing that Lu Chen had brought her to the bed too, Chu Qingli was stunned for a moment.

Could it be that she had misunderstood this lecher?

She had thought he was about to do something to her, but he was apparently just bringing her to bed to sleep.

It made sense, after all, her sister was right there; he wouldn't dare do that sort of thing to her right now.

With this thought, Chu Qingli breathed a sigh of relief in her heart.

At this moment, Lu Chen stood by the bed, glancing at Chu Qingli lying there. Chu Qingli was wearing a purple gauze dress that draped over her, blending with her body as if they were one, perfectly highlighting her behind.

Even though the scent of alcohol on Chu Qingli was somewhat off-putting, the sight still stirred something in Lu Chen.

And this was in Chu Yuqin's room.

In the past, when they secretly did naughty things, just hearing Chu Yuqin's voice would make Chu Qingli's body tense up completely.

What if they were right beside Chu Yuqin?

Lu Chen didn't continue the thought.

Anyway, he was not planning to leave today.

This woman, Chu Qingli, actually dared to stop him from doing those things with Chu Yuqin. She must be taught a lesson. He wanted to completely tear apart her facade, strip away her sense of shame, and see if she would keep watching him and Chu Yuqin.

Just then, Chu Qingli saw that Lu Chen seemed not to have left the room. She turned her head towards him at the bedside, and said with an icy expression, "You... can go out now."

At these words, a surge of anger rose in Lu Chen's heart. The next moment, a ripping sound was heard. Chu Qingli immediately felt a chill on her behind and realized what was happening, her face turning pale instantly.

This was in Chu Yuqin's room!

And right beside Chu Yuqin!

No! She absolutely could not let this man have his way!

Chu Qingli quickly mustered all her skill, but the next moment, Lu Chen leaned over and grabbed her wrist, sealing her skill once again, and she was left powerless once more.

"Mmm mmm mmm..."

The clouds in the sky gradually dispersed, and bright moonlight once again illuminated the earth.

A gentle breeze blew at that moment, rustling the leaves. Summer was approaching, and the evening breeze was exceedingly tender, bringing immense comfort to anyone it caressed.

At this time, a woman dressed in white sat on the rooftop, overlooking everything in the North Prince Mansion.

Tonight, it was Bai Qingqing's turn to stand night watch. She generally did not patrol around, as a Grandmaster only needed to stand in a relatively high place to sense any disturbance in the Prince's Mansion.

Just then, she felt some slight noise coming from Chu Yuqin's room, surrounded by the calls of animals.

Bai Qingqing paid it no mind; she continued to stand on the rooftop, gazing into the distance.

The only one who could cause this sort of commotion in the Prince's Mansion was the man she served.

However, it was surprising that the sound was coming from Chu Yuqin's room. It was her first time hearing any noise from there. Normally, at night, it was the animal cries from the Spring Sound Court that were prevalent.

After an unknown period, the moonlight was once again obscured by clouds, and following a phoenix's cry, the noise from a certain room ceased abruptly.

Although Ninth Grade martial artists could get drunk, they had skill protecting their bodies, which meant alcohol was broken down very quickly.

The noise in the room was simply too loud, and Chu Yuqin, in a daze, opened her eyes. For some reason, she vaguely saw two figures overlapping each other.

"Chen'er, don't bully Qing Li..." Chu Yuqin murmured.

When Chu Yuqin opened her eyes, Chu Qingli was nearly scared out of her wits. She froze, her body tensed.

As she came to her senses, she wanted to quickly explain something to Chu Yuqin, but at that moment a pair of large hands reached down and covered Chu Qingli's mouth.

Chu Qingli instantly understood and immediately stopped moving, and the room fell silent. You could even faintly hear the buzzing of mosquitoes.

After what felt like an eternity, Chu Yuqin closed her eyes again, muttering, "Why hasn't Chen'er arrived yet? Could it be that he has forgotten..."

After saying this, Chu Yuqin closed her eyes and once more fell into a deep sleep.

Seeing Chu Yuqin close her eyes and fall back to sleep, Chu Qingli let out a sigh of relief.

The next moment, a surge of anger welled up inside her. This damn bastard!

Then Chu Qingli prepared to settle the score with a certain villain, but as she turned her head, she found herself pinned down, and the next moment, her mouth was gagged.

The assassin had come again...

Thinking of the assassin looking at Chu Yuqin's stunning face while attacking her, Chu Qingli felt immensely indignant. This detestable assassin was definitely full of thoughts about her sister by now, and he had begun to conflate her with her sister as well.

Early in the morning.

Bai Qingqing, who had been standing on the rooftop all night, came down. She was supposed to go to Chu Yuqin's room to take over the shift, as Chu Yuqin was in charge of the guard duty within the Prince's Mansion today.

However, she didn't go to find Chu Yuqin but headed straight to Lin Wanyun's courtyard to hand over the guard duty to her.

At this moment.

Sunlight streamed into the room, and the disheveled Chu Yuqin woke up from her sleep.

"Mmm..."

Chu Yuqin made a mumbling sound and then opened her bleary eyes.

It was then that she suddenly heard an "Alt!" from beside her.

Chu Yuqin came to her senses abruptly and hurriedly turned her head to look, only to find Chu Qingli sprawled beside the bed and Lu Chen standing at the bed, with Chu Qingli's Cloud Attire torn into several pieces.

Seeing this scene, Chu Yuqin was dumbfounded.

She was about to speak when Lu Chen calmly said to Chu Qingli, "Qingli, do you still want to be healed? If these scars on your body don't go away, how will you ever get married in the future?"

As he spoke, Lu Chen straightened his clothes while Chu Qingli stood in front of Chu Yuqin, blocking part of her view.

Hearing Lu Chen's words, Chu Yuqin was momentarily stupefied.

At that point, Lu Chen looked at Chu Yuqin and said with a smile, "Madam Chu, you're awake. I just heard Chu Qingli screaming in the room, so I came in to check. It turns out she had another demonic episode. I planned to treat her, but she kept struggling, even accusing me of wanting to take advantage of her body, so I had no choice but to step in."

"Look at the new scars on her neck."

This...

Hearing what Lu Chen said, Chu Yuqin finally understood.

She thought to herself how Lu Chen and Chu Qingli could possibly do such a thing in front of her. Her thoughts had grown increasingly dirty; she had actually believed they were engaging in that sort of act.

It was obvious that Lu Chen was treating Chu Qingli.

Seeing Chu Qingli's clothes torn to shreds, Chu Yuqin looked reproachfully at Lu Chen and said, "Chen'er, I know you need to treat Qingli, but you can't just tear a lady's clothes like that!"

“If you have seen Qingli’s body, then she will only be able to marry you from now on.”

Hearing Chu Yuqin’s words, Chu Qingli quickly said, “Sister, I don’t want to marry this bastard at all. Chu Qingli had already come to her senses by now and was full of resentment towards Lu Chen.”

When Chu Yuqin heard Chu Qingli curse Lu Chen as a bastard, her eyebrows knitted slightly, and she immediately said, “Qingli, how can you curse Chen’er? After all, he is a Prince.”

“Besides, he is treating you out of kindness!”

Chapter 299: Chen’er, Aunt’s Promise...\_i

At this moment, Chu Yuqin’s face was unmistakably serious, and she appeared to be genuinely angry.

She knew that Chu Qingli had always had grievances with Lu Chen, but regardless, Lu Chen was the ruler of a feudal state, a Seignior; how could he be insulted at will by others.

Seeing the darkening expression on Chu Yuqin’s face, Chu Qingli felt a pang in her heart, realizing that she had perhaps gone too far.

Although Lu Chen was indeed a scoundrel, it was fine for her to curse him in bed, but she couldn’t curse him in front of others. Even a Prince needed to save face.

Chu Qingli then had no choice but to say, “Sister, I know I was wrong.”

Chu Yuqin then said sternly, “Qingli, you must apologize to Chen’er immediately.”

Hearing this, Chu Qingli reluctantly looked at Lu Chen and said, “Prince, I’m sorry, I know I was wrong.”

Even as she mouthed an apology, Chu Qingli’s heart still harbored a strong resentment. She had been rebuffed all of last night, and now early this morning, she had to apologize to this lecher.

This guy not only had his fill of pleasure, but he was probably thrilled in his heart too; he likely wanted to see her apologizing and admitting her mistake. Despicable man, actually using her sister to make her apologize to him; if they ever had a chance to be alone again, she would definitely get her revenge on this guy.

Upon hearing Chu Qingli's words of apology, Lu Chen immediately said, "Madam Chu, it's fine, I don't mind at all."

"I was also at fault earlier; I shouldn't have torn Qingli's clothes and caused her embarrassment."

Seeing Lu Chen also admitting his mistake, Chu Yuqin quickly said, "Chen'er, you are now the sovereign of a nation; you can't just admit fault so lightly outside."

Although a Seignior wasn't as grand as an Emperor, he was still a symbol of power; how could he casually admit fault? Casually admitting fault would suggest that he, as a Seignior, was not up to par, always doing things wrong. This was similar to an Emperor issuing an edict admitting personal guilt; the more powerful one is, the less they can afford to apologize and admit fault lightly.

Lu Chen said with a smile, "Madam Chu, I understand your meaning, and I would only say this within the inner courtyard; I would not casually apologize to others outside."

"And indeed, I was the one at fault earlier."

Hearing Lu Chen's response, Chu Yuqin sighed, then addressed Chu Qingli, "Qingli, Chen'er is treating you for your own good; don't refuse his kindness." As she spoke, Chu Yuqin gave Chu Qingli a thorough look and noticed many red marks on her neck.

She continued, "Sister shouldn't have let you drink last night. I didn't expect you to fall into deviance again. Thankfully, Chen'er found out."

Lu Chen said with a smile, "Madam Chu, don't worry. Although Qingli fell into deviance, it hasn't had much of an impact on her body. The biggest problem is the scars appearing on her body."

Chu Yuqin said, "These scars can have a considerable impact on a woman. Qingli is still a virgin and has not yet married; with such marks, it might be difficult for her to find a husband. No man would want to see so many scars on his wife's body."



Lu Chen said, "That's alright; if it comes to it, Qingli can just stay in the North Prince Mansion for the rest of her life."

Hearing this, a chill went through Chu Yuqin's heart, and she cast Lu Chen a deep look.

This little scoundrel, he indeed had designs on Qingli.

She had suspected from the beginning that once Qingli entered the North Prince Mansion, it would be very difficult for her to ever leave.

After being looked at reproachfully by Chu Yuqin, Lu Chen gave an awkward smile and said, "Qingli, don't move; I will continue the treatment for you." With that, Lu Chen raised his hand and used the Rejuvenating Skill, pretending to treat the marks on her neck. Afterward, some of the scars on Chu Qingli's neck began to fade away.

However, Lu Chen did not completely remove them; after all, these were marks he had left, which shouldn't be erased so casually.

Chu Qingli's expression was cold at this time, yet a faint blush still graced her indifferent face.

Seeing that Chu Qingli's face seemed to flush with anger, Chu Yuqin sighed inwardly once again. It seemed that changing Chu Qingli's attitude toward Lu Chen was not going to be a matter of a day or two.

As Chu Yuqin was reflecting on this, she suddenly smelled an odd scent in the air, one she had detected countless times before, but she could never quite place what it was.

Suddenly, Chu Yuqin realized that every time Chu Qingli fell into deviance, this scent would linger in her room. Could it be...

Could it be the impurities expelled from her body after falling into deviance?

Yes, that must be it; otherwise, why would there always be such a strange odor on Chu Qingli?

Chu Yuqin no longer dwelled on the thought.

Just then, Lu Chen raised his hand and said to Chu Qingli, “Qingli, I have treated you a little, but your scars need several more treatments to heal. Whenever you have the time, come to me for treatment. Last night, your deviance caused you to sweat out many impurities. You should go take a bath first.”

Hearing Lu Chen’s words, Chu Qingli glared coldly at him, then turned and walked away.

As Chu Yuqin watched Chu Qingli’s retreating figure, droplets of murky sweat fell from her body as she moved. Chu Yuqin thought to herself that it appeared Qingli’s body had indeed expelled many impurities; she wondered what the root cause of her deviance was.

Could it be due to the environment?

Qingli’s practice of martial arts shouldn’t have led to such frequent bouts of deviance, right?

If a martial artist were to suffer from deviance so often during training, they would probably have lost all their skill and become incapacitated by now. But Chu Qingli hadn’t.

Every time she fell into deviance, she would recover swiftly. This rapid recovery could be attributed to Lu Chen’s Immortal Technique, after all, his technique could easily heal even wounds on the body.

However, the frequent instances of deviation during practice were difficult to explain.

Could it be because she harbored deep resentment towards Lu Chen, yet was powerless against him, leading her to become agitated while cultivating and thus causing her to deviate from the correct path?

For martial artists, a disturbed mind was the most taboo; once disturbed, it was very likely to lead to deviation during cultivation.

Chu Qingli’s frequent deviations must have had their reasons, and perhaps it might really be due to this.

The thought made Chu Yuqin's heart waver with indecision.

If that really was the reason, then the affair between her and Lu Chen must be kept from Chu Qingli at all costs. If Chu Qingli were to learn that she had been physically tending to Lu Chen, wouldn't that make her even more susceptible to deviation during practice?

At that thought, Chu Yuqin felt a swell of worry in her heart.

But just then, something occurred to Chu Yuqin. Hadn't she asked Lu Chen to come to her room last night? Did Lu Chen actually come?

With that in mind, Chu Yuqin looked at Lu Chen and said, "Chen'er, didn't I ask you to come to my room last night? Did you..."

Chu Yuqin didn't finish her sentence. As she spoke, her pretty face began to burn with heat. For some reason, she had been constantly thinking about serving Lu Chen lately. Perhaps it was because her promise had gone unfulfilled for so long and she feared Lu Chen would think she wasn't keeping her word, or perhaps it was for some other reason.

Whatever the exact reason, she didn't know. She simply wanted to find various ways to spend time alone with Lu Chen. Yet whenever she thought of her sister, her heart would again feel incredibly conflicted.

Lu Chen turned to look at Chu Yuqin, whose cheeks were now flushed. He had been ready to conquer Chu Yuqin last night, but who would have thought Chu Qingli would also be in the room and, moreover, awake? With no other choice, he had to deal with Chu Qingli. And watching Chu Yuqin, with her goddess-like beauty, handle Chu Qingli was indeed a different experience.

Lu Chen didn't feel that he was at a loss. Judging by his progress with subduing Chu Qingli, it was only a matter of time before she accepted his relationship with Chu Yuqin.

Sooner or later, he would be openly cultivating a relationship with Chu Yuqin in front of Chu Qingli, and he was confident she wouldn't have anything to say about it.

Lu Chen said with a smile, “I came last night, but seeing Madam Chu drunk and lying on the ground, I had to help Qing Li get you to bed to sleep. Then I went back.”

“I wanted to come and see how you were doing early this morning, but I didn’t expect to run into Qing Li deviating during her practice.”

Chu Yuqin sighed inwardly with a tinge of regret in her tone, “I see.”

Curious, Lu Chen asked, “Madam Chu, did you have something to tell me last night?”

“I...” Chu Yuqin hesitated.

She simply couldn’t bring herself to admit that she had sought Lu Chen last night to serve him.

After a pause, Chu Yuqin said, “I... wanted to ask you to use the Immortal Technique to check on Qing Li and see why she keeps deviating during her practice—whether there’s something wrong with her body.”

Seeing Chu Yuqin’s face flush, Lu Chen knew she wasn’t telling the truth. Drawing closer, he whispered in her ear, “Madam Chu, Qing Li is no longer in the room, you can tell the truth now, right?”

“Did you seek me out yesterday to confess our relationship to Qing Li while under the influence of alcohol?”

This...

Seeing that Lu Chen had misunderstood, Chu Yuqin breathed a sigh of relief, then said, “Aunt did have that idea at first, but as you’ve seen, Qing Li is still unable to accept you. I suspect her frequent deviations during cultivation are because she cannot accept you, leading to distracting thoughts. Why don’t you find a reason to send her somewhere else?”

Lu Chen replied, “That won’t be necessary, I’ll find a way to get her to accept me soon. You saw the scars on her body; I still need to treat those. She can’t be too far from the Prince’s Mansion. If those scars aren’t healed, they may stay forever.”

Hearing this, something stirred in Chu Yuqin's heart.

Scars had a very significant impact on a woman, as all women valued beauty. Moreover, Chu Qingli was an unmarried maiden; she certainly couldn't afford to have so many scars on her body.

Lu Chen assured with a smile, "Don't worry, Madam Chu, it won't be long before Qing Li can accept me. She's just a tough talker with a soft heart. She may seem strong, but both her body and mind are quite tender."

Chu Yuqin responded, "Now all we can do is hope she can accept you."

"But..."

As she spoke, Chu Yuqin timidly looked into Lu Chen's eyes, "Chen'er, Aunt's promise..."

Chu Yuqin's statement hung in the air, followed by her silence, too ashamed to continue.

Gazing into Chu Yuqin's beautiful eyes, Lu Chen said, "Madam Chu, I will try to control myself for now."

Flushed, Chu Yuqin suggested, "Then perhaps Zixuan can find you a concubine for now."

Lu Chen responded, "That's not necessary. Now that I am a Grandmaster, an ordinary woman may not last long with me."

Chu Yuqin acknowledged, "That's true."

"Alright, Madam Chu, I have state affairs to attend to and must leave now," said Lu Chen.

Chu Yuqin softly hummed in acknowledgment, and the next moment, Lu Chen turned and walked away.

As he left, Lu Chen thought how fortunate he was to be clever enough to have put on his clothes just before dawn, showing just enough to prevent Chu Yuqin from discovering what he had done earlier.

But to speak of it, that feeling was incredible, truly thrilling. And this wasn't about any psychological thrill but rather a physical stimulation.

After this incident, he didn't believe Chu Qingli would have the face to prevent him and Chu Yuqin from being together.

### Chapter 300: Officially Entering the Age of Firearms\_1

Great Xia Dynasty, Capital city.

East Palace.

Lu Shuyun was in the courtyard testing the improved Piercing Cloud Bow made by the craftsmen. The Piercing Cloud Bow was Lu Shuyun's second achievement after becoming the Crown Prince. Made of special materials, its power was immense, and when paired with the custom-made Piercing Cloud Arrow, it could easily penetrate the armor of Heavy Cavalry.

With the Piercing Cloud Bow, the Great Xia Dynasty would no longer fear the enemy nation's Heavy Cavalry on the battlefield, or in future internal strife within Great Xia, the forces aligned with them need not fear the secretly prepared armor of his brothers.

Looking at the Piercing Cloud Bow in his hands, a smile appeared on Lu Shuyun's face.

The materials for making the Piercing Cloud Bow and the Piercing Cloud Arrow were very special and currently only available to their Aristocratic Family in the South; furthermore, some of the

production techniques were kept secret. Even the craftsman in the Ministry of Works might not know the techniques, only their faction was privy to it.

Thus, the Piercing Cloud Bow could not only serve as an achievement for the Crown Prince but also to a certain extent prevent their rivals from acquiring the production methods and materials.

As for whether other factions in the royal court would get the Piercing Cloud Bow, there was no need to worry about that.

Once the Piercing Cloud Bow was brought out, it would certainly end up in the hands of people from other factions, but they would only obtain a few. Currently, the Ministry of Works could only forge a very limited number of Piercing Cloud Bows each day, and they were far from mass production.

As long as they kept a tight leash on the quantity, even if others acquired the Piercing Cloud Bow, they would not obtain many. Meanwhile, the people on the Crown Prince's side had already been secretly mass-producing them. In terms of the quantity of Piercing Cloud Bows, his rivals would definitely not be able to compare with them.

Just as Lu Shuyun was immersed in joy, a maid hurried to him and said, "Crown Prince, Mr. Wang has returned!"

Hearing this, Lu Shuyun snapped back to reality and immediately said, "Bring him to see me."

"Yes, Crown Prince."

The maid then went out and brought Wang Yong before Lu Shuyun, "Greetings to the Crown Prince, long live, long live, long long live!"

After Wang Yong finished his salute, Lu Shuyun eagerly asked, "What did Dongfang Yi say? Did he agree to give Dongfang Longyue to me in marriage?"

Wang Yong replied, "He agreed, but..."

Wang Yong hesitated.

Seeing Wang Yong's response, a smile appeared on Lu Shuyun's face. As long as he could firmly bind the Dongfang Family to their side, then the entire Aristocratic Families of the South would truly be united as one.

As for Dongfang Longyue the woman, he had seen her a few times and indeed liked her beauty, but more than Dongfang Longyue's beauty, what Lu Shuyun cared about was the Dongfang Family standing behind her.

At this point, Lu Shuyun asked, "But what?"

Wang Yong answered, "But as soon as Miss Dongfang heard she was to marry you, she immediately jumped into the river to commit suicide. Though she was rescued, she has been seeking death persistently. If she is set on dying, I fear no one will be able to stop her."

"If this gets out, it could seriously damage Your Highness's reputation. Left with no choice, Dongfang Yi asked me to convey to the Prince that Dongfang Longyue will not marry you for the



time being. Instead, it will be determined after you marry the Crown Princess Consort. He wants to continue persuading Dongfang Longyue.”

Hearing Wang Yong’s words, Lu Shuyun’s expression darkened instantly; he had not expected Dongfang Longyue to be so staunchly opposed.

Although he had known from the start that Dongfang Longyue was a woman of difficult temperament—many talented young men from the South had their legs broken by her, which said plenty about her character—he had thought that being the Crown Prince, the future successor to the throne, even if Dongfang Longyue was temperamental, she would restrain herself once she knew she was to marry the Crown Prince. There wasn’t a woman in the world who wouldn’t want to marry a man wielding great power.

But unexpectedly, Dongfang Longyue had resorted to attempting suicide by jumping into the river.

If word got out, wouldn’t the officials in the court accuse him of forcing a virtuous woman into dishonor?

Seeing Lu Shuyun’s face darken, Wang Yong continued, “Crown Prince, please rest assured, although Dongfang Longyue is currently unwilling to marry, as long as Dongfang Yi has agreed to this marriage, it means he has already sided with us.”

Lu Shuyun thought for a moment and realized it was true. Dongfang Longyue’s stance was not important; as long as they could stabilize her for the time being and prevent her from committing suicide, that would suffice.

Lu Shuyun then said, “Send a letter to Dongfang Yi, telling him my undying affection for Dongfang Longyue. I was devastated to hear of her attempted suicide, so I have decided to first confirm our

engagement. After I have married the Crown Princess Consort, I will come to marry her. I hope Dongfang Yi can persuade Dongfang Longyue to accept me soon.”

Although Dongfang Longyue was beautiful, Lu Shuyun was not an impatient man. If he really drove her to death, their connection with the Dongfang Family could be severed.

The Dongfang Family only had one daughter; Dongfang Longyue could not die. Moreover, if she were driven to death, it would have a significant negative impact on his reputation. Thus, the best course was to delay—the engagement would be set first, then use it as a political tie.

The timing of Dongfang Longyue’s marriage to him was not important.

After hearing Lu Shuyun’s words, Wang Yong said, “Yes, Crown Prince. I will send the letter to Dongfang Yi right away.”