

Es. Benefits 441

Chapter 441: Lu Shuyun Wants to Run Away_1

Great Xia, Sufeng City.

Outside the city, the Imperial Army of Great Xia had assembled, countless trebuchets set up in a row, while archers were poised and ready.

Inside Sufeng City chaos reigned, as no one had anticipated that the Imperial Army would be able to defeat the combined forces of the great families so quickly and besiege Sufeng City.

Now, their last opportunity was to have the Grandmasters of the great families take action together against the Imperial Army.

Of course, they also anticipated the presence of the Imperial Grandmaster within the army's ranks, so what would follow was a contest between the Grandmasters of the aristocratic families and the Grandmaster of the Court. If the Grandmasters of the aristocratic families could overcome the Imperial Grandmaster, perhaps they of the South still had a glimmer of hope.

But if their Grandmasters were defeated, then it wouldn't be long before the Imperial Army could storm the city.

At the forefront of the Imperial Army, the Great General Zhao Quan was mounted on his horse, surveying the gates of Sufeng City, before loudly commanding, "Attack!!!"

The next moment, the horn sounded overhead Sufeng City, followed closely by the advance of the Imperial Army. Countless trebuchets launched massive stones, which smashed into the city walls, pitting them everywhere.

On their part, Sufeng City was also employing trebuchets, with just as many massive stones crashing into the midst of the Imperial Army.

Of course, these stones were of little use against the elite troops of the Court, as an average elite soldier could easily dodge both the large stones and arrows.

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Meanwhile.

At the Wang Family.

The heads of the South's aristocratic families had once again gathered in the Wang Family's reception hall. The Crown Prince, Lu Shuyun, sat at the head of the family, his expression dark and foreboding.

He seemed to see his future, poisoned by wine, laid out before him.

After hearing the horn echo over Sufeng City, everyone knew the Imperial Army had initiated their assault. Now, their only hope lay with the Grandmasters of their own families.

If their Grandmasters were defeated, they would likely find themselves with no avenues for escape, only a path to death.

The reception hall was deathly quiet, every face was grim, and not a single person spoke.

It was at this moment that Chu Hongfei could hold back no longer. He outright said, "Your Highness, we should try to escape. As long as we keep our base, we need not fear running out of fuel. If we perish now, there will be nothing left."

Chu Hongfei had no desire to die there; he was still so young, and he had many ambitions and ideas yet to fulfill. His mind was on Chu Yuqin, that beauty who could topple empires.

In his heart, Chu Hongfei thought, seeing as his father had already secured a foothold in the North Country, if only he could escape Sufeng City and slip quietly into the North Country, he would once again be a hero.

Moreover, he was his father's only son. If he made it to the North Country, he would still be the young master of the Chu Family there.

Once he took his leave, he would eventually become the Chu Family Master.

Of course, all this was secondary to the fact that being in the North Country would give him the chance to pursue Chu Yuqin.

Just the thought of Chu Yuqin's voluptuous figure made Chu Hongfei's fear of death recede a little.

Upon hearing Chu Hongfei's words, Chu Liang immediately scolded, "Hongfei, do not speak carelessly. The Grandmasters of our families have not yet taken action. How could you know we are not a match for the Imperial Army?"

Hearing Chu Liang's words made Chu Hongfei somewhat disgruntled. Although he had begun by standing with his two uncles, betraying his own father for more power within the Chu Family and to shake off the shackles placed by his father.

Now that the Imperial Army was at the gates, if they waited until the forces entered the city, the entire Chu Family would be doomed. His father had already prepared such a good exit strategy in the North Country, and he had no intention of staying and dying with the rest in Sufeng City.

Though Chu Hongfei was displeased, he held his tongue out of respect for Chu Liang being his uncle and considering the Crown Prince and so many heads of aristocratic families were present. He closed his mouth and ceased to speak, but in his heart, he was already planning his escape from Sufeng City.

At that time, Lu Shuyun spoke, "As the Crown Prince, having chosen this path, I will surely stand with all of you till the end. How could I possibly flee at a time like this?"

Lu Shuyun could see that what the heads of the aristocratic families feared the most was his potential flight. The Imperial Army was already besieging the city, and the people within were in a state of panic. If the pillar that was the Crown Prince ran, the morale of Sufeng City's populace would likely crumble in an instant.

And indeed, Lu Shuyun was the one most easily able to escape because he had no estate in Sufeng City. He had come empty-handed and could just as easily leave unburdened.

But the aristocratic families were different. Their family legacies spanned generations within Sufeng City; they had no path to retreat. If they fled, the work of dozens of generations would be lost.

Of course, it wasn't just about their legacies. Lu Shuyun was a single man, perhaps with a few attendants, but these aristocratic families, wasn't each one comprised of thousands of clan members? How could they all possibly escape?

If Lu Shuyun were to take a few attendants and slip away amidst the chaos, he might indeed go undetected, but it would not be the same for the aristocratic families. With so many people, such a large target, any attempt at escape would certainly be discovered.

Therefore, by declaring his intention to stay, Lu Shuyun was also stabilizing the resolve of the heads of the great families, preventing them from harboring any further thoughts on the matter.

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But Lu Shuyun was clearly not really thinking that way.

He was the Crown Prince. Why should he have to die alongside these aristocratic families? He already had a premonition that if he were captured, his father the Emperor certainly wouldn't spare him just because he was a Prince. Instead, he would surely be given poisoned wine or bestowed a white silk noose.

So if he wanted to live, he could not allow himself to be captured by the Imperial Army outside the city. He must find a way to leave Sufeng City.

Since this Chu Hongfei was also thinking of escaping, he might as well make use of him.

Chu Hongfei was from the Chu Family in the South, having grown up in Sufeng City, and having spent so many years there, he should be quite familiar with the city. Perhaps he could find a way to escape from it.

Of course, this wasn't the sort of thing one could openly talk about.

At that moment, Lu Shuyun continued, "With the city in a state of panic, sitting here, none of the family heads can think of a good solution. It's best for everyone to return home now and calm your clanspeople. Only with people's hearts at ease can we hope to survive this crisis."

Hearing this, the heads of the aristocratic families thought it over and admitted that indeed, they were merely sitting around, unable to come up with any good ideas. They could only wait for the outcome of the Grandmaster's war and then learn whether they could defeat the Imperial Army.

At that time, the Head of Qin Clan stood up and said, "The Crown Prince is right. In this situation, even if we sit here, we can only fret needlessly. It would be better to return to our own families and soothe our clanspeople."

Seeing the Head of Qin Clan speak so, the Head of Wang Clan sighed and said, "Very well, everyone should go back for today."

The family heads thought that if Sufeng City was really breached by the Imperial Army, they would only be waiting for their deaths in the Wang Family's place, and it would be better to lead their clanspeople in a last desperate struggle afterward.

Moreover, once the Imperial Army entered the city, they were bound to split their forces. The noble families were scattered throughout Sufeng City, and once the Imperial Army divided their troops, it might be possible, amidst the chaos, for some family to take their clanspeople and break out of Sufeng City.

Although everyone spoke of unity, in their hearts, they had all made the worst contingency plans. Most did not believe they could win. If there was any real chance of victory, they would not have been defeated so thoroughly up to this point.

Afterward, the family heads left the Wang Family and returned to their respective clans.

Once they had all departed, Lu Shuyun went to a tavern in Sufeng City and had someone secretly bring Chu Hongfei to meet him.

When Chu Hongfei heard that the Crown Prince wanted to see him alone, he was overjoyed. If he could meet with the Crown Prince in private, he would have a chance to persuade him to escape together.

Chu Hongfei had also considered escaping from Sufeng City on his own, but realized that he had no real strength, nor did he have any powerful subordinates in the Chu Family. If he attempted to escape alone, should he be discovered by the Imperial Army outside, he would likely be caught immediately.

If he had masters by his side, it would be different; they could hold off the Imperial soldiers while he made a getaway.

Without a doubt, collaborating with Lu Shuyun was the most appropriate option. Lu Shuyun had Master Realm experts by his side. If they escaped together, even if they were accidentally discovered by the Imperial soldiers, there would be powerful individuals to cover their retreat, greatly increasing their chances of leaving Sufeng City successfully.

Before long, Chu Hongfei appeared in Lu Shuyun's room. Upon seeing Lu Shuyun, he immediately paid his respects, "This humble one pays his respects to the Crown Prince!"

Lu Shuyun, smiling, replied, "Brother Chu, please get up. There's no need for such courtesy."

Seeing Lu Shuyun being so polite, Chu Hongfei felt encouraged, and then he asked, "Crown Prince, may I know why you have summoned this humble one?" NovelBin-content

Lu Shuyun sighed and then said, "The great families are all harboring their own schemes, which ultimately led to this war and our defeat. Although the Imperial Army has not yet breached Sufeng City, the city's fall is inevitable."

"I recall receiving a letter from a family in Qi Country not long ago, saying that as long as I go to Qi Country, my Uncle would surely find a way to keep me safe. When my father the Emperor passes away, my Uncle would spare no expense to support my accession to the throne."

Upon hearing this, Chu Hongfei's heart surged with excitement. From what Lu Shuyun implied, Lu Shuyun also planned to discreetly escape from Sufeng City, and moreover, head north?

Did this mean they were kindred spirits?

Chu Hongfei immediately said, "Crown Prince, if there is anything you require, please tell this humble one. Should I be able to assist, I will not hesitate even if it costs me my life!"

Lu Shuyun, still smiling, replied, "Death is not necessary. I just want to know, having lived in Sufeng City for so many years, you must be very familiar with it and aware of some ways to leave the city."

"If I manage to safely reach Qi Country, you will be the first to be credited. When I ascend to that position, I shall appoint you as a Duke!"

Hearing the promise Lu Shuyun offered, Chu Hongfei's heartbeat accelerated. After pondering for a moment, he felt there was still hope for Lu Shuyun to turn things around.

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Qi Country was not weak, and if the Qi Prince supported Lu Shuyun, and Lu Shuyun kept a low profile in Qi Country, when the Sum Emperor passed away, the Qi Prince might really be able to help Lu Shuyun ascend the throne. At that time, as the person who had saved Lu Shuyun's life, he would be sure to receive the title of a great contributor, and the position of a Duke was definitely within reach.

Thinking this, Chu Hongfei immediately said, "Your Highness, rest assured, I will definitely find a way to ensure your safe exit."

Hearing Chu Hongfei's response, Lu Shuyun said with a smile, "Chu, do you know of a place where we can leave Sufeng City without anyone noticing?"

Chu Hongfei said with a smile, "But of course, if Your Highness is ready, we could leave Sufeng City tonight."

Lu Shuyun said, "Very well, I will trouble you with this matter, Chu. We will leave Sufeng City under the cover of night."

At this point, Lu Shuyun suddenly thought of something and continued, "One more thing, Chu, please don't tell anyone else from the Chu Family about this. If we have too many people, we will

be a big target and easily reveal our whereabouts. Even if we escape Sufeng City, we could still be discovered by the Imperial soldiers."

Chu Hongfei laughed and said, "Your Highness, don't worry, I will bring just two or three attendants. I will tell no one else from the Chu Family."

Lu Shuyun said, "Good, then please make preparations promptly. Come find me at the tavern tonight."

"Yes, Your Highness."

As his voice fell, Chu Hongfei left the tavern with a happy expression.

Watching Chu Hongfei's retreating back, a murderous intent flashed in Lu Shuyun's eyes. He planned to dispose of Chu Hongfei, the fool, once they were out of Sufeng City.

By the time the Imperial Army broke through Sufeng City, and the Chu Family was destroyed, Chu Hongfei would naturally be of no use anymore.

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Lu Shuyun thought to himself, hoping tonight's action would go smoothly. If they were discovered, whether by the Aristocratic Families within the city or the Imperial soldiers outside, it would be very difficult for them to escape.

It was best to succeed at the first attempt.

Meanwhile.

Outside Sufeng City.

Just as the Imperial Army was about to scale the city walls, suddenly the Imperial soldiers on the walls were struck by an invisible force and flung away; then, the siege ladders of the Imperial forces were also destroyed.

The next moment, three Grandmasters appeared atop the walls.

Upon seeing this, the morale of Sufeng City's rebel soldiers soared. Their Grandmasters had finally taken action. With the help of Grandmasters, the Imperial Army, no matter how formidable, would not be able to breach the city.

At that moment, the soldiers were still unaware that their leader, Lu Shuyun, was planning his escape.

Seeing the three Grandmasters atop the city tower, the Imperial Great General Zhao Quan immediately said to his soldiers, "Retreat!"

As his voice fell, the sound of horns filled the air, and the Imperial Army promptly withdrew.

Seeing the Imperial Army retreat, the soldiers of Sufeng City immediately cheered, believing that they had won, and that the Imperial forces were scared off by their side's Grandmasters.

Little did they know, a sneer appeared on Zhao Quan's face after ordering the Imperial soldiers to pull back.

They were not truly retreating; instead, the second phase of warfare was commencing. It was a war between Grandmasters, and the conflict between Grandmasters inevitably affected those nearby, which was why he immediately ordered the Imperial soldiers to pull back.

While the soldiers of Sufeng City were indulging in their fantasies, three elderly men riding horses emerged slowly from the retreating Imperial Army.

Upon seeing the three elders, the soldiers of Sufeng City immediately sensed that something was amiss.

The Imperial Army had clearly retreated, so why would they send out three elders at this time?

Could it be...

Were these three elders also Grandmasters?

Before people could ponder further, the three elders rode their horses straight toward the city gates.

Witnessing this scene, the three Grandmasters from the Aristocratic Family did not just stand by; they leaped down from the city wall.

Following that, the second battle of Sufeng City began.

It was evident that the three Grandmasters from the Imperial Army were stronger than those from the Aristocratic Family, who were beaten back step by step, a fact that the Aristocratic Family's Grandmasters could hardly believe.

From where had the Sum Emperor found such powerful Grandmasters, capable of such strength?

If they remembered correctly, when they themselves were Family Heads, the Grandmasters of the Great Sum royal family were once hunted by Celestials from the Heavenly Human Realm. By all accounts, the Great Sum royal family should no longer possess such strong Grandmasters.

It was already quite an achievement for the State Preceptor Situ Ce to have broken through to the Grandmaster Realm, yet the royal family now had three more Grandmasters, and their strength was formidable.

Could it be that these three Grandmasters were the ones from the royal family who had survived by chance, avoiding the pursuit of that Celestial?

Despite their shock, such thoughts were useless now. Before long, one of the Aristocratic Family's Grandmasters was seriously injured, and the three had no choice but to retreat temporarily.

After seeing the three Grandmasters of the South's Aristocratic Family withdraw, the Imperial Army's three Grandmasters also departed without joining the fray.

The Imperial Army was not so desperate as to use Grandmasters against mere foot soldiers. Of course, another reason was that the three Grandmasters from the Imperial Army had also expended a great deal of their strength. If they used up all their power fighting the soldiers of Sufeng City, they would likely be no match for the three Grandmasters should they reappear.

So typically, in wars between dynasties, it was Grandmaster against Grandmaster, and Grandmasters did not engage in battles beneath their level. This war was no exception.

At that moment, General Luo Zhao Quan said, "Charge again!"

As his voice fell, the sound of the bugle rose once more, and the Imperial Army besieged the city again.

However, by the end of the day, the Imperial Army had not managed to take Sufeng City; the defending rebels of Sufeng City were still very strong.

After nightfall.

In the inner courtyard of a tavern in Sufeng City, dozens of shadows gathered around a well.

A man's voice asked, "Can we leave Sufeng City through this well?"

Another man replied, "Yes, this well leads to the seaside. If we go through this well, we can reach the sea directly."

The man said, "In that case, let's not waste any more time. Chu, please lead the way."

Chu Hongfei replied with a smile, "Certainly. I will take the Crown Prince out of Sufeng City."

With those words, Chu Hongfei grasped the rope and slowly descended into the well, followed by Lu Shuyun and the others at the rim.

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Chu Hongfei, with Lu Shuyun and several dozen followers, walked for over two hours before they finally reached the mouth of the cave.

As they were about to reach the exit, they heard the whooshing sound of the sea at the entrance of the cave. Lu Shuyun's heart leaped with joy, as he hadn't expected Chu Hongfei to actually lead them to escape.

It was great, as long as he could get to Qi Country, he'd have a chance for a comeback.

Before long, they had left the cave, and by the time they emerged from the underground, the sky was already beginning to lighten.

Looking at the vast ocean before him, Lu Shuyun's ambition reignited in his heart.

At that moment, Chu Hongfei spoke up, "Your Highness, the Crown Prince, we should hurry on our way. We are not far from Sufeng City, and if the Imperial Army realizes you have escaped, they might send someone to look for us here."

After hearing Chu Hongfei's voice, Lu Shuyun snapped back to reality and immediately signalled to a master at his side with a glance.

Now that they had escaped, Chu Hongfei was no longer of use.

The master understood Lu Shuyun's intent instantly, drew his sword, and thrust it through Chu Hongfei's chest.

Chu Hongfei suddenly felt a chill on his back, followed by waves of intense pain. He spat out a mouthful of blood, then looked down in disbelief at the sword blade sticking out of his chest.

Soon after, he glared at Lu Shuyun with eyes full of unwillingness and said, "Your Highness... you..."

Before Chu Hongfei could finish his sentence, the Grandmaster protecting Lu Shuyun kicked him off the cliff and into the sea.

Having dealt with Chu Hongfei, Lu Shuyun was also preparing to leave when suddenly a man's voice came from behind him, "Your Highness, the Crown Prince, Chu Hongfei, after all, helped us escape. Is it really appropriate to kill him like this?"

"Isn't this a bit too ungrateful?"

"If Your Highness treats your own subordinates like this, always biting the hand that feeds, who will dare to follow Your Highness in the future?"

Hearing this, Lu Shuyun was stunned for a moment. He hadn't expected anyone to speak to him this way. He immediately turned his head to see that his followers had surrounded someone.

The person they had surrounded was none other than Liang Zong, who had always helped him amass wealth.

Lu Shuyun thought that after he got to Qi Country, he would definitely need to accumulate some money to bribe court officials and couldn't rely solely on his Uncle, which is why he had brought Liang Zong along.

But now, unexpectedly, Liang Zong, this slave, dared to speak to his master in such a manner.

Lu Shuyun asked coldly, "Liang Zong, do you know to whom you are speaking?"

Hearing this, Liang Zong simply smiled and then said, "Of course, I'm talking to a rebel leader now."

Seeing Liang Zong actually referring to himself as a rebel leader, Lu Shuyun was instantly enraged and declared, "Since you're seeking death, then I shall grant it!"

With that, Lu Shuyun said to a master nearby, "Kill him!"

In Lu Shuyun's eyes, Liang Zong was nothing more than an ordinary person skilled at making money, no different from squashing an ant.

Upon hearing Lu Shuyun's command, the Grandmaster at his side immediately took action, swinging his sword at Liang Zong's head.

Just when everyone thought Liang Zong's head was about to fall, all of a sudden, Liang Zong pulled out a soft sword strapped to his waist and swiftly beheaded the master who had attacked him.

Seeing the bloody scene unfold before him, Lu Shuyun was dumbfounded. His protector, a Grandmaster, was so easily killed.

How could this be???

Lu Shuyun looked incredulously at Liang Zong, "You... you actually know martial arts!"

Lu Shuyun had always thought Liang Zong was an ordinary person; he hadn't expected that Liang Zong could easily kill a master.

To be able to strike so swiftly, so fast that even a master couldn't react, Liang Zong's strength must be at least at the Master Level or above.

Fear instantly filled Lu Shuyun's heart.

A 'normal' person by his side for so many years, now displaying Master Level strength—what did that imply?

It suggested that this person had always been lurking by his side for some purpose, and now that his rebellion had failed, and he only had a few dozen followers left, Liang Zong's sudden revelation of his strength meant that he was about to make a move against him.

At this time, Liang Zong said with a smile, "Crown Prince, I never said I couldn't perform martial arts, it's you who always assumed I couldn't."

Lu Shuyun involuntarily took a step back, "You... who exactly are you?"

Liang Zong smiled and said, "Someone to send off His Highness, the Crown Prince."

Hearing this, Lu Shuyun hurriedly said to his followers, "Kill him! Kill him for me!"

As soon as Lu Shuyun's command fell, the crowd took action.

With a flick of Liang Zong's soft sword and a series of clanging sounds, his attackers were swiftly dealt with.

Seeing this, Lu Shuyun knew his followers were no match for Liang Zong. He turned and ran, hoping to have his remaining followers delay Liang Zong for a while.

Unfortunately, his followers did not buy Lu Shuyun much time. Before Lu Shuyun had gone far, Liang Zong had already killed all of his followers.

Seeing Lu Shuyun running away, Liang Zong smiled faintly, kicked a stone with force, and it flew straight towards Lu Shuyun, knocking him to the ground.

Chapter 445: Three Hundred Years Old Ah!_2

After collapsing, Lu Shuyun turned around and retreated nonstop.

While retreating, he said, "Whose person are you? If you come over to my side, once I go to Qi Country, I will surely have my Uncle grant you ten thousand taels of gold. If I ascend to the throne someday, I will make you a Duke!!!"

Hearing Lu Shuyun's words, Liang Zong laughed and said, "Crown Prince, I'm not Chu Hongfei—I won't be easily swayed by the grand promises you paint."

At this, Liang Zong was about to take action when Lu Shuyun quickly said, "I am the Crown Prince! You can't kill me! Even if I have rebelled, I am still the Crown Prince appointed by the Sum Emperor. If you kill me, you won't meet a good end!"

Liang Zong paid no attention to Lu Shuyun's words and brought his sword down in a swift arc. The flash of the sword passed, and Lu Shuyun's body slowly fell to the ground, though he still retained a sliver of consciousness.

At that moment, Liang Zong said, "Allow me a final introduction. I am Liang Zong, Commander of the Brocade Guard from North Country. Crown Prince, may you have a good journey ahead!" Your source for fiction: m-vlempyr.

Lu Shuyun spat out blood, his body slowly collapsing as he uttered a faint voice, "You... you are... Lu Chen's man..."

After his last words, Lu Shuyun lost consciousness completely, and Liang Zong wasted no more time and departed.

With Lu Shuyun dead, his infiltration mission also came to an end. It was time to report back to the North Prince in North Country. Ever since the North Prince had started using the Brocade Guard, he hadn't reported in person to the North Prince even once, not a sign of commendable servitude.

After Lu Shuyun fled, the major Aristocratic Families in Sufeng City quickly realized that Lu Shuyun had vanished, but no matter how they searched, they couldn't find him.

Two days later, the Imperial Army breached Sufeng City. The Grandmasters of the South clashed with the Imperial Grandmasters once again. In the end, the Grandmasters of the South were completely annihilated, and three of the Imperial Grandmasters were seriously injured.

Some Aristocratic Family members took this opportunity to rush out of Sufeng City with their relatives. Although the Imperial Army attempted to block the city gates, the foundations of the Aristocratic Families were still strong, and they had a considerable number of capable people, including numerous Grandmasters, so many of them did manage to escape.

Of course, Zhao Quan also sent Imperial soldiers to chase down those fleeing Aristocratic Family members immediately. Though they killed quite a number who had fled, some still slipped through the net.

However, that was no longer important. Most of the elite of the Sufeng City Aristocratic Families were beheaded, executed on the spot, and all their wealth was confiscated. Without land or money, those that fled could no longer stir up any waves in the future.

Zhao Quan had wanted to capture Lu Shuyun and bring him back for the Sum Emperor's personal judgment. Upon hearing that Lu Shuyun had escaped two days before the capture of the city, he had to send people to search for Lu Shuyun again.

They did find him, but it was only a corpse. With no other choice, he ordered the body to be properly laid out and transported back to the Capital city.

Thus, the disturbance in the South came to a close.

Not long after, the Sum Emperor received news that Lu Shuyun had taken his own life by the seaside. He wasn't particularly pleased, not because he felt any guilt toward Lu Shuyun's death. Lu Shuyun was merely one of his children; to him, if one died, then they died.

He could not be pleased because the movements in the north were becoming increasingly frequent. The soldiers from North Country were very aggressive, even provoking the Imperial Army stationed at the border of Qi Country.

Clearly, North Country wished to provoke the Imperial Court into starting a war, then find an excuse to strike back.

Fortunately, he had issued a strict order to the Imperial Army at the Qi Country border: no matter what, as long as the North Country soldiers didn't attack Qi Country, they were not to attack the soldiers from North Country.

Recently, the Sum Emperor had also received a report from the Shadow Guard about whether Zhuge Zhongguang had broken through to the Celestial Realm.

While there was no direct evidence that Zhuge Zhongguang had reached the Celestial Realm, as they had never seen him in action, the beam of golden light that shot straight into the sky from the North Prince Mansion and the swirling clouds that appeared overhead had been witnessed by every resident of Yan County.

This phenomenon clearly wasn't something a Grandmaster could produce, so it was very likely that Zhuge Zhongguang had indeed broken through to the Celestial Realm. Coupled with the intentional provocations by North Country soldiers at the Qi Country border, it further confirmed the speculation. The Sum Emperor grew more and more worried.

He soon transferred the elite soldiers of the Imperial Court from the South to the north, preparing for the event that North Country would indeed rebel.

Meanwhile.

In the North Land.

In Great Yu City.

After a long journey, Lu Chen and his group finally arrived at Great Yu City.

The common folk of Great Yu City had been informed in advance of Lu Chen's arrival and had decorated their homes with lanterns and streamers as soon as they heard their King was coming.

The citizens of Great Yu City, along with the City Lord, personally came to the city gates to welcome Lu Chen's procession.

When Lu Chen reached the gates of Great Yu City, he came out directly from the carriage.

After all, to meet his subjects, he couldn't stay inside the carriage.

Riding his horse, Lu Chen slowly made his way through the entrance road, with crowds of people lining both sides, all very excited.

When Lu Chen reached the city gates, he saw an old man standing there, waiting respectfully.

Lu Chen then dismounted from his horse, and at that moment, the old man knelt down.

"Your servant, Xuanyuan Chaoge, pays respects to the King!"

As Xuanyuan Chaoge knelt, the common folk lining the road also knelt down, saying, "We pay respects to the King! May the King live for thousands of years!"

Chapter 446: Three Hundred Years Old Ah!_3

Hearing the name Xuanyuan Chaoge, Lu Chen paused for a moment, then used the system to identify him, and discovered that the City Lord of Great Yu City was indeed called Xuanyuan Chaoge.

Chaoge, this name...

Lu Chen thought to himself that it must be a coincidence, and then he didn't dwell on it any longer.

He glanced at Xuanyuan Yunki, who was standing next to Xuanyuan Chaoge.

Xuanyuan Yunki was dressed, just as she had been the last time she went to Yan County, in black and gold armor, with her hair tied up in a high ponytail, revealing her pale forehead, both beautiful and imparting a sense of heroic spirit.

However, it seemed that her Favorability toward him had risen considerably.

[Name: Xuanyuan Yunki]

[Identity: Daughter of Xuanyuan Chaoge, the Family Head of the Xuanyuan Family in Great Yu City, 23 years old this year, sister of Xuanyuan Chen, at the Master Realm. She heard you were coming to Great Yu City and went out to welcome you with her father.]

[Rating: 98]

[Loyalty: 100]

[Favorability: 60] .

The Favorability had increased, but why only by this much?

Lu Chen thought to himself, if his memory served him right, when Xuanyuan Yunqi saw him last time in Yan County, her Favorability was at 50, right? That's only a 10-point increase.

Am I, the North Prince, really doing so poorly that even virtual characters summoned by the system have only this much Favorability toward me?

Without dwelling on it any further, Lu Chen promptly walked up to Xuanyuan Chaoge, then took hold of his arms to help him up, saying, "Lord Xuanyuan, please rise!"

Continuing, Lu Chen also addressed the surrounding commoners, "Everyone, please stand."

Upon hearing this, Xuanyuan Chaoge was the first to say, "Thank the Great King!"

Then the commoners around them also followed, saying, "Thank the Great King!"

Straight after, Xuanyuan Chaoge rose from the ground, and with a touch of excitement, he said, "Great King, you have finally arrived!"

Lu Chen could tell that Xuanyuan Chaoge was truly excited about his arrival; Xuanyuan Chaoge's body trembled with excitement, and even his eyes brimmed with tears, as if he had waited for this day for countless years. Lu Chen saw the signs of age etched onto Xuanyuan Chaoge's face.

Again, almost subconsciously, Lu Chen used the system to check Xuanyuan Chaoge's personal details.

[Name: Xuanyuan Chaoge]

[Identity: City Lord of Great Yu City, 300 years old this year, he is very happy about your arrival.]

[Strength: Grandmaster]

[Loyalty: 100]

Lu Chen was a bit stunned, a whole 300 years old!

Wait a minute, if he's 300 years old, why is his daughter Xuanyuan Yunqi only in her twenties? And his son Xuanyuan Chen is just a few decades old.

Children born in his old age?

Isn't that way too old?

Having children after over two hundred years?

That moment, Lu Chen, with a smile, said, "Lord Xuanyuan, you just let this king stand here; won't you show me around your city?"

Snapping back to reality, Xuanyuan Chaoge hurriedly replied, "Please mount your horse, Great King, your servant will lead it for you."

Lu Chen said, "No need, I'd rather walk; it's good for the health to walk more."

He then handed the horse's reins to a soldier at his side.

"Let's get going," Lu Chen said.

Seeing Lu Chen's insistence on walking, Xuanyuan Chaoge didn't say anything further. He then led Lu Chen into Great Yu City.

Upon entering Great Yu City, Lu Chen could immediately sense the city's opulence and order.

The streets of Great Yu City were very clean, although this didn't discount the possibility that they had been swept again because of his planned visit.

As Lu Chen walked through the city after entering, he noticed that the integrity of the buildings in Great Yu City was far superior to those in Yan County.

Yan County still had earthen houses, with some of the commoners' homes pitted and uneven, but it was different in Great Yu City. The homes there were all built from stone and wood, and the houses along the streets were in neat rows, looking orderly, unlike the chaotic layout of Old Yan County.

Just by the architecture of Great Yu City, one could glean that the lives of the common people there were much better than those in Old Yan County.

Great Yu City was further to the north, with longer winters that were also colder, yet the days of its commoners seemed even better than those in Yan County, enough to show how strong the leadership of City Lord Xuanyuan Chaoge must be.

At this time, Lu Chen asked with a smile, "Lord Xuanyuan, may I ask your age this year?"

Xuanyuan Chaoge answered, "In response to the Great King, I am exactly 300 years old this year."

Lu Chen exclaimed, "300 years old! You have worked hard these years."

Xuanyuan Chaoge answered, "For the Great King, it is not hard work."

Afterward, Xuanyuan Chaoge took Lu Chen around Great Yu City for inspections. Come evening, Xuanyuan Chaoge arranged for Lu Chen to stay in the City Lord's Mansion, even giving him the largest hall for his residence.

Looking at the magnificent hall in front of him, Lu Chen thought to himself that the specifications of this hall were rather high.

At that moment, Xiao Wenyao, after having bathed, came to Lu Chen's side wearing a cyan, semi-transparent cicada-wing robe. She sat down next to Lu Chen, leaning into his embrace. Instead of immediately getting handsy with her or being affectionate, he glanced around the hall, then his gaze fell upon the maids of the hall.

He directly asked, "Does anyone usually live in this hall?"

Upon hearing Lu Chen's question, the maid of the City Lord's Mansion immediately replied, "In response to the Great King, this hall has been specially prepared for you. Normally, no one resides here."

Lu Chen was taken aback, prepared for him?

Lu Chen then continued asking, "Your City Lord is already 300 years old, how come his son and daughter are only a few decades old? Do you know the reason?"

The maid answered, "In response to the Great King, the City Lord actually has many children. However, most of them have only average Martial Arts Talent and thus a lifespan of only several decades at best, so the majority have already passed away."

"The City Lord feared that he might not live to see your arrival. Therefore, he continuously tried to have more children and finally, in his two hundreds, Madam Mo bore him a son of an extremely high Martial Arts Talent, the young master Chen. Later, Madam Mo gave birth to Yunqi, and Miss Yunqi also possesses an exceptional Martial Arts Talent."

Hearing this, Lu Chen thought for a moment. He had not expected that the characters the system arranged for him were already waiting for his emergence long ago.

The Dongfang Family was like this, the Wei Family was like this, the Qian Family was also like this, and the Xuanyuan Family was even more so.

300 years old...

Xuanyuan Chaoge had been waiting since birth, no wonder he was so excited to see him today.

Chapter 447: The Ashamed Xuanyuan Yunqi_1

Lu Chen hugged Xiao Wenyao and asked the maidservants of the City Lord's Mansion many questions about Xuanyuan Chaoge and Great Yu City.

Seeing how much Lu Chen cared about the matters of Great Yu City and his exceptionally serious demeanor, Xiao Wenyao obediently sat in Lu Chen's embrace without moving a muscle, feeling the hard seat becoming somewhat uncomfortable.

Through Lu Chen's inquiries, he had come to understand the situation in Great Yu City quite thoroughly; it had developed even better than he had anticipated.

Initially, he had thought that Great Yu City was merely wealthier than Yan County, but as he came to understand, he found that the lives of the common people in Great Yu City far surpassed those in the Great Xia Capital city, thus it was no wonder that these commoners had no desire to go to Yan County.

However, on another note, Great Yu City really provided a suitable environment for industrial development. Firstly, craftsmen were abundant, and Xuanyuan Chaoge encouraged the common people to be hands-on, unlike other places in the Great Xia Dynasty that still had divisions among scholars, farmers, artisans, and traders.

Some of the officials in Great Yu City were of craftsman origin, so the status of craftsmen in Great Yu City was relatively high, without the strict divisions of scholars, farmers, artisans, and traders.

Lu Chen now felt that sending Mo Xing back to Great Yu City to construct steam engines and trains had been an utterly correct decision. To develop industry in Great Yu City one would benefit from a relatively stable environment, where numerous craftsmen were present, and importantly, these craftsmen's acceptance of new things far exceeded that of the common folk of Great Xia.

While Lu Chen was lost in such thoughts, suddenly he felt the delicate beauty in his arms squirming.

Lu Chen came back to his senses and asked at Xiao Wenyao's ear, "What's wrong?"

Hearing Lu Chen's question, Xiao Wenyao's face flushed with heat as she whispered back, "Prince, your servant... your servant feels somewhat uncomfortable."

Hearing this, Lu Chen immediately realized and said with a smile, "I apologize, I wasn't paying attention. I will make it up to you right now."

With that said, Lu Chen directly hugged Xiao Wenyao's delicate body and placed her on the large bed before gently pressing down upon her.

The next morning, bright and early.

After getting up, Lu Chen enjoyed a sumptuous breakfast. The arrangements Xuanyuan Chaoge made for him were of the highest standard, whether it was the food, the amenities, or the accommodations.

It must be said that the systems in place were truly loyal.

After breakfast, Lu Chen planned to visit the northern cattle ranch of Great Yu City. A significant reason for the city's high standard of living was because Great Yu City had long engaged in large-scale ranching. Though the common people of Great Yu City couldn't have meat in every meal, they at least ate more meat annually than the commoners in average cities.

At that moment, Lu Chen said to Xuanyuan Chaoge, "Lord Xuanyuan, you have official duties to attend to, so there's no need to accompany this Prince today."

Hearing Lu Chen's words, Xuanyuan Chaoge immediately thought of the look Lu Chen gave Xuanyuan Yunqi the day before, and promptly said to Lu Chen, "Your Majesty, since it's your first visit to Great Yu City and you are not yet familiar with it, how about I have my daughter show you around?"

At this, Xuanyuan Chaoge turned to a servant at his side and instructed, "Go call Yunqi and have her show the way for the Prince."

Seeing how understanding Xuanyuan Chaoge was, Lu Chen smiled faintly and then said, "Then I'll trouble Yunqi."

Hearing Lu Chen call Xuanyuan Yunqi as "Yunqi," so intimately, Xuanyuan Chaoge knew there was a chance. He hadn't anticipated that his daughter, born when he was more than two hundred years old, could potentially catch the eye of the future Human Emperor. It seemed destiny itself wished for the revival of the Xuanyuan Family!

A moment later.

City Lord's Mansion, Xuanyuan Yunki's boudoir.

As Xuanyuan Yunki donned her black and gold armor and picked up her Red Tassel Spear, preparing to head to the military camp outside the city, a maid hurried to her side.

"Miss, the master has instructed that you accompany the Prince around today."

Hearing this, Xuanyuan Yunki was taken aback.

Frankly, she did not have a particularly good impression of Lu Chen. Upon learning of the appearance of the Human Emperor, she had used various channels to inquire about Lu Chen, only to discover that their future Human Emperor was quite the philanderer, with a harem full of women.

While it was normal for a man to have multiple wives and concubines, even her father had more than one wife.

But her father's motivation to have children was not solely driven by lust. He was just worried about leaving no successor until the coming of the Human Emperor, which was why he desired a child with exceptional Martial Arts Talent to take up the mantle. Moreover, her father didn't marry many women at once; he only took another wife after the passing of the previous one.

This North Prince, on the other hand, was different. According to letters sent back by her brother, the North Prince's harem already contained many beautiful women, and he had fathered six children.

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In her view, this future Human Emperor was simply fond of beauty.

Of course, even though she knew of the Human Emperor's proclivity for beauty, she didn't harbor too much contempt for him. After all, he was the future Human Emperor, the one her father and his predecessors had awaited for centuries. The Xuanyuan Family's mission was to assist the Human Emperor in achieving great feats.

Moreover, Xuanyuan Yunqi also saw that despite Lu Chen's fondness for the opposite sex, always having beautiful wives and concubines by his side and unable to live without women, he was still quite kind to the people of North Country.

It was also indeed possible that the North Prince had managed to annihilate two powerful Barbarian Tribe clans in North Land and even defeat the Tianqi King, a Grandmaster.

Chapter 448: The Ashamed Xuanyuan Yunqi_2

She too admired the strong, and so her opinion of Lu Chen had improved slightly, though it was just that—slightly. Regarding the Human Emperor's lustfulness, she still felt this should be corrected.

After all, the Human Emperor is the Human Emperor, who should prioritize the grand affair of ruling the world. How can he devote all his energies to women? How can a martial artist who does not abstain from sensual pleasures continue to practice martial arts?

Even though she had sensed yesterday that Lu Chen was a Grandmaster, she still held on to her view. In her eyes, the Human Emperor was a sacred leader, the lord of the world. A leader must behave like a leader and must pay attention to their conduct.

She did not believe that Lu Chen must have only one wife, but she did think that there were simply too many women around Lu Chen.

Xuanyuan Yunqi wasn't a fool. When she heard that her father wanted her to guide the North Prince, she vaguely sensed that her father was trying to 'sell' her.

She also had an elder brother, who logically should be the guide if one were needed. Yet, it was she, a daughter, who was tasked with guiding the North Prince. Her father's intentions did not need to be guessed.

Xuanyuan Yunqi sighed softly, then said to the maid who came to call her, "Lead the way."

Soon after, the maid brought Xuanyuan Yunqi to Lu Chen. Upon seeing Lu Chen, Xuanyuan Yunqi promptly paid her respects, saying, "Your subordinate greets Your Majesty!"

Upon seeing Xuanyuan Yunqi dressed in black-and-gold armor, Xuanyuan Chaoge was startled, and then he quickly said, "Yunqi, delegate your military duties to your elder brother for now. You don't need to be on duty today; go change your clothes first."

Xuanyuan Yunqi glanced at Lu Chen and said with neither servility nor arrogance, "Father, I am responsible for His Majesty's safety, given that I am guiding him. I must protect His Majesty; how could I possibly remove my armor?"

This...

Xuanyuan Chaoge was somewhat frustrated; he didn't believe his daughter couldn't sense that Lu Chen had already become a Grandmaster. Their monarch was already a Grandmaster—there was no need for a martial artist of lesser rank to protect him.

Moreover, the citizens of Great Yu City were His Majesty's subjects; who would harbor ill will against him? Besides, this place was so remote that ordinary enemies couldn't find it. Xuanyuan Yunki's excuse was clearly just that—an excuse.

Xuanyuan Chaoge was somewhat worried. Through Xuanyuan Yunki's words, he could tell that his daughter seemed not to be very interested in their monarch.

This wouldn't do at all—he was counting on Xuanyuan Yunki being able to marry Lu Chen and bear him children.

Xuanyuan Chaoge was about to continue speaking when Lu Chen, smiling, said, "Lord Xuanyuan, Yunki makes a good point. Let her wear the armor. Moreover, I find that this armor suits Yunki extremely well. It makes her look valiant and impressive. Perhaps changing into another attire wouldn't give her the same presence."

Upon hearing Lu Chen's words, Xuanyuan Yunki was startled internally, but she quickly recovered and respectfully responded, "Thank you for the compliment, Your Majesty."

Lu Chen smiled lightly, "Alright, now that Yunki is here as well, let us set off."

Xuanyuan Yunki replied, "Yes, Your Majesty."

Following that, Xuanyuan Yunqi led Lu Chen and the others towards the pastures of Great Yu City.

Along the way, Xuanyuan Yunqi and Lu Chen did not interact much. Xuanyuan Yunqi's face was expressionless, and she appeared meticulous, seemingly alert to every sign of movement around her, as if she really was protecting Lu Chen.

Lu Chen glanced at her a few times and then looked at her Favorability towards him—Favorability 63, an increase of 3 points since yesterday.

At that moment, while riding his horse, Lu Chen asked, "General Xuanyuan, did your father teach you all your martial skills?"

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Xuanyuan Yunqi was briefly taken aback when she heard Lu Chen call her General Xuanyuan. Her favorability towards him rose again.

After recovering, she immediately answered, "Yes, Your Majesty."

Lu Chen, with a smile, asked, "May I ask General Xuanyuan a rather personal question, if that is alright?"

Xuanyuan Yunqi responded, "Please do, Your Majesty."

Lu Chen then asked, "Does General Xuanyuan wish to stay in Great Yu City for a lifetime, protect Great Yu City, and then find a good family to marry when the time comes, or does she want to take her Red Tassel Spear, charge through the battlefield, accomplish great feats, and become a respected female general admired by thousands?"

Hearing Lu Chen's question, Xuanyuan Yunqi's mind went blank. She had not anticipated such a question from Lu Chen.

At this moment, she involuntarily pictured a battlefield crowded with warriors, filled with the unceasing din of battle, where she rode a war horse, charging into the fray.

Indeed, her dream was to become a Great General revered by thousands. However, she also knew this was nearly impossible. She had inquired about the outside world: not just in Great Sum, but in all the great dynasties, the society valued men over women, and the military was almost devoid of women.

Forget the external situation, even Great Yu City was much the same. If her father were not the City Lord of Great Yu, she might not even be able to join the city's army, let alone command one of its military units.

Seeing that Xuanyuan Yunqi had not answered for a while, Lu Chen continued, "General Xuanyuan, have you thought it through?"

Hearing Lu Chen's words, Xuanyuan Yunqi came back to her senses, she immediately said, "To your question, Your Majesty, your subordinate wishes to become a Great General!"

Hearing Xuanyuan Yunqi's answer, the corners of Lu Chen's mouth lifted slightly. He glanced again at Xuanyuan Yunqi's Favorability—her Favorability had jumped to seventy-five.

Chapter 449: The Ashamed Xuanyuan Yunqi_3

Lu Chen then said, "I can offer you a chance to become a Great General, but you must accompany me to Yan County. Are you willing?"

This...

Xuanyuan Yunqi suddenly felt something was amiss.

Why did it feel like the North Prince was trying to lure her to Yan County to make her his woman?

Despite her concerns, she also thought that without the North Prince's offer, there would be no possibility of her becoming a Great General. If she didn't seize this opportunity, there might never be another chance.

With this in mind, Xuanyuan Yunqi then said, "Your Highness, I am willing to follow you!"

Lu Chen said, "Good! Starting today, General Xuanyuan will stay by my side!"

Xuanyuan Yunqi was bewildered. Staying by his side was not the same as becoming a Great General. How could she lead troops in battle if she was by the North Prince's side?

The North Prince was the future Human Emperor, a leader. Although he had led troops into battle before, as more generals gathered around Lu Chen, it was certain he would not lead the troops himself in the future.

If she stayed by his side, she feared she might not even step onto the battlefield.

Xuanyuan Yunqi was startled, realizing she had been duped!

It wasn't about becoming a Great General at all; the North Prince clearly wanted to deceive her into going to Yan County!

Xuanyuan Yunqi felt a bitterness in her heart, and she didn't dare to say more since Lu Chen was the future Human Emperor.

Seeing Xuanyuan Yunqi's troubled expression, Lu Chen knew what she was thinking and continued, "General Xuanyuan, not just anyone can lead troops on the battlefield. Maybe you could barely manage ten thousand soldiers, but what about a hundred thousand, a million? Could you command an entire army then?"

"To become a true Great General, learning is indispensable. In Yan County, there are many Military Generals, and your brother is there too. We often discuss military matters together. If you stay by my side, you could learn many military strategies and knowledge that you don't yet know. This will greatly assist you in becoming a Great General in the future."

Upon hearing Lu Chen's words, Xuanyuan Yunqi's mind went blank for a moment.

She had actually suspected that the North Prince was deceiving her. How could she doubt the future Human Emperor? Although the North Prince was indeed a bit lecherous, after all, he was the future Human Emperor, their sovereign, whose word was bond. Anything he promised to do would be done; how could he possibly deceive her?

Xuanyuan Yunqi then said, "Thank you, Your Highness, for giving me this opportunity!"

Lu Chen smiled and once again glanced at Xuanyuan Yunqi's Favorability, which had risen to eighty.

There's hope.

Someday he would make Xuanyuan Yunqi's Favorability reach one hundred without relying on the Dragon and Phoenix Tea.

Of course, he intended to keep the promises he had made. Since Xuanyuan Yunqi wanted to be a female general, he would give her that chance.

In Lu Chen's eyes, Xuanyuan Yunqi was a woman who looked even more beautiful dressed in armor.

Each woman had her own uniqueness, and Lu Chen had no intention of erasing their individual traits. If all women became the same, only beautiful without any distinctiveness, what would be the difference between them and inflatable dolls?

Afterward, Xuanyuan Yunqi first took Lu Chen and his entourage to the livestock farm and then to Great Yu City's largest workshop, the Mohist Workshop.

The rest of the day, Lu Chen spent at the Mohist Workshop, discussing the construction of steam engines and trains with the craftsmen, from the materials to the principles of the steam engine, and then on to which industries the steam engine could be applied.

When the city's craftsmen heard that their sovereign had gone to the Mohist Workshop, they trickled in one after another to see what was happening, and soon the workshop was surrounded inside and out by curious onlookers.

Lu Chen's discussions with the craftsmen at the Mohist Workshop opened the door to a new world for them and showed the citizens of Great Yu City the esteem he held for craftsmen, thereby laying the ideological foundation for the future industrial development.

Seeing Lu Chen discuss a certain machine with the craftsmen, looking very approachable, Xuanyuan Yunqi suddenly felt incredibly ashamed.

She suddenly thought, maybe it was fine for the future Human Emperor to be a bit lecherous, as he was very amiable towards the common people and took good care of his subjects.

If the Human Emperor liked beauties and had more children with his concubines, and if the royal family flourished, perhaps it would have a positive effect on stabilizing the entire world.

In the evening, when Lu Chen and the group returned to the City Lord's Mansion, he was surprised to find that Xuanyuan Yunqi's Favorability had reached ninety. discover stories on mvlem-pyr

He didn't expect that just by having Xuanyuan Yunqi accompany him for one day, her Favorability nearly maxed out.

However, it was a pity that there were still ten points short of one hundred.

Moreover, Xuanyuan Yunqi was a special case; even if her Favorability reached one hundred, he couldn't let her have children right away. He had promised to make her a general, and if he let her get pregnant too quickly, he would be going back on his word. On this matter, Lu Chen had no intention of breaking his promise.

When Lu Chen and his group arrived at the City Lord's Mansion, Lord Xuanyuan was already waiting at the door. Upon seeing Lu Chen's return, Lord Xuanyuan immediately approached, saying, "Your Highness, I apologize for any trouble my daughter may have caused you."

Lu Chen, with a smile, replied, "Lord Xuanyuan jests. General Xuanyuan has been diligent and responsible; she hasn't troubled me at all."

"By the way, Lord Xuanyuan, General Xuanyuan and I have agreed that from now on, she will follow me. When I return to Yan County, she will also accompany me."

Upon hearing this, Lord Xuanyuan was first taken aback, then overjoyed inside, and immediately said, "Thank you, Your Highness, for valuing my daughter so highly!"

What Lord Xuanyuan had in mind was for Lu Chen to marry Xuanyuan Yunqi. He had been worried about Xuanyuan Yunqi's attitude towards Lu Chen, fearing she might resist. To his surprise, after just one outing, the matter seemed settled.

Truly worthy of being the Son of Destiny, the Human Emperor - no woman could resist his charm.

Seeing her father so excited, Xuanyuan Yunqi's lips twitched slightly; she instantly deciphered her father's thoughts.

But she was accompanying the North Prince down south to become a Great General, not to start a family with him. This was likely to disappoint her father.

Chapter 450: When Can This Palace Return to My Hometown..._1

Great Wu Dynasty.

Green Cloud Palace.

Wu Junwan, dressed in a red palace attire, reclined on a couch, and as the years passed, her temperament became increasingly dignified and luxurious.

At this moment, as Wu Junwan looked at the red phoenix robe she was wearing, the image of the Yue Emperor's phoenix robe appeared in her mind. Just the thought of draping that phoenix robe over herself made her feel utterly contented.

Unfortunately, she couldn't wear such a phoenix robe yet.

At least, she had no opportunity to wear one for fifty years.

Just then, a maid entered the grand hall, "Princess Junwan, Mr. Chai requests an audience!"

Wu Junwan didn't rise from her couch. She said lazily, "Let him in."

After a while, the maid brought Chai Jiliang into the Green Cloud Palace.

Upon entering, Chai Jiliang instantly felt that the Green Cloud Palace had changed greatly from before. Red curtains had been added to the hall, allowing only faint glimpses of the figures within.

The Green Cloud Palace used to be without curtains, and he could directly see Wu Junwan whenever he came.

Chai Jiliang was somewhat puzzled. Why had Wu Junwan changed the Green Cloud Palace to look like this? What was the meaning of such a change?

Naturally, Chai Jiliang didn't understand the reason behind Wu Junwan's doings, but if there was an official from the Da Yue Dynasty present in the Green Cloud Palace, they would surely realize that the current arrangement of the palace was modeled after the Yue Emperor's sleeping quarters.

Then, Wu Junwan's languid voice came from behind the curtains, "Mr. Chai, we haven't seen each other for a long time. I am quite curious why Mr. Chai is in such a hurry for me to return to the capital."

"I don't believe Mr. Chai is unable to see that my Imperial Father intends to balance the court."

Chai Jiliang said, "Princess Junwan, I naturally understand His Majesty's thoughts, but the North Country is key to dividing Great Sum. So even if this may trigger His Majesty's displeasure, I believe we cannot allow others to claim this achievement." .

"His Majesty has always been focused on expansion. Once Great Sum falls into internal strife, it will present an opportunity for Great Wu to expand further. His Majesty will not let this chance slip by, and at that time, the territory of Great Wu will increase once more."

"The Princess must be well aware that in Great Wu, princes who achieve great military success in expanding the territory eventually become strong contenders for the throne."

"You, being a woman, have to acknowledge that there has never been a precedent for a woman to ascend to the supreme position in Great Wu. If you desire that position, you must indeed accrue far more achievements than the average prince. If you allow others to take credit for such important accomplishments, do you believe you still have a hope of reaching that position?"

"Furthermore, Zhuge Zhongguang has already broken through to the Heavenly Human Realm. Although the news is not yet confirmed, considering intelligence from various sources, it is very likely to be true."

"With the ambition of the North Prince, he probably doesn't want to remain in the impoverished corner of the North Country. The North Country might wage war against Great Sum at any time, meaning, whoever convinces the North Country to attack Great Sum and contributes to its division will have the credit fall onto their shoulders. This is an achievement that can be quickly realized.

Don't you intend to seize this opportunity?"

Upon hearing Chai Jiliang's words, Wu Junwan was taken aback, her brows furrowed momentarily.

She suddenly felt that Chai Jiliang made a lot of sense. Indeed, though it wasn't yet confirmed if Zhuge Zhongguang truly had broken through to the Heavenly Human Realm, the recent provocations by the North Country's army of a hundred thousand at the border of Qi Country suggested that the North Country was prepared for war with Great Sum.

The confidence of the North Country indicated that they might truly have a Celestial warrior, giving the North Prince the audacity to act in such a manner.

The behavior of the North Prince also showed that he was probably no longer satisfied with his current position and coveted the throne of the Sum Emperor, hence his scheming to instigate war.

If at this time an envoy from Great Wu was sent to the North Country, able to incite the Sum Emperor or persuade the North Country to directly attack Great Sum, then the division of Great Sum would be at hand.

Once Great Sum divided, such tremendous credit would immediately fall upon the envoy of Great Wu sent to the North Country, a reward that could be reaped in the short term. Indeed, she shouldn't just cede it to her brothers.

With this in mind, Wu Junwan said, "Mr. Chai speaks of it lightly, but I don't believe my Imperial Father would assign me the task of an envoy to the North Country."

Chai Jiliang spoke indifferently, "Please rest assured, Princess. I will find a way to persuade His Majesty to let you take on the mission to the North Country."

Wu Junwan had recently quelled the southeastern rebellion in Great Wu. It was clear to any discerning observer that though she was a woman, the Martial Emperor regarded her highly; therefore, Chai Jiliang could use this fact as leverage.

To be an envoy to the North Country, one must show sincerity, naturally by sending someone of significant standing.

Nowadays, the Emperor's sons lacked luster and were of no use at all. They had failed to quell the southeastern rebellion even with the court's elite forces. Sending such people as envoys to the North Country would be an insult.

Wu Junwan was different. She had easily resolved the southeastern rebellion with the army, and as the Martial Emperor's long-established Princess Junwan, her importance was evident.

Since she received such attention and was such a significant figure in Great Wu, naturally, the responsibility of being an envoy to the North Country should be hers. Only in this way could they show the North Country that Great Wu was serious about establishing amicable relations.