

## Es. Benefits 451

Chapter 451: When Can This Palace Return to My Hometown...\_2

Of course, this was just the excuse Chai Jiliang had prepared to deal with the Martial Emperor. Chai Jiliang had also guessed what the Martial Emperor would eventually decide.

It was highly likely that the Martial Emperor would agree to let Wu Junwan go on a diplomatic mission to the North Country, but he would also send a prince he valued to accompany her, attempting to share some of her merits and keep Wu Junwan in check.

After all, Wu Junwan had just quelled the turmoil in the southeast and was currently in the limelight. If she were to destabilize Great Sum as well, such a great accomplishment falling into Wu Junwan's lap, she might just soar to the heavens.

Seeing Chai Jiliang so confident, Wu Junwan lazily said, "Then it's all up to Mr. Chai."

Chai Jiliang then said, "If Your Highness has no other matters, your servant will take his leave first."

Wu Junwan responded, "Very well, Mr. Chai. Go and attend to your own affairs."

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Northwestern lands.

Ruins of the Barbarian Tribe royal court.

A woman dressed in light gauze, shimmering in gold, stood atop the ancient city wall, gazing into the distance. Her figure was enchanting, her long jade legs faintly visible beneath the gauze and revealing her soft, fair waist that one could encircle with a hand. Unfortunately, her face was covered with a red veil, obscuring her unparalleled beauty.

If Lu Chen were here, he would definitely feel that this woman exuded an exotic charm.

At that moment, a robust man dressed in animal fur clothes approached the woman and handed her a fur scroll, "Goddess, this is the intelligence we have just acquired!"

The woman took the scroll from the man, unrolled it, glanced at its contents, and her brows instantly furrowed.

"Foolish creature, to act on your own without heeding my commands."

Her voice was cold yet carried a hint of allure. Although she sounded angry, her voice was strangely comforting to those who heard it.

The robust man then said, "The other tribes have also received news of the Tianqi King's death. They believe the Tianqi King was an important ally of ours, and we must avenge this grievance. If we do not, wouldn't it look like we are letting those two-legged sheep belittle us?"

The woman replied indifferently, "They don't even know how the Tianqi King was defeated, and they're rushing to their deaths so quickly. With brains like theirs, the Barbarian Tribe is bound to perish."

Hearing this, the man scratched the back of his head and then said, "Goddess, I initially thought we should seek revenge too. After all, the Tianqi King was a branch of our royal lineage, and his death at the hands of the Great Sum people is a disgrace for our Barbarian Tribe royal court."

The woman spoke lightly, "You still know of the royal court? The royal court has long been fractured. Which tribe doesn't have its own royal court now?"

Hearing the woman's words, the Barbarian Tribe's robust man said nothing more.

The woman continued, "First, send someone to infiltrate Great Yue, and then through Great Yue go to the North Country. Gather information on how the Tianqi King was defeated."

"He was, after all, a Grandmaster, and he also had an army of four hundred thousand. He shouldn't have been defeated so thoroughly."

The Barbarian Tribe's robust man said, "I understand. I will find a way to send someone to infiltrate Great Yue."

As the sound of his voice faded, the Barbarian Tribe's robust man turned and left.

The woman, looking at the red sunset in the sky and the geese flying in a "human" formation, murmured to herself, "When can I return to my homeland..."

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After inspecting Great Yu City and arranging the construction of the steam engine and railway, Lu Chen returned to Yan County with Xuanyuan Yunqi.

He had just returned to Yan County and hadn't even had the chance to take a bath when a maid came looking for him, "Prince, Lady Wang is looking for you."

Hearing this, Lu Chen was momentarily stunned. He had just arrived at the Prince's Mansion, and that bitch was already seeking him out? Did she really want to be dealt with that badly?

Lu Chen inquired, "Where is she now?"

The maid replied, "The study."

Lu Chen said indifferently, "Tell her to wait for me in her room. I need to take a bath first."

"Yes, my Prince."

The maid then turned and left.

Subsequently, Lu Chen returned to the main hall and instructed Mu Zixuan to prepare hot water. He then enjoyed a comfortable hot bath in the bathing pool.

After finishing his bath, Lu Chen went to find Wang Qingci.

The moment he pushed the door and entered the room, he found Wang Qingci half-reclining on the bed in a vulnerable state. Then Wang Qingci said in a coquettish tone, "Prince, I've been ill recently. Could you please help me heal?"

Hearing Wang Qingci's provocative tone, Lu Chen did not indulge her. He entered the room, waved his hand, pressed her down on the bed, and treated her well.

Thanks to Lu Chen's treatment, Wang Qingci soon recovered completely, and her body was as good as new.

After an indeterminate amount of time, Lu Chen hugged Wang Qingci's delicate body and asked, "Now, tell me, what do you need?"

"I highly doubt you were so eager to come back to see me just for this." story by m|v\_l,e,m,p,y,r

Although Lu Chen knew that bitch Wang Qingci needed to be dealt with by him regularly to be comfortable, she most likely brought information each time she came to him. She wouldn't come to him without any intelligence.

In Wang Qingci's view, if she didn't have any intelligence to offer, she wasn't worthy of sharing his bed, so she always had to bring back some intelligence.

Underneath Lu Chen, Wang Qingci weakly extended her hand, searched beneath the pillow, and withdrew an envelope. Then, lifting her hand, she handed it over to Lu Chen behind her.

Chapter 452: When Can This Palace Return to My Hometown...\_3

Lu Chen received the envelope from Wang Qingci and opened it to see the contents.

Upon seeing what was inside, Lu Chen chuckled to himself.

After hearing Lu Chen's laughter, Wang Qingci teased, "Is the Prince delighted because he knows that the great beauty Wu Junwan is coming, and he can't help but laugh out loud?"

Hearing this, Lu Chen chuckled and then said, "You little minx, you actually dare tease your master, it seems you haven't been disciplined enough by me?"

Wang Qingci snorted with laughter, then responded, "This humble one is already used to it, no matter how the Prince treats me, I am fearless."

Facing Wang Qingci's challenge, Lu Chen said, "Oh, is that so?"

"Then until tomorrow evening, I will be in my room, having a heart-to-heart with Mr. Wang."

Having said that, Lu Chen used his spiritual energy to tear the intelligence report in his hand to shreds, then bent down again and continued his earnest conversation with Wang Qingci.

Inside the Prince's Mansion.

Lin Wanyun paced back and forth outside the main courtyard, seemingly anxious about something. Just then, Chu Yuqin came to the main courtyard looking for Mu Zixuan for some matter and saw Lin Wanyun walking back and forth at the entrance. Out of curiosity, Chu Yuqin asked, "Lin, do you have something you wish to discuss with Chen'er?"

Upon hearing Chu Yuqin's voice, Lin Wanyun paused and then turned to look at Chu Yuqin, saying, "Um, I'm not sure if I should bring it up with him."

Chu Yuqin quickly caught on, almost guessing what it might be. The only thing that could make Lin Wanyun this concerned would probably have to do with Chen Wanrong.

It was highly likely that something had happened to Chen Wanrong after she returned to the Mysterious Moon Palace.

With that in mind, Chu Yuqin asked, "Is it about Miss Chen?"

Lin Wanyun nodded, her expression full of worry, but she said nothing.

Chu Yuqin continued, "Chen'er is not in the main courtyard. I just heard some noise coming from that bitch Wang Qingci's room; he might be disciplining that female slave."

Lin Wanyun replied, "I understand."

After that, Lin Wanyun turned and left the main courtyard, but instead of heading towards Wang Qingci's quarters, she went in the opposite direction, apparently deciding not to disclose Chen Wanrong's situation to Lu Chen for the time being.

Chu Yuqin didn't give it much thought and entered the main courtyard directly, seeking Mu Zixuan to inquire about prenatal care methods.

The next morning.

A jade hand lingered on the door of a room, only to be swiftly pulled back by another hand. Then, sounds of Wang Qingci repeatedly begging for mercy could be heard by Yelv Nanyan and Xiao Wen Yao in the neighboring courtyard.

At that time, Xiao Wen Yao was having breakfast in Yelv Nanyan's room. After taking a bite of a steamed bun and a sip of porridge, she said, "It must be that Wang angered the Prince last night."

"The Prince isn't usually so fierce."

This time Xiao Wen Yao accompanied Lu Chen to Great Yu City, serving him every day. Although he had been harsher with her compared to Mu Zixuan and the others, he had never been so brutal as to make her cry out in despair.

Wang Qingci was different; from last night's continuous wailing until this morning, even the people in the next courtyard could hear her. In Xiao Wen Yao's opinion, this was clearly the Prince's anger showing, which was why he was being so fierce.



Smiling faintly at Xiao Wenyao's remark, Yelv Nanyan then said, "It's not about being provoked or not; this is simply the Prince's way of getting along with his sister Wang."

"The Prince has a different way of getting along with each of his wives and concubines. He adopts an approach that matches our personalities."

"Isn't it always like this when he visits sister Wang's room?"

Xiao Wenyao considered it for a moment, then tossed the rest of the bun into her mouth, chewed it a few times, and said, "That's true. Every time the Prince visits sister Wang's room, it's never a pleasant experience for her."

Just then, Wang Qingci's voice suddenly became loud, startling Xiao Wenyao. With a somewhat schadenfreude expression, Xiao Wenyao said, "Fortunately, the Prince is relatively gentle with me; he has never been that cruel to me."

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At dusk.

The setting sun cast a glow.

Reddish rays of twilight crept over the windowsill into the room, bathing the sweat-drenched skin of the occupants in a bronze hue. .

At this time, Lu Chen sat on the edge of the bed, turning to glance out the window, then looking at Wang Qingci sprawled on the bed before saying, "I keep my word, is Mr. Wang satisfied with the Prince's punishment?"

"If Mr. Wang feels wronged, feel free to speak up, I would be happy to keep you company."

Upon hearing this, Wang Qingci hastily said, "Master, you are the most formidable, your humble servant was ignorant and dared to challenge you, please have mercy on me..."

Lu Chen snorted with amusement, patted her derriere, then got up to dress and promptly left the room.

As Lu Chen stepped out of the room and looked at the evening sky, he thought to himself that it wasn't good to be so decadent on his first day back from Great Yu City.

However, it was a pity; he had assumed that if he had more time, and Wang Qingci had no chance to expel the impurities from her body with her practice, he could have made her fall prey just as Chu Yuqin had last time.

Unfortunately, his plan failed this time.

It seemed he would have to wait for another opportunity to test on Yelv Nanyan, perhaps by dragging out the time longer, he might succeed.

Lu Chen didn't dwell on it. He walked towards the grand hall, planning to go back for dinner. After being busy all day and night, he was also hungry.

When he arrived at the grand hall, several of Lu Chen's wives and concubines were already seated at the dining table. Seeing Lu Chen arrive, they all gazed at him intently. Smiling, Lu Chen said, "Why are you all staring at me like that? Is there something on my face?"

As he spoke, he sat down, and then Chu Yuqin said quietly, "Chen'er, yesterday Lin came to the main courtyard looking for you."

Hearing this, Lu Chen asked curiously, "Looking for me? What for?"

Chu Yuqin answered, "Judging by her troubled expression, it's most likely about Miss Chen."

At those words, the smile on Lu Chen's face instantly froze.

He immediately got up and said, "Go ahead and have dinner; don't wait for me."

As soon as he finished speaking, Lu Chen went straight to Yunrong Courtyard.

Chapter 453: Shut Up! You still know he is your eldest apprentice-sister's child!\_1

Lu Chen arrived at Yunrong Courtyard, seeming to find Lin Wanyun sitting despondently on a stone bench in the pavilion, looking troubled about something.

Lu Chen immediately asked, "Madam Lin, has something happened to Rongrong?"

Hearing Lu Chen's voice, Lin Wanyun abruptly looked up at him.

She seemed about to say something, but then she swallowed her words.

Lu Chen then approached Lin Wanyun and continued, "Whatever happened, just tell me directly."

Lin Wanyun sighed and then replied, "The Honorable found out about her loss of purity."

This...

Lu Chen was momentarily stunned, then asked, "Isn't that Honorable of yours in closed-door cultivation?"

"I remember Rongrong mentioning that she wouldn't be coming out of seclusion so soon. How could she have discovered this?"

Lin Wanyun sighed again, then said, "I have no idea how it happened, but some speculate in the Mysterious Moon Palace that it's because the Honorable sensed the emergence of someone from the Heavenly Human Realm. Worried about the safety of Mysterious Moon Palace, she ended her seclusion early."

Lu Chen frowned and then asked, "Does that mean Rongrong has been imprisoned by her Master?"

Lin Wanyun answered, "I don't know if she has been imprisoned or not. I just heard about it, and now the whole Mysterious Moon Palace is aware of the issue." find more stories on NovelBin|lempyr

Although the Mysterious Moon Palace didn't forbid disciples from finding romantic partners, they were simply instructed not to bear children. However, Chen Wanrong, being the Palace Master, had a special status. How could she casually give herself to another?

The members of the Mysterious Moon Palace were now divided into two camps. One camp believed that while romantic affairs weren't forbidden, the Palace Master should remain chaste and not be involved with any man, especially someone from outside the Palace.

What if one day Palace Master Chen Wanrong acted irrationally out of emotion and brought disaster upon the entire Mysterious Moon Palace?

However, the other camp believed that despite being the Palace Master, Chen Wanrong was human and had natural desires, so she shouldn't be prevented from seeking a romantic partner.

Since Chen Wanrong's matter became known within the Mysterious Moon Palace, the two camps have been fiercely arguing. Ultimately, the decision of how to deal with Palace Master Chen Wanrong was up to the Honorable. No matter how much the others quarreled, it wouldn't change the Honorable's decision.

Hearing Lin Wanyun's answer, Lu Chen's brows knit tightly. He had not anticipated that Chen Wanrong's Master would leave her seclusion so quickly and discover the truth about her loss of virginity.

This was troublesome.

Her Master appeared to be from the Heavenly Human Realm, or even above, and right now, Zhuge Zhongguang had not truly achieved the Heavenly Human Realm. If Chen Wanrong's Master came looking for trouble, he probably wouldn't be a match for her.

Seeing the worry on Lu Chen's face, Lin Wanyun comforted him, "Chen'er, you don't need to worry that the Honorable will come directly to you. Although she's powerful, she seems to have encountered problems in her cultivation over the years, and it's uncertain whether she still has the strength of the Heavenly Human Realm."

"Moreover, there's already one from the Heavenly Human Realm in the North Country. Even if she knows you're the cause of Rongrong's plight, considering the presence of a powerful Celestial in the North Country, she is unlikely to come after you."

Lu Chen was not reassured by Lin Wanyun's words because he knew very well that Zhuge Zhongguang hadn't actually broken through to the Heavenly Human Realm. The breakthrough was just a lie to intimidate others.

Lin Wanyun continued, "The fact that the Honorable hasn't gone to the Great Sum Imperial Palace to reclaim the Sacred Artifact of Mysterious Moon Palace suggests that her strength has declined significantly. Otherwise, she would have already snatched the Sacred Artifact back from the Imperial Palace."

Hearing Lin Wanyun's logic, Lu Chen realized, right, if that Honorable was indeed so powerful, invincible in the world, then why would she stay put in Mysterious Moon Palace, not even attempting to take back the Palace's Sacred Artifact when it was stolen?

Clearly, her strength must have fallen to the Grandmaster Realm, making her unsure if she could defeat the Sum Emperor, who possessed the Sacred Artifact. After all, the Sacred Artifact could momentarily boost one's strength to the Celestial Realm, and a Grandmaster was no match for a Celestial.

Lu Chen thought to himself, hoping that Zhuge Zhongguang's so-called "Celestial Realm" presence would be enough to fool Chen Wanrong's Master and keep her from daring to venture into North Country.

With that thought, Lu Chen sighed, then said, "Who knows how your Honorable will deal with Rongrong."

Lin Wanyun said, "After all, she is the Honorable's only disciple left. I guess she won't hurt her, but to strip her of her position as Palace Master and confine her is quite likely."

As she spoke, Lin Wanyun glanced at Lu Chen's reaction. To be honest, she was initially reluctant to tell Lu Chen about this matter because she worried that it might result in enmity between him and Mysterious Moon Palace.

The current strength of North Country was too formidable; although it was not yet a match for Mysterious Moon Palace, it took countless years for Mysterious Moon Palace to reach its current stature. However, in just a few short years since Lu Chen's arrival in North Country, its power had become frighteningly strong, to the point where they even had a Celestial-level warrior.

If allowed to continue growing for a few more years, it was not impossible for North Country to surpass Mysterious Moon Palace.

Chapter 454: Shut Up! You still know he is your eldest apprentice-sister's child!\_2

If Mysterious Moon Palace and the North Country fell out over the matter of Chen Wanrong, and Lu Chen decided to lead his troops against Mysterious Moon Palace, the Palace's final outcome would likely not be good.

Lin Wanyun was very impressed with Lu Chen. In her opinion, the development of Mysterious Moon Palace had essentially stalled, whereas the North Country was rapidly advancing, with its

strength growing at an especially fast pace. No one could predict whether another Celestial Realm powerhouse would emerge from the North Country in the future.

From Lin Wanyun's personal standpoint, she really hoped the two powers would not come into conflict.

While Lin Wanyun was lost in thought, Lu Chen spoke up, "As long as Rongrong's master does not harm her, it's fine. If her master confines her and won't allow her to leave the mountain, I will personally go to bring her down once the North Country stabilizes."

Hearing this, Lin Wanyun quickly said, "Chen'er, don't be impulsive. There might be other ways to handle this situation."

Lu Chen smiled and asked, "Madam Lin, do you have any other ideas?"

Lin Wanyun replied, "Rongrong's master is particularly good to her. If Rongrong insists on becoming your woman, I believe her master will eventually let her come down the mountain to find you."

Lu Chen said, "That might not..."

Before Lu Chen could finish speaking, the voice of a maid came from outside, "Prince, Commander Qin is looking for you. He says he has good news and urges you to go to the study immediately!"

Lu Chen was startled by the words.



Good news?

What good news?

Lu Chen immediately stood up, then said to Lin Wanyun, "Madam Lin, if you have any news about Rongrong, tell me right away."

Lin Wanyun replied, "Yes, alright."

Lu Chen then turned and walked towards the study.

If Qin Yushan emphasized that he had good news, then the information he brought this time must be of great value.

In a short while, Lu Chen appeared in the courtyard of the study. At that moment, Qin Yushan, seeing Lu Chen arrive, was about to come over to say something when he suddenly remembered that the matter was not suitable to be discussed outside, so he simply saluted and said, "Greetings, Prince!"

Lu Chen nodded and said, "Yes. What is it?"

Qin Yushan suggested, "Prince, let's talk elsewhere."

Hearing this, Lu Chen knew the intelligence was of great importance. He immediately walked toward the study, saying as he went, "Come with me."

The two then entered the study, and as soon as they were inside, Qin Yushan promptly closed the door of the study and handed a small slip of paper to Lu Chen, "Prince, a Pigeon Letter from Great Yu City. Xuanyuan Chaoge has broken through to the Heavenly Human Realm!"

Upon hearing this, Lu Chen was stunned.

The Heavenly... Celestial Realm???

When he left Great Yu City, he had not seen any signs that Xuanyuan Chaoge was about to make the breakthrough. How could he have broken through so suddenly?

He had only returned to the Prince's Mansion yesterday, and today he received a Pigeon Letter from Great Yu City.

Wait, wasn't there supposed to be some special trial required to break through to the Celestial Realm?

According to Zhuge Zhongguang's conjecture, every Grandmaster who wanted to break through to the Celestial Realm had to undergo a special trial from this world, like a certain Celestial Realm powerhouse from Mysterious Moon Palace who had once hunted down many Grandmasters to achieve their breakthrough, or Zhuge Zhongguang himself, who needed the North Country to have more scholars so that he could absorb the Qi of Literature.

What was the trial this world set for Xuanyuan Chaoge?

Lu Chen pondered for a moment and thought that Xuanyuan Chaoge's trial might very likely be related to himself. Before he had gone to Great Yu City, Xuanyuan Chaoge had lived for three hundred years without breaking through to the Celestial Realm. Yet, having merely inspected Great Yu City, Xuanyuan Chaoge broke through immediately after.

Thinking of this, Lu Chen's lips curled into a slight smile. He had just been worried about Chen Wanrong's master causing him trouble, but now, with a Celestial Realm powerhouse in the North Country, there was no immediate concern about Mysterious Moon Palace.

Without delay, Lu Chen instructed Qin Yushan, "Send a Pigeon Letter at once. Tell Xuanyuan Chaoge to hand over the position of City Lord of Great Yu City to his second son and come to Yan County to take up an important position."

Although he wasn't sure if Chen Wanrong's master would cause him trouble, it was better to call Xuanyuan Chaoge to Yan County just to be safe. \_em \_pyr.

Qin Yushan said, "Yes, Prince."

Lu Chen continued, "Go now."

Qin Yushan bowed and said, "Your subordinate takes his leave."

With those words, Qin Yushan turned and left the study to write the letter.

Meanwhile.

Mysterious Moon Palace.

A cold and stunningly beautiful woman with silver-white hair was seated on the throne in the great hall, watching Chen Wanrong, who knelt before her, with an expressionless face.

The entire hall was empty except for the two of them.

The woman spoke again, "Who exactly is that man?"

Chen Wanrong knelt on the ground with an indifferent expression, giving no response.

Seeing Chen Wanrong still not answering, the woman said coldly, "Rongrong, it seems you have forgotten all the teachings I imparted to you. I had only recently retreated into seclusion, and you went down the mountain to find a man. Do you have any idea how losing your Primordial Yin would affect your cultivation?"

"You could have broken through to the Celestial Realm in at most fifty years. Now that your Pure Yin Body is damaged and contaminated with worldly karma, even if you had a hundred or even two hundred years, you might never be able to break through to the Celestial Realm!"

The woman grew angrier as she spoke.

Chills emanated from her body, quickly enveloping the entire hall in ice.

Chapter 455: Shut Up! You still know he is your eldest apprentice-sister's child!\_3

At this moment, Chen Wanrong still knelt quietly on the ground.

Seeing Chen Wanrong maintain her expressionless face, the woman sighed and then said, "Enough."

Then, Chen Wanrong finally spoke, "Disciple is unfilial and has failed to meet Master's expectations. I hope Master will allow me to resign from the position of Palace Master."

Hearing this, the woman snorted coldly, "Resign from the position of Palace Master? What, do you wish to descend the mountain and be with your lover?"

Chen Wanrong replied firmly, "I hope Master will grant this request."

As soon as Chen Wanrong's words fell, an extremely cold energy burst forth from the woman's body, sending Chen Wanrong's body flying in an instant. She tumbled several times on the ground before stabilizing herself.

At this time, the woman said, "Do you still remember how your senior sister died?"

Chen Wanrong struggled to rise from the ground, then continued kneeling.

The woman went on, "Your senior sister didn't heed her teacher's advice years ago and insisted on marrying the Sum Emperor, ultimately meeting her tragic end. Do you intend to follow in your senior sister's footsteps?"

"Even if you don't tell me who that man is, I have a fairly good idea of his identity."

"Based on reports from the disciples of the Mysterious Moon Palace, you have been staying at the North Prince Mansion recently. The North Prince is a known womanizer with a houseful of wives and concubines. It's likely that he is the one who took your innocence!" .

Hearing this, Chen Wanrong hastily said, "All of this was the disciple's own wish. Please do not blame others, Master!"

The woman snorted again, "You still think of protecting your little lover at a time like this. You're deeply in love with him indeed."

Chen Wanrong continued, "The North Prince is the son of my senior sister. Since senior sister was the Goddess of the Mysterious Moon Palace, the North Prince is the God's Son of the Palace. Even if your disciple has lost her purity to him..."

Chen Wanrong's words were abruptly cut off by the woman.

"Silence! You know he's the son of your senior sister!"

"What good can come from the bloodline of the Sum Emperor!"

"Your senior sister died because of the Sum Emperor, and one day you will die because of the Sum Emperor's son too! Do you think the North Prince approached you with good intentions?"

In the woman's view, the North Prince approaching Chen Wanrong was most likely aiming to control the Mysterious Moon Palace and then use it to fulfill his personal ambitions, just as the Sum Emperor had done in the past; the scenario was all too familiar.

At this point, Chen Wanrong said resolutely, "It was I who approached North Prince first!"

Upon hearing this, the woman almost burst into laughter, "You approached him? What for? Surely you don't really think of him as the God's Son of the Mysterious Moon Palace? Feel sorry for him because he lost his mother at a young age? Want to take care of him on behalf of your senior sister?"

"Take care of him until you end up in his bed?"

"Looking at you, it seems you really want to follow in your senior sister's footsteps and bear North Prince's children."

Chen Wanrong closed her mouth and said nothing.

Seeing Chen Wanrong's expressionless face, the woman became enraged. She then said, "What sin have I committed to have taken you two as my disciples!"

"Are men really that important? Can you not live without them?"

At this point, the woman fell into silence, and the great hall became quiet. After what seemed like a long time, the woman spoke again, "Since he is your senior sister's son, I will not pursue his

responsibility. Tell me, what is his true nature like? Is he as lustful and hedonistic as the rumors say?"

Upon hearing this, Chen Wanrong breathed a sigh of relief internally. She was worried that her Master would find trouble with Lu Chen for her sake. Since her Master still harbored old affections, Lu Chen was probably safe. After all, Lu Chen was also the God's Son of the Mysterious Moon Palace.

Chen Wanrong then said, "He does indeed fancy beauty, but he is very good to all of his women."

Hearing this, the white-haired woman snorted, "As expected, all men are alike."

The white-haired woman continued to ask, "How is his martial arts talent?"

Chen Wanrong answered, "He... has already broken through to the Grandmaster Realm, and the reason I was able to break through to the Grandmaster Realm so quickly is also due to his assistance."

Hearing this, the white-haired woman was taken aback, then her eyebrows slightly furrowed, "Grandmaster? Isn't he only eighteen this year? With his love for beauty, how could he have broken through to the Grandmaster Realm so quickly?"

Chen Wanrong replied, "Disciple does not know."

The white-haired woman spoke with vexation, "You don't even know his background, and you already gave yourself to him? You're really trying to anger me to death!"



The white-haired woman took a deep breath, then continued to ask, "You said that you were able to break through to the Grandmaster Realm with his help. What's the story there?"

Hearing this question, Chen Wanrong's cold and pale cheeks flushed with a hint of red. She hesitated.

Seeing Chen Wanrong not answering, the white-haired woman went on, "What? Have you resorted to some deviant and wicked method? Too ashamed to speak of it?"

Chen Wanrong slightly bit her lip, then answered, "When I was in bliss with him, I broke through to the Grandmaster Realm. Moreover, when I am with him, my strength increases rapidly."

Upon hearing Chen Wanrong's answer, the white-haired woman was suddenly taken aback, as if she understood something.

Then, with a wave of her hand, Chen Wanrong's body uncontrollably flew straight in front of the white-haired woman, who quickly grabbed Chen Wanrong's wrist to examine her body.

Afterward, she murmured in a surprised tone, "No Evil Yin Energy detected, it's indeed the authentic Dual Cultivation Skill."

"He's not on the path of martial arts, he's on the Tao of Cultivation!"

The white-haired woman appeared utterly astounded, and after a while, she came to her senses and then said, "Never would I have thought that Yue'er's child could have such fortune."

Having said this, the white-haired woman released Chen Wanrong's wrist and then asked, "Do you know why I don't forbid the disciples of the Mysterious Moon Palace from finding romantic partners?"

Chen Wanrong said, "Disciple does not know."

The white-haired woman explained, "In the world where I come from, there were people who used relations between men and women to develop a unique way of cultivation, the Dual Cultivation Skill. However, this method can only be practiced by men and women who truly love each other. Without a mutual connection of heart and soul, it could cause both parties to stumble into madness."

"I have not forbidden disciples from seeking romantic partners because I wanted to see if any would understand this way of cultivation."

Chapter 456: Yun Xianxian\_1

Although Palace Master Yun Xianxian would always speak as if all men were alike, appearing to despise them, she had never forbidden romantic relationships between the male and female disciples of the Mysterious Moon Palace, let alone prohibited their intimate relations.

On one hand, she was well aware that humans have the seven emotions and six desires, and the Tao of Cultivation is the loneliest journey; repressing one's emotions and desires for a long time will inevitably lead to an accumulation of negative emotions, which can easily cause a cultivator to deviate during practice.

On the other hand, of course, she told Chen Wanrong that she wanted to see if any disciple of the Mysterious Moon Palace could comprehend the Dual Cultivation Skill.

As of now, not a single disciple had grasped the Dual Cultivation Skill, but certain disciples with Dao companions had noticeably faster cultivation speeds after obtaining Dao companions compared to those without, a phenomenon that Yun Xianxian had long noticed.

Naturally, compared to some ascetic disciples, those with Dao companions found it hard to stand out significantly.

For example, a woman she once brought up the mountain focused all her energy on cultivation; unlike Chen Wanrong, who was her direct disciple, she just gave the woman her Cultivation Technique and offered some guidance. Originally, she wasn't optimistic about the female disciple, yet she managed to break through to the Heavenly Human Realm in a short period of time.

Of course, even though abstinence could accelerate cultivation speed and enable one to go farther, Yun Xianxian never considered forbidding the disciples of the Mysterious Moon Palace from seeking Dao companions. In her view, some people are simply not meant to travel far on this path.

However, this did not include her two direct disciples, one being Chu Yue and the other Chen Wanrong.

Yet, both of her direct disciples disregarded her words and insisted on finding men, which greatly annoyed her.

After examining Chen Wanrong's body and confirming there was no Evil Yin Energy within her, Yun Xianxian was pretty sure that Lu Chen practiced some authentic Dual Cultivation Skill, which somewhat relieved her. As long as Lu Chen was not using the crooked paths of demonic cultivation, not exploiting women's Primordial Yin for his own cultivation, it would be acceptable.

No wonder Chen Wanrong had just said that Lu Chen treated his women well; the Dual Cultivation Skill requires harmony of mind and spirit between man and woman, so naturally, Lu Chen would be good to his wives and concubines.

Being able to achieve such harmony also implied, from another perspective, that Lu Chen likely truly cherished his wives and concubines; otherwise, he wouldn't be able to use the authentic Dual Cultivation Skill.

At this thought, Palace Master Yun reflected that Yue'er's child turned out to be a man of great affection.

At this moment, Chen Wanrong spoke, "Master, since I and the North Prince practice the authentic Dual Cultivation Skill, may I resign my position as the Palace Master and marry the North Prince to cultivate in the North Prince Mansion?" the place NovelBinmpy \_r

Seeing that Chen Wanrong was still thinking about going to the North Country, Palace Master Yun said coldly, "Even if you practice the authentic Dual Cultivation Skill, what of it? The greatest taboo of the Dual Cultivation Skill is inconstancy of affection. He, as a Seignior, has so many wives and concubines — how much of his heart can be on you? Sooner or later, he will deviate."

Confronted with Yun Xianxian's words, Chen Wanrong was despairing inside. It seemed she was destined to be confined to the Mysterious Moon Palace by her own master.

She wondered if Lu Chen had been serious when he spoke those words, telling her that if she did not return, he would come and take her back by force.

She actually hoped that Lu Chen wasn't serious, for although she might never see Lu Chen again in her life, she was even less eager for a conflict to arise between the North Country and the Mysterious Moon Palace.

Just as Chen Wanrong thought she might never see Lu Chen again in her life, Yun Xianxian said, "Enough; what's done is done. Since your Pure Yin Body has been broken, there is no other way but to accept the mistake as it is."

Hearing this, Chen Wanrong could hardly believe her ears; she gazed at Yun Xianxian's icy face and then asked, "Master, do you mean you'll allow me to leave the mountain?"

Yun Xianxian snorted and replied, "You're thinking too highly of yourself. Since you've been appointed by me as the Palace Master of the Mysterious Moon Palace, you're to keep that position."

"Once my strength recovers somewhat, I myself will go to test that lover of yours. If he has feelings for you, I can permit you to enhance your Cultivation State through the Dual Cultivation Skill in the future. But if he's only fond of your body, without real affection, then you will stay in the Mysterious Moon Palace for good, never thinking of going to him again."

This...

Chen Wanrong was anxious inside; she hadn't expected her master to actually consider going to test Lu Chen.

If her master found Lu Chen to be a lecherous libertine, preoccupied with women instead of proper affairs, wouldn't that mean the end of her relationship with him?

To be honest, at this point, Chen Wanrong had no confidence in Lu Chen at all; she didn't believe for a second that he could withstand her master's test.

After spending time with Lu Chen, she saw him as thoroughly lecherous. Although he indeed could improve his skill through the Dual Cultivation Skill, to Chen Wanrong, it seemed Lu Chen was more interested in the pleasures than in cultivation. She didn't think Lu Chen had his mind set on dual cultivation.

Despite her anxiety, Chen Wanrong dared not say no outright. If she strongly resisted her master's decision to go down the mountain and test Lu Chen, her master would surely conclude that something was wrong with him.

Chapter 457: Yun Xianxian\_2

Now, all she could hope for was that during the time her master Lu Chen descended from the mountain, he would focus all his attention on his rightful duties and not spend his days indulging with his wives and concubines.

At that moment, Yun Xianxian said, "Alright, go busy yourself with your affairs."

Following those words, Chen Wanrong rose to her feet, "Yes, Master."

As her voice faded, Chen Wanrong turned around and walked towards the grand hall's entrance. Just when she was about to reach the door, Yun Xianxian continued, "If he is exceptionally talented, just like your senior sister, then I might also consider taking him as my personal disciple."

Hearing this, Chen Wanrong was slightly stunned. If her master truly accepted Lu Chen as a personal disciple, then her relationship with Lu Chen would become legitimate.

Chen Wanrong instantly understood her master's intention. Her master had essentially agreed to their relationship, and now it all depended on whether Lu Chen could pass her master's test.

Chen Wanrong then turned back to Yun Xianxian and bowed respectfully, "Thank you, Master, for granting this favor."

Yun Xianxian coldly said, "Quickly get out; your presence is vexing to me."

"Disciple bids farewell." After saying this, Chen Wanrong turned once again and left the grand hall.

Watching Chen Wanrong's departing figure, Yun Xianxian let out a soft sigh and muttered to herself, "The path of cultivation is destined to be lonely. The advancements brought by the Dual Cultivation Skill are ultimately fleeting. I hope you won't regret it in the future."

Afterwards, Yun Xianxian closed her eyes, and a chill emanated from her body. The entire grand hall became further encased in ice as she continued to speak to herself, "A Celestial Realm powerhouse has appeared up north. The energy signature this time does not seem to be the same as the one who previously triggered the heavenly phenomenon."

"The North Prince, blessed with fortune in the way of the immortals, is also in the North Country. Could there be some causal connection between these events?"

"It seems I must hasten to recover my strength and find time to visit the North Country."

...

Half a month later.

North Country.

At dawn, Lu Chen was lying in Yelv Nanyan's Gentle Jade Fragrance, appearing utterly relaxed. Xuanyuan Chaoge was already on his way to Yan County and would probably arrive there soon.

Ever since learning that Xuanyuan Chaoge had broken through to the Celestial Realm, Lu Chen felt no pressure at all. With a Celestial Realm powerhouse present, he could boldly do as he wished, as long as he did not provoke any other Celestial Realm strongmen.

It was then that Lu Chen suddenly remembered the Essence Pill and propped himself up, looking into Yelv Nanyan's eyes, he said, "Right, Nanyan, I have a question for you."

Yelv Nanyan asked curiously, "What would you like to ask, Prince?"

Lu Chen then said, "I have two types of pills here. One kind can make you stay forever young, and the other can enhance your strength. If you had to choose one, would you choose eternal youth or enhanced strength?"

Upon hearing Lu Chen's question, Yelv Nanyan suddenly thought of something she had observed recently. Mu Zixuan, Xiaozhou, and Dazhou seemed to have become much more beautiful, and their skin appeared to be more tender. In fact, the three of them were now stepping out without any makeup, apart from arranging their hair in the morning, their faces were completely free of rouge.

Yelv Nanyan thought to herself that it seemed the reason the princess and Xiaozhou, Dazhou had become more beautiful was due to taking the pill that granted everlasting youth.



At this time, Yelv Nanyan asked, "Prince, when you say 'eternal youth,' do you mean one will never get old?"

Lu Chen replied, "Yes, aside from hair turning white, there will be no other changes; your face will remain wrinkle-free."

Hearing Lu Chen's answer, Yelv Nanyan didn't hesitate to say, "I choose the pill that grants eternal youth."

Surprised by Yelv Nanyan's choice, Lu Chen said, "I thought you would choose the pill that enhances strength."

Yelv Nanyan smiled faintly and then said, "If I were still in the Sky Wolf King's tribe, I would likely choose the pill that enhances strength."

If it were before, Yelv Nanyan, despite caring about her beauty, would have preferred to enhance her strength in order to protect herself in the harsh environment of the grassland.

But now that she was the North Prince's woman, her living environment had changed; she no longer needed to possess great strength.

She, of course, understood that greater strength meant slower aging, but even with slow aging, one would still get old. She was already in her thirties, and in a few years, she would be forty. With her strength, perhaps she could still maintain her charm at forty, but by fifty, signs of aging would be inevitable on her body.

Moreover, now that her heart harbored affection for someone, women who fall in love tend to become particularly concerned about their appearance.

In Yelv Nanyan's eyes, even if the growth in strength could delay the aging process temporarily, she didn't believe she could improve much more; she lacked confidence in herself.

One option promised certain everlasting youth, while the other required effort and carried great risk, and ultimately, aging was inevitable. Between these, there was no need for much consideration in choosing.

Initially, Lu Chen thought that Yelv Nanyan was quite an independent woman and that she would likely choose the Essence Pill. This was why he presented the choice to her, allowing Yelv Nanyan to decide for herself.

Chapter 458: Yun Xianxian\_3

However, it's no surprise that Yelv Nanyan would choose the Preserving Beauty Pill, that woman covets beauty.

Lu Chen smiled, then conjured a small porcelain bottle out of thin air and said to Yelv Nanyan, "Inside this is the Preserving Beauty Pill that can keep a woman eternally youthful."

Hearing what Lu Chen said, Yelv Nanyan asked with slight surprise, "Prince, is there really such a pill in this world?"

Lu Chen replied, "Of course, there is. However, it is an Immortal Pill, exceedingly precious."

Upon saying this, Lu Chen placed the small porcelain bottle amid the Gentle Jade Fragrance, then added, "This is for you. After taking it, impurities will be expelled. Later, have your maids prepare some hot water for you to bathe with."

Immediately, Yelv Nanyan said, "Thank you for bestowing the pill upon me, Prince!"

At that moment, Lu Chen got up from Yelv Nanyan's side, glanced at her voluptuous body, and couldn't help but sigh internally. Having a Martial Artist become pregnant was indeed difficult.

Another half a month passed and there was still no reaction in the bellies of Yelv Nanyan and the other Martial Artists. Only Chu Yuqin became pregnant almost immediately.

Lu Chen didn't think too much about it and got off the bed. Yelv Nanyan also quickly got up and helped Lu Chen dress.

An hour later.

Hall of Political Affairs.

The main topic for today's early court was discussing Princess Wu's mission to North Country.

Regarding this matter, a great number of officials from North Country held an opposing stance.

As an important figure in Great Wu, if Princess Wu was coming to North Country, there had to be a hidden agenda, one which was certainly no secret to anyone.

It was apparent that Great Wu was aiming to incite an internal war between North Country and Great Sum so that it could capitalize on the resulting division within Great Sum for its own benefit.

It was then that an official from the Universal Academy faction said, "Prince, I believe North Country doesn't yet have the capacity to stand independently.

Although North Country has signed trade agreements with Great Jue and engaged in commerce with other dynasties, many of our important resources still come predominantly from other regions of Great Sum, particularly the ores related to weapons production."

"If we become estranged from the Great Sum imperial court now, and if the court decides to cut off relations completely with us, North Country will struggle to find means to obtain those resources in a short time."

"Although North Country now possesses masters of the Heavenly Human Realm, nobody knows whether His Majesty has a trump card capable of countering a Celestial. I heard just a while ago that the royal family acquired a Sacred Artifact from Mysterious Moon Palace, capable of temporarily elevating a Grandmaster's prowess to match that of the Heavenly Human Realm."

Officials from the Universal Academy faction knew much, since being insiders meant that Lu Chen usually tasked them with the procurement of materials for weapons production, giving them insight into the current situation of North Country.

To the Universal Academy officials, an immediate war with Great Sum would not only preclude the North Prince from seizing the throne in short order but might also cause the loss of methods to acquire many resources due to the outbreak of war.

Moreover, with Great Wu having recently quelled the unrest in the southeast and eyeing North Country covetously, a war between North Country and Great Sum at this time would play straight into Great Wu's hands.

The key consideration was North Country's possession of a Celestial master, while the Great Sum imperial court also had means to contend with Celestials. A collision between two powerful forces could likely result in mutual destruction, which would only benefit a third party.

Lu Chen's agreement with Great Jue had already provoked the imperial court, and further close relations with Great Wu might provoke Great Sum's court even more to take drastic actions.

Although North Country now possessed a certain strength, it was not yet mighty enough to overturn a dynasty, which is why most officials believed that it was not a good idea to permit Princess Wu's visit at this time.

Seeing that the Universal Academy faction's officials held this opinion, Li Rui stepped forward, "Prince, I also believe that now is indeed not the right time to further provoke the imperial court."

Although the presence of Heavenly Realm masters had bolstered the confidence of North Country officials, most officials remained clear-headed, and it was evident that Lu Chen had no immediate plans for direct confrontation with the imperial court.

After hearing their views, Lu Chen smiled faintly, then looked towards Zhuge Zhongguang and asked, "Great Scholar, what is your opinion?"

Zhuge Zhongguang replied, "Old subject believes that since Princess Wu of Great Wu wishes to come, we should let her. Prince, did you not mention that not only is she coming, but Prince Wu Ming of Great Wu is also accompanying her?"

"If Great Wu seeks to agitate the relationship between North Country and the Great Sum court, North Country can also stir up the relationship between their Princess and the Prince."

Hearing Zhuge Zhongguang's comments, Lu Chen pondered, then said, "The Great Scholar makes a good point. In that case, let them come."

Lu Chen also saw through the Martial Emperor's intention behind allowing Prince Wu Ming to accompany Princess Wu to North Country; it was to keep her in check and prevent her from monopolizing all the merit.

As a woman, Princess Wu was always contending with the princes for achievements, and the princes of Great Wu surely resented her for it.

Given the situation, it would be possible to exploit this and stir up tension between the princes of Great Wu and Princess Wu, ideally intensifying Great Wu's political infighting.

Seeing Zhuge Zhongguang and Lu Chen agreed on allowing Princess Wu's visit, the court officials said no more, and the matter was settled. The following task was preparing for the reception.

Princess Wu's delegation was different from that of Great Jue's, and as a princess with significant power in Great Wu, the reception standards had to be high.

A half month quickly passed, and the delegation from Great Wu finally arrived at Yan County in North Country.

Sitting inside the carriage, Princess Wu thought about the last time she hastily left Yan County and couldn't help but feel amused. When she left back then, she thought she wouldn't be coming back to North Country any time soon, and yet here she was, returning to Yan County so quickly.

Opening the carriage window curtain, Princess Wu glanced at the welcoming crowd outside and felt a sense of anticipation. Last time, she left Yan County in a hurry and didn't have the chance to see what the North Prince was like. Now, at last, she had the opportunity to meet him face-to-face.

Talking to herself, Princess Wu said, "I hope you won't disappoint me."

Chapter 459: Wu Junwan's Mission to the North Country\_1

Princess Wu Junwan had taken an interest in Lu Chen a long time ago. As a teenager, he led a handful of people to the North Country, and in a short period of time, endowed the impoverished North Country with the strength to defeat a 300,000-strong army from the Barbarian Tribe. Moreover, he made the Palace Master of the Mysterious Moon Palace, who resided in North Prince Mansion, unwilling to leave.

All this aroused Princess Wu Junwan's curiosity. She wondered what was so special about Lu Chen, or what value he possessed that could attract the superpower supporting him, as well as the Mysterious Moon Palace, and even the Universal Academy to the North Country.

In the past, she had only heard about what kind of person the North Prince was but had never met him personally. Princess Wu Junwan was well aware that much of the information that reached her was hearsay, but she didn't know the actual situation.

To find out what the real North Prince was like, she needed to meet him in person, and now the opportunity had come.

When Princess Wu Junwan's convoy arrived at the southern gate of the North Country, Lu Chen rode out to the gate on horseback to welcome them personally.

Princess Wu Junwan was the Princess of the dynasty, while Lu Chen was just a Seignior. It was only natural for him to come out of the city to welcome her, but something felt amiss to Princess Junwan—was the reception standard of the North Country a bit too high?

Not only did the North Prince personally come out to greet her, but the roadsides were also packed with the city's common folk. The level of reception seemed excessively high.

As the convoy stopped, Princess Wu Junwan lifted the carriage curtain, and an attractive face came into view. Though his skin looked somewhat youthful, the North Prince already possessed the aura of a mature man, especially his eyes, which were bright and extraordinarily profound.

With just one glance, Princess Wu Junwan found her gaze captivated by his appearance.

Princess Wu Junwan couldn't help but sigh inwardly—the reports were indeed accurate; the North Prince was indeed a rare beauty.

While she was lost in thought, Princess Wu Junwan suddenly sensed something wrong. She quickly regained her senses—though Lu Chen was deliberately concealing his martial artist's aura, she still felt it.

They were standing more than ten meters apart, yet she felt a sense of oppression. Lu Chen clearly had reached the Grandmaster Realm.

This...



How is this possible...

The North Prince was only seventeen or eighteen years old, and already a Grandmaster?

Was there something wrong with her perception?

Princess Wu Junwan even began to doubt her own vision. After all, even though she was quite talented, it had taken her over twenty years to break through to the Master Realm, whereas the North Prince was only seventeen or eighteen and already a Grandmaster.

This was way too exaggerated!

At that moment, Pei Hong, standing beside the carriage, whispered a reminder, "Your Highness, the North Prince is very strong; he is a Grandmaster!"

After hearing what Pei Hong said, Princess Wu Junwan confirmed that her senses were not mistaken. The young man nearby was indeed a Grandmaster.

Is he really the North Prince?

Could it be that the North Prince just randomly sent someone to meet them?

After all, she had never seen what the real North Prince looked like.

Just then, Lu Chen said with a smile, "Welcome, Princess Wu, to the North Country as a guest. I have been waiting for you for a long time!"

Hearing Lu Chen's words, Princess Wu Junwan frowned slightly.

My Prince?

So, the young man was indeed the North Prince himself?

The North Prince's martial arts talent was terrifying!

At the rate of the North Prince's progress, he might breakthrough to the Heavenly Human Realm by the age of fifty, or even before thirty!

A thirty-year-old in the Heavenly Human Realm! Princess Wu Junwan dared not even think of it!

Among those she knew, not even the Empress of Da Yue, a martial arts prodigy, could compare with the North Prince!

She had always thought that the Empress of Da Yue was the person with the highest martial arts talent in the world, believing no one could be more gifted than her.

But now, there was the monstrous existence of the North Prince!

It seemed that the rumors of the North Prince being a womanizer were false. To break through to the Grandmaster Realm at such a young age, he must have worked harder than most, even with his talent.

The Empress of Da Yue did just that—decades ago, she sealed off all her emotions and desires to vie for her position, focusing all of her efforts on martial arts, to achieve the strength she has today.

Others may not know how formidable the Empress of Da Yue is, but Princess Wu Junwan was clear about it.

Of course, even someone like the favored daughter of heaven, the Empress of Da Yue, paled in comparison to Lu Chen in the eyes of Princess Wu Junwan at that moment.

In her heart, Princess Wu Junwan instantly identified Lu Chen as the number one enemy of the Great Wu dynasty.

Compared to the Great Xia Dynasty and the Great Qian Dynasty, Lu Chen was Great Wu's real enemy.

The North Prince was growing too fast—he was young enough, and his ambitions were great.

The North Prince had kept his strength very well hidden!

After defeating the Sky Wolf King's 300,000-strong army in the North Country, people said the North Prince knew martial arts, but no one ever specified how skilled he was.

In the eyes of many, the North Prince's success was due to the heavy cavalry supporting him, or the power behind him that supported the North Prince. Without that support, he wouldn't have his achievements today.

Now it seemed that everyone might have been mistaken. The North Prince might have relied on his backing, but he was definitely not simple himself.

Princess Wu Junwan thought to herself that it was no wonder the superpower behind Lu Chen supported him, the Palace Master of the Mysterious Moon Palace came to the North Country and stayed for a long time, and even Zhuge Zhongguang had arrived in the North Country.

Chapter 460: Wu Junwan's Mission to the North Country\_2

The North Prince's strength improved so rapidly partly because he undoubtedly possessed exceptional martial arts talent and, perhaps, because he harbored a secret.

Moreover, Zhuge Zhongguang had not broken through to the Heavenly Human Realm for so many years, yet within less than a year of arriving in North Country, he managed the breakthrough, which inevitably raised suspicions of the North Prince's involvement.

Wu Junwan grew increasingly curious about the young man not far from her, desiring to unravel the secrets he might carry.

At this moment, with a smile, Wu Junwan said, "It is rumored that the North Prince is exceptionally handsome, and seeing him today, he indeed lives up to his reputation!"

Hearing Wu Junwan's praise, Lu Chen replied with a smile, "Thank you, Princess Junwan, for your compliment."

"It is an honor for the North Prince to have Princess Junwan and the delegation visit North Country. I have already arranged a luncheon. Let us discuss matters there while we dine," he added.

With those words, Lu Chen turned his horse around and then said, "To the city!"

As his voice fell, the welcoming procession entered the city, and Wu Junwan's carriage followed behind the delegation, continuing forward.

At that moment, Pei Hong, watching the North Prince's departing figure, felt his silhouette seemed familiar, especially his voice, which for some reason, sounded like he had heard it somewhere before.

Pei Hong thought to himself that this was his second visit to North Country, and he had never met the North Prince before, so how could the voice feel familiar?

While Pei Hong was pondering where he might have heard that voice, Wu Junwan's voice came from inside the carriage, "Does Mister Pei also feel that the North Prince's voice sounds familiar?"

It wasn't just Pei Hong who had this feeling; even Wu Junwan experienced it. As someone involved in intelligence gathering, she was particularly attentive to details and could remember small nuances quite distinctly.

She always felt the North Prince's voice was very familiar, and she had a nagging sense that he resembled someone she had met before.

Pei Hong's eyebrows furrowed when he realized that Wu Junwan shared his sentiments. Suddenly, he felt this probably wasn't just their imagination.

If one person thought the North Prince's voice sounded familiar, that might be dismissed as an illusion, but now that both of them felt the same, it likely meant they had indeed heard Lu Chen's voice somewhere before.

Pei Hong's mind raced through the people they met the last time they came to Yan County, concluding that if the voice felt familiar, and considering the North Prince resided in North Country, they might have heard it during their previous visit to Yan County.

After only a brief thought, Pei Hong instantly recalled where they had heard a voice similar to the North Prince's.

At this point, Pei Hong's expression turned grim, and he then said to Wu Junwan in the carriage, "Your Highness, I fear the North Prince is the Tower Master of Rain-listening Pavilion!"

Although they hadn't seen the face of the Tower Master of Rain-listening Pavilion during their last visit to Yan County, since he wore a mask, they had discerned from his voice and stature that he was a very young man. At the time, they suspected that the Tower Master was a person from a mysterious force behind the North Prince.

Now, it seems that the influence behind the scenes at Rain-listening Pavilion wasn't some figure behind the North Prince, but rather the North Prince himself.

They had all been deceived by the North Prince!

After hearing Pei Hong's hint, Wu Junwan also thought back to the scene when they met the Tower Master of Rain-listening Pavilion in Yan County.

With such reflection, she too realized that the North Prince's voice was identical to that of the Tower Master, and their figures largely matched as well.

Critically, both the Tower Master of Rain-listening Pavilion and the North Prince were notably young!

Wu Junwan's expression became stern, and she murmured, "It seems that the North Prince recognized us during our last visit to Yan County."

By that logic, the North Prince probably also knew long ago that the Qianhai Commercial Association was her force, and by allowing Rain-listening Pavilion to collaborate with Qianhai Commercial Association, he aimed to gather intelligence on Great Wu in return.

At this realization, Wu Junwan felt a discomfort in her heart, aggrieved by the fact that she had been outmaneuvered.

More uncomfortable than Wu Junwan, and with even greater resentment, was another individual—Prince Wu Ming from Great Wu.

Prince Wu Ming's carriage trailed behind Wu Junwan's, and at this very moment, he sat inside with a contorted expression and clenched fists, his anger refusing to subside.

As the Second Prince of Great Wu and accompanying Princess Junwan on a diplomatic mission to North Country, he arrived only for the North Prince to extend a welcome exclusively to Princess Junwan, effectively forgetting about his presence.

Prior to their diplomatic visit, Great Wu had informed North Country, which meant North Country could not possibly be unaware of his accompanying Princess Junwan.

Yet, the North Prince had not so much as mentioned his name, as if he held no regard for him. It seemed that in Princess Junwan's presence, or whenever he was put alongside her, his title of Second Prince became negligible.

Prince Wu Ming also noticed that the high standard of reception in North Country was entirely for Princess Junwan, and none of it related to him as the Second Prince.

Despite being a woman, why should she receive such high-level treatment!

He was the prince, the legitimate heir to the throne, and yet he had been ignored!