

Es. Benefits 411

Chapter 411: Mysterious Barbarian Tribe Goddess_1

The Barbarian Tribe's camp had been scattered by the artillery fire, and in the darkness, the barbarian soldiers had no idea where to run. They fled around like headless flies, but in the end, they were all cut down one by one by the armies of the North Country.

Even when facing Ninth Grade barbarian soldiers who still had the strength to fight, the muskets of the North Country soldiers could kill them instantly. The surviving barbarian soldiers couldn't regroup to counterattack; they didn't even know that their great king was already dead.

Some barbarian soldiers saw that all was lost and they were undoubtedly doomed. Combined with the previous bombardment that had terrified them, they simply surrendered outright.

Meanwhile.

After Chen Wanrong brought Lu Chen back to his residence, she immediately dismounted from her horse. Her complexion was a bit flushed, and she seemed somewhat unhappy.

Then she said coldly to Lu Chen, who was still on horseback, "We're here, go inside by yourself."

This guy had been making trouble behind her back all the way, grabbing with his paws everywhere, stirring emotions within Chen Wanrong.

At that moment, Lu Chen dismounted and said to the soldier at the gate, "Take the horse away."

As his words fell, Lu Chen walked up to Chen Wanrong with a smile and said, "Master Chen, I still need your help."

Hearing this, Chen Wanrong asked, "What help?"

Without another word, Lu Chen wrapped his arms around her and, with a princess carry, lifted her up. Chen Wanrong was momentarily stunned, she quickly raised her arms to wrap around Lu Chen's neck to prevent herself from losing balance and falling.

Chen Wanrong asked somewhat angrily, "What are you doing?"

Lu Chen replied, "Asking for your help!"

With that, Lu Chen, holding Chen Wanrong, immediately headed to his own room.

Once in the room, Lu Chen laid Chen Wanrong on the bed and then pressed down on top of her.

Seeing that Lu Chen had brought her all the way to his room, Chen Wanrong could very well guess what he wanted to do. She said coldly, "The Prince's soldiers are fighting on the battlefield, isn't it somewhat improper for the Prince to be doing this in the rear?"

Lu Chen smiled and said, "Didn't General Mu just say that I've suffered serious injuries and now need to heal? The matters of the battlefield are temporarily unrelated to me."

Chen Wanrong then turned her head aside, not looking at Lu Chen anymore, displaying a resigned attitude.

This guy had already put it that way, what else could she do? Let him do whatever he wanted, after all, she was already his woman.

Seeing Chen Wanrong's snow-white neck, Lu Chen could no longer resist, he bent down and kissed her tempting red lips.

Lu Chen had no choice, for the skill he had just absorbed was too much for him to digest all at once. He could only share some of the skill with Chen Wanrong and use the Dragon and Phoenix Yin Yang Skill to speed up the absorption of the skill.

Soon, Chen Wanrong also felt the rapid increase of skill within her body, and she guessed what the previous anomaly with Lu Chen had been.

Lu Chen had absorbed the skill of a Grandmaster while he himself was still only a Grandmaster, not yet at the point of breakthrough. Absorbing more skill couldn't help him break through, and so the accumulated skill within his body, which he couldn't digest all at once, made him extremely uncomfortable. Thus, Lu Chen urgently needed to release some of this skill.

Chen Wanrong didn't know whether to be happy or angry at this point. On one hand, this scoundrel had transferred his skill to her, which was a good thing since it helped to improve her strength. On the other hand, after being tormented by this guy, she still felt a bit of minor irritation in her heart.

The soldiers of the North Country fought in the Barbarian Tribe camp throughout the night. Although the barbarian soldiers had completely lost the capability to resist, they still numbered in the hundreds of thousands. Even if it were hundreds of thousands of pigs, capturing them would take some time.

And so had Lu Chen also fought through the night.

Only as dawn broke did Lu Chen rise from Gentle Jade Fragrance. After getting up, he took a glance at Chen Wanrong's fair skin, which was faintly blushing with splashes of light pink.

At this moment, Chen Wanrong's eyes were fixed on Lu Chen, her gaze somewhat resentful.

Lu Chen said with a smile, "I owe this one to you. Otherwise, I really wouldn't have known how to quickly digest so much skill in such a short time yesterday."

As Lu Chen finished speaking, Chen Wanrong said with a blushing face and without expression, "Thank you."

Hearing Chen Wanrong thank him, Lu Chen was taken aback for a moment. He had not expected her to take the initiative to thank him.

Regaining his composure, Lu Chen said, "No need to thank me."

He of course understood why Chen Wanrong was thanking him. Having transferred so much skill to her, helping her to enhance her strength, it was only natural for her to thank him.

Chen Wanrong then continued, "After the war is over, I need to return to the Mysterious Moon Palace for a visit."

Her appearance on the battlefield would surely spread to the ears of the Elders of Mysterious Moon Palace soon, so she must return there to stabilize them first, and ensure the Mysterious Moon Palace didn't develop a conflict with the North Country because of her.

She had witnessed the military strength of the North Country firsthand. Although Mysterious Moon Palace also had Grandmasters, and even Celestial-level powerhouses, nobody knew if Lu Chen and his people could produce even more powerful weapons. Becoming enemies with the North Country was unwise.

After hearing Chen Wanrong's words, Lu Chen thought for a while, and he surmised that when Chen Wanrong proposed returning to the Mysterious Moon Palace, it was probably to stabilize the Elders there, and Lu Chen didn't believe that Chen Wanrong would not come back after returning to the Mysterious Moon Palace.

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But then again, seeing such a fairy depart was something Lu Chen found rather hard to let go of.

At this moment, Lu Chen rested his large hand on Chen Wanrong's slender, fair leg, gently caressed it, and said, "Okay then, but when do you plan to return to the North Country?"

"You don't have my child yet, we still need to work harder on that."

Hearing this, Chen Wanrong pondered for a moment before answering, "Once those Elders are stabilized, I'll return to the North Country."

Lu Chen responded, "Alright then, I'll wait for your return."

Seeing how readily Lu Chen agreed, Chen Wanrong looked into his eyes and asked, "Aren't you afraid that once I go back, I'll never return?"

Upon hearing this question from Chen Wanrong, Lu Chen gently smiled, then leaned in closer, shifting his body towards her. He raised his hand to stroke her beautiful cold cheek and, gazing into her eyes, said, "Didn't I tell you a long time ago that I've poisoned you with love? If you don't come back, can you bear to live without me?"

Chen Wanrong did not avoid Lu Chen's gaze and continued to say, "I can force out the love poison you've given me with my cultivation."

Lu Chen, with a smile, replied, "Then you can try."

"But I think I told you before I came to Ningbei City, if you really don't come back, I will go to the Mysterious Moon Palace and snatch you back."

"I'm quite domineering after all. Once you're my wife for a day, you'll be my wife for life, it won't be so easy to get rid of me."

Chen Wanrong was unimpressed, responding icily, "Eventually, you'll get tired of me."

In Chen Wanrong's view, although Lu Chen still fancied her beauty now, he already had so many women, each one extremely beautiful and mesmerizing. Plus, with Lu Chen's growing strength, he would undoubtedly marry even more women in the future.

Once the number of Lu Chen's women reached a certain point, it was highly likely that he would become weary of the ones from the past.

The joys of men and women are all transient. His women are all so beautiful; whether it was with her or any other, it was all the same for Lu Chen. Perhaps after they had been intimate many times, he would lose interest in her.

Lu Chen just laughed upon hearing this from Chen Wanrong. He then wrapped his hand around her slender waist and said, "Tired? I won't get tired. Bullying a beauty such as you, how could I ever feel weary?"

With an expressionless face, Chen Wanrong replied, "That's just what you say now."

Seeing that Chen Wanrong didn't believe his words, Lu Chen said, "How about this, let's make a bet. If I never grow tired of you in the future, then you'll stay by my side forever. As long as you're by my side, I'll visit your room at least once a month. What do you think?"

Hearing Lu Chen say that, Chen Wanrong's originally rosy cheeks flushed even redder. She stopped speaking and didn't agree to the bet proposed by Lu Chen.

Anyway, whether Lu Chen grew tired or not had nothing to do with her; she only planned on giving birth to a child for him. Once their child was grown, she would return to the Mysterious Moon Palace to continue her cultivation, waiting for her master's seclusion to end.

Seeing that Chen Wanrong had nothing more to say, Lu Chen lowered his head and kissed her red lips, deeply kissing her for a while. Chen Wanrong did not push Lu Chen away as she had grown used to being intimate with him.

After a moment, their lips parted. Lu Chen then said, "I'm going to check on the battlefield, continue to rest."

Chen Wanrong softly hummed in acknowledgment without saying much more.

Lu Chen then got up, dressed, and left the room, heading straight for the battlefield.

At this time, the troops of the North Country were still clearing the battlefield in the Barbarian Tribe's camp. Even though a night had passed, the soldiers were still bustling with activity.

Riding his horse around the perimeter of the Barbarian Tribe's camp, Lu Chen soon encountered Mu Changtian and other generals who approached him and greeted, "We pay our respects to the Prince!"

Lu Chen nodded and inquired, "How's the situation?"

Mu Changtian reported, "Aside from some Barbarian Tribe soldiers who managed to escape under the cover of darkness, the Tianqi King's forces have been virtually annihilated by us. The soldiers did a rough count of the Barbarian Tribe bodies; we killed two hundred thousand enemies last night and captured eighty thousand Barbarian Tribe soldiers."

While the Tianqi King's army had a total of four hundred thousand, Mu Changtian's report only mentioned two hundred thousand Barbarian Tribe soldiers, but considering the casualties during the half-month of battle leading up to this, this number basically aligned with the size of the forty thousand-strong Barbarian Tribe forces.

Of course, under such darkness last night, there would have undoubtedly been some who managed to escape.

Lu Chen continued, "Send out scouts to check the hoof prints on the grasslands and continue the search for Barbarian Tribe soldiers who escaped last night."

Mu Changtian assured him, "Please rest easy, my Prince. General Wenren and General Xiao have already dispatched cavalry to search for those fleeing Barbarian Tribe soldiers."

Lu Chen ordered, "Take me to see the Barbarian Tribe captives who surrendered."

Lu Chen was somewhat concerned about the final words of the Tianqi King before his death; he wanted to find some Barbarian Tribe soldiers to inquire about this so-called Goddess.

"Please follow me, Your Highness," said Mu Changtian.

Afterward, Mu Changtian led Lu Chen to the temporary camp where the Barbarian Tribe captives were held.

When Lu Chen appeared at the temporary camp of the Barbarian Tribe captives, each one of them became incredibly fearful, having sensed the aura of a Martial Artist emanating from Lu Chen. Some slightly stronger Barbarian Tribe soldiers immediately deduced that this young man was a Grandmaster.

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At first, the soldiers of the Barbarian Tribe were unaware of where their King had gone, thus they harbored a sliver of hope, wishing for their King to save them. However, when they saw this young Grandmaster, their hearts instantly turned cold.

The North Country had sent a Grandmaster this time, and their King had been absent for an entire night. Did that mean it was very likely that their King had encountered misfortune?

This was a total disaster.

Lu Chen swept his gaze over the captured barbarians and saw a Master Realm Barbarian Tribe General among the crowd.

This Barbarian Tribe General was adept at concealing his strength; his body barely emitted any martial artist aura, appearing to be just an ordinary Barbarian Tribe soldier.

But no matter how much he hid, it was futile in front of Lu Chen with his system. Lu Chen immediately said to the Barbarian Tribe General hiding in the crowd, "Huyan Tong, do you really think you can hide among the Barbarian Tribe soldiers and no one will recognize you?"

Upon hearing the young man call his name, Huyan Tong was shocked. How could anyone in the North Country recognize him!!!

That's not right, the youth must be bluffing him. He must have learned about Huyan Tong's existence within the Barbarian Tribe army through some soldier, which is why he said so to the crowd. The young man probably had not recognized him.

Huyan Tong thought that he looked no different from any ordinary Barbarian Tribe soldier and, having cultivated the Cultivation Technique given by the Goddess, had concealed his martial artist aura. He looked just like any other ordinary soldier and couldn't possibly be recognized.

As long as the surrounding Barbarian Tribe soldiers did not betray him and pointed him out, he would be able to blend in safely. Once the youth had left, he would find an opportunity to slip away and report what happened in Ningbei City to the Goddess.

While Huyan Tong thought this way, Lu Chen chuckled to himself and then raised his hand, using his Spiritual Power to drag Huyan Tong out from the crowd.

Huyan Tong was stunned; he had assumed the youth was only trying to bluff them, but the youth had actually singled him out.

Which bastard had betrayed him!

If he found out, he would definitely slaughter that traitor!

Seeing Lu Chen pull out a Barbarian Tribe soldier who did not look robust and was dressed in worn fur clothes, Mu Changtian curiously asked, "Prince, do you know this man?"

Lu Chen casually remarked, "This man is a Master Level military general under the Tianqi King."

At these words, Mu Changtian froze in place, his eyes in disbelief as he scrutinized Huyan Tong.

Huyan Tong did not seem like a Master Level military general at all. First, there was no martial artist aura about him, and second, his body wasn't as burly as the usual Barbarian Tribe soldier. He looked nothing more than cannon fodder among the barbarians.

This man was a Master Level military general under the Tianqi King???

Coming back to his senses, Mu Changtian frowned and said, "Prince, could it be that you've made a mistake? This man doesn't look like a Barbarian Tribe General at all."

Lu Chen laughed and then said, "Huyan Tong, do you truly think that by concealing your martial artist aura, you can deceive my eyes?"

"If you continue this act, I'll send you down to meet your King."

Upon hearing this, Huyan Tong was taken aback.

Send him down to meet the King?

So, did that mean that their King had truly died?

Could it be that the young Grandmaster in front of him had killed him?

Filled with fear at the thought, Huyan Tong quickly changed his tune, "I am Huyan Tong, the Tianqi King's Barbarian Tribe General, spare my life, great lord. Whatever you wish to know, you may ask me; I will tell you anything."

Seeing Huyan Tong immediately confess his identity, Mu Changtian felt somewhat speechless; it was his first time seeing a Barbarian Tribe General act so cowardly. Not only had he hidden among the Barbarian Tribe soldiers, but he was also afraid to acknowledge his own identity.

He hadn't expected the Tianqi King's subordinates to include such a Barbarian Tribe commander.

Lu Chen then asked directly, "You said that your King mentioned, before he died last night, that your Goddess would seek revenge upon me. I am quite interested in your Goddess, tell me, what kind of woman is she?"

Hearing Lu Chen's question, Huyan Tong was momentarily stunned.

Seeing that Huyan Tong did not answer immediately, Lu Chen continued, "What, as a Master General, do you not even know of your Barbarian Tribe's Goddess?"

After snapping out of it, Huyan Tong quickly responded, "Of course I know her; I just wasn't sure what you wanted to learn about the Goddess."

Lu Chen then inquired, "What is the strength of your Goddess?"

Huyan Tong answered, "I am not clear on that. I only know that even our King is no match for her; the Goddess could pin our King to the ground with just a flick of her finger."

At Huyan Tong's response, Lu Chen and Mu Changtian's hearts skipped a beat. The Tianqi King was already formidable, yet the Barbarian Tribe Goddess could pin him to the ground with just a flick of her finger?

How terrifying must the strength of this Barbarian Tribe Goddess be?

Could she be a Celestial of the Heavenly Human Realm?

Could it be that the Barbarian Tribe also had a Celestial of the Heavenly Human Realm?

This was not good news for their North Country!

The North Country currently had at most three Grandmasters, and the gap between a Grandmaster and someone of the Heavenly Human Realm was vast—as different as earth and heaven. If the Barbarian Tribe Goddess came knocking, it was uncertain if the North Country could withstand the attack.

Chapter 414: The Tianqi King is a Grandmaster!!!_1

After hearing Huyan Tong's response, Lu Chen wasn't intimidated by the strength of the Barbarian Tribe Goddess. Although the goddess was powerful, the more potent she was, the less likely she would personally stoop to demeaning acts.

Under normal circumstances, even a Grandmaster would not easily appear on the battlefield, let alone a warrior from the Heavenly Human Realm.

Moreover, even if the goddess of the Barbarian Tribe really wanted to trouble the North Country, Lu Chen didn't have to worry too much. Zhuge Zhongguang was about to break through to the Heavenly Human Realm, and Lu Chen believed that Zhuge could successfully make the breakthrough before the goddess came looking for trouble.

Even without relying on Zhuge Zhongguang, he could accelerate his cultivation speed and strive to enhance his own Cultivation State, hoping to break through to the Heavenly Human Realm as soon as possible.

Lu Chen then continued to ask, "Why did the Tianqi King march eastward? Was it to relocate to the North Land, or specifically to attack the North Country?"

Huyan Tong replied, "Initially, the goddess intended for the Tianqi King to relocate to the North Land and not act rashly for the time being. However, the king, in a foul mood after being defeated by the Da Yue Dynasty, wanted to vent his anger, and thus led us to attack the North Country."

At this point, Huyan Tong immediately knelt down, "It was all the Tianqi King's decision, it has nothing to do with me. I was forced to follow him to attack the North Country, I beg for mercy, sir!"

Hearing Huyan Tong's words, Lu Chen fell into contemplation. He originally thought that the Tianqi King had his own reasons for coming to the North Land, but it turned out there was someone pushing him from behind.

What did the goddess of the Barbarian Tribe want the Tianqi King to do in the North Land? Was there something in the North Land that the goddess cared about?

Thinking of this, Lu Chen asked, "Do you know why your Barbarian Tribe Goddess had the Tianqi King come to the North Land?"

Huyan Tong replied, "I'm just a leader of a small tribe, how could I possibly know the thoughts of the goddess."

Upon hearing Huyan Tong's answer, Lu Chen suddenly regretted killing the Tianqi King so quickly.

Before he acted last night, his thought was to avoid prolonging the matter and to kill the Tianqi King early to prevent any mishaps. But by killing him so quickly, he had just deprived himself of a lot of intelligence.

It seemed that he needed to hesitate a bit before taking action in the future—being too decisive wasn't always a good thing.

At this moment, Lu Chen glanced over the captured members of the Barbarian Tribe and then his gaze fell back on Huyan Tong, "Do you know anything else about your goddess? For example, how was your goddess born, or what kind of abilities does she possess?"

Huyan Tong responded, "My lord, I have told you all I know. I have only seen the goddess a few times, I really don't know much about her."

At this time, Mu Changtian approached Lu Chen and whispered in his ear, "Prince, how should we deal with this Barbarian Tribe General?"

After some thought, Lu Chen said, "First, seal his skill, then take him back to Yan County for further use. He might still be useful."

Mu Changtian responded, "Understood."

Lu Chen then said to Huyan Tong, "If you wish to live, be honest. If you dare to play any tricks, I will send you straight to meet your king."

Huyan Tong replied, "Rest assured, my lord, I will be completely honest and won't attempt to escape!"

Lu Chen no longer wasted words with Huyan Tong. He didn't plan to interrogate other Barbarian Tribe soldiers about the goddess; given that even Huyan Tong knew so little about her, it was likely that the others had even less contact with her, probably knowing even less.

Lu Chen then turned and left.

No sooner had Lu Chen left the temporary camp of the captured Barbarians than Xiao Pengthian returned with Cavalry, bringing in a group of Barbarian Tribe soldiers who had fled the previous night.

Seeing Xiao Pengthian, Lu Chen immediately asked, "General Xiao, come here for a moment; I have something to ask you."

Hearing this, Xiao Pengthian promptly came before Lu Chen, "Prince, what do you need from me?"

Lu Chen went straight to the point, "Have you ever heard of your Barbarian Tribe's Goddess?"

Lu Chen thought that since Xiao Pengthian grew up among the Barbarian Tribe, and his status within the Sky Wolf King's tribe was not too low, he should know some intelligence about the goddess.

Startled by Lu Chen's question, Xiao Pengthian paused before saying, "Prince, when did the Barbarian Tribe have a Goddess? I have no knowledge of this."

Realizing something from Xiao Pengthian's response, Lu Chen immediately reflected that the Sky Wolf King's tribe had relocated to the North Land quite early. It was possible that the Barbarian Tribe Goddess was born after the Sky Wolf King's tribe had moved, and the tribe might not know anything about a goddess at all.

Lu Chen waved his hand, "Never mind then, carry on with your duties."

This...

Xiao Pengthian paused again and then said, "I shall take my leave."

After touring the battlefield of the previous night several times, Lu Chen returned to Ningbei City.

As Lu Chen was about to have the Brocade Guard send the latest battle report to Yan County, Wu Yuan came before him, handing him an envelope, "Prince, there is intelligence from Yan County."

Lu Chen first took the envelope from Wu Yuan, opened it, and read through the intelligence inside.

Seeing that the intelligence mentioned the Da Yue Dynasty sending an envoy to the North Country, Lu Chen's expression grew serious.

What did the Da Yue envoy want by coming to the North Country at such a time?

The intelligence stated that the envoy of the Da Yue Dynasty offered help, saying that if the North Country had any needs, they could turn to Da Yue, which would surely assist.

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Help? So charitable?

North Country and the Da Yue Dynasty had never had official dealings, after all, North Country was just a feudal state within the Great Xia Dynasty, and feudal states had no right to establish diplomatic relations with a dynasty.

Da Yue's sudden dispatch of an envoy to aid North Country obviously carried ill intentions.

I'm afraid Da Yue intended to sow discord, provoking the Sum Emperor to believe that North Country planned to declare independence, hence secretly establishing diplomatic ties with the Da Yue Dynasty.

It's unclear if this was the Empress's idea.

If it was indeed the Empress's idea, it would prove that she was an exceedingly restless sovereign, possibly harboring ambitions to expand her territory.

Lu Chen temporarily didn't take this matter to heart. He said to Wu Yuan, "Go back to Yan County immediately and report last night's military achievements to the Eastern Newspaper Agency, instructing them to promote it heavily in the newspapers."

An Imperial Army of two hundred thousand had utterly defeated the Barbarian Army of four hundred thousand, even killing a Grandmaster in the process.

This was the first time in hundreds of years that a Grandmaster had died on the battlefield; previously, whether in dynastic wars or any other conflicts, Grandmasters never took to the field, which is why none had ever died there.

Lu Chen believed that such significant military success would suffice to deter some with ulterior motives from coveting North Country. Of course, this would also make certain individuals even more wary of North Country, accelerating their plans to eliminate him, the North Prince, such as his own father—the Emperor.

At that moment, Wu Yuan asked, "Prince, when I came to Yan County, the Great Scholar asked me to inquire if you wish to meet with Da Yue's envoys?"

Hearing this question, Lu Chen countered, "What did the Great Scholar say?"

Wu Yuan replied, "The Great Scholar said it's entirely up to you."

Currently, North Country definitely couldn't continue to just survive passively; after all, its strength had already been exposed, and the Sum Emperor was already considering moving against North Country. Thus, Zhuge Zhongguang believes that it's not necessary for North Country to rely on the Great Xia court's opinion to establish diplomatic relations with that dynasty.

If the North Prince is willing, they could set up an official channel of communication with the Da Yue Dynasty.

Moreover, the rebel forces in the South are still holding out, and the Great Xia court doesn't have the energy to pay attention to the happenings in North Country. Although they disapprove of North Country, they won't break off relations at this point.

North Country is already the most powerful feudal state; breaking off relations prematurely wouldn't benefit the Great Xia court. If they plan to deal with North Country, they would make their move after preparing for war.

The way the Sum Emperor handled the Aristocratic Families of the South shows that he was a cautious sovereign; he forced Lu Shuyun to head south only when there were no external threats and ample preparations were made.

Moreover, North Country is not like the Aristocratic Families of the South; since Lu Chen's arrival in North Country, he had achieved victory in three successive battles.

The Aristocratic Families of the South were loose sand, unable to band together even in rebellion. The Imperial Army easily dealt with them, but facing North Country, which has accumulated nearly a million casualties among enemy ranks, the Sum Emperor would certainly be even more cautious—this was beyond doubt.

Once the Sum Emperor learns of the battle at Ningbei City and reassesses North Country's strength, there is a high likelihood he would choose to continue maintaining relations with North Country.

After thinking for a while, Lu Chen then said to Wu Yuan, "Go back and tell the Great Scholar to have Da Yue's envoys stay in North Country for a while longer. I will return in half a month."

"Your subordinate understands."

Lu Chen said, "Alright, you may attend to your duties."

"Your subordinate takes his leave."

...

Seven days later.

Yan County.

The latest edition of the Eastern Newspaper Agency was immediately sold out as soon as it was released.

Dongfang Longyue instantly had the Prince's Mansion's printing press rush to print another batch of newspapers, which again sold out in less than a quarter of an hour.

The news of North Country annihilating the Tianqi King's army of four hundred thousand and slaying the Tianqi King himself shook the entire Yan County in an instant.

People found it hard to believe the news, especially the spies of various dynasties and powers.

The Tianqi King was a Grandmaster!!!

And he was just killed like that?

It should be remembered that before attacking North Country, the Tianqi King had joined forces with the Barbarian Tribe to attack the Da Yue Dynasty, and even with the Empress leading the campaign personally, the Tianqi King managed to retreat from the battlefield unscathed—but ended up falling in North Country.

Mysterious Moon Tavern.

Inside a private room.

A woman dressed in black and white plain clothes, exceptionally beautiful, with a bewitching allure, sat at a table, looking over a note in her hand.

Several elders stood before her, and among them was Wang Maoxue, who had volunteered to be an envoy to North Country for the Great Yue Empress.

She then asked, "What did Zhuge Zhongguang say?"

Upon hearing the woman's question, Wang Maoxue spoke up, "Lord Murong, Zhuge Zhongguang suggests we wait a bit longer, until the North Prince returns, as he intends to meet with us personally."

Hearing this, the woman voiced her doubts, "Wait for the North Prince to return?"

"The North Prince is currently engaged in battle with the Barbarian Army at Ningbei City. Can he really afford to leave at this time?"

"Could it be that the North Prince plans to let his subordinates hold Ningbei City while he returns alone to Yan County?"

Wang Maoxue noted, "I'm not sure about that. Perhaps the Barbarian assault isn't too fierce, and the North Prince believes they are only probing our defenses, not truly intending to attack North Country."

Just then, a knock at the door suddenly rang out, and the woman spoke softly, "The door isn't latched, come in."

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The next moment, a man from the Great Jue delegation entered the room, holding a newspaper that had just been published by the Eastern Newspaper Agency. He said, gasping for breath, "Big... big news, the Barbarian Tribe... forty thousand strong Barbarian Army has been annihilated, the Tianqi King... huff huff... has been defeated... and killed..."

Upon hearing these words, everyone in the room was stunned.

In an instant, the room fell into a deathly silence, and the sounds from the street outside became excruciatingly piercing.

After a while, Wang Maoxue came to his senses and asked with disbelief, "Where did you get this information from? The Tianqi King had an army of four hundred thousand men; how could they be defeated so easily?"

The man immediately handed over the newspaper he was holding to Wang Maoxue, who grabbed the paper and quickly scanned the content.

Today's newspaper from the Eastern Newspaper Agency focused on only one thing, which was the North Country's annihilation of the Tianqi King's army.

The agency described how over the past half-month, the Barbarian Army of the Tianqi King had been assaulting Ningbei City and how the North Prince, undaunted by danger, deceived the enemy and then decisively struck out, wiping out the Tianqi King's army overnight.

Of course, the Eastern Newspaper Agency didn't record anything about firearms. Without the existence of firearms, the paper seemed particularly fake.

Two hundred thousand soldiers launching a night raid on the Barbarian camp, destroying the Tianqi King's four hundred thousand strong army, and even killing the Tianqi King, a Grandmaster?

Could it really be that easy?

What a joke!

Even if the Barbarian Army was asleep at night, once they reacted, they would still be formidable in combat. Moreover, the Tianqi King's Army comprised a major tribe that had branched out from the past Barbarian King. Their soldiers possessed extraordinary fighting abilities; how could they collapse instantly in an ambush?

Could this news be false?

But from the intelligence gathered by Great Jue, the Eastern Newspaper Agency was established with the approval of the North Prince Mansion. They shouldn't be spreading false news on their own, especially not about a matter related to war.

After frowning for a moment, Wang Maoxue immediately passed the newspaper to a woman, saying, "Lord Murong, please take a look."

The woman took the newspaper from Wang Maoxue's hand and read the content carefully.

After reviewing the content of the newspaper, Murong Xue'er frowned slightly before saying to the people in the room, "I remember that North Country also has an official newspaper. Go and buy a copy of today's official newspaper right away."

Hearing this, the man who had just delivered the newspaper immediately turned around and said, "Yes, I'll go buy the official newspaper immediately."

After the man left the room, Wang Maoxue asked, "Lord Murong, how credible do you think this news is?"

Murong Xue'er replied, "Completely credible."

At her words, everyone in the room was taken aback.

An official from the delegation asked, "Lord Murong, why do you believe the content of the newspaper so much? This news seems fake no matter how you look at it."

Murong Xue'er said, "To print newspapers, the Eastern Newspaper Agency must get the approval of the North Prince Mansion, so naturally, this news has been reviewed by the North Prince Mansion."

"This indicates that the North Prince Mansion intentionally released this news."

"Ever since the North Prince came to North Country, the two battles he has faced have not ended in defeat. During the battle for Tianguang City, although North Country claimed that they lost over forty thousand Heavy Cavalry, these Heavy Cavalry reappeared in a North Country military parade a month ago.

This proves they were only concealing their true strength; they definitely defeated the North Fre King's army in the battle for Tianguang City."

"From these two battles, it's clear that North Country's military strength is not weak."

At this point, Wang Maoxue interjected, "Lord Murong, the Tianqi King's tribe is a major tribe that branched out from the Barbarian King's court. The Barbarian soldiers under the Tianqi King are stronger than those barbarians from the North Land."

Murong Xue'er said, "Sir Wang is also aware of the strong military power of the Tianqi King-led Barbarian Army. Wouldn't Sir Wang then think that North Country has been concealing its true strength from the start?"

"This..."

Wang Maoxue paused, then said, "The North Prince has only been in North Country for a few years..."

Murong Xue'er said, "When the Sky Wolf King's army was pressing down on Yan County, how long had the North Prince been in North Country?"

"To speculate on North Country's military strength, one obviously cannot view it through normal eyes."

"No one knows what kind of power lies behind the North Prince, except for the North Prince himself, not even the Empress can see through him."

Hearing Murong Xue'er's words, everyone once again fell into silence.

Murong Xue'er said, "Once the official newspaper of North Country comes out, we will know whether this news is true or false."

At this moment, Wang Maoxue murmured, "No wonder Zhuge Zhongguang asked us to wait a bit longer today; it turns out he already knew about the great victory of the North Country army."

The feelings of the people present were complex. Originally, they had come to North Country with the intention of aiding it, hoping to make North Country owe a favor to the Da Yue Dynasty. They did not expect the war to end so promptly.

After waiting in the room for about fifteen minutes, a member of the delegation returned with the official newspaper.

When everyone saw the news of the great victory at Ningbei City published in the North Country official newspaper, they basically believed that North Country had indeed defeated the Tianqi King-led Barbarian Army.

This realization posed a new question to the delegates: the Tianqi King was a Grandmaster, so to defeat him, the Grandmaster, there had to be at least one other Grandmaster on the battlefield. Zhuge Zhongguang had always been in Yan County and had never left, which implied that there was another hidden Grandmaster in North Country?

A small feudal state with two Grandmasters? Could that still be considered a feudal state?

Perhaps when the North Prince returned to Yan County, he would have plans to proclaim himself Emperor. Otherwise, why would Zhuge Zhongguang say the North Prince wanted to meet with the delegation from the Da Yue Dynasty personally?

The news of North Country defeating the Tianqi King's army was so explosive that it spread throughout the several dynasties in less than half a month. Of course, it also reached the ears of the Sum Emperor.

However, when the Sum Emperor and the court officials learned of this news, it wasn't through rumors. Instead, it was through the Red Ribbon Messenger from North Country.

Great Xia Dynasty.

Xuanzheng Hall.

The court was unusually lively today, with officials discussing how to handle Lu Shuyun. The civil war within Great Xia was nearing its end. Although Lu Shuyun had not been captured yet, the court had encircled Sufeng City, where Lu Shuyun, once the Crown Prince, was now at his wits' end.

As the heated discussion continued, a resounding voice came from outside, "Urgent report from North Country!!!"

Upon hearing this, the entire court went silent in an instant.

North Country?

What urgent report could come from North Country?

Could it be that North Country's two hundred thousand soldiers had been defeated by the Tianqi King?

Chapter 417: He is Already a Grandmaster_1

Although the court officials had been focusing their attention on the military affairs in the South recently, they were still aware of some news about the North Country.

In particular, the news of North Country's troop review alarmed officials, realizing that the North Country had grown beyond control with the appearance of its two hundred thousand-strong army.

However, with the Southern rebels yet to be eliminated, they lacked the energy to pay attention to what was happening in the North Country.

Before the Southern rebels were put down, going after the North Country could very likely lead to being caught between two fronts. Therefore, the court officials had a very clear stance on the North Country: they chose to ignore it, pretending it did not exist.

Furthermore, upon hearing that forty thousand of Tianqi King's troops had marched eastward, they believed that a battle between the North Country and Tianqi King was inevitable and that the Tianqi King's formidable presence would inevitably weaken North Country's strength.

But, on reflection, though they wished Tianqi King to further weaken the North Country, they were not willing to see it collapse completely at the hands of Tianqi King.

Now that their focus was on the South, if the North Country were to fall to Tianqi King, it would become another problem for Great Xia—a formidable enemy, given Tianqi King was a Grandmaster, and his tribe had branched out from a former Barbarian Tribe kingdom, with each of his barbarian soldiers being exceptionally strong.

If the North Country were to be conquered by Tianqi King's army, it would be akin to a sharp sword hanging over Great Xia's head, extremely unfavorable for the empire.

Just when all the court officials were speculating that something had happened to the North Country, the Red Ribbon Messenger loudly announced, "Victory in the North Country!!!

The North Prince led a two hundred thousand-strong army and achieved a great victory in Ningbei City, slaying three hundred twenty thousand barbarians, capturing eighty thousand barbarian soldiers, and even slaying Tianqi King at the hands of one of our Generals!"

Upon hearing these words, the great hall fell even quieter, and some officials couldn't help but gasp in shock.

They had just assumed that it was the North Country that had fallen to Tianqi King, but the outcome turned out to be the North Country defeating Tianqi King's four hundred thousand-strong army and even killing the Grandmaster Tianqi King.

This...

How is this possible...

How did North Country achieve this?

To their knowledge, North Country's Grandmaster Zhuge Zhongguang had always been in Yan County and had not gone to Ningbei City.

To kill a Grandmaster, the North Country would need a Grandmaster of its own. If Zhuge Zhongguang had not gone to the battlefield, did that not hint at another hidden Grandmaster in the North Country?

Two Grandmasters in a mere feudal state?

Can it still be considered just a feudal state?

Even the Great Xia imperial family had only one publicly known Grandmaster—the State Preceptor Situ Ce. Yet North Country had two, which made it hard to believe that North Country had no intention of rebelling, didn't it?

This led those who previously thought the North Prince was but a pawn of the Sum Emperor to doubt: could the North Prince truly be the Sum Emperor's pawn? Did the Emperor need to place two Grandmasters next to a mere pawn?

When a pawn has the power to leap out of the chessboard, is it still a pawn?

At this moment, the court was filled with a grave atmosphere, as if they could already feel the imperial pressure exuding from the Sum Emperor. The officials did not even dare to breathe too heavily.

It took a long while before the eunuch beside the Sum Emperor snapped out of it. He quickly approached the Red Ribbon Messenger, took the battle report from their hands, and then shakily returned to the Sum Emperor, presenting the report with both hands.

The Sum Emperor then took the report, glanced over its content, and remained silent for a long time.

When he first heard about Tianqi King's eastward advance, he too thought that the North Country was inevitably facing a great crisis. Even if the North Country could withstand Tianqi King's onslaught, its might would be significantly weakened.

Yet now, the battle report told him that North Country not only had triumphed over Tianqi King's four hundred thousand troops but had also killed Tianqi King, the Grandmaster.

Had North Country's power grown so strong in such a short period?

The key was, according to intelligence from the Shadow Guard, Zhuge Zhongguang had not gone to the battlefield. This meant that North Country had at least another Grandmaster. Initially, he thought Zhuge Zhongguang was the person backing Lu Chen, but now it seemed Zhuge might truly not be the mastermind behind the changes in North Country.

As he looked at the content of the battle report, the Sum Emperor's face darkened, growing very displeased.

As North Country was a vassal of Great Xia, the Sum Emperor, as the Great Xia Emperor, should be pleased with its victory. However, when a vassal state grows too powerful, it poses a serious threat to the court and even to his position as the Emperor.

It appeared that North Country was verging on being out of control, and evidently, the Great Xia court could no longer rein it in. Measures must be taken to address the situation in North Country.

After an indeterminate period of time, the Sum Emperor finally spoke coldly, "My loyal subjects, the North Prince has shown great bravery in battle and achieved such glory. How do you think I should reward him?"

Hearing the Sum Emperor's icy tone, not a single official in the great hall dared to speak.

Clearly, the Sum Emperor was very displeased with the outcome. A Seignior with such formidable military might was a huge threat to the court.

At that moment, Right Minister Zhao Wenhan stood up and said, "Your Majesty, although the North Prince has earned immense military merits, he has violated the decree limiting military forces, expanding his troops to two hundred thousand without authorization. Such unauthorized expansion is a grave offense.

However, considering that this army marched north and protected Great Xia from the invasion of foreign enemies, I believe his merits offset his offenses, so there is no need to reward the North Prince further."

Chapter 418: He is Already a Grandmaster_2

Upon hearing Zhao Wenhan's remark, the Sum Emperor chuckled coldly, "No reward, isn't that inappropriate? If nothing is awarded, wouldn't that chill North Prince's heart?"

Zhao Wenhan then clasped his hands and continued, "It all depends on Your Majesty's decision."

As soon as the words fell, Zhao Wenhan returned to his original position.

Zhao Wenhan was merely facilitating conversation for the Sum Emperor; he could tell that the Sum Emperor had no intention of rewarding the North Prince. To say nothing of a reward, the Sum Emperor probably wished deep down that the North Prince would drop dead.

With the North Country suddenly possessing such strong military power, by the time they finished suppressing the rebellion in the South, it was likely that the court would have to start weakening the power of the vassals again. The North Prince still expected a reward? A reward of poisoned wine might be more fitting.

At that moment, the Sum Emperor's gaze fell upon Lin Gaoyuan, "Lin, what do you think I should reward the North Prince with?"

When Lin Gaoyuan heard the Sum Emperor inquire of him, he slowly stepped out from the line, then bowed and said with his hands clasped, "Your Majesty, my thoughts align with those of Prime Minister Zhao."

Although Lin Gaoyuan was on Lu Chen's side, now was not a good time to speak up for Lu Chen. Anyone with clear eyes could see the big change in the Sum Emperor's attitude toward Lu Chen.

The court officials no longer simply viewed the North Prince as the Sum Emperor's pawn.

North Country's development had obviously escaped the Sum Emperor's control. Being a traditional emperor, he would never allow those from the Universal Academy to come to Great Sum and stir up trouble.

Perhaps the North Prince might have been the Sum Emperor's pawn in the past, but certainly not now.

The Sum Emperor glanced over the people on the court floor and then asked, "Does anyone else have different thoughts?"

No sooner had the words left his mouth than the court hall became quiet again, not a single person speaking. The Sum Emperor then said, "It seems this is what you all think."

"Since none of you want me to reward the North Prince, then I won't reward him."

"However, considering the North Prince's great merits, even if there is no physical reward, a verbal commendation is still needed. Zhao, I will trouble you to take a trip to North Country for me to convey a few words on my behalf."

Hearing this, Zhao Wenhan's heart skipped a beat. He really didn't want to go to North Country, which was no different from a dangerous place. It was clear to everyone that North Country could revolt at any moment. If he happened to arrive just as North Country started its uprising, wouldn't he end up without even a body to be found?

However, since this was the Sum Emperor's will, Zhao Wenhan dared not disobey. He had no choice but to respond, "Your servant, acknowledges the decree."

The Sum Emperor continued, "Aside from the matter of the South's warfare, do any of my beloved officials have other matters? If not, we will conclude today's early court, for I am weary."

No minister in the great hall spoke up, as it was evident that the Sum Emperor was in a very foul mood, and no one dared to stir the pot at this time.

Seeing that no minister spoke up, the Sum Emperor got up from the Dragon Throne and flicked his sleeve, "If there are no matters, then let it be."

After the words were uttered, the Sum Emperor departed.

All the ministers immediately paid their respects, saying, "We respectfully send off Your Majesty!"

Once the Sum Emperor left the Xuanzheng Hall and returned to his study, his expression turned sour. But this time, he didn't lash out at his surroundings with his Gang Qi. Instead, he spoke to the

shadow behind the bookshelf, "Have those two old men from Four Directions Mountain and Fixed Wind Mountain agreed?"

Someone from within the shadow of the bookshelf responded, "Your Majesty, they are still hesitating."

The Sum Emperor said in a cold voice, "A bunch of cowardly rats."

For the Sum Emperor at this moment, it didn't matter how North Country developed, but Zhuge Zhongguang absolutely must not break through to the Heavenly Human Realm.

No matter how North Country developed, it was only a mundane power, but should a Celestial of Heavenly Human Realm appear in North Country, then it would be beyond what Great Sum could handle.

The Heavenly Human Realm was the highest realm of martial arts known to people. Before the discovery of Immortals, the Heavenly Human Realm was almost synonymous with being an Immortal. Other countries or dynasties didn't have Immortals; if an Immortal emerged in North Country, how could it still be seen just as a mundane power?

The disciples from the Mysterious Moon Palace did as they pleased in all the major dynasties, but there were few powers that dared to target the Mysterious Moon Palace. The reason was that the Mysterious Moon Palace had a Celestial, who had slain many Grandmasters. This made the major dynasties remain in fear of the Mysterious Moon Palace.

Only those hard-headed powers dared to target the Mysterious Moon Palace, such as the Chu Family from the South. The Chu Family once sought to provoke a Mysterious Moon Palace disciple over a Divine Artifact, and had it not been for Chu Yue being the Goddess of the Mysterious Moon Palace, the world might no longer remember the Chu Family.

At that point, the Sum Emperor continued to inquire, "What about Peach Blossom Valley?"

The shadow behind the bookshelf replied, "The Valley Master of Peach Blossom Valley agreed. If Your Majesty wishes to make a move against Zhuge Zhongguang, she can contact her anytime."

Relieved to hear this, the Sum Emperor loosened up. It was okay as long as someone had agreed.

Zhuge Zhongguang was not an ordinary Grandmaster, and killing him would certainly not be easy. The Sum Emperor had to enlist the help of several Grandmasters before he could be at ease.

Thinking about this, a sharp gleam flashed in the Sum Emperor's eyes. He asked in a somber voice, "How goes the investigation into the matter I asked you to look into?"

"Your Majesty, I still haven't found any evidence of Consort Yue being involved with any other man. I have already investigated everyone in the palace, and my subordinates have also been to the Chu Family residence. Currently, we just haven't investigated the Mysterious Moon Palace.

If Your Majesty suspects Consort Yue of being involved with another man, then it's most likely that the man is from the Mysterious Moon Palace."

Chapter 419: He is Already a Grandmaster_3

Hearing this, the Sum Emperor fell into deep thought, then he said, "Back then, Chu Yue had a maid by her side; she should know many things unknown to others."

From behind the bookcase, a shadow spoke, "Chu Yuqin is now in the North Prince Mansion, my subordinates are unable to contact her for the moment."

The Sum Emperor frowned slightly, then said, "Continue the investigation."

Although all the evidence from various sources indicated that Chu Yue had not been in contact with any other man for over a year before her pregnancy, the Sum Emperor still didn't believe that Lu Chen was his child. Every time he visited Chu Yue's room, he never regained consciousness, how could he believe that something had happened between him and Chu Yue.

If it hadn't been for the need to stabilize the throne and the reluctance to offend the Chu Family, he probably would have turned against them long ago.

Moreover, making such a matter public wasn't a good thing for an emperor; it was a disgrace. Even though he knew for certain that Lu Chen couldn't possibly be his child, he couldn't say it out loud.

The reason he was still having people investigate this matter after more than a decade was mainly that he couldn't get over it. Because of this matter, the Shadow Guard had killed no small number of men related to Chu Yue, but he was still restless without finding Lu Chen's biological father.

...

Meanwhile.

In a military camp of the Great Wu Dynasty.

Wu Junwan, clad in silver-white armor, was talking with the leader of a rebel faction, already the fourth one to choose surrender to her.

The reason for Wu Junwan's smooth suppression of the rebellion was primarily her strategy of encirclement without attack, using military force as a deterrent on the one hand, while on the other, sending envoys to persuade surrender, and employing various means to buy off the people around the rebels.

Wu Junwan controlled the Qianhai Commercial Association, and she also held the strongest intelligence agency in Great Wu. With money and connections at her disposal, it was an easy task for her to precisely buy off the people around the rebel leaders.

After negotiations with Wu Junwan concluded, the rebel leader left the tent with a smile.

Watching the back of the departing rebel leader, Wu Junwan's smile instantly solidified, then she asked the person next to her, "This should be the last persuadable rebel leader, right?"

The Military General beside Wu Junwan immediately replied, "Yes, the remaining rebels are mainly supported by the Aristocratic Families of the Southwest Region, and they're highly unlikely to surrender."

Hearing this, Wu Junwan coldly said, "Find a way to get rid of that man in a few days."

"Yes, Princess Junwan."

Wu Junwan cared about the rebels, not the rebel leaders. She bought off the people around the rebel leaders to help her take control of the rebels. As for those who bargained with her, such as the rebel leaders, they were better off dead.

Just then, a soldier entered the tent, presenting an envelope to Wu Junwan, "Your Highness, there is intelligence from North Country."

Upon hearing this, Wu Junwan immediately took the envelope from the soldier, opened it, and glanced at the contents.

As Wu Junwan read about North Country's annihilation of Tianqi King's army of four hundred thousand, her expression turned very stern.

At that moment, Wu Junwan asked, "Is this information confirmed?"

The soldier replied, "This news has been published in the official reports of North Country, and our people have learned that the North Prince is already on his way back to Yan County. He will soon receive the envoys from Da Yue Dynasty, so there is a high likelihood that this news is true."

Hearing this, Wu Junwan murmured to herself, "I thought it would be impressive enough if North Country could hold off Tianqi King's invasion, but they've gone and annihilated Tianqi King's army outright. North Country is growing faster than I imagined."

At that point, Wu Junwan suddenly remembered the intelligence report mentioning that the Da Yue Dynasty sent envoys to North Country. She looked at the intelligence again and a smile smoothed over her features.

She also realized why her good sister would send envoys to North Country at this time. Clearly, the Yue Emperor planned to use North Country to divide Great Sum. Despite North Country's strength, its rise was not good for the Great Sum court, nor for the Sum Emperor.

Once the Sum Emperor had dealt with the matter of the Southern Aristocratic Families' rebellion, he would probably move to weaken the vassals next. If she could incite war between North Country and the Great Sum court, the division of Great Sum could be expected in no time.

North Country had a proven military might, definitely not as fragile as the Southern rebels; a rebellion by North Country would be a disaster for Great Sum, but for other kingdoms, it would be a most welcome event. Without Great Sum, a powerful adversary, they could not only expand opportunistically, but external pressures would also be greatly reduced in the future.

Wu Junwan thought to herself, now that Da Yue Dynasty had made a move, Mr. Chai, the Prime Minister, should also know what to do.

Since Da Yue wanted to establish official communications with North Country, then Great Wu must also get involved. This would more easily provoke the Great Sum court. Once North Country established diplomatic relations with other kingdoms, it wasn't far from de facto independence. When that time came, Great Sum would definitely take action against North Country.

Now what the Great Wu Dynasty needed to do was to fan the flames and make the fire burn even brighter.

Thinking this, Wu Junwan said, "I will write a letter to Mr. Chai later; come to my tent to collect it in two hours."

The soldier replied, "Understood, Princess Junwan."

...

Half a month later.

North Country, Yan County.

Today the North Gate of Yan County was packed with people, for it was the day of the North Prince's triumphant return. The citizens of Yan County spontaneously headed to the North Gate to welcome the North Prince.

To confirm if the North Prince had really defeated Tianqi King, spies from various countries were also mixed in with the crowd, waiting for the North Prince's return.

The envoys from the Da Yue Dynasty also found a place to wait for the North Prince's entourage.

Suddenly, the dashing figure of the North Prince appeared in the distance.

As the North Prince rode slowly down the Avenue of Entrance to the city, the surrounding citizens of North Country immediately burst into cheers.

In the middle of the crowd, Murong Xue'er in her black and white attire glanced at Lu Chen on horseback and muttered to herself, "Indeed, a man of exceptional handsomeness."

"It seems we have underestimated the North Prince, he is already a Grandmaster."

Chapter 420: Murong Xue'er_1

Lu Chen slowly passed through the main road into the city, and soon the people saw that behind him, on the cart, there was a wooden rack, and hanging upon that rack, a corpse. Behind that corpse was a long procession of barbarian captives.

Seeing the body hanging from the wooden rack, spies from other nations were almost all stunned.

Although most of the spies had never seen Tianqi King in person, they all had his portrait to verify whether the news of Tianqi King's death at the hands of North Country was true or not. The corpse hanging from the rack looked almost identical to Tianqi King's portrait.

The spies from various countries couldn't help but think, could it be that North Country really did defeat Tianqi King's forces?

At this moment, Wang Maoxue, who was by Murong Xue'er's side, spoke up, "Lord Murong, you have accompanied Her Majesty the Empress in the war against the Barbarian Tribe and should have seen Tianqi King."

Even though Wang Maoxue hadn't asked if the body hanging there was truly Tianqi King, Murong Xue'er knew what he wanted to ask by saying this, and she promptly said, "That body is indeed Tianqi King's body. The news of the annihilation of Tianqi King's army can basically be confirmed as true now."

"Moreover, the North Prince is not as simple as we imagined; he is a Martial Artist with Martial Arts Talent no less than that of Her Majesty the Empress."

Upon hearing Murong Xue'er's latter statement, the officials from the Da Yue embassy were instantly stunned.

A Martial Arts Talent no less than their Empress—could that not mean that North Prince was a Grandmaster...

How could this be possible?

The information they had collected on North Prince all indicated that he had previously never practiced martial arts. How long had he been in North Country? Even if he started practicing martial arts now, it wouldn't be possible to break through to the Grandmaster Realm in such a short time, would it?

Keep in mind that their Empress had started practicing martial arts from childhood and also had a highly powerful Master, making her strong as she was now.

In just a few years, had North Prince reached the Grandmaster Realm?

At this time, Wang Maoxue said, "Lord Murong, you couldn't have seen it wrong, right?"

Murong Xue'er casually said, "I haven't seen it wrong. He indeed has become a Grandmaster. Although he's concealing his Martial Artist aura, this cannot deceive everyone."

Upon hearing what Murong Xue'er said, everyone felt it was unbelievable. North Prince's growth rate was way too fast. Could they be facing a very powerful enemy in the future in their Da Yue Dynasty?

The Empress had sent them to foster good relations with North Country—it was unclear whether this was a good or bad thing.

...

Amidst the cheering of the common people, Lu Chen returned to the North Prince Mansion.

By this time, his wives and concubines were already waiting at the entrance of the North Prince Mansion.

When they saw Lu Chen return, smiles crossed the faces of his women.

They had thought Lu Chen would be away from Yan County for months and hadn't expected the war to end so quickly.

Lu Chen dismounted and said to the women with a smile, "My ladies, your darling has returned. Why don't you seem excited?"

The previous times Lu Chen had gone on long journeys and reunited with them, they had been very excited, but today, Mu Zixuan and the others seemed much calmer.

At that moment, Mu Zixuan approached Lu Chen and said with a smile, "My Prince, our excitement is all inside."

Lu Chen gave a naughty smile and said, "Oh, is that so? Then, I need to check to see if my lady is truly excited on the inside."

As he said this, Lu Chen immediately pulled Mu Zixuan into his embrace, as if he were about to examine her body. Blushing, Mu Zixuan softly protested, "My Prince, the sisters are all watching."

Lu Chen laughed and did not truly inspect Mu Zixuan's body, then continued, "Well, let's go back."

Without much further conversation, they headed towards the Prince's Mansion.

At this moment, two graceful silhouettes lingered behind the group.

Seeing Lu Chen's back, Chu Qingli's heart was in utter turmoil.

She too had thought that it would be months or even half a year before Lu Chen returned. Yet in so little time, he had annihilated Tianqi King's army and returned to Yan County.

Now that Lu Chen had returned to Yan County, did that not mean she and her sister were going to marry Lu Chen?

Her sister had told her not long ago that Lu Chen would marry them once he returned and had told her to mentally prepare herself.

How could this man come back so soon when she wasn't yet mentally prepared?

At this moment, Chu Yuqin beside Chu Qingli was also feeling somewhat flustered. Her heart was racing; she vaguely remembered the words Lu Chen whispered in her ear before he left—when he returned, he would marry her.

Now that there were no obstacles to Lu Chen marrying her, did that mean she would become Lu Chen's woman before long?

Although she had lived in the inner court and heard many stories, she had never been intimate with Lu Chen; she was still a virgin. The thought of being with Lu Chen and becoming like his other women made Chu Yuqin feel her face heat up and her heart become a chaos of emotions.

Then, within her heart, Chu Yuqin comforted herself: wasn't it just becoming Lu Chen's woman? What was there to be nervous about? They had hugged and kissed before; doing that wasn't any different from hugging and kissing, and there was no need to be this nervous.