

Es. Benefits 421

Chapter 421: Murong Xue'er_2

But the more Chu Yuqin thought about it, the faster her heart raced.

After Lu Chen entered the Prince's Mansion, he asked, "My consort, there haven't been any incidents in the Prince's Mansion recently, have there?"

Mu Zixuan replied, "My Prince, all is well in the Prince's Mansion, and no major events have occurred."

Hearing Mu Zixuan's response, Lu Chen said, "That's good to hear. I was worried that after my departure from Yan County, some people with ulterior motives might harm the Prince's Mansion."

At that moment, Lu Chen suddenly thought of something and then said, "By the way, my wife, there is something I want to discuss with you?"

Mu Zixuan asked curiously, "What is it?"

Lu Chen said with a smile, "I am thinking of taking two Side Concubines."

Side Concubines and concubines are different; in ancient times, concubines had little status, but royal Side Concubines were different. Of course, in the North Prince Mansion, Lu Chen didn't maintain such a strict hierarchy; his women held essentially the same status in the North Prince Mansion and even called each other sisters.

Even Wang Qingci, a female slave, had a not-so-low status in the North Prince Mansion.

However, this was after all Lu Chen's idea, and by thinking of taking Side Concubines, it meant that, to some extent, he was shaking Mu Zixuan's position as his wife. Therefore, he still had to ask her—or rather, simply leave the matter to Mu Zixuan to handle.

After hearing Lu Chen's words, Mu Zixuan smiled slightly and immediately said, "Whomever my Prince wishes to marry, you may do so without consulting me."

Mu Zixuan did not care at all about whom Lu Chen married. She was very clear that in the North Prince Mansion, unlike other places, there was no room for manipulation and scheming in the inner court. Lu Chen had absolute control over his harem—even an Emperor couldn't achieve that.

Furthermore, Mu Zixuan owed her current position to Lu Chen's existence, and the survival of the Mu Family was also thanks to him. How could she possibly interfere in Lu Chen's affairs? Now, she only wanted to be a good consort for Lu Chen; everything else was of no concern to her.

Whoever Lu Chen wished to marry, let him do so. If Lu Chen intended for that child to inherit his position in the future, she likewise had no intention of meddling.

Seeing that Mu Zixuan agreed, Lu Chen said with a smile, "Since you agree, then I am relieved."

Mu Zixuan glanced at Chu Yuqin and Chu Qingli standing behind her with the corner of her eye and then asked, "I wonder which family's daughter the Prince intends to marry this time?"

Lu Chen replied with a smile, "Naturally, it would be the daughters of the Chu Family."

Upon hearing "the daughters of the Chu Family," both Chu Qingli and Chu Yuqin's complexions grew even more flushed and hotter.

Mu Zixuan instantly understood Lu Chen's intention and then said, "Prince, allow me to handle the wedding preparations."

Lu Chen said, "Then I will trouble my consort with this."

Mu Zixuan responded, "It is my duty to do so."

Lu Chen returned to the main hall and after chatting with Mu Zixuan and the others about the events in Ningbei City, he went directly to his study. He didn't immediately indulge in pleasures; he still had one more thing to do that day, which was to meet with the delegation from the Da Yue Dynasty.

Upon arriving at his study, Lu Chen found the desk piled with a good amount of intelligence. However, he didn't flip through them one by one. Then, a demoness wearing a red dress and curvaceous figure appeared at the doorway of the study.

When Lu Chen noticed the seductress, he asked, "Mr. Wang, have you missed me so much because you haven't seen me for a long time? I have only just arrived at the Prince's Mansion, and you are already here to see me."

Wang Qingci said with a charming smile, "My Prince is my master; naturally, I, as your female slave, must come to see you upon your return."

Lu Chen then sat down at his desk and swept a glance at Wang Qingci.

Wang Qingci was holding an envelope in her hand, clearly here to report intelligence. Lu Chen directly asked, "Mr. Wang, do you have any intelligence to report? Just speak up, I have matters to attend to shortly."

Wang Qingci asked with curiosity, "My Prince has only just returned to Yan County, what urgent matter could there be?"

While she spoke, she approached the desk and placed the envelope on top, then continued, "This contains information about each member of the Da Yue delegation. I'm not sure if you might need it, but since the traders had collected it, I had someone compile it and bring it here."

Upon hearing this, Lu Chen immediately took the envelope from Wang Qingci and opened it to review the information about the members of the Da Yue delegation.

When Lu Chen's eyes fell on Murong Xue'er's information, he paused for a moment.

Murong Xue'er was a female official close to the Empress of Da Yue. According to the intelligence, the Empress of Da Yue valued Murong Xue'er highly, and she held the title of "Inner Palace Prime Minister." She had a voice in major military and national affairs, and could even occasionally influence the Empress's decisions.

Of course, Murong Xue'er herself didn't hold any significant official position, but it was her value to the Empress that granted her such a high status within the Da Yue Dynasty. Even the highest-ranking officials had to address her as "Lord Murong."

Reading the content on the dossier, Lu Chen couldn't help but think how interesting it was to have a female Emperor and a female Prime Minister be so similar.

Quite fascinating.

Seeing Lu Chen staring at the information about Murong Xue'er, Wang Qingci said with a dripping smile, "It seems that you are quite interested in this Murong Xue'er, my Prince. Let this female slave remind you that Murong Xue'er is a cold beauty. You will surely like her very much, my Prince."

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Hearing this, Lu Chen extended his claw and smacked it down on Wang Qingci's buttocks, then said, "The bitch starts to slander me again, does she? It seems like Your Highness has been away from home too long, and you've become too bold."

Wang Qingci, after being hit, let out a "yiying" sound and hurriedly said, "How would this one dare to slander the Prince? I am merely reminding the Prince."

Today, Lu Chen didn't press Wang Qingci onto the desk right away. Instead, he glanced again at the intelligence report about Murong Xue'er in his hand, before saying, "Since you mentioned she is beautiful, then she must indeed be quite the beauty. Now, I have to meet her."

Having said that, Lu Chen spoke to the maidservant outside the study, "Xiao Huan, go and tell the State Preceptor that the Prince wants to host a noon banquet at the Hall of Political Affairs to receive the delegation from the Da Yue Dynasty."

"Yes, Prince."

After the maidservant went to relay the message to Zhuge Zhongguang, Wang Qingci asked, "The matter the Prince just spoke of, is it about this, right?"

Lu Chen pulled Wang Qingci into his arms, making her sit on his lap, then embraced her slender waist and said, "What else do you think it would be about? Do you think I will go to foster relationships with my wives and concubines later on?"

Wang Qingci said, "This one wouldn't dare to make such a claim."

"However, the Prince has indeed been working hard in Ningbei City lately, and you should truly relax on your return."

At this point, Wang Qingci's jade hand began to roam around Lu Chen's body recklessly.

In his heart, Lu Chen chuckled silently, this sly fox.

Lu Chen said, "I had intended to let you off, but since Mr. Wang insists on challenging me, don't blame me for not being courteous."

In the midst of speaking, Lu Chen stood up, holding Wang Qingci, and directly pushed her onto the desk.

Then, with a wave of his hand, two streams of spiritual energy closed all the windows and doors of the study, and it was time for Lu Chen to relax.

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At noon, after taking a bath, Lu Chen headed to the Hall of Political Affairs.

The noon banquet was also attended by some important officials of North Country.

When Lu Chen appeared in the Hall of Political Affairs, members of the Da Yue delegation had already taken their seats.

Upon seeing Lu Chen, Murong Xue'er, with the delegation members, all stood up.

Together, they said in unison:

"We pay our respects to the North Prince!"

Lu Chen replied with a smile, "You are too kind, everyone, please take your seats."

At this time, Lu Chen's gaze fell upon Murong Xue'er.

[Name: Murong Xue'er]

[Identity: A lady-in-waiting by the Empress of Da Yue's side, the only daughter of the Murong Family, at the Extreme Realm Master level, 24 years old. The year the Empress of Da Yue ascended to the throne, the Murong Family was executed for opposing her, leaving only Murong Xue'er alive. The Empress of Da Yue took her into the palace and raised her as her confidant.

This time, she has come to North Country, having received orders from the Empress of Da Yue to see what kind of person the North Prince is.]

[Rating: 95]

[Favorability: 50]

Seeing Murong Xue'er's information, Lu Chen was slightly taken aback; why did he have such a strong sense of déjà vu?

How could Murong Xue'er, whose family was killed by the Empress of Da Yue, become the confidant of the Empress?

Though surprised, Lu Chen quickly regained his composure. It wasn't particularly strange after all. Murong Xue'er had been a child when brought to the palace, so she probably didn't harbor any hatred towards the Empress.

Furthermore, it wasn't hard to deduce from the fact that Murong Xue'er had attained the Master Realm at only twenty-four that she must have received excellent care from the Empress, being given abundant resources to train in martial arts, which allowed her to break through to the Master Realm by the age of twenty-four.

After reviewing Murong Xue'er's information, Lu Chen's eyes took a few more sweeps over her.

Murong Xue'er's appearance was indeed as Wang Qingci had said, somewhat aloof. Dressed in simple black and white clothes with a matching hairband, her ink-wash style made her look like a talented woman.

Noticing Lu Chen's continual gaze, Zhuge Zhongguang realized that if Lu Chen kept looking, it might be embarrassing. Zhuge Zhongguang promptly coughed and said, "Prince, since everyone is here, shall we start the banquet?"

Lu Chen then came to his senses and quickly said, "Oh, of course, let everyone please take a seat, we'll chat while we eat."

Murong Xue'er also noticed that Lu Chen had been staring at her face, and she couldn't help but think that the rumors on the outside were correct, the North Prince truly did fancy beautiful women.

But with his penchant for beauty, how did he manage to breakthrough to the Grandmaster Realm? Martial arts usually required abstinence, and even the Empress of Da Yue was no exception. Their realms improved so quickly in part because of their abundant resources, and also because of their abstemiousness.

It was indeed peculiar for the North Prince, a man who kept so many wives and concubines in the Prince's Mansion and even had six children, to have advanced to the Grandmaster Realm in such a short time.

As Murong Xue'er puzzled over how Lu Chen's strength had increased so rapidly, Lu Chen spoke up, "Envoy of the Great Jue, I am delighted that you would visit North Country as guests. I regret not having met you all at the first opportunity; that was my negligence. Today, I hope you enjoy yourselves to the fullest."

"Play the music, dance!"

As Lu Chen's words fell, a group of dancers appeared in the grand hall, and the melodious sound of the guqin echoed throughout.

At this moment, Wang Maoxue spoke out, "North Prince, you speak too modestly. Not long ago, you were in Ningbei City fighting against the armies of the Tianqi King, and not receiving us was purely that king's fault, not related to the Prince."

"On the contrary, it is our honor that the Prince, having just returned to Yan County, was willing to meet with us."

Upon hearing these words, Lu Chen smiled and then asked directly, "May I know why the Yue Emperor has sent you all to North Country?"

Wang Maoxue replied, "To not keep the North Prince in the dark, originally we came here to help North Country ward off the invasion of the Barbarian Tribe. However, unexpectedly, North Country was strong enough not to need our help and handled the trouble with the barbarians effortlessly."

Chapter 423: Early Departure and Return_1

Hearing Wang Maoxue's words, Lu Chen gave a faint smile, took a sip of wine, and then said, "It's not that North Country is so powerful, but rather that Tianqi King underestimated his enemy, and our North Country's army won by luck."

Wang Maoxue said, "North Prince is being modest, the Tianqi King's tribe is the main branch that split off from the Barbarian Tribe's royal court, and their soldiers are all very strong in battle. And

Tianqi King himself has long been a Grandmaster. It's not just luck that can defeat Tianqi King and his four hundred thousand strong army."

Lu Chen chuckled, then said, "The Yue Emperor has sent you all to North Country, surely not just to aid North Country. There must be other motives, right?"

Wang Maoxue said, "North Prince's guess is correct, our Empress wishes to establish relations between Great Jue and North Country, it's just that we don't know whether North Prince is willing."

Lu Chen said, "To establish relations, huh? North Country is just a small feudal state under the Great Xia Dynasty; we don't have the qualifications to have diplomatic relations with a dynasty."

Wang Maoxue said, "North Country has at least two Grandmasters, and moreover, with its strong military force, it can no longer be judged as just a feudal state. In our Empress's eyes, North Country is already an independent dynasty."

Hearing this, Lu Chen, smiling, said, "I didn't expect the Yue Emperor to think so highly of North Country."

Lu Chen saw right through the Great Jue Dynasty's intentions; establishing relations with Great Jue meant that North Country would be independent. This was clearly an instigation for North Country to engage in a civil war with the Great Xia Imperial Court so that the Great Jue Dynasty could benefit from the conflict.

This is certainly unacceptable.

Lu Chen then said, "I'm honored that the Empress thinks so highly of North Country, but North Country is a feudal state of Great Xia and cannot have diplomatic relations with the Great Jue Dynasty."

Hearing this, Wang Maoxue was slightly taken aback; it seemed that North Prince had seen through their intentions.

But thinking it over, for North Prince to develop North Country to this state in such a short time, he must have some brains; it was normal to be seen through.

However, Wang Maoxue didn't intend to give up just yet, and continued saying, "North Prince, pardon this outsider for saying something unpleasant, even if you are now loyally devoted to the Great Xia Imperial Court, the Imperial Court, and your father the Sum Emperor may not truly trust you."

"You now have a two hundred thousand strong army that is so powerful, and you not only defeated the barbarians of the North Land and brought North Land under North Country's control but even defeated Tianqi King's army of four hundred thousand and killed Tianqi King the Grandmaster. In such a situation, it's hard for people not to believe that you have other intentions."

"If you can establish relations with the Great Jue Dynasty in advance, then if the Great Xia Imperial Court dares to send troops against North Country, we Great Jue will definitely help you proactively. That would be a good thing for you, wouldn't it?"

Lu Chen gave a faint smile upon hearing Wang Maoxue's words. If it were any other seignior, perhaps they might have been persuaded by Wang Maoxue's words, but it was different for him; he had his own ideas, his own plans for the future.

As the son of the Sum Emperor, he definitely would not rebel on his own initiative unless the Sum Emperor pushed him to do so. Now was not yet the time to rebel; North Country still needed time to develop. At the moment, North Country depended on imports for its grain and didn't have a large population—it was still quite vulnerable and couldn't afford such disturbances.

Lu Chen then said, "You are right; it's indeed possible that my father the emperor doesn't completely trust me, but whether he trusts me or not is not important. All I need to do is to keep a clear conscience."

"As for whether the imperial court will send troops to attack North Country, that is a matter for the future. Currently, the strife with the aristocratic families in Great Xia hasn't settled yet, and the Imperial Court doesn't have the capacity to concern itself with what is happening in North Country."

"North Prince has taken to heart the Yue Emperor's kindness."

Seeing Lu Chen reject the offer again, Wang Maoxue knew that it was highly likely that North Prince would not agree to establish relations. This North Prince was no fool; he probably still planned to continue accumulating power.

Just as Wang Maoxue thought that their mission to North Country might return without success, Murong Xue'er spoke up, "North Prince truly is a loyal and righteous man."

Seeing Murong Xue'er speak, Wang Maoxue hurriedly said, "I forgot to introduce to North Prince, the lady beside me is Murong Xue'er, the personal attendant of our Empress."

Hearing this, Lu Chen's gaze once again fell on Murong Xue'er, he smiled lightly and then said, "Worthy of being the personal attendant of the Empress, not only possessing beauty that could overthrow cities but also an extraordinary demeanor."

Murong Xue'er gave a slight smile, then said, "Thank you for the compliment, North Prince."

At this point, Murong Xue'er suggested, "Since North Prince is concerned that establishing relations between our two countries could bring trouble to North Country, why not sign a trade cooperation agreement instead to strengthen commercial and trade contacts between our two countries?"

"During my time in North Country, I've observed that commercial trade is very prosperous, which is enough to show that North Prince values commercial trade."

"Fortunately, our Empress also places great importance on commerce. On the streets of Yan County, I saw plenty of food made from flour, proving that the common people of North Country and the Da Yue Dynasty have similar dietary habits, and our Great Jue is a major producer of wheat. Our people also like many goods from North Country. In such a case, why not strengthen our trade relations?"

It would be beneficial for both North Country and Great Jue."

Hearing Murong Xue'er say this, there was a moment of surprise in Lu Chen's heart; this woman's observations were indeed meticulous.

Chapter 424: Early Departure and Return_2

They even understand the eating habits of Yan County thoroughly.

Since Lu Chen had Rain-listening Pavilion procure large amounts of wheat in the Great Jue Dynasty, he promoted the making of steamed buns and mantous. Although the traditional staple food in North Country remained rice, the shops in Yan County were already selling buns and mantous, and the common people had grown accustomed to eating them.

To avoid alerting the Great Jue Dynasty to the fact that Rain-listening Pavilion was an intelligence agency of the North Prince Mansion, the Pavilion adopted very complicated procedures when purchasing wheat from the Great Jue Dynasty. Moreover, when transporting the wheat out of the Great Jue Dynasty, the country levied a significant amount of tariff.

If a trade agreement could be signed with the Great Jue Dynasty, North Country would be able to procure wheat directly under the name of the North Prince Mansion and possibly reduce tariffs significantly, even to zero. This would greatly alleviate the food scarcity issue in North Country.

It must be said, Murong Xue'er's point of entry was excellent, and indeed, Lu Chen was tempted.

Coarse grains like corn, potatoes, and sweet potatoes were already being promoted continuously in North Country, but it would take years of cultivation before they could fully spread and thoroughly alleviate the food issues.

The food issue would still be a major problem that North Country had to face in the coming years.

Lu Chen thought to himself that this Murong Xue'er, being called the "Inner Palace Prime Minister," had indeed grasped the lifeline of North Country.

At this time, Lu Chen smiled and said, "Miss Murong, I do place great importance on the commercial trade of North Country. Your proposal is indeed good, but I'm not sure whether your delegation can represent the Yue Emperor."

At this point, Wang Maoxue spoke up, "Prince, please be assured. Miss Murong is here representing the Empress. The Empress said that once in North Country, every word Miss Murong speaks is her will."

Lu Chen smiled and said, "It seems that the Yue Emperor values Miss Murong very highly."

"A trade agreement can certainly be drafted, but its clauses need further discussion. Today's luncheon is to entertain our guests; it is not suitable for discussing this matter. Let's discuss the specific terms of the trade agreement tomorrow."

Upon Lu Chen's agreement, the members of the delegation also sighed with relief. Although no diplomatic relations were established, if both sides could sign a trade agreement, it would be no different from establishing diplomatic relations.

Their mission to North Country was not in vain.

Afterward, everyone continued to enjoy the delicacies and appreciate the music and dance performances. In the meantime, Lu Chen inquired about some matters regarding the Great Jue Dynasty from the members of the delegation, albeit casually, as small talk.

After the luncheon ended, the people from the delegation returned to their inn, while the officials of North Country stayed in the Hall of Political Affairs to discuss the trade agreement with the Great Jue Dynasty.

Lu Chen, who valued commerce highly, would certainly be pleased if he could open up the Great Jue market and sell North Country-made goods there while reducing a significant amount of tariffs.

Most officials of North Country also agreed with signing a trade agreement with Great Jue.

They faced many problems purchasing food from Great Xia, and although they had previously signed some agreements with the Aristocratic Families within Great Xia allowing them to buy food from feudal states at a low price during the refugee acceptance, as time passed, some feudal states began to regret their decision.

This included Qi Country, the closest to North Country. The Qi Prince once sent envoys to North Country, lamenting that he could no longer control the Aristocratic Families within his borders. Regretting their decision to sell food at low prices, they simply broke the agreement, and the price of food that used to be a few coins soared to several tens of coins.

And this was when North Country had not yet fallen out with the Great Xia imperial court. Once the day comes when the conflict between Great Xia and North Country becomes public, North Country would definitely be unable to purchase food from within Great Xia's borders.

Apart from the Great Xia Dynasty, North Country only bordered the Great Jue Dynasty. Even if it would buy food from other dynasties, it would mostly have to go through the Great Jue Dynasty. Now, improving relations with Great Jue would only benefit North Country without any downside.

Lu Chen spent the afternoon in the Hall of Political Affairs, discussing the clauses of the trade agreement with the officials of North Country, and they did not adjourn until evening.

As the sun set, Lu Chen returned to his private quarters and had a simple meal in the main hall before heading straight to Yunrong Courtyard.

Chen Wanrong would soon leave the North Prince Mansion to return to Mysterious Moon Palace, and Lu Chen intended to enjoy her company a few more times before her departure.

Upon arriving at Yunrong Courtyard, Lu Chen saw the ethereal Fairy Chen sitting in the pavilion, gently strumming the zither strings and playing a touching piece, while the beautiful Lin Wanyun also sat beside Chen Wanrong.

When Lu Chen entered Yunrong Courtyard, Chen Wanrong's fingers paused, and the music stopped.

Lu Chen said with a smile, "Why have you stopped? Continue playing, I love listening."

At Lu Chen's words, Chen Wanrong's delicate fingers once again struck the zither strings, and the sound echoed through the courtyard anew.

Lu Chen then sat slowly behind Chen Wanrong and wrapped his arms around her slender waist.

Seeing this, Lin Wanyun blushed slightly. What is this mischievous fellow doing? Can't he see Rongrong is playing the zither? How could she continue with him sitting behind her, reaching out and touching her?

Chapter 425: Leave Early, Return Early_3

At this moment, Chen Wanrong was unaffected, her guqin music still melodious. However, it didn't take long before Lu Chen's hands became restless, and soon a blush crept across Chen Wanrong's usually cold face.

Shortly after, Chen Wanrong could no longer bear it. Her fingers suddenly swept across the guqin, producing a jarring sound that was quite unpleasant to the ears.

Turning her head to look at Lu Chen, Chen Wanrong asked with an icy tone laced with a tinge of embarrassment, "What are you doing?"

Lu Chen chuckled, then responded, "I apologize, your guqin music is just so enchanting that I couldn't help myself."

Hearing this, Lin Wanyun snorted coldly from the side. Enchanting guqin music? He simply couldn't contain his mischief, it seemed.

Lin Wanyun then said, "Chen'er, people from the Mysterious Moon Palace came by today. The elders are asking when the Palace Master will be able to return."

As she spoke, Lin Wanyun gazed at Lu Chen's handsome face, looking for his reaction. She was uncertain whether Lu Chen would let Chen Wanrong leave the North Prince Mansion.

Hearing this, Lu Chen paused for a moment before saying, "So soon?"

He then leaned his head on Chen Wanrong's shoulder and said, "If you wish to return, you can go back to the Mysterious Moon Palace first thing tomorrow morning. The sooner you go, the sooner you'll return. I'll be waiting for you to come back and have our child."

Seeing that Lu Chen agreed, Lin Wanyun felt slightly surprised, she had thought that Lu Chen wouldn't let her go so easily, but he had consented without hesitation.

Just as Chen Wanrong was about to thank him, Lu Chen tightened his embrace around her waist, supported her head with another hand, and kissed her.

"Mmm..."

Chen Wanrong immediately struggled faintly. It wouldn't have bothered her if it were just the two of them, but Lin Wanyun was still watching, and yet he dared to do this to her.

Seeing Lu Chen suddenly kiss Chen Wanrong, Lin Wanyun was also stunned.

This little rascal was doing such things to Chen Wanrong right in front of her!

This left Lin Wanyun unsure what to do, whether to go and pull away this rascal Lu Chen or to silently leave the pavilion and let them continue their intimate moments there.

Lu Chen, completely unconcerned about Lin Wanyun's presence, continued as he pleased, and after kissing Chen Wanrong for a while, she stopped struggling and instead began to respond to Lu Chen.

Watching this scene, Lin Wanyun's face turned beet red, her ears burning. She could no longer bear it and quickly stood up, leaving the pavilion alone.

After Lin Wanyun left, Lu Chen slowly parted his lips from Chen Wanrong's, caressed her beautiful cheek lovingly, looking into her charming eyes, he smiled and said, "My lady, you will be leaving the North Prince Mansion tomorrow. I do not know when you will be able to return, so tonight, you must serve your husband well."

Hearing this, Chen Wanrong softly hummed in affirmation. Overwhelmed by her shy beauty, Lu Chen could no longer restrain himself, lifting her in a bridal carry with ease, he then leaped to the door of Chen Wanrong's boudoir, pushed the door open, and placed her on the bed.

This time, Chen Wanrong made no move to resist, surrendering to the whims of this bad man.

After a while.

In the room next door.

Lin Wanyun, listening to the sounds coming from the adjacent room, let out a soft sigh and murmured to herself, "Who knows what will happen in the future."

After all, Chen Wanrong was the Palace Master of the Mysterious Moon Palace and also the disciple of the Honorable. Should she have Lu Chen's child and the Honorable found out, it's likely they would both be punished.

Although behind Lu Chen there might also lie a powerful force, or perhaps Lu Chen himself might have a mighty mentor, it wasn't certain whether Lu Chen's backing could rival that of the Honorable from the Mysterious Moon Palace.

As of now, the most powerful person Lin Wanyun knew of in this world was the Honorable from the Mysterious Moon Palace. If that Honorable were to get angry, the consequences would be unimaginable.

Lu Chen was too impulsive, utterly incapable of controlling his own body. Chen Wanrong might be beautiful, but no matter what, she was not a woman he should lay a finger on.

Lu Chen could oppress himself all he wanted, she was at most just a protector in the Mysterious Moon Palace, and even if she bore Lu Chen's child, the most she would face was expulsion from the Mysterious Moon Palace.

Chen Wanrong was different; her status was far too exalted.

What would they do if Chen Wanrong were to become pregnant?

"Ah... I hope Rongrong's master won't finish her seclusion too quickly," she sighed.

Now all Lin Wanyun could do was hope that the Honorable's retreat went smoothly and that nothing went wrong with her cultivation – if her cultivation ran into issues and she left seclusion early, the matter of Chen Wanrong's lost chastity would definitely be discovered by her, which would be troublesome.

Lu Chen had stayed in Chen Wanrong's room for an entire night and didn't sleep a wink. With such a fairy beside him, how could he possibly fall asleep?

Chen Wanrong was leaving today, and he naturally wanted to indulge his wife to the fullest before that.

At dawn, sunlight streamed in through the window sill and shone upon the bed, casting a bright gleam over it.

Seeing the glaring sunlight on Chen Wanrong's snow-white skin, Lu Chen sighed. He gently caressed her skin, smooth and delicate as jade. This fairy was about to leave him for a short while, yet he had still not managed to impregnate her.

It seemed he could only wait for her return.

He truly didn't want to part with her.

Right then, Chen Wanrong slowly got up, gazing into Lu Chen's deep eyes, and said, "I should go."

Lu Chen smiled faintly, his face clearing of reluctance, before saying, "Come back early."

Without another word, Chen Wanrong simply hummed in response, then rose and began to dress.

Lu Chen just sat on the bed, watching her get dressed.

Once Chen Wanrong was dressed and had tied her messy hair back into a bun, she turned her head to gaze into Lu Chen's eyes again.

For some reason, she found she couldn't tear her gaze from Lu Chen's body. For a moment, she seemed paralyzed, appearing to be very reluctant to leave the man before her.

Seeing Chen Wanrong staring at him, Lu Chen asked with a smile, "What is it? Can't bear to leave your husband?"

Chen Wanrong's expression was icily impassive, and she remained silent.

Lu Chen seemed to understand something, got up from the bed, walked over to Chen Wanrong, encircled her waist, and captured her red lips in a kiss.

After a long kiss that lasted a quarter of an hour, lips finally parting, Chen Wanrong spoke, "I'll come back early."

Lu Chen smiled softly and whispered in her ear, "I'll wait for you."

As his words faded, Chen Wanrong turned and left the room.

Chapter 426: So, the North Prince has taken a liking to your beauty?_1

Chen Wanrong left and returned to the Mysterious Moon Palace.

Even though Lu Chen was reluctant, he still let her go.

Lu Chen was a scoundrel, for he liked all the beautiful women in his inner courtyard, yet he was also a hopeless romantic. He had profound feelings for Chen Wanrong, this fairy-like woman, and suddenly the Prince's Mansion felt empty without her, which he found quite unsettling.

For a long time after Chen Wanrong's departure, Lu Chen would occasionally visit Yunrong Courtyard to reminisce about the days when she was there. If he happened to encounter Lin Wanyun there, he would pin her down and have his way with her.

Half a month flew by. During this time, Lu Chen was negotiating the terms of a trade agreement with the delegation from the Da Yue Dynasty on one hand and preparing for his wedding with Chu Yuqin and Chu Qingli on the other.

Since it was a marriage to a Side Concubine, it naturally had to be a grand and public affair, not done quietly like bringing in a mere concubine.

After half a month of discussion, the terms of the trade agreement between the North Country and the Da Yue Dynasty were essentially settled, and what followed was the formal signing of the agreement.

Morning.

After getting up from bed, Lu Chen started to dress with the assistance of Lin Wanyun.

Though Lin Wanyun's hands were busy helping Lu Chen with his clothes, her eyes carried a hint of resentment.

That scoundrel had visited Yunrong Courtyard many times in the past half a month. Even though she was now the only one living in Yunrong Courtyard, she didn't believe that Lu Chen had come for her.

She always felt that the scoundrel came to Yunrong Courtyard and treated her as if she were Chen Wanrong.

At that moment, Lin Wanyun asked, "Do you see me as Rongrong?"

Hearing Lin Wanyun's question, Lu Chen was taken aback. He turned his head to look at Lin Wanyun and, with a smile, said, "Madam Lin, why would you think that?"

"Although I am not a good person, I would not stoop to such indecency. How could I possibly see you as Rongrong? She is her, and you are you."

At this point, Lin Wanyun pulled Lu Chen's belt tightly, fastening it properly for him and while doing so, spoke, "Don't think I don't know what's in your mind."

Lu Chen, smiling, asked, "Madam Lin, could it be that you are jealous?"

Lin Wanyun coldly said, "You flatter yourself."

With that, Lin Wanyun fell silent and continued to help Lu Chen dress.

Lu Chen, thinking of something, then said, "I will be getting married soon; how about you marry into the Prince's Mansion with me?"

No sooner had Lu Chen finished his words than Lin Wanyun rejected the offer, "There's no need. After all, I belong to the Mysterious Moon Palace and am not suitable for marriage. Besides, I have no objections to bearing your children secretly, as long as others remain unaware."

"Moreover, the Lin Family is still in the Capital City. If I were to marry you, and people came to know that I am the adopted daughter of Prime Minister Lin, it could endanger the entire Lin Family."

Nowadays, the North Country was the strongest feudal state within the Great Sum, and Lu Chen was the most powerful among the seigniors. The conflict between the North Country and the imperial court was becoming increasingly acute, and it was only a matter of time before war would break out.

If others were to learn now that the adopted daughter of Lin Gaoyuan lived in the North Prince Mansion, the Sum Emperor might suspect that the Lin Family had defected to the North Prince Mansion. The Lin Family would likely face dire consequences; thus, Lin Wanyun thought it best to keep a low profile in the North Prince Mansion and avoid public appearances.

Lu Chen, with a smile, replied, "That's true. I will just have to trouble you for a while. Once things in the Great Sum have stabilized, I'll give you a proper status."

Lin Wanyun curled her lip, "No need. At my age, what good is a status? Just treat Rongrong well and don't let her down; that's enough for me."

Lin Wanyun thought to herself that by the time Great Sum stabilized and Lu Chen ascended the throne, she would likely be in her forties or fifties. By then, she would be old, and it would be a miracle if Lu Chen still favored her.

As long as Lu Chen treated Chen Wanrong well and took care of the children they might have, she would be very happy. As for herself, she planned to stay by Lu Chen's side and help Chen Wanrong take care of the children.

Lu Chen said, "You must be given a status, and your age is certainly not an issue. Nanyan is in her thirties and is still my Side Concubine."

Lin Wanyun didn't say more and began to arrange Lu Chen's hair.

However, she thought to herself that maybe this scoundrel had a bit of a conscience after all. She had assumed that Lu Chen was only interested in her body, and that once some time passed, he would lose interest and not hold himself responsible for her.

At this thought, Lin Wanyun's heartbeat quickened slightly. She indeed hoped to stay by Lu Chen's side forever, taking care of him for her sister Yue.

...

After getting dressed and having a quick breakfast, Lu Chen went to the Hall of Political Affairs.

By the time Lu Chen arrived at the Hall of Political Affairs, the envoys from the Da Yue Dynasty and officials from the North Country were mostly in attendance.

With a wave of his sleeve, Lu Chen took his seat on the throne, addressing the kneeling delegation from the Da Yue Dynasty below, "Miss Murong, I wonder if you have any additions to the trade agreement. If there are none, let us sign it according to the content we settled upon previously."

Once the agreement was signed, goods from the North Country would enter the Da Yue Dynasty tax-free, and similarly, Da Yue Dynasty's grain would enter the North Country without tariffs.

For Lu Chen, the greatest benefit was that, from now on, the North Country could purchase grain directly in large quantities in the name of the North Prince Mansion, no longer having to do so surreptitiously through Rain-listening Pavilion.

Chapter 427: So, the North Prince has taken a liking to your beauty?_2

However, once this trade cooperation agreement is signed, from then on the Da Yue Dynasty will have to dispatch a diplomatic mission to permanently reside in Yan County of the North Country, and the North Country will also have to send a diplomatic mission to permanently reside in the Capital City of the Da Yue Dynasty.

In name, they claim it is for the sake of trade cooperation and to prevent issues from arising with the trading caravans on each other's territory, which would leave no one to resolve them.

The mutual dispatch of diplomatic missions means that, should any commercial issues arise, they can be communicated in a timely manner.

Although it's said to be for the sake of trade, anyone with a discerning eye could see that this was no different from establishing diplomatic relations, just short of the two sides publicly and directly doing so.

Murong Xue'er smiled at this moment and said, "Replying to the North Prince, we have no further objections regarding the content of the trade cooperation agreement and can sign it today."

Lu Chen replied, "Good, since that's the case, then bring in the trade cooperation agreement."

As soon as Lu Chen finished speaking, two Jinyiwei guards entered the grand hall, each carrying a scroll. One Jinyiwei guard placed a scroll on the table in front of Murong Xue'er, and the other placed one on the table in front of Lu Chen.

After opening the scroll, they revealed black silk cloths inscribed with yellow characters that recorded the terms of the trade cooperation between the North Country and Da Yue.

Although the North Country was already capable of mass paper production, for treaties signed with other countries, silk cloth was still used. Textiles, compared to paper, were not as easily damaged and this also signified respect for the Da Yue Dynasty, as no other dynasties had yet adopted paper for the signing of bilateral agreements.

Once the scroll was opened, Lu Chen took out the King Seal from his hand and stamped it directly onto the scroll, and Murong Xue'er likewise took out a seal from her sleeve to stamp.

After the seals were stamped, the parties exchanged the scrolls.

When the scroll from Murong Xue'er's hand was placed before Lu Chen, he noticed that the seal she used was actually that of the Prime Minister of the Da Yue Dynasty.

Lu Chen chuckled to himself, as he originally thought of Murong Xue'er as merely referred to as the Inner Palace Prime Minister of the Da Yue Dynasty. Now it seemed this title was not so simple; with the Prime Minister's seal in her hands, what difference was there between her and the actual Prime Minister of Da Yue.

Without dwelling on the thought, Lu Chen continued to stamp the scroll with the King Seal, and after the stamping was completed, the scrolls were exchanged once again.

In this way, the trade cooperation agreement between the two countries was considered complete.

At this time, Murong Xue'er said, "North Prince, now that the trade cooperation agreement has been signed, our mission should return to Da Yue. Please determine the members of the North Country's diplomatic mission within these two days, and dispatch them to return to Da Yue with us."

Lu Chen replied, "No problem."

...

Two days later, the Da Yue diplomatic mission left three people from the Da Yue Dynasty in the North Country. The rest returned to Da Yue with Murong Xue'er, and of course, Lu Chen also dispatched several North Country officials to accompany the Da Yue mission back to the Da Yue Capital City.

No sooner had the Da Yue mission left Yan County than the envoy sent by the Great Sum court arrived.

To Lu Chen's surprise, this time his father, the Sum Emperor, did not send Situ Ce to find him but dispatched Right Minister Zhao Wenhan instead.

Lu Chen had not had much interaction with Zhao Wenhan; even when he was in the Capital City, he had never spoken a word to Zhao Wenhan and had only seen him a few times.

The Sum Emperor sending Zhao Wenhan to the North Country had a similar purpose to the last time he had sent Situ Ce; it was nothing more than to relay messages to Lu Chen, saying that the princes of the court were incompetent and then praising the North Prince as both literary and martial, possessing the aura of an emperor.

Lu Chen, of course, understood that the Sum Emperor was trying to stabilize his allegiance by having Zhao Wenhan come to speak these words. He did not believe that the Sum Emperor would one day give that position to him.

The Sum Emperor already doubted whether Lu Chen was his biological son, so how could he possibly pass the throne to him?

What worried Lu Chen the most now was whether the Sum Emperor's plan had progressed to that stage, with the Sum Emperor already preparing to join forces with Grandmasters to assassinate Zhuge Zhongguang. Zhuge was an important figure in the North Country, and Lu Chen did not want to see anything happen to him.

The reason he could remain so relaxed, with time to cultivate relationships with his wives and concubines every day, was because after Zhuge Zhongguang came to the North Country, he took over most of the state affairs.

If Zhuge Zhongguang was gone, Lu Chen doubted he would have any time left to cultivate relationships with his wives and concubines.

Unlike the North Country's mission, Zhao Wenhan only stayed in Yan County for two days. After delivering the Sum Emperor's message to Lu Chen, he hastily departed from Yan County.

Zhao Wenhan also feared death; he was afraid that the North Country would suddenly rebel, and then he would be killed as a declaration of war.

After sending Zhao Wenhan away, Lu Chen also welcomed the event he most looked forward to, which was marrying Chu Yuqin.

...

Da Yue Dynasty.

Empress's Bedchamber.

Behind the red curtains, the fair jade back of a woman was faintly visible. Outside the curtains, a woman was kneeling on the ground, the very Murong Xue'er who had just returned from the North Country to the Da Yue Dynasty.

From within the curtains, the woman chuckled lightly and said, "So it seems, the North Prince has taken a fancy to your beauty?"

Hearing this, Murong Xue'er's expression shifted slightly, "Your Majesty, this servant has never seduced the North Prince. It was entirely him who kept staring at this servant."

The Yue Emperor paid no attention to Murong Xue'er's words, and instead spoke indifferently, "A man given to lust, yet capable of reaching the Grandmaster Realm at the tender age of seventeen or eighteen. It seems his cultivation technique is quite extraordinary."

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The Yue Emperor continued, "Since he has taken a liking to you, you will need to visit the North Country a few more times in the future."

This...

Hearing the Yue Emperor's words, Murong Xue'er was immediately stunned.

Could it be that the Yue Emperor was planning to use her to employ a honey trap against the North Prince?

Murong Xue'er did not believe that a honey trap would work on Lu Chen, for although Lu Chen enjoyed the company of beautiful women, the women around him were all very pretty, and it was probably just a spontaneous interest that made him take a few more glances at her.

Seeing that Murong Xue'er did not speak, the Yue Emperor's tone suddenly turned somewhat icy, "What, are you unwilling?"

Murong Xue'er hastily replied, "Your Majesty, this servant is willing. Whatever Your Majesty commands this servant to do, this servant will do."

The Yue Emperor then continued, "By the way, I've heard that you've kept quite a few male pets outside. Is this true?"

At these words, Murong Xue'er was so frightened that she quickly prostrated on the ground and hurriedly said, "Your Majesty, that is absolutely not the case. This servant seldom leaves the palace; how could I keep male pets outside? Moreover, this servant is still a virgin and has never been involved with any man."

The Yue Emperor said, "So you are saying that someone has slandered you. Who do you think would spread such rumors?"

Murong Xue'er responded, "This servant does not know."

The Yue Emperor went on, "You do not know? Is there anything that you, as the Inner Palace Prime Minister, do not know?"

Hearing this, Murong Xue'er's delicate body trembled incessantly, and her cheeks beaded with cold sweat.

At that moment, no more sound came from behind the curtains. Several maidens came out from behind the curtains, flustered, while the red Phoenix Robe of the Yue Emperor became faintly visible.

Apparently, the Yue Emperor had just been dressing.

After a while, the Yue Emperor spoke again, "Although the matter of you keeping male pets outside has been falsely attributed to you, for the sake of your purity, I think it should be thoroughly examined."

As she spoke, a gust of wind blew from inside, and the red curtains were swept aside, revealing an alluring face that could captivate all living beings.

In the next moment, Murong Xue'er, who was prostrate on the ground, suddenly flew up; her body shot straight into the curtains.

Immediately following, Murong Xue'er's clothes were shattered, and her fair skin was exposed. Murong Xue'er's entire form appeared unobstructed before the Yue Emperor.

The Yue Emperor glanced at Murong Xue'er's body and then said, "The Virgin Mark is still there; it seems you have indeed been slandered."

As she spoke, the Yue Emperor lightly lifted her hand, and a golden silk blanket from the bed flew into her hand. She then threw the blanket over Murong Xue'er, covering her white, jade-like body.

The Yue Emperor continued, "You may go."

Murong Xue'er hastily wrapped herself in the blanket, covering her body, and while doing so, she bowed and said, "Yes, Your Majesty."

She then turned and left the Empress's bedchamber.

When Murong Xue'er came out, she found herself covered in sweat beads that kept seeping out, even the blanket that the Yue Emperor had just draped over her was dampened by sweat.

Murong Xue'er exhaled a sigh of relief at this moment and then adjusted her emotions before returning to her own room.

Meanwhile.

In the Da Wu Dynasty.

Inside a city in the southeast, a group of people knelt before Princess Junwan begging for mercy, "Princess Junwan, spare our lives, and from now on, whatever you command us of the Zhang Family to do, we will do. We will be your dogs."

Hearing this, Wu Junwan smiled and then said, "Zhang Family Head, why didn't you think of today before? I gave you ample time to surrender, but not only did you not cherish it, you even rallied more rebels, fantasizing about becoming king."

The man kneeling before Wu Junwan was about to say more, but Wu Junwan cut him off, "Take him away and behead him."

Then a number of soldiers came and dragged away those who were kneeling before Wu Junwan, pulling them towards another place.

"Princess, spare us!"

"Princess, Princess, spare us!"

"The Wu's, you will not die a good death. I will not let you Wu Family go even as a ghost!"

...

Soon the distant voices gradually quieted down.

At this time, Wu Junwan murmured, "Having been out for so long, it's time to return. I wonder if my dear brothers have missed me."

With the fall of the largest Aristocratic Family in the southeast, the Zhang Family, the internal strife of Da Wu also came to an end. In this civil war, there was no doubt that Princess Junwan played the most critical role.

She persuaded most of the rebel leaders to surrender and led her troops to annihilate the remaining rebels, as well as dealt with the insurgents who initiated the rebellion.

Before her, a few of her brothers also led troops to quell the rebellion. Initially, the Martial Emperor thought to allow her brothers to accumulate some military merit, but contrary to expectations, her brothers were of no use at all, not only falling for the rebels' traps, losing many great Wu soldiers but also nearly failing to return.

It was only after Prime Minister Chai Jiliang's repeated advice that the Martial Emperor agreed to let Princess Junwan, the Family Head, lead the troops in quelling the rebellion.

This was the first time in Da Wu that a woman was allowed to lead troops, and naturally, there was much opposition in the court. However, despite the contention, those ministers were well aware that Princess Junwan, Wu Junwan, definitely had the capability to quell the revolt.

Their opposition was not due to Wu Junwan's personal abilities. The very fact that Wu Junwan had been named Princess by the Martial Emperor attested to her robust capabilities, and if the court officials opposed Wu Junwan's leadership, it was mainly because she was a woman.

Furthermore, Wu Junwan had a very close relationship with the Empress of the neighboring Da Yue Dynasty. Now that she was leading troops to suppress the rebellion and accumulating military merits, coupled with the vast intelligence network she controlled, it was clear what she might aim to do in the future.

The officials of Da Wu certainly did not want to see the rise of an Empress in Da Wu.

At this very moment, Wu Junwan was preparing to order the great army to return to the Da Wu Capital City, just when a soldier came before her, handed over a letter with both hands, kneeled halfway, and said, "Princess Junwan, this is a letter from Prime Minister Chai; he asks that you return to the capital city as soon as possible."

Chapter 429: Chu Yuqin is pregnant_1

Hearing the soldier's words, Junwan took the letter from the soldier's hand, opened it, and glanced over it.

The content of the letter was quite simple: Chai Jiliang had already persuaded the Martial Emperor to send envoys to the North Country, attempting to establish trade relations and thereby further provoke the Great Xia Imperial Court.

The Martial Emperor's idea was to send one of his own princes as the envoy to the North Country.

Chai Jiliang's intention was that since Junwan had already dealt with the rebels, the opportunity of being the envoy to the North Country should not be given to anyone else.

If one could instigate civil strife within Great Xia, it would be a tremendous achievement. If Junwan wanted to compete for that position, she must seize this chance to be the envoy.

After reading Chai Jiliang's letter, Junwan's brows slightly furrowed.

She had just quelled the rebellion in the southeast, and now to immediately compete with her brothers for merit might incur the Emperor's displeasure.

Any somewhat intelligent person could see that the reason the Emperor wanted to choose one of his princes to be the envoy to the North Country was to let his sons accumulate some merits and thereby balance the court.

Now that her, the Princess, held somewhat too great a power in court, especially after the quelling of the Southeast rebellion, her influence had further expanded.

Although the Martial Emperor had appointed her as Princess, bestowing upon her the appearance of great importance, it wasn't necessarily true that he intended to leave her his position.

The Great Wu dynasty was an extremely military-oriented dynasty with a severe preference for men over women; the emergence of an Empress might well lead to chaos.

Of course, external conditions are unimportant; what matters is what the Martial Emperor thinks.

If the Martial Emperor didn't want a female emperor in Great Wu, then Junwan, this Princess, would sooner or later be deposed.

Junwan feared that racing back to compete with her brothers for merit might anger the Emperor, and if she managed to upset him, and he decided to suppress her power from all sides, cutting off her wings, it would be a loss not worth the gain.

However, on second thought, Junwan didn't believe that Chai Jiliang, such an intelligent man, would fail to see that the Emperor was trying to balance the court.

She had just made such a significant contribution, and it was necessary for his sons to gain some merits as well; otherwise, some ministers would start to suspect whether the Emperor was intentionally cultivating the Princess to become the Empress.

Since Chai Jiliang could also understand this point, why would he still want her to return to the Capital so soon to compete with her brothers for merit?

Junwan was puzzled and didn't know what Chai Jiliang was thinking. Chai Jiliang hadn't explained in the letter why he wanted her to do this; only after returning to the Capital and seeing Chai Jiliang would she know exactly what this astute man was scheming.

After thinking it over, Junwan decided to return to the Capital first and see how things go. After all, she had already quelled the Southeast rebellion, and she was supposed to return to the Capital to hand over military authority and report back. Once back in the Capital and having met Chai Jiliang, she would know what Chai Jiliang intended to do.

...

A few days later.

North Country, Yan County.

The North Prince Mansion was decorated with lanterns and streamers, hanging large red lanterns everywhere, looking like they were preparing for a festival.

Of course, this was not for any festival, but because Lu Chen was about to take a Side Concubine.

These last few days, Lu Chen had sent people to pay close attention to the public opinion of the common people in the North Country, wanting to see what they thought about him marrying Chu Yuqin and Chu Qingli.

According to reports from the Brocade Guards, it seemed that the common people didn't care at all about whom he married; to most of them, Lu Chen was inherently a lascivious Prince, so it didn't matter how many women he married.

As for Chu Yuqin's status, the public didn't pay attention to that, either. Now that the Chu Family and the Wang Family from the South were trapped by the Imperial Army in Sufeng City and their meddling was gone, who cared whether Chu Yuqin had been married before?

The North Prince had even married the Sky Wolf King's consort, so what difference did it make if he married a Great Xia widow? Hence, the common people simply didn't care.

The reason Lu Chen was so concerned about public opinion was not that he cared much about his own reputation; he was worried that Chu Yuqin would struggle mentally to accept it, as women tend to be more sensitive to face. He feared that public opinion might affect Chu Yuqin's resolve to marry him.

It was particularly important not to encounter any issues at this critical juncture. Once he and Chu Yuqin had consummated the marriage, no matter what the common folk said, at that point, with raw rice cooked into a meal, Chu Yuqin would have no choice but to stay with him no matter what. But for the moment, there couldn't be even a slight problem.

Fortunately, everything went smoothly, and the day for Chu Yuqin and Chu Qingli to leave as brides finally arrived.

In that era, whether for a commoner's marriage or a Prince's taking of a Side Concubine, the bridal sedan chair could not enter through the main gate, but the North Prince Mansion was different.

Mu Zixuan directly allowed the bridal sedan chairs of Chu Yuqin and Chu Qingli to enter the Prince's Mansion through the main gate, and they were wearing red bridal gowns, which looked no different from a formal wedding.

However, as Mu Zixuan, the lady of the house, had no objections to these arrangements, others did not dare to say much, though some officials of the North Country privately reminded Lu Chen that such a way of marrying was against ritual propriety.

After the wedding ceremony was completed, Chu Yuqin and Chu Qingli went to their bridal chamber, which was the Southern Courtyard where they had always lived.

At this moment, Chu Yuqin sat on the bridal bed with utter chaos in her heart, feeling her heart thump wildly. She had never once imagined the day she would actually marry Lu Chen.

Chapter 430: Chu Yuqin is pregnant_2

She felt as if she were dreaming, somewhat surreal.

She watched Lu Chen, this little rascal, grow up, and now she was even going to bear him children, which always made her feel somewhat ashamed deep down.

Even though Lu Chen, the little rascal, didn't mind her being older, and he had several other women who were older, Chu Yuqin always felt there was something odd about marrying Lu Chen.

She had always treated Lu Chen as her junior, and now she suddenly had to change her address to call this rascal darling. It wasn't easy for her to switch identities so quickly.

While Chu Yuqin's thoughts were in tumult, the maid's voice came from the door, "Paying respects to the Prince."

Upon hearing this, Chu Yuqin's heart rate suddenly accelerated, beating even faster, her face flushed, her whole body seemed to be ignited, not knowing whether it was anticipation or extreme nervousness.

Shortly after, the sound of the door opening was heard. Although Chu Yuqin was under her bridal veil, she could clearly feel Lu Chen gradually approaching the bed, making her tremble uncontrollably.

Right at that moment, she felt the bed sink slightly as Lu Chen sat beside her, then he lifted her veil with his jade ruyi.

Once the veil was lifted, what met his eyes were Chu Yuqin's blushing cheeks, her face was so red it nearly dripped with color.

Chu Yuqin stuttered, "Chen... Chen'er, why have you come so soon?"

After all, Lu Chen was the groom, and he still needed to entertain the guests and drink with them at the banquet. Even if he was to visit the bridal chamber, it would be at night. Chu Yuqin was somewhat surprised Lu Chen had come to consummate their marriage so soon.

Hearing Chu Yuqin's words, Lu Chen then embraced her voluptuous body and, looking into her eyes, smiled and said, "Still calling me Chen'er? Shouldn't you be calling me darling now?"

Chu Yuqin was caught off guard, constantly avoiding his gaze, not daring to look into Lu Chen's eyes. After a moment, she finally whispered, "Dar... darling..."

Saying this address, Chu Yuqin felt shame as if she wanted to die. She couldn't get used to her new role so quickly.

Then Chu Yuqin said, "It's... it's still broad daylight, shall we... shall we wait till night to do..."

Chu Yuqin hesitated, stopping herself from continuing.

Seeing the bashful expression on the beautiful woman before him, Lu Chen was barely able to restrain the impulses in his heart, and he asked with a smile, "What shall we do at night?"

"Why not say what you want to say, my dear?"

At this moment, Chu Yuqin was feeling somewhat peculiar. Lu Chen hadn't even started touching her, and yet her body was already restless. She simply bowed her head, saying no more.

Seeing that Chu Yuqin had fallen silent, Lu Chen didn't feel like teasing her anymore and immediately laid her down on the bed.

After casting a downward glance at the woman he had yearned for over a decade, Lu Chen hesitated no more. He leaned down, claimed her red lips, and launched a relentless conquest until Chu Yuqin, the beautiful woman, fully became his.

...

Meanwhile. powered-by-NovelBin

In the neighboring room.

Chu Qingli sat on her bed, listening to the sounds coming from next door, her heart feeling incredibly heavy.

She had always feared her sister would be ruined by that rascal, trapped in the North Prince Mansion for life. She had striven to save her sister, only to let that rascal succeed in the end.

Not only had she let that rascal succeed, but she had also gotten herself involved.

Hearing her sister's sounds, Chu Qingli couldn't help but think that her sister must truly like that rascal. Otherwise, she wouldn't make such noises.

But then again, it seemed that any woman who had contact with Lu Chen would end up like that, hadn't she herself once...

At this thought, Chu Qingli's mind was flooded with memories of over a hundred times she had 'transactions' with Lu Chen. Those images played over and over in her head.

The more she thought about it, the hotter Chu Qingli's face became, her entire body feeling unbearably warm. She could no longer stand it and directly removed the red veil from her head.

Seeing this, the maid beside her was terrified. According to custom, the Prince was supposed to lift the veil himself; how could Chu Qingli do so on her own? The maid quickly said, "Young Lady Chu, you shouldn't lift the veil. If the Prince comes and sees, he will surely get angry."

Hearing the maid's words, Chu Qingli snorted coldly and then said, "Wait for later? I doubt he will come to my room tonight."

She knew very well how formidable Lu Chen's endurance was; she didn't believe he would visit her room so soon. If Lu Chen didn't come all night, was she expected to wear the veil the entire afternoon and night? She would suffocate.

Considering the relentless sounds from next door already made her feel unbearably hot, wearing the veil would surely drench her wedding dress in no time.

The maid continued to plead, "Young Lady Chu, even if the Prince doesn't come, you can't just lift it. What if someone finds out?"

Chu Qingli said nonchalantly, "If you don't speak and I don't speak, then nobody will know."

"This servant..."