

## Es. Benefits 391

### Chapter 391: Rongrong, You're So Beautiful!\_2

Lu Chen was not sure whether his guess was correct.

At this time, he glanced at the distant Shadow Guards who had not yet died. Although he had injured those Shadow Guards with his spiritual power, several of them had not died instantly.

Lu Chen then walked over and looked at a Shadow Guard who was still struggling on the ground, and then asked, "Do you want to live?"

The Shadow Guard hurriedly said, "Prince, spare my life!"

Lu Chen said with a smile, "I will give you a chance to live. Just consume your Blood Burst Pill and then use the Blood Ignition Skill, and I will let you go."

Hearing these words, the Shadow Guard lying on the ground felt puzzled as to what Lu Chen wanted to do, but still, he quickly took out a Blood Burst Pill from his chest pocket and swallowed it.

After swallowing the Blood Burst Pill, the Shadow Guard also used the Blood Ignition Skill. In the next moment, his eyes turned blood-red, but because his skill had been enhanced, the pain from his injuries seemed much less severe than before. He suddenly felt a lot more comfortable.

At this point, he got up from the ground and asked cautiously, "Prince, may I leave now?"

Lu Chen chuckled and said, "You may leave."

Seeing that the North Prince really let him go, he was incredulous, but to avoid Lu Chen changing his mind, he immediately ran towards the distance.

However, he had not gone far when his body suddenly exploded, scattering into countless pieces, meeting the same fate as Wang Jiantao before him.

Lu Chen laughed softly; he could now basically confirm the condition that caused their self-destruction. As long as they used the Blood Burst Pill and then used the Blood Ignition Skill, they would explode and die.

He hadn't expected his father to have such a method. Lu Chen then went back to Bai Qingqing's side, grabbed her hand again, and checked her body for the second time. Still, he found no unusual substances in her body. Bai Qingqing's body was very healthy and showed no signs of poisoning.

Lu Chen thought with confusion, Bai Qingqing had not consumed poison, but for something to act as a trigger for one's self-destruction, that substance should continuously be present in the body. Why had he found nothing inside Bai Qingqing's body after several checks?

At that moment, Lu Chen had a bold guess and asked the system in his mind, "System, can my Poison Immunity Body help others detoxify?"

[Yes, the body fluids of the host also possess the ability to detoxify.]

Hearing the system's response, Lu Chen immediately understood what was going on.

No wonder there was nothing unusual in Bai Qingqing's body. It turned out to be this.

Then, Lu Chen went to another Shadow Guard, grabbed his body, and while absorbing the Shadow Guard's skill, he searched for the poison that Bai Qingqing mentioned.

Soon, Lu Chen found a mass of black substance in the Dantian of the Shadow Guard. He turned his head to Bai and said, "Bai, do you have any Blood Burst Pills on you?"

Hearing Lu Chen's words, Bai Qingqing immediately took out a bottle of Blood Burst Pills from her sleeve and threw it to Lu Chen. Lu Chen caught the bottle, opened the cap, and shoved several Blood Burst Pills into the mouth of the Shadow Guard, then said to him, "If you want to live, use the Blood Ignition Skill."

The Shadow Guard was already close to death, and to survive, he used the Blood Ignition Skill without hesitation. The next moment, the black substance inside him spread throughout his body

and merged with the Blood Burst Pills he had just ingested. Right after, the Shadow Guard's body began to swell.

Lu Chen kicked the Shadow Guard away with a foot. Because Lu Chen had already nearly drained the Shadow Guard of his skill, the Shadow Guard didn't explode like Wang Jiantao and the other Shadow Guard. At most, it was an internal explosion, with a large amount of blood spewing out from his orifices.

Seeing this, Lu Chen was essentially certain of the means by which his father controlled the Shadow Guards.

Anyway, as long as the Shadow Guards used the Blood Burst Pills and executed the Blood Ignition Skill, they were undoubtedly destined to die.

But then again, had his father never considered the possibility of them actively betraying? For example, Bai Qingqing was actively betraying. Active betrayal did not require a desperate fight, thus the conditions for self-destruction could not be triggered.

Of course, even if Bai Qingqing now used the Blood Burst Pill and the Blood Ignition Skill simultaneously, she would not self-destruct because the black substance was no longer in her body. She had been overpowered by Lu Chen so many times, the poison inside her had long been purified completely.

At this time, Lu Chen directly used the Absorption Technique to absorb all the skills from the Shadow Guards on the ground into his body.

After Lu Chen dealt with these Shadow Guards, a guard asked, "Prince, shall we head to the military camp now?"

Lu Chen was about to say they should continue to the military camp, but he suddenly noticed his body was unbearably hot.

It wasn't a big problem; it was just that he had absorbed too much skill at once and couldn't digest it for the moment, which caused this condition. It had been like this in the past when he absorbed skills.

The solution was simple. Lu Chen glanced at Bai Qingqing in the distance. But he restrained himself and did not ask Bai to come into the carriage. He then returned to the carriage and said to the guards, "Send two people to inform the military camp and have the soldiers clean up the surrounding corpses. We are returning to the Prince's Mansion!"

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"Yes, Prince!"

Following that, Lu Chen and Bai Qingqing returned to the Prince's Mansion.

As soon as Lu Chen returned to the Prince's Mansion, he went straight to Yunrong Courtyard.

The reason he did not strike Bai Qingqing was mainly that he had business with Chen Wanrong, and his skill could also help Chen Wanrong strengthen her abilities.

When the time came for Chen Wanrong to journey northward with him, the stronger her abilities, the greater their chance of defeating the Tianqi King of the Barbarian Tribe.

Upon arriving at Yunrong Courtyard, Lu Chen happened to see Chen Wanrong sitting in the pavilion, her slender jade hands resting on the strings of the instrument, gently plucking them.

Chen Wanrong, as usual, was dressed in white garments purer than snow, exuding a cool and distant aura, like a noble fairy.

In the past, whenever Lu Chen saw Chen Wanrong, there were few if any improper thoughts in his heart, as he always felt an aura of sanctity emanating from her which purified his soul.

However, since he had exchanged words with Chen Wanrong once, his feelings when seeing her had changed. Gazing at this cool and distant fairy, Lu Chen found himself harboring a wicked desire to conquer her, a desire for her to fall from grace as she had before.

Chen Wanrong, who was playing the instrument, also sensed someone entering the courtyard. She then stopped playing and lifted her head to see Lu Chen entering.

Upon seeing Lu Chen, Chen Wanrong asked with no expression on her face, "What matter does the Prince have?"

This wasn't Chen Wanrong giving him the cold shoulder; it was simply her character. Even though she was now Lu Chen's captive, it wasn't possible for her to suddenly change her demeanor and greet Lu Chen with a smiling face.

At this moment, Lu Chen spoke with a smile, "Miss Chen, there is a matter I wish to discuss with you. May I have some of your time?"

Chen Wanrong asked curiously, "What matter does the Prince wish to discuss with me?"

Lu Chen replied, "This isn't a good place to talk. Let's go inside the room."

Upon hearing this, Chen Wanrong glanced at Lu Chen. She always felt that Lu Chen was up to no good, but since he referred to her as "Miss Chen" instead of calling her Rongrong, it seemed he truly had a serious matter to discuss with her.

With this thought, Chen Wanrong stood up and headed towards her room, saying as she walked, "The Prince may follow me."

Lu Chen followed without hesitation.

Soon Chen Wanrong and Lu Chen had both entered the room. As soon as they were inside, Lu Chen closed the door.

At this moment, Chen Wanrong turned her head to look at Lu Chen, "I wonder what the Prince wishes to speak of..."

Before Chen Wanrong could finish speaking, Lu Chen could no longer restrain the restless skill within him and wrapped his arms around Chen Wanrong's soft waist. Then he sealed her red lips with a kiss.

"Mmmh..."

Chen Wanrong was completely taken aback. She had thought Lu Chen had some real business with her, but as soon as they entered the room, he revealed his true colors.

However, Chen Wanrong did not struggle violently, for she quickly realized that Lu Chen was transferring his skill to her.

As Lu Chen kissed Chen Wanrong, he pushed her body toward the bed. When she could retreat no further and reached the bed, Lu Chen slowly pushed her down onto the bed and looked down dominantly at the cold fairy beneath him.

At that moment, a blush spread across Chen Wanrong's face. Although her complexion remained cold, the shy blush on the ice beauty only made Lu Chen's heart stir even more.

Chen Wanrong said coldly at this moment, "Has the Prince summoned me just for this affair?"

Without answering Chen Wanrong's question, Lu Chen leaned down once again, and this time, his hands began to loosen Chen Wanrong's clothing.

Since that night at the Mysterious Moon Tavern in the southern city with Chen Wanrong, Lu Chen had not touched her again, yet he had long been wanting to discuss the meaning of life with this fairy once more.

Chen Wanrong did not refuse Lu Chen either. After all, she had already been intimate with him, and by now, she was his captive; whatever Lu Chen wished to do to her, he would do. When she came into contact with Lu Chen's body, the skill within her was sealed, leaving her no way to resist.

...

Time passed, unbeknownst how much of it.

Outside Yunrong Courtyard.

Lin Wanyun and Chu Yuqin were discussing the eastward march of the Barbarian Army. They chatted while walking toward Yunrong Courtyard.

Chu Yuqin let out a sigh and said, "I've heard that the Barbarian King who has come to the North Land this time is a Grandmaster. I wonder if the North Country's army can stand against them."

Lin Wanyun consoled her, "Don't worry, Yuqin. Isn't Chen'er also heading north this time? With him there, nothing bad will happen."

Chu Yuqin expressed her concern, "What I worry about the most is Chen'er's safety."

As she spoke, Chu Yuqin suddenly had an idea and said to Lin Wanyun, "Lin, why don't you and Miss Chen head north together to protect Chen'er?"

Presently Chu Yuqin was only a Half-step Grandmaster, and she knew her abilities were limited. Even if she accompanied Lu Chen to the North Land, she would only be able to care for his daily needs, not protect him. She might even become a hindrance to him.

But Chen Wanrong was different. She possessed sufficient strength, and with the Mysterious Moon Palace behind her, if Chen Wanrong were to accompany Lu Chen north, they could then utilize the power of the Mysterious Moon Palace to contend with the Barbarian Tribe's Tianqi King.

Hearing Chu Yuqin's words, Lin Wanyun smiled slightly and then said, "You, your mind is always full of thoughts about your Chen'er."

"Even if the Palace Master and I wanted to follow him to the North Land, he might not allow us to go."

As Lin Wanyun finished speaking, Chu Yuqin was about to respond when they suddenly heard a faint sound, prompting a puzzled Chu Yuqin to say, "What sound is that?"

They then became silent, listening intently, and immediately realized the sound was coming from Chen Wanrong's room.

Lin Wanyun initially thought something might have happened to Chen Wanrong, and anxiously hurried toward her room, with Chu Yuqin quickly following to check.

But as they approached Chen Wanrong's room, they heard her delicate, bashful voice from inside.

"Darling... don't... like this... mmm...ah..."

This...

Chu Yuqin and Lin Wanyun exchanged glances, both women stood frozen in place.

They were not fools; they could almost guess the situation at hand.

Just then, a mischievous voice also emerged from the room, "Rongrong, you're so beautiful!"

Hearing Lu Chen's voice, both women felt their cheeks burning and a rosy blush spread across their faces. As if linked by telepathy, they turned simultaneously and left Yunrong Courtyard.

Chapter 393: You Will Regret It\_1

Chu Yuqin and Lin Wanyun both walked out of the Yunrong Courtyard at the same time, each appearing somewhat awkward and unsure of what to say.

Although Chu Yuqin had long guessed that Lu Chen had thoroughly conquered Chen Wanrong, it was the first time she had encountered such a scene.

Lin Wanyun felt the same way. She also knew that Chen Wanrong had become Lu Chen's woman, but she hadn't expected the always cold Chen Wanrong, blinded by hatred, to show such a side.

Was this little rascal truly the bane of all women?

As the two beautiful women thought more about it, their faces grew redder. Lin Wanyun then coughed and said, "Yuqin, I'm off to patrol. Don't worry about Chen'er's matters, if he wants the Palace Master to accompany him northward, I'm sure she will agree."

Since Chen Wanrong had already "tussled in bed" with Lu Chen, with their current relationship, it was unlikely that she would refuse to accompany him northward.



Chu Yuqin, with a flushed face, said, "Oh, okay, Sister Lin, you go ahead and busy yourself."

After Lin Wanyun turned and walked towards the other side of the courtyard, Chu Yuqin muttered to herself, "This little rascal, she's the Palace Master of the Mysterious Moon Palace after all, how could he do such things to her before nightfall..."

...

After transferring some of his skill to Chen Wanrong, Lu Chen instantly felt much better. At that moment, he embraced Chen Wanrong as they faced each other candidly.

Having recovered her composure, Chen Wanrong thought about her behavior just moments ago and instantly felt a mix of shame and anger. With a flushed and emotionless face, she said coldly, "You can leave now."

Lu Chen chuckled, his hands continuing to roam recklessly over her body. He laughed and said, "Just now, I don't know who was calling me darling. My dear wife, why have you changed your tune so quickly?"

Chen Wanrong didn't say a word and turned her head away, unwilling to look at the scoundrel before her.

Chen Wanrong felt that if she continued this way, she might well be corrupted. Originally, she had only intended to bear Lu Chen a child, but she hadn't expected some things to be addictive.

This was not a good sign.

Lu Chen then said, "Come on, my dear Rongrong, don't be angry. I truly came to you with a serious matter; I want you to accompany me northward."

Upon hearing this, Chen Wanrong stiffened for a moment, then turned her head to look at Lu Chen and asked, "You want me to help you against the Tianqi King?"

Chen Wanrong was also among the first to know about the Barbarian Tribe's eastern invasion, as it was no small matter. The disciples of the Mysterious Moon Palace had immediately told her after reading the news from the Eastern Newspaper Agency.

Lu Chen said, "Yes, although I am also a Grandmaster, I've never fought against another Grandmaster before and lack combat experience. Just to be cautious, I plan to take you with me northward."

Chen Wanrong asked icily, "Do you always like to treat people you seek help from this way?"

Lu Chen, with a smile, said, "It's just that my dear Rongrong is too beautiful, I couldn't help myself. And you should have noticed that I've transmitted a lot of skill to you, further enhancing your power. This is a good thing for you, isn't it?"

Chen Wanrong was silent, knowing that improving her power was naturally a good thing. However, the fact that this guy had done such things to her in broad daylight, causing everyone in the Prince's Mansion to hear it, irked her.

Although her power was sealed at the time, she was very perceptive while Lu Chen was instilling skill into her. Now a Grandmaster, she was well aware of Lin Wanyun and Chu Yuqin's visit to Yunrong Courtyard.

Both of them had heard her voice. The thought alone stirred emotions within Chen Wanrong.

She hadn't minded before because it happened at the Mysterious Moon Tavern, but this time it occurred at Yunrong Courtyard, and even Lin Wanyun heard it. She, too, had a sense of shame.

After a while, Chen Wanrong said, "Fine, I will accompany you northward."

Seeing her agreement, Lu Chen smiled and said, "My wife is the best."

As he spoke, Lu Chen leaned in to kiss Chen Wanrong again, but she raised her hand, stopping Lu Chen's mouth, and continued, "If I accompany you northward, it may draw the Elders' attention at the Mysterious Moon Palace. Consider it carefully."

In the North Country, the Elders of the Mysterious Moon Palace left Chen Wanrong alone because they saw no danger in her actions.

To the Elders, the North Country was just a remote feudal state with no powerful martial artists, so they allowed her to act freely there.

However, it would be a different matter if Chen Wanrong appeared on the battlefield. If she led the disciples of the Mysterious Moon Palace to fight against the Barbarian Tribe, and especially against a Grandmaster of the Barbarian Tribe, the Elders, upon knowing it, would surely become agitated.

The Elders would then probably say that she was, after all, the Palace Master of the Mysterious Moon Palace and shouldn't be meddling in worldly affairs, let alone putting herself in danger.

Eventually, they may come to the North Country, demanding Chen Wanrong to return to the Mysterious Moon Palace.

Although the Elders didn't want a Grandmaster dictating to them, Chen Wanrong was the disciple of an Honorable, who had already lost one disciple. If another died, specifically the Palace Master of the Mysterious Moon Palace, the Elders might be held accountable by the Honorable, and they would certainly intervene.

## Chapter 394: You Will Regret It\_2

Hearing Chen Wanrong's words, Lu Chen smiled and said, "Although we previously agreed to wait until our child turns fifteen before I would allow you to leave North Country, I have thought it over and decided that since you are already my woman, I should trust you and not limit your freedom.

In the future, if you wish to return to the Mysterious Moon Palace, I won't stop you, as long as you come back to me."

Upon hearing this, Chen Wanrong paused, scarcely believing what she heard, and asked, "Aren't you afraid that once I leave North Country I may never come back?"

Lu Chen replied, "Didn't I just say that you are now my woman? That's why I choose to trust you. I don't believe you would abandon your darling."

With that, Lu Chen raised his hand and gently caressed her cool and lustrous cheek.

Hearing Lu Chen's words, Chen Wanrong said expressionlessly, "You'll regret this."

Lu Chen responded indifferently, "I won't regret it. If one day you really don't return from the Mysterious Moon Palace back to North Prince Mansion, then I'll just have to go there and take you back by force."

At these words, Chen Wanrong fell silent; her heart was racing much faster than usual. Even though she thought Lu Chen's words were just sweet nothings, for some reason they still touched her heart.

The most terrifying thing about this man was exactly that; not only did he possess numerous ways to handle women, but he could also make them fall for him. Almost any woman who approached him would lose both body and soul.

Having stayed in North Prince Mansion for so long, she had already noticed this. Almost all of Lu Chen's women were deeply in love with him, and even Lin Wanyun had become unable to leave him.

Seeing that Chen Wanrong remained silent, her face flushed yet her expression still cold, Lu Chen's heart grew restless once more. He continued, "We still have plenty of time. I'll help you increase your strength a bit more, and when we reach the North Land, we'll have a greater chance of defeating the Tianqi King."

With that, Lu Chen immediately grasped the jade hand that Chen Wanrong had been using to cover her lips and leaned in once again to kiss her.

Although Chen Wanrong was slightly emotional inside, in the end, she cooperated with Lu Chen.

Improving her skills was indeed very rapid when together with Lu Chen, although she didn't understand why Lu Chen had such methods of enhancing strengths. She had always thought that these methods were only used by those from the Demon Sect and must carry some harm.

But having practiced with Lu Chen in this way twice, she had not detected any harm to her body, proving that these methods were entirely different from those practiced by the Demon Sect.

Chen Wanrong became more at ease once she considered Lu Chen's mysterious background and the possibility that behind him was an existence like her Grandmaster.

Perhaps these methods for enhancing skills were all taught to Lu Chen by the person behind him; maybe that person was an Immortal, for it was often said in North Prince Mansion that Lu Chen was the disciple of an Immortal, which was likely not a baseless rumor.

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Early in the morning.

When Lu Chen woke up, he found Chen Wanrong staring at his face expressionlessly. Lu Chen cracked a slight smile, "My dear, you're awake so early?"

Chen Wanrong said icily, "It's time for you to get up."

As Chen Wanrong's voice fell, Lu Chen suddenly wrapped his arms around her delicate body, flipped over, and pinned her beneath him. Chen Wanrong thought this scoundrel was up to no good again and instantly her face turned crimson. She quickly raised her jade hand to push against Lu Chen's broad chest, "No... "

"You're about to lead the troops north soon; you should have many things to handle."

Hearing this, Lu Chen replied with a smile, "My dear makes a good point."

"But before I get up, I like to kiss my dear. Let me have a kiss, and I'll get right up."

Hearing Lu Chen's words, Chen Wanrong looked at him skeptically. She felt Lu Chen might renege on his words, as he was a bad man and particularly thick-skinned, so reneging would be nothing odd for him.

But Lu Chen was just as shameless; if she didn't agree, Lu Chen might very well refuse to get up.

With that thought, Chen Wanrong finally released her jade hand, and Lu Chen, without hesitation, leaned down to give Chen Wanrong a deep kiss.

Just when Chen Wanrong was dazed by Lu Chen's kisses, Lu Chen got up from the bed.

Seeing Lu Chen genuinely getting up, Chen Wanrong felt somewhat surprised inside; she hadn't expected this man to keep his word sometimes.

As Lu Chen dressed himself, he said, "You're tired from last night too. Lie down and rest a little longer."

Hearing this, Chen Wanrong felt a flutter of emotion inside; the man seemed to know that she could get tired.

For Martial Artists to conceive was already quite difficult, and for two at the Grandmaster Realm like them, having offspring was even less likely, not something that could be achieved in a day or two. And yet, this fellow acted as if he wouldn't be satisfied until she was pregnant within a day.

She seriously suspected that this scoundrel wasn't doing it for the sake of having children, but rather indulging in pleasure.

After Lu Chen finished dressing, he left Chen Wanrong's room, and upon stepping out, he saw Lin Wanyun walking around in the yard with a flushed face.

Seeing this scene, Lu Chen chuckled and said, "Madam Lin, you weren't eavesdropping by the wall last night, were you?"

Caught off-guard by the question, Lin Wanyun's cheeks turned even rosier as she spoke indignantly, "Who was eavesdropping? Don't project your interest in such dirty activities onto everyone else."

### Chapter 395: You Will Regret It\_3

Lu Chen chuckled, "Who was it that used to come to my study every day to engage in such filthy acts?"

Lin Wanyun snorted coldly, then said, "I don't want to talk about this with you. What I want to know is, do you plan on having the Palace Master accompany you to the north?"

Lu Chen nodded and said, "That's indeed my intention."

Lin Wanyun continued to ask, "Did the Palace Master agree?"

Lu Chen replied, "She agreed."

Lin Wanyun reminded him, "If the Palace Master appears on the battlefield, it's very likely that the Elders of Mysterious Moon Palace will find out and they might make her return. Have you thought this through?"

Lin Wanyun was also aware that Lu Chen had a very powerful presence backing him, no ordinary person, but with his current level of strength, he wasn't yet capable of contending with the entire Mysterious Moon Palace.

Although those Elders of Mysterious Moon Palace seldom or almost never interfere in secular matters, the situation would be different when it involved their Palace Master.

The Palace Master represented the face of Mysterious Moon Palace; if those Elders saw Chen Wanrong in danger, they would likely order her to return immediately.

Lu Chen said, "I have already thought this through. After this war is over, if she wants to return to Mysterious Moon Palace, then she will be free to go."

Seeing that Lu Chen was actually willing to let Chen Wanrong leave the North Country, Lin Wanyun was somewhat incredulous. Lu Chen then gazed at the dignified and plump Lin Wanyun and said with a smile, "She can leave, but you cannot."

Upon hearing this, Lin Wanyun snapped back to reality, her face changing color as she said coldly, "I didn't say I wanted to leave."

Having said that, Lin Wanyun headed straight for Chen Wanrong's room.

Lu Chen didn't stay any longer at Yunrong Courtyard.

He returned to the main hall for breakfast. As soon as he reached the main hall, Mu Zixuan had the maids serve Lu Chen's breakfast in front of him.

Lu Chen glanced at the maids and then said, "Go call Madam Dazhou and Madam Xiaozhou. The Prince has something to discuss with them."

"Yes, Your Highness."

Mu Zixuan, cradling a child in her arms, asked, "Your Highness, is it about you leading the troops northward that you want to talk about?"

The news of Lu Chen leading troops northward had already spread throughout Yan County, naturally reaching Mu Zixuan's ears.

Lu Chen said with a smile, "Indeed, I am going to lead troops northward. However, that's not what I want to discuss. I have a gift for the three of you."

Hearing about a gift, Mu Zixuan was taken aback, then glanced at Lu Chen's body, her gaze uncontrollably falling to the area around Lu Chen's crotch, her cheeks turning a slight red as she asked, "The gift you're talking about... it isn't going to be a child, is it?"

Lu Chen often said he was going to give them gifts during their intimate moments, and everyone understood what those 'gifts' from Lu Chen ended up being. It was no wonder Mu Zixuan's thoughts wandered; after all, Lu Chen was a bad man who often said such things in bed.

Hearing Mu Zixuan's words, Lu Chen said speechlessly, "My love, what are you thinking about? All that fills your head are such filthy thoughts. If I say it's a gift, then it must certainly be a real gift."

Realizing that her mind had gone astray, Mu Zixuan's face grew even redder, but she retorted without showing weakness, "That's Your Highness's fault. Who made you always say in bed that you were going to be a giver of children and gifts to your concubine?"

Lu Chen smiled and then said, "Alright, alright, my fault."

Although Lu Chen couldn't easily admit his faults outside, within his inner court it was different. In front of his women, he was a man who actively admitted his errors.

Soon, Zhou Youyou and Zhou Xiaoxiao came to the main hall. Lu Chen said to Mu Zixuan, "My love, hand the child over to the wet nurse, and ask the maids to step out for a moment."



Hearing this, Mu Zixuan immediately handed the child in her arms to the wet nurse, and then the wet nurse along with the maids departed to the adjacent room.

Once only the four of them remained in the grand hall, Lu Chen took out three small porcelain bottles from his system space and passed them to Mu Zixuan and the other two women.

Mu Zixuan, curious, asked, "Your Highness, what's inside these?"

Lu Chen teased mysteriously, "Why don't you take a guess?"

The three women took the small porcelain bottles from Lu Chen's hands. Mu Zixuan opened a bottle, sniffed it, and found only a faint scent.

Mu Zixuan poured the bottle into her palm, tipping out the pills inside, and seeing the faintly glowing green pills in her hand, all three women were momentarily startled.

Yet they still couldn't guess what it was.

Suddenly, Mu Zixuan had a thought, recalling that Lu Chen had been using the yin-yang harmony method to enhance her skills, so she hazarded a guess, "Your Highness, could this be an Immortal Pill for improving skills?"

Hearing this, Lu Chen burst out laughing and then said, "How could I possibly have such precious Immortal Pills right now?"

Lu Chen had once taken a pill that enhanced his skills in the Capital city, and since then, the system had not awarded him any more pills of that kind.

Lu Chen knew such pills were most certainly precious, so it would likely be only when he was more advanced, when he had more children, that the system would use them as a reward, because it seemed he didn't need any such pills to improve his skills for the time being.

Seeing Lu Chen dismiss her guess, Mu Zixuan grew even more curious about the pills before her.

At this moment, Zhou Youyou timidly asked, "Your Highness, these pills aren't Poison Pills, are they?"

Hearing Zhou Youyou's inquiry, Lu Chen found himself speechless. He said, "Youyou, it seems I haven't visited your room for a while, and now you're out of line. How could I possibly give my own women Poison Pills? What kind of person do you think I am?"

Seeing Lu Chen upset, Zhou Youyou hastily apologized, "Your Highness, I am in the wrong. I was just talking nonsense. If Your Highness is angry, I am willing to be punished tonight."

Lu Chen chortled, "Xiaoyouyou, I didn't expect you to be so cunning. Seems like you actually want me to visit your room tonight, deliberately talking nonsense."

Hearing Lu Chen's comment, Zhou Youyou's cheeks instantly flushed a deep red, spreading to her earlobes. She had no such intention; everyone knew how formidable Lu Chen was, and she wouldn't dare to play tricks in such matters.

#### Chapter 396: Marching Northward\_1

Seeing that Mu Zixuan and the others couldn't guess, Lu Chen directly said, "The pill in your hands is called the Preserving Beauty Pill. By the name, you should know what it is for, right?"

Upon hearing Lu Chen's words, the three women were stunned at the same time.

When their gazes returned to the pill in their hands, their eyes seemed to emit a fervent glow.

With disbelief on her face, Mu Zixuan asked, "Prince... Prince, does that mean after taking the Preserving Beauty Pill, we won't age so quickly?"

Mu Zixuan only dared to speculate that the pill was for slowing aging; she didn't even dare to think about eternal youth, as that was something all women dream of. She truly couldn't believe that such a miraculous pill existed in the world.

Lu Chen said with a smile, "My beloved concubine, your guess is too conservative."

"As long as you take the Preserving Beauty Pill, you will never age. With the passage of time, at most your hair might turn white."

Hearing Lu Chen's words, the three women were utterly astonished.

Looking at the Preserving Beauty Pill in their hands, they were desperate to pop it into their mouths right away.

No woman doesn't wish for eternal youth, and Mu Zixuan and the others were no exception; the temptation was simply too great for them.

After coming back to her senses, Mu Zixuan said, "Prince... Prince, such an Immortal Pill must be extremely precious. Are you truly going to give it to us?"

Lu Chen said with a smile, "Of course, all of you are my women, isn't it right for me to give you gifts?"

Mu Zixuan then said, "Thank you, Prince, for bestowing me the Immortal Pill."

Seeing Mu Zixuan expressing her gratitude, Dazhou and Xiaozhou also hastily said, "Thank you, Prince, for bestowing the Immortal Pill."

Although she was very happy, Mu Zixuan still asked, "Prince, such an Immortal Pill is so precious, what about the other sisters..."

Mu Zixuan paused mid-sentence because this kind of Immortal Pill was something everyone wanted; she was worried that Lu Chen only had these three pills, and giving them to the three of them could cause imbalance among the other women in the Prince's Mansion.

Lu Chen said, "The reason I'm giving these three Preserving Beauty Pills to you first is mainly because they are Martial Artists. Martial Artists do not age as quickly. If their Realms should reach the Heavenly Human Realm in a short period of time, they too can maintain their youth indefinitely and might not need the Preserving Beauty Pill."

"Moreover, rest assured, I have more than three Preserving Beauty Pills. When someone needs one, I will give it to her immediately."

Hearing Lu Chen's words, Mu Zixuan said, "With that, I feel assured."

Mu Zixuan's biggest worry was that the women in the mansion would grow jealous over certain matters, leading to intrigue and plots within the household. Since Lu Chen had more than one pill, he would presumably give them to the other women when he visited their rooms in the future.

Lu Chen said, "Alright, go ahead and take them now, let's see how effective they are."

After hearing this, the three women didn't hesitate and immediately swallowed the Preserving Beauty Pills.

After swallowing the pills, they felt their bodies become incredibly refreshed, and their spirits were noticeably lifted. Then, Lu Chen noticed Mu Zixuan and the others' skin peeling away at a visible rate, although they felt no pain.

Lu Chen then lifted his hand and gently took a piece of peeling skin from Mu Zixuan's face, revealing the smooth, tender skin beneath; from now on, the three women wouldn't even need to wear light makeup.

Mu Zixuan and the others also became aware of what was happening to their faces, and not just their facial skin, but all over their bodies, the skin was shedding like a snake's.

Mu Zixuan peeled away the dead skin from her hand and discovered her arm had become incredibly smooth and fair, which excited her greatly.

Indeed worthy of the name Immortal Pill, it went to work the moment they took it.

Lu Chen said with a smile, "My beloved concubines, why don't you go wash away the dirt from your bodies? After bathing, take a look in the mirror; I'm sure you will be very surprised."

Mu Zixuan excitedly said, "Yes, Prince,"

"Your concubine will take her leave now."

Immediately thereafter, Mu Zixuan told the maids to prepare hot water, and she bathed with Dazhou and Xiaozhou.

Next to the main hall was a hot water pool, which had been constructed at Lu Chen's behest since his arrival in the North Country. The three women bathed in it.

Once they had washed off all the dead skin and filth, their skin had become smooth as porcelain, as tender as a baby's, with a fair complexion slightly flushed with a soft glow. If Lu Chen were there, he surely would not have been able to suppress the stirrings within his heart.

Xiaoxiao, thrilled, said, "Sister Zixuan, you've become so beautiful, I can hardly recognize you!"

Zixuan said, "You too, I never expected the Preserving Beauty Pill the Prince gave us would make us even more beautiful!"

At this moment, Youyou said childishly, "That's wonderful, from now on I won't need to apply rouge to my face anymore."

All three women felt overjoyed inside. After their bath, they immediately went to look in the recently made glass mirror in the Prince's Mansion. As soon as they saw themselves in the mirror, they were captivated by their own beauty and didn't want to leave for quite some time.

It took a while before Zixuan and the others snapped out of it and remembered they had to thank Lu Chen. However, by the time they returned to the main hall, Lu Chen was already occupied with state affairs.

They were due to head north soon, and there would be a lot to handle in the coming days, including preparations for provisions and weapons.

A few days later.

Lu Chen held a military review outside the walls of North City. This review did not showcase the firearms of the North Country, instead, it was mainly to boost morale.

Chapter 397: Marching Northward\_2

Upon hearing that North Country was going to hold a military parade, spies from various nations mingled among the crowd, eager to gather intelligence.

Rumors had been circulating that North Country's Heavy Cavalry had been annihilated, and spies from all nations were keen to find out if there was any truth to them.

North Country was about to send troops northward, and this parade would surely feature most of its military forces. There was no need for concealment, allowing the spies to roughly estimate North Country's military strength.

Early in the morning, Lu Chen got up and donned his black-gold armor, then went to the city wall of North City.

By this time, the various camps of North Country had already completed their assembly, and after the parade, they would return to their camps to move weapons and then head to North Land for defensive positioning in the afternoon.

Around nine in the morning, there was a sea of people outside North City with the populace eagerly awaiting the start of the parade.

As the drumbeat sounded, followed by the "woo woo woo" of horn calls, North Country's soldiers began to enter the arena.

The first to appear were the infantry, who carried not firearms, but cold weapons like long halberds.

The infantry marched in perfect unison, a highly entertaining spectacle for the civilians, but the informed spies discerned from their stride the presence of a strictly disciplined army.

As the infantry slowly passed through the city gate, the next soldiers in line were from the Artillery camp, each carrying a bow and arrows, with bows slung across their backs.

Since Lu Chen had decided not to showcase firearms and wanted to boost morale, he had no choice but to substitute them with other cold weapons.

For some reason, after the bowmen of North Country entered the arena, the troops seemed even more different, more excited than those carrying long halberds before them.

As the bow-armed artillery came beneath the city gate, they shouted in unison, "Those who violate North Country will be pursued and annihilated, no matter the distance!"

"Kill! Kill! Kill!!!"

"Kill! Kill! Kill!!!"

...

Now inside North Country's army, the majority of soldiers were eagerly anticipating war, with the artillery craving it the most intensely.

Their aura was distinctly different.

After the Artillery camp passed, the last troop made its entrance: North Country's most mysterious Heavy Cavalry.

Everyone, including all the foreign spies, held their breath.

Right then, the ground began to tremble, and hearts rose into throats as, not long after, a dark mass became visible in the distance.

A terrifying aura emanated from afar, shaking some civilians to the point of unsteadiness. The Black Cavalry's aura was incredibly heavy, and with each of them a Martial Artist above the fifth rank, even the forty thousand Heavy Cavalry that Lu Chen dispatched formed an oppressive, high-pressure force when gathered together.

As the Black Cavalry drew closer, people found it increasingly difficult to breathe.

The heavy thud of their hooves seemed to trample directly on the spectators' hearts, causing them to throb wildly.

As the Black Cavalry passed through North Country's North City gate, they roared in unison, "Where the great king points his sword, there we direct our spears!!!"

"Those who offend North Country shall be executed without mercy!!!"

"Kill! Kill! Kill!!!"

"Kill! Kill! Kill!!!"

"Kill! Kill! Kill!!!"

...

The momentum of the Black Cavalry overwhelmingly eclipsed the bow-armed artillery from earlier. As the Black Cavalry passed by, some people shuddered non-stop. This army felt as if it had emerged from the netherworld, its murderous aura so thick that breathing was nearly impossible.

The spies from all nations were utterly intimidated by the Black Cavalry.

Although there were rumors that North Fre King had decimated the Black Cavalry during his southern invasion of North Country, there were still doubts that it was a ploy by North Country to hide its military might.

But contrary to expectations, North Country's Heavy Cavalry indeed remained.

People didn't believe that North Country could have trained an army with such a heavy killing aura in such a short time; this Heavy Cavalry was surely the same force that had defeated Sky Wolf King's three-hundred-thousand strong army.

With two Master Level generals leading and the remaining forty thousand Heavy Cavalry all being Martial Artists above the fifth rank, such an army was not easily destroyed.

North Country's military might was truly terrifying!

Although this parade featured only three main divisions, the sheer number of troops meant that the event lasted over two hours.



After the parade ended, Lu Chen returned to North Prince Mansion to bid farewell to his wives and concubines.

Standing at the gate of North Prince Mansion, Lu Chen swept a glance over his worried wives and concubines and said with a smile, "Don't worry, the war will be over quickly."

Hearing these words, Mu Zixuan wiped away her tears and said, "Prince, I am waiting for your triumphant return!"

Chu Yuqin, standing to the side, said, "Chen'er, why don't you also take Bai along? You should have someone to take care of you."

Lu Chen was taking only Chen Wanrong, a woman, on his trip to the north, but as the Palace Master of Mysterious Moon Palace, even though she was now Lu Chen's woman, her status meant she could not demean herself as his servant. Thus, Chu Yuqin still wanted Bai Qingqing to accompany Lu Chen.

Lu Chen smiled faintly, then said, "After I leave, Yan County will likely not be peaceful, so Bai should stay there to protect you all."

"I am going to the north to fight, not to enjoy life, so there is no need for anyone to wait on me."

### Chapter 398: Marching Northward\_3

Hearing Lu Chen's words, Chu Yuqin let out a faint sigh; she had guessed that Lu Chen might say something like that.

At that moment, Lu Chen said, "Oh, Madam Chu, I forgot to tell you something."

Chu Yuqin asked curiously, "What is it?"

Lu Chen then leaned close to Chu Yuqin's ear and whispered, "When I return, I will marry you. You just wait to bear my children."

Blushing at Lu Chen's words, Chu Yuqin turned her head to glance at Lu Chen's other wives and concubines before saying with a touch of resentment, "You're not being serious!"

Just then, Chu Qingli, who was standing nearby, saw Lu Chen suddenly lean close to her sister and whisper something that made her sister's face turn red. She immediately gave Lu Chen a glare.

Lu Chen just smiled faintly, saying nothing more.

After saying goodbye to each of them, Lu Chen then led the North Country's two hundred thousand troops as they set off to march northward.

Clearly, the number of soldiers in the North Country had now exceeded the maximum number stipulated by the imperial decree on limiting troop numbers. Yet, Lu Chen had stopped pretending and openly displayed the strength of the North Country's soldiers during the military parade.

Lu Chen felt there was no longer any need for pretense. A few days earlier, he had learned from Commander Wang Jiantao that the Sum Emperor was planning to join forces with various grandmasters to kill Zhuge Zhongguang. Lu Chen did not believe his father the emperor aimed solely at Zhuge Zhongguang.

Zhuge Zhongguang was now a person of the North Country and its second-in-command. Targeting him was an attack on the entirety of the North Country.

Furthermore, based on the Sum Emperor's various actions, it seemed that once the emperor had dealt with the aristocratic families of Great Sum, the next step would be to weaken the vassals, with the North Country likely being the first to be targeted.

Having prepared the grandmasters for the kill, it was impossible for the emperor to leave the North Country for last. This was why Lu Chen thought there was no longer any need to continue the charade.

...

Half a month later.

The news of the North Country's military parade had shocked all of the major dynasties; no one had anticipated that the North Country could have developed such formidable military power in such a short time.

The Sum Imperial Court was the most shocked, but because the court was deeply engaged in an intensifying war with the rebel forces of the South, it had no time to address the happenings in the North Country, so the matter did not spark much discussion in the imperial assembly.

However, when the Sum Emperor saw the reports in his hands, his expression turned extremely ugly, to the point of being described as contorted.

In the Royal Garden.

The Sum Emperor stood by the lotus pond, looking at the reports in his hands, silent for a long time. The next moment, sharp Sword Qi burst from his body, slicing every structure in the Royal Garden in half, instantly dismembering all the eunuchs and maids below the Ninth Grade.

Seeing such a furious outburst from the Sum Emperor, Situ Ce guessed that something must have happened in the North Land.

The Sum Emperor then spoke coldly, "Good, very good indeed, such a good son I have!!!"

The Sum Emperor had always believed that the North Country's Heavy Cavalry had been destroyed, yet when the Barbarian Tribe moved eastward, the North Country's Heavy Cavalry had emerged once again.

Adding to that the messages previously transmitted back by Commander Wang, the Sum Emperor had realized that the North Country's rate of growth far exceeded his estimations. He had previously thought that the refugees would hinder the North Country's development, but now their military might had become so formidable.

Especially those Heavy Cavalry, according to messages from the Shadow Guard, the strength of those Heavy Cavalry was mostly above Fifth Grade, and their leading Military General was even suspected to be an Extreme Realm Master.

The North Country's Heavy Cavalry strength had far outstripped the Great Sum Imperial Court's Heavy Cavalry. When the North Fre King had moved south, he had thought the North Country's

Heavy Cavalry were just a bunch of heavily armored weaklings, hence they were so easily defeated. Now, he was being told that those Heavy Cavalry were all above the Fifth Grade!

At this time, the Sum Emperor said to the trembling grandmaster Shadow Guard kneeling on the ground, "Is there still no news of Wang Jiantao?"

The kneeling Shadow Guard promptly responded, "None. The Shadow Guards we dispatched to the North Country reported that upon their arrival, they couldn't find Commander Wang and the others; they seemed to have completely vanished."

The Sum Emperor had sent additional Shadow Guards to the North Country because he worried that Wang Jiantao might be incompetent. The military parade news he had just received was from the latter group of Shadow Guards sent out.

These Shadow Guards had tried to locate Wang Jiantao upon reaching Yan County, but all the Shadow Guards in the city had disappeared without a trace.

At this moment, the Sum Emperor understood what had happened. He said coldly, "Stop searching. Consider them all dead. From today on, you will temporarily assume command of the Shadow Guards."

Hearing this, the kneeling Shadow Guard immediately kowtowed and said, "Thank you for Your Majesty's grace!"

Then, the Sum Emperor sent the report flying to the destroyed pavilion where Situ Ce was; although the pavilion was ruined, he was surrounded by a sphere of outwardly projecting Gang Qi, holding up the remnants of the pavilion from collapsing.

The report sent by the Sum Emperor pierced through Situ Ce's Gang Qi barrier without surprise, and Situ Ce caught it without any ripple of emotion in his heart.

He had long known that the North Prince was no ordinary person, and that the North Country's Heavy Cavalry could not have been truly annihilated.

It seemed that the North Prince had become aware of the Sum Emperor's actions, and thus had decided to hold a high-profile military parade, no longer intending to remain concealed.

Just then, a soldier rushed into the Royal Garden, shouting, "Report!"

The soldier kneeled halfway before the Sum Emperor and the emperor said coldly, "Speak!"

The soldier immediately said, "Your Majesty, the Dongfang Family has disappeared! The imperial soldiers behind the rebel lines planned to seek the Dongfang Family's help, only to find their docks devoid of merchant ships, and the Dongfang Family itself deserted!"

Upon hearing this, the Sum Emperor's heart skipped a beat.

Gone?

What was going on?

The Dongfang Family had agreed to assist him in eliminating the South's aristocratic families. Could it be they were reconsidering?

The Sum Emperor's expression darkened further, then he asked, "How can they be gone? Did you find out where they went?"

The soldier replied, "No, not just our soldiers are looking for them, even the South's rebel forces are searching."

Chapter 399: A Mere Two Hundred Thousand Troops, Nothing to Fear\_1

Hearing the soldier's reply, the Sum Emperor fell into silence, his expression constantly changing.

The Dongfang Family's interest in joining the court and cooperating with the Emperor was undoubtedly the best choice. Allying with a group of rebels was, to begin with, very unlikely to succeed, and should they fail, the entire Dongfang Family would be finished.

The Sum Emperor believed that since the Dongfang Family chose to cooperate with him in the first place, it showed that they also thought the aristocratic families in the South were bound to be eliminated, so why had they suddenly disappeared?

If the aristocratic families in the South were all looking for the Dongfang Family, that would be even more bizarre. Logically, if the Dongfang Family regretted their decision and didn't want to collaborate with the Imperial Court, thinking the Imperial Army was no match for the southern rebels, then the Dongfang Family should have actively sought to join Lu Shuyun.

Instead, both the court and the southern rebels were now searching for them.

Upon hearing the dialogue between the soldier and the Sum Emperor, Situ Ce had pretty much guessed what was going on, and he spoke up, "Your Majesty, hasn't the Dongfang Family's merchant fleet been going north frequently lately?"

Hearing this, the Sum Emperor's mind jolted, and his face grew even more grim as he spoke in a cold voice, "You mean to say that the Dongfang Family has neither planned to cooperate with the court nor to join the rebels, but has instead chosen to join the North Country?"

Situ Ce said, "The Dongfang Family has likely seen your determination to eradicate the ancient families, and the Dongfangs themselves are one such ancient family, and moreover one controlling Great Sum's economy. They probably don't believe that after eliminating the Southern families, you would spare theirs."

"Nowadays, the North Country values commerce, and joining them could be a good choice for them."

The Sum Emperor pondered for a moment, thinking there might be some truth to Situ Ce's speculation. Could it be that the Dongfang Family had really run off to the North Country?

No wonder the Dongfang Family still ventured north to do business with the North Country while the court and southern rebels were at war. He had initially thought that, as merchants are profit-driven, with Great Sum embroiled in civil strife and prices soaring, the Dongfang Family went to the North Country to profit from the war. But in fact, they had directly fled there.

At that moment, the Sum Emperor was in a terrible mood. He had expected the Dongfang Family to collaborate with the Imperial Army in the South, making it easier to get intelligence on the rebels and even attack them from behind. He hadn't anticipated that they would flee the scene so cunningly.

The Sum Emperor snorted coldly, "What I hate the most is betrayal. Do they think they can live in peace after fleeing to the North Country?"

He had originally intended to deal with the Dongfang Family last, but now it seemed these people were so eager for death. So after dealing with the southern rebels, he would immediately seek a way to eliminate them.

However, it was still uncertain whether the North Country would last until the end of Great Sum's civil war.

The Tianqi King was no ordinary barbarian. According to the intelligence they had gathered, the Tianqi King had long been a Grandmaster, and his tribe was a main branch derived from the royal line of the barbarian tribes. Their overall strength far surpassed that of the Sky Wolf King and the North Fre King, two tribes from the North Land.

This time, the Tianqi King had brought four hundred thousand troops to march eastward, and

...

Meanwhile.

In a military tent of the Great Wu dynasty.

Wu Junwan, clad in silver-white armor, was intently reading a letter. As she read the contents, her brows lightly furrowed.

She had suspected from the beginning that the heavy cavalry of the North Country had not been defeated by the North Fre King's forces, and that the North Country claimed their cavalry had been destroyed merely to conceal their military strength.

To her amazement, her suspicions had been confirmed; the North Country's heavy cavalry was indeed still around, and not only that, it was even stronger than they had imagined.

With two Extreme Realm Masters as military generals and over four thousand Fifth Grade Martial Artists, this heavy cavalry unit was clearly stronger than the main forces of various dynasties.

Even the heavy cavalry of the Great Wu dynasty couldn't achieve having all soldiers be Fifth Grade Martial Artists; such warriors were distributed across different military units.

At that moment, she looked at the person who had delivered the intelligence and asked, "Didn't Zhuge Zhongguang follow the North Prince up north?"

The person in front of Wu Junwan replied, "No, he is still in Yan County. Right now, the political affairs of the North Country are managed by him."

After hearing the intelligence operative's reply, Wu Junwan fell into deep thought.

As far as she knew, the Tianqi King was a Grandmaster, and to confront him, the North Country would need at least one Grandmaster on their side.

Moreover, the Tianqi King had led four hundred thousand troops on an eastern campaign, but the North Country only had two hundred thousand.

Even though the North Country's heavy cavalry were all above Fifth Grade Martial Artists, with tremendous strength, the strength of the Tianqi King's forces was not to be underestimated. Without a Grandmaster overseeing the situation, relying solely on their heavy cavalry, it wouldn't be easy for the North Country to defeat the Tianqi King.

What was that young man thinking? Why didn't he allow Zhuge Zhongguang to follow him up north, instead choosing to lead the troops himself?

Could it be that the North Prince Mansion has more than one Grandmaster?

At this thought, Wu Junwan instantly remembered the Tower Master of the Rain-listening Pavilion she had met when she entered Yan County as a member of the Qian Family. The Tower Master was a Grandmaster, and his strength was nothing short of formidable.

Wu Junwan thought to herself, if the Tower Master of the Rain-listening Pavilion had also gone north with Lu Chen, that would explain why Lu Chen didn't take Zhuge Zhongguang with him.



She hoped the Tianqi King's troops would greatly weaken the military power of the North Country, especially those heavy cavalry. It would be best if those heavy cavalry units could be annihilated.

#### Chapter 400: A Mere Two Hundred Thousand Troops, Nothing to Fear\_2

Now, the chaos within the Great Wu Dynasty was unceasing, and with such commotion, the morale of Great Wu's civilians had become unstable, and its military power would also be greatly weakened in the future. The emergence of a military monster so powerful at Great Wu's side made Wu Junwan very uneasy.

At this moment, a soldier burst into the tent with excitement, "Princess Junwan, good news, the rebel leader plans to surrender! He wants to negotiate with you personally!"

Hearing this, Wu Junwan put down the intelligence in her hand. The affairs of the North Country could wait; she would first quell the internal turmoil within Great Wu.

Her purpose in leading troops this time was to thoroughly suppress the rebellion in the southwest. Through her various means, there were not many rebels remaining now; most of the rebels had already chosen to surrender to the Great Wu court.

Of course, in name they were surrendering to the Great Wu court, but in reality, these surrendered troops had essentially become the private soldiers of Princess Junwan. They were not surrendering directly to the court, but to Wu Junwan.

...

The Da Yue Dynasty.

The Empress's Bedchamber.

Inside the bedchamber, red curtains fluttered in the wind, and deep within the chamber, the silhouette of a woman wearing a red Phoenix Robe could be seen now and then.

At this time, a maid entered the bedchamber.

"Your Majesty, Sir Wang requests an audience."

The woman spoke indifferently, "Let him in."

Her voice was crisp, cold, and penetrating, as if it directly reached one's brain.

As the woman finished speaking, a man wearing an official hat entered the bedchamber.

"Your servant greets Your Majesty, long live Your Majesty, long live, long may you reign!"

The woman then asked, "What is it?"

The official immediately took out an envelope, then said,

"Your Majesty, this is intelligence from a North Country spy."

As he finished speaking, the intelligence in the official's hand flew up and "whooshed" into the curtains.

Inside the curtains, the woman glanced at the contents recorded in the intelligence and then said with a smile, "Interesting."

"It seems the Tianqi King couldn't gain any favors from us and is a little unwilling to accept that."

The kneeling official asked, "Your Majesty, do we need to do anything?"

"The rapid growth of the military power of the North Country is extremely disadvantageous to us in Da Yue."

Hearing this, the woman chuckled and then said, "What, does Sir Wang intend for our soldiers to march northward at this time and attack the North Country?"

Seeing the woman's tone was somewhat off, the official did not speak further, although that was indeed his thought.

The North Country bordered Da Yue, and it was not in Da Yue's interest to watch the North Country grow stronger. Moreover, the North Country was a feudal state of the Great Xia Dynasty, and its strength also meant the strengthening of Great Xia.

However, hearing the tone of the Empress, it was clear she had other ideas, so the man did not speak further.

At this point, the woman said, "Sir Wang is not wrong, we indeed should do something. Send an embassy immediately to the North Country, tell them, whatever the North Country needs, they can turn to Da Yue."

"If the North Country cannot resist the Barbarian Tribe, they can also ask Da Yue for help, and I will surely send troops to assist them immediately."

Hearing the Empress's words, the man kneeling on the ground was stunned.

Help the North Country? Why?

To Da Yue, wasn't the North Country an enemy? If North Country became stronger, how would that benefit Da Yue?

At this moment, the woman said, "Sir Wang, the North Country is key to splitting Great Xia. Do not be so shortsighted."

Hearing this, the man's heart thumped, and he instantly understood the Empress's plan.

Indeed, if the North Country was considered part of Great Xia, then the rapid increase in its military power was indeed bad news for the Da Yue Dynasty.

But if the North Country was viewed as an independent entity, that changed everything. The swift rise in the North Country's military power clearly indicated that the North Prince was an ambitiously Seignior.

In the future, it was highly probable that the North Country would rebel. Even if they did not, the Sum Emperor would definitely not allow such a powerful feudal state to exist, so he would certainly seek to reduce its power.

If the Sum Emperor sought to diminish their power, the North Country wouldn't passively wait to be targeted; the inevitable outcome would be a civil war.

Currently, Great Xia was fighting against the rebels in the South, and once the internal strife ended, its strength would surely be weakened. If a war between the Great Xia court and the North Country were to break out afterwards, it would lead to great suffering among the people of Great Xia, and the Seigniors were bound to have all sorts of thoughts.

That was why the Empress intended to establish friendly relations with the North Country and then further provoke the Sum Emperor.

The North Country was merely a feudal state and had no right to have independent foreign relations with a dynasty. If it did so, it would mean the North Country was seeking independence, planning to rebel.

With this in mind, the man said, "Your Majesty is correct, it is my lack of foresight. I earnestly request that Your Majesty allow me to lead the mission to the North Country."

The woman's voice came from within the curtains, "Granted."

"Thank Your Majesty, your servant takes his leave!"

As his words fell, the man left the Empress's bedchamber.

Then, the woman in the bedchamber murmured to herself, "North Prince, I hope you do not disappoint me."

...

North Land.

Ningbei City.

Lu Chen stood on the city wall, feeling the breeze from the grasslands. At this moment, Chen Wanrong, wearing a white garment, stood beside him.

Throughout the journey, Chen Wanrong, having followed Lu Chen to the north, harbored numerous doubts, especially concerning the many strange things within Lu Chen's army.

She had never seen such things before, did not know their use, and was even less understanding of why Lu Chen and his men had gone to such great lengths to transport these objects to the North Land.