

Es. Benefits 511

Chapter 511: The Seventh Child is Born_1

When Wang Qingci snapped back to reality, she stared into Lu Chen's eyes with unabated disbelief, searching his face for any trace of teasing.

However, at that moment, Lu Chen wore only a faint smile, and one of his hands was gently caressing her belly, nothing at all resembling someone making a joke.

Wang Qingci still couldn't bring herself to believe it. She remembered that the last time they were intimate had been in the study of the old Prince's Mansion, and she had immediately expelled all impurities from her body the day after returning—how could she possibly have been impregnated?

Moreover, she hadn't felt anything unusual in her body during this period. If she had truly been impregnated, she should have noticed something.

With these thoughts, Wang Qingci looked into Lu Chen's eyes and asked, "My Prince, you wouldn't lie to me, would you?"

Lu Chen replied with a smile, "Do you think I would joke about this kind of matter with you?"

"But I clearly..." Wang Qingci faltered.

She wanted to say that she clearly expelled all impurities from her body, so how could she have been impregnated, but considering Lu Chen's persistent desire for her to bear his child, Wang Qingci found it difficult to openly discuss her actions.

Seeing that Wang Qingci had stopped midway, Lu Chen immediately guessed what she was about to say and spoke up, "Are you about to say that after you returned, you expelled all impurities from your body, so how could you still be impregnated?"

Wang Qingci pursed her lips and remained silent. At that moment, Lu Chen lifted his right hand, pinched Wang Qingci's smooth and delicate chin, and said, "Did you think that would prevent you from carrying my child? You underestimate me."

"Are you not aware that there are those in the Prince's Mansion who became pregnant after spending just one night with me?"

Upon hearing this, Wang Qingci immediately thought of Chu Yuqin. Although she seldom stayed in the Prince's Mansion, she was aware of what happened there and knew how easily Chu Yuqin had become pregnant with Lu Chen's child.

Wang Qingci thought to herself that it seemed she really was pregnant, but she wasn't ready to be a mother yet.

It was all this scoundrel's fault, undoubtedly because he had been intimate with her all night, preventing her from immediately expelling impurities from her body, which led to her becoming pregnant.

When she was with Lu Chen, she couldn't actively use her skill, but could only be at his mercy. Usually, she would wait until after Lu Chen was finished to cleanse her body.

Wang Qingci felt like she was waking from a dream; no wonder the man sometimes didn't release her after his nefarious deeds. He had deliberately suppressed her internal skill so she couldn't detoxify in time, and his plan had succeeded.

This scoundrel, so cunning!

Wang Qingci sighed inwardly but eventually accepted the reality: she was pregnant. The courtyard she was currently residing in was quite large; it wasn't just suitable for raising one child but several.

Wang Qingci then said, "My Prince, today is the day I marry you, and even if I can't consummate the marriage with you, there are still things that must be done."

That...

Lu Chen was taken aback for a moment. Things that must be done?

She was already pregnant, how could they 'do' anything?

He wouldn't want to do anything that could harm his child.

As Lu Chen was thinking this, Wang Qingci suddenly raised her slender hand to press against his chest, then swiftly slid her hands around his waist, embraced him, flipped over, and brought him beneath her.

Lu Chen did not stop Wang Qingci, so she succeeded in an instant. Now sitting astride Lu Chen, she heard him chuckling, "Mr. Wang, you are quite bold to treat me this way!"

"My little female slave, you dare to ride atop me. Aren't you afraid I'll punish you?"

Wang Qingci replied with a grin, "Now that I carry your child, my Lord, would you still bear to punish me? Aren't you afraid I might harm the child of yours?"

Lu Chen laughed lightly, "Are you trying to blackmail me with the child?"

Wang Qingci replied cheekily, "I've finally caught your Achilles' heel, so of course I must make good use of it. After all, you always oppressed me and plotted to have me carry your child."

With that, Wang Qingci's hands began to undress Lu Chen, her actions becoming more mischievous.

Lu Chen didn't stop Wang Qingci—after all, what could he do when Wang Qingci carried his child? Today, he would indulge her a little.

...

Gazing at the big red lanterns hanging in the Prince's Mansion, Lin Wanyun sat on the flowerbed in the outer courtyard, sighing softly.

For some reason, she felt a profound sense of loss. Although she had long been Lu Chen's woman and was prepared to go without official status for life, witnessing another woman getting married into the Prince's Mansion stirred a bit of envy within her.

At that moment, Chu Yuqin came to sit beside Lin Wanyun. Seeing the dejected look on her face, Chu Yuqin asked with concern, "Sister Lin, are you worried about Miss Chen?"

Lin Wanyun snapped back to attention and said with a smile, "No, I'm just resting for a bit."

Chu Yuqin then suggested, "Sister Lin, you've been Lu Chen's woman for a long time. Why not find an opportunity for Lu Chen to give you a title too?"

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Hearing this, Lin Wanyun hurriedly said, "I'm afraid that won't do."

"The Lin Family is still in the Capital city, and if I, as their adopted daughter, were to marry the North Prince, it could easily be used by some to attack the Lin Family. They could claim that the Lin Family has sided with the North Prince, and this could bring significant trouble to them."

"Moreover, Rongrong and I share a bond like mother and daughter. Rongrong will definitely marry into the North Prince Mansion in the future. If I also marry into the North Prince's Mansion, it would be somewhat inappropriate."

Hearing this, Chu Yuqin gave a slight smile. She took Lin Wanyun's jade hand and, gazing into her face, said, "Sister Lin, not many people are aware of your relationship with Miss Chen, and no one will care about what your relationship is."

"Look at me; I've been taking care of Chen'er since he was a child, and in the end, he still took me into the Prince's Mansion. Now nobody is saying anything about us; you're overthinking it."

"As for your relationship with the Lin Family, this could indeed bring them trouble, but I believe Lu Chen will soon be able to resolve this issue."

Lin Wanyun sighed and said, "Let's talk about this matter later."

Chu Yuqin did not continue on the topic. Instead, she asked, "By the way, how is Miss Chen doing in the Mysterious Moon Palace now?"

Lin Wanyun replied, "She's fine. The Honorable has forgiven her, and she is still managing the entire Mysterious Moon Palace."

Chu Yuqin said, "That's good to hear."

At this point, Chu Yuqin took Lin Wanyun's hand again, and they chatted about some woman-to-woman topics.

About half an hour later, they got up from the flower beds and prepared to head back to the courtyard for some tea.

However, as the two beautiful ladies walked past Wang Qingci's courtyard, they suddenly heard noises coming from inside.

This...

Both of them were startled.

How could there be noises?

The new Prince's Mansion was different from the old one. Having lived in the Prince's Mansion for quite some time, they knew the setup: the doors and windows of the Prince's Mansion were specially made such that once closed, the inside noise would be blocked off.

Even if someone could hear from the outside, it would be an extremely faint sound, and under no circumstance could it travel outside to the walkway of the courtyard.

But today, the two of them heard noises on the walkway, which puzzled them.

Could that little rascal have opened the doors and windows to create a thrill?

Thinking this, the two beautiful ladies glanced at each other.

Then Chu Yuqin said, "This naughty thing, he must have deliberately left the doors and windows open!"

With a blushing face, Lin Wanyun said, "Yuqin, let's hurry to the Yunrong Courtyard."

Chu Yuqin replied, "Yes, let's go."

Then, the two beautiful ladies quickened their pace and walked past Wang Qingci's courtyard.

Meanwhile.

Inside Wang Qingci's bridal chamber, Lu Chen and Wang Qingci were both standing by the window, enjoying the view of the courtyard. Lu Chen had his arms around Wang Qingci's body, laughing as he said, "I don't even know what to say to you. You will have to call me 'darling' from now on, not 'master'."

Upon hearing this, Wang Qingci responded weakly, "Regardless, in my heart, I've always been your female slave."

Lu Chen chuckled, then embraced Wang Qingci and slowly returned to the bed.

Once back on the bed, Lu Chen adjusted Wang Qingci's red wedding dress, saying as he did so, "You really didn't need to go to such lengths. Whether or not we have a wedding night is not so important to me."

Wang Qingci was already carrying his child, and even if she didn't serve him, Lu Chen wouldn't say anything. However, Wang Qingci insisted on serving him, so Lu Chen had to find another way.

When Lu Chen was with his wives and concubines, his goal was very clear, which was to have them bear his children, so he rarely engaged in deviant practices and had never strayed from the path.

Seeing Wang Qingci's hair had become wet with sweat, Lu Chen lifted his hand and began to play with her hair, pushing it aside to get a clearer view of her charming and tempting face.

It was at this moment that Wang Qingci's complexion suddenly changed, turning somewhat pale, and then she began to heave.

Seeing this, Lu Chen quickly got up and gently patted her back.

With a smile on his face, Lu Chen said, "I told you that you're carrying my child, but you didn't believe me; look, you've started to have morning sickness."

After retching for a while, Wang Qingci turned to look at Lu Chen, her eyes seeming to carry a bit of resentment.

This was no morning sickness; it was obviously...

Lu Chen, the naughty thing.

Well, it was her own choice, so she couldn't really blame Lu Chen.

Lu Chen said, "Alright, let's stop here for today. You rest well, and don't hurt our child."

Hearing this, Wang Qingci chuckled softly and said, "Are you scared of me, Prince?"

Challenged by Wang Qingci's words, Lu Chen laughed and then pressed her back onto the bed.

This bitch, if she wasn't properly disciplined, she would never learn restraint.

Since he'd already strayed, he might as well continue down that path.

...

At this very moment.

Great Jue Mansion in the North Country.

Murong Xue'er was pondering over the letter in her hands. The Yue Emperor had asked her to find a way to get close to Lu Chen and try to learn the origin of North Country's secret weapon.

Murong Xue'er had long heard of North Country's secret weapon, but it was not easy for her to get close to the North Prince. He had taken another concubine today, and his harem was already filled with countless women.

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Although Murong Xue'er was still very confident in her own beauty, she was well aware that it wasn't easy to attract the North Prince with her looks alone. The North Prince, despite his fondness for the company of women, already had so many that he was probably too busy to seek more affairs outside.

Murong Xue'er pondered how she could get close to the North Prince.

Just as she was lost in thought, a maid entered her room and placed an invitation in front of Murong Xue'er, "Lord Murong, a son from Great Qian is holding a poetry gathering in Yan County, and he invites you to participate."

Upon hearing this, Murong Xue'er was slightly taken aback.

A poetry gathering?

This could be a good pretext.

Since Yan County had become a trading hub, many merchants and scholars had also come to Yan County. There had been frequent occasions where wealthy sons organized poetry gatherings or meetings of scholarly friends, inviting people of status from Yan County.

North Country had not interfered with such activities, which in turn enriched the cultural atmosphere of Yan County even further.

Murong Xue'er thought to herself that the North Prince had been recently promoting universal education. By paying such close attention to literacy among the common people, it showed that the Prince greatly valued learning. The North Prince must be someone well-versed in poetry and literature.

Usually, the policies of a ruler are closely linked to their personal interests. The North Prince's strong push for universal education might very well align with his hobbies.

If she could use the poetry gathering as an excuse to invite the North Prince, it was likely that he would come. By doing so, wouldn't she have the opportunity to build a relationship with the North Prince?

Having made up her mind, Murong Xue'er started to devise her plan.

In the blink of an eye, another half-month had passed.

Wu Junwan returned from her mission to Great Jue without any achievements, which caused a number of ministers in the court to view her with great dissatisfaction.

Some thought that with Wu Junwan's good relationship with the Yue Emperor and considering that Great Sum was at its weakest, it was entirely possible for the two great dynasties to join forces and wipe out Great Sum. Yet Wu Junwan had failed to persuade the Yue Emperor to form an alliance with Great Wu, which was seen as a testament to her incompetence.

The failure to form an alliance with Great Jue also made some ministers in Great Wu more conservative. Some believed that without someone to keep North Country in check, Great Wu would likely find itself in crisis if it engaged in a two-front war.

From Yongan County of North Country to the Imperial City of Great Wu, the landscape was almost entirely flat plains. North Country's heavy cavalry could directly penetrate the heartland of Great Wu.

If Great Wu were to deploy troops against Great Sum, they would need to station a significant force in the north for defense, which would greatly reduce the main combat forces available for the offensive against Great Sum.

Even the Martial Emperor, who favored the use of force, was becoming indecisive. He was unsure whether to go to war.

Days passed by, and the world seemed to regain its former peace. Although the Seigniors of Great Sum were still actively preparing for war, incessantly expanding their armies, and daily quarrels erupted in the court, no one dared to be the first to mobilize their troops.

Everyone was waiting.

Waiting for the news of the Sum Emperor's death.

However, to everyone's surprise, this waiting lasted nearly a year.

During these months, almost all of Great Sum's state affairs were handled by Prince Lu Yi. The Sum Emperor had been ill in his bedchamber and hadn't appeared before others. Some even suspected that the Sum Emperor might have already died, his demise known only to Prince Lu Yi and the two Prime Ministers, yet not publicly announced.

Several months ago, there had been rumors in the palace that the Sum Emperor was on his deathbed, but so much time had passed without his death. Some Princes were beginning to grow impatient.

At this very moment.

In North Country.

Within North Prince Mansion, the room outside Chu Yuqin's chamber was filled with people, all awaiting the birth of her child.

Just then, a tall and handsome man entered the courtyard, prompting the maid to quickly announce, "The Prince has arrived!"

At these words, the crowd immediately cleared a path.

Lu Chen entered the birthing room without delay.

Chu Yuqin lay quietly on the bed, her complexion somewhat pale, but upon seeing Lu Chen enter, a faint smile appeared on her lips.

Lu Chen sat down beside the bed, grasping Chu Yuqin's hand, and with a smile said, "Yuqin, did you ever think that after taking care of me growing up, you would also care for our child?"

At his words, Chu Yuqin glared at Lu Chen and then retorted, "You scoundrel, you have the audacity to say that. You already have so many women, and yet you couldn't leave me be, insisting on having me bear your child."

Lu Chen smiled slightly and gently brushed Chu Yuqin's hair at her temples with his other hand.

Chu Yuqin then asked, "When will the child be born?"

Lu Chen replied, "That depends on when he is ready to come out."

Chu Yuqin persisted, "Have you thought of a name for the child?"

Lu Chen suggested, "What about Lu Chengwang?"

Chu Yuqin curiously inquired, "Just one name? What if it's a girl?"

Lu Chen answered, "I sense that it's a boy."

Lu Chen's Rejuvenating Skill was now so profound that he could accurately gauge the condition within a person's body, which meant he knew very well whether the child in Chu Yuqin's womb was a boy or a girl.

Chu Yuqin murmured softly, "So it's a boy."

Hearing Chu Yuqin talking to herself, Lu Chen asked, "Would you have preferred a girl?"

Chu Yuqin replied, "I don't want my child to go through the same things you did. A girl would be nice."

Lu Chen immediately understood her meaning and, squeezing her hand firmly, said, "Don't worry, our child will never face a situation of fraternal strife."

With a smile, Chu Yuqin said, "Let's hope so."

No sooner had Chu Yuqin finished speaking, her complexion changed dramatically; Lu Chen quickly infused Spiritual Power into her body, and the next moment, the pain that had been there vanished entirely.

Seeing the green glow around Chu Yuqin, the midwives and maids of the Prince's Mansion sprang into action, well-experienced by now, knowing that Chu Yuqin's child would soon arrive.

The next moment, the room was filled with the "wah-wah-wah" cries of the newborn.

Chapter 514: The Polar Regions_1

Hearing the cries of the child in the room, Chu Yuqin was startled for a moment. She had inquired Mu Zixuan and both the Great Yu and Dazhou Xiaozhou about the childbirth process yesterday. They told her that with Lu Chen around, one wouldn't feel anything, and the child would simply crawl out of the belly.

Initially, Chu Yuqin had some doubts, feeling that there would at least be some difficulties, but it turned out that what Mu Zixuan and others had said was actually true.

Indeed, without feeling a thing, her belly contracted, and the child came out.

At that moment, Chu Yuqin felt a continuous warm current flowing into her body. As Lu Chen's spiritual power entered her body, the stretch marks from her pregnancy gradually faded away, and other areas of her body started to heal. Soon, her body returned to its pre-pregnancy state.

Then, the midwife brought the child over to Lu Chen, "Congratulations, Prince, it's a son."

Lu Chen smiled faintly, took the child, placed him on the bed, and infused him with some spiritual power to give him stronger resistance.

Chu Yuqin, now restored to strength, slowly sat up from her lying position and turned to look at the child on the bed, with a kind smile on her face.

Chu Yuqin's gentle hands caressed Lu Chengwang's cheeks as she said with a smile, "Wang'er, your dad is such a bad guy; make sure you don't grow up to be like him."

Hearing this, Lu Chen laughed and said, "Yuqin, what are you talking about? How am I a bad guy? Besides, Wang'er is still a child; he can't understand what you're saying."

Chu Yuqin then looked at Lu Chen and said, "Chen'er, I know you have been busy these past few days. Now that there's nothing urgent, you should go take care of your matters."

Lu Chen replied with a smile, "Now that we have a child, do you still call me Chen'er?"

Hearing this, Chu Yuqin's cheeks reddened with embarrassment. It had been so long, yet she had not gotten used to calling him otherwise; it had become a habit.

Then in a quiet voice, Chu Yuqin said, "Darling, go ahead with your work. I have fully recovered."

Seeing the blushing beauty before him, Lu Chen leaned down and whispered in Chu Yuqin's ear, "My lady, rest well. In a few days when I am less busy, I will spend every night in your room, keeping you and the child company."

At those words, Chu Yuqin's complexion turned slightly hot, immediately grasping the implication behind Lu Chen's words.

Lu Chen did not continue to tease Chu Yuqin any further. After saying that, he stood up and left the birthing room, heading for his study.

He wanted to see what the system had rewarded him with this time.

Upon entering the study, Lu Chen sat down in his chair, opened the system interface, and checked the system prompt.

[Congratulations to the host for having a son, rewarded with an army of two hundred thousand, with an additional bonus of two Grandmaster Military Generals and one million population.]

[Population Identity Implantation: Great Yin Remnants, currently located in the polar regions.]

[The host can issue one command to them. Do you wish to convey any instructions to them?]

Lu Chen thought for a moment and then said, "Direct them to the North Country and report back on the situation in the polar regions."

[The polar region's inhabitants have accepted your command. They will arrive in Yan County in three months.]

Hearing the system prompt, Lu Chen was taken aback. Three months?

That long?

How far north were the polar regions?

From Great Yu City to Yan County was roughly a month's journey. Yet it would take three months to get from the polar regions to Yan County, adding an entire two months of travel time.

Yan County was already so cold; he wondered just how cold the polar regions must be and whether the common people living there could even survive.

As Lu Chen pondered, the maid's voice rang outside the study, "Prince, Commander Wu requests an audience!"

Hearing this, Lu Chen came back to his senses, "Come in."

The next moment, Wu Yuan pushed the door and entered the study. It had been several months since Lu Chen had assigned Wu Yuan to oversee the construction of the railway, and he asked, "Is the railway nearing completion?"

The railway from Great Yu City to Yan County had been started from both ends simultaneously, so Lu Chen was not particularly familiar with the construction progress; he only knew that the railway was being built remarkably quickly.

Wu Yuan replied, "The tracks have been connected. Testing can begin in a few days."

Hearing this, Lu Chen smiled faintly and said, "You've done well; you've worked hard during this period."

Wu Yuan said, "This is Master Xuanyuan's achievement. I haven't done much."

At that moment, Lu Chen thought of something and continued, "After you go back, tell Lord Xuanyuan to continue surveying the terrain north of Great Yu City. I plan to build another railway to the polar regions soon."

Wu Yuan was stunned upon hearing this.

The polar regions?

Why would there be a need to build a railroad to the polar regions?

The polar regions are so cold, and nobody lives there.

While Wu Yuan was thinking this, Lu Chen spoke up, "There are my people in the polar regions. I need to strengthen the connection with them."

Once Lu Chen said this, Wu Yuan immediately understood. No wonder the Prince wanted to expand further north—it turns out there was still the power of the North Prince in the north.

Wu Yuan then said, "I understand. I will speak to Master Xuanyuan shortly."

As Wu Yuan finished speaking, the maid's voice came from the doorway again, "Prince, Commander Qin requests an audience."

Lu Chen said indifferently, "Let him in."

Following that, Qin Yushan entered the study. After seeing Qin Yushan, Wu Yuan said, "Prince, if there's nothing else, I will take my leave."

Wu Yuan had only come to inform Lu Chen that the railway connection was complete; he didn't have other matters to discuss.

Lu Chen said, "Hmm, all right."

Wu Yuan then turned and left.

After Wu Yuan had left, Qin Yushan spoke up, "I pay my respects to the Prince!"

"Prince, good news. The Dongfang Family's merchant ships have been converted, and they successfully performed a trial sail last night."

Hearing this, Lu Chen was momentarily startled. They were already finished?

So soon?

Lu Chen then asked, "Has the steam engine played its part?"

Qin Yushan replied, "It has played its part. The modified warships no longer require manpower or wind; burning coal to produce steam alone can propel the large ships."

"However, the steamships converted from wooden ships can't operate for too long. The Dongfang Family has still left the sails on the ships untouched."

Hearing this, Lu Chen pondered for a moment. After all, a wooden ship is just that—a wooden ship. Even if the boiler's heat insulation is done well, it might still affect the wooden hull.

Of course, this is the first time the Donghang Family has transformed wooden ships into steamships. It's good enough that they are operational.

Perhaps, as they gain more experience in conversions, the heat insulation will be improved, and the steam engine's impact on the wooden hull will be lessened.

Regardless, as long as they work, that's all that matters.

Lu Chen then said, "Immediately tell Wei Siyuan to move the great army of Anping City to the east, to train with the Dongfang Family's modified warships."

Since the warships had been built, Wei Siyuan's navy soldiers no longer had any reason to remain ashore.

They would train with the converted wooden steamships for now, and once steel steamships were available, the North Country's navy could adapt to them immediately.

Chapter 515: Junwan Wants Dragon and Phoenix Tea_1

After Lu Chen transferred the soldiers stationed at the Qi Country border, it quickly caught the attention of the Great Sum royal court.

This left the officials of the Great Sum royal court somewhat baffled, wasn't the North Country long intent on moving south? Yet now, as the Sum Emperor fell ill, he actually withdrew the soldiers from the Qi Country border.

Could it be that some unexpected event had occurred in the north, like the Barbarian Tribe attacking the North Country again?

Without the threat of the North Country, wouldn't it be even more convenient for them to aid their respective supported princes in the struggle for the supreme position after the Sum Emperor passed away?

As soon as the North Country soldiers left Anping City, the two seigniors to the south started to fight fiercely, and the verbal sparring in the Great Sum court also became increasingly intense.

What was once an undercover struggle among the various princes had gradually turned into an open confrontation.

At the same time.

In the Great Wu Dynasty.

Inside the Green Cloud Palace, smoke swirled around as Wu Junwan reclined on a reclining couch, holding a teacup and savoring the tea delicately.

At that moment, Wu Junwan muttered to herself, "I never expected the North Prince's tea to have so many effects, it's a pity it will soon be gone, and I have no idea where these tea leaves come from. If only I could buy some."

Since her mission to the North Country, Wu Junwan had often been drinking Dragon and Phoenix Tea, but the supply Lu Chen gave her was limited, and she tried to save it as much as possible, but no matter how much she saved, there would come a time when it was all gone.

Wu Junwan had fallen in love with the taste of Dragon and Phoenix Tea, which cleared her mind and allowed her skill to circulate smoothly through her body.

In the past, when she practiced her skill, she often felt a faint pain in her Dantian, but now these sensations were all gone, all thanks to this tea.

Wu Junwan thought to herself, such fine tea must also be extremely precious in the North Prince Mansion. How could she obtain some for herself?

As Wu Junwan pondered how to get Dragon and Phoenix Tea from the North Prince Mansion, a female guard entered the Green Cloud Palace, "Your Highness, there is intelligence from the North Country."

Wu Junwan said indifferently, "Bring it in."

Then, the female guard passed through the red curtains and entered the Green Cloud Palace, handing the intelligence in her hand to Wu Junwan, who took it from the guard and skimmed through.

The next moment, her eyebrows slightly furrowed, she then asked, "Has it been discovered where the North Country soldiers have been dispatched to?"

The female guard replied, "We haven't confirmed it yet, but the intelligence from our sources suggests that those North Country soldiers at the Qi Country border were most likely transferred to the eastern part of the North Country."

Wu Junwan sank into thought.

The eastern part of the North Country?

What were they doing by transferring to the eastern side of the North Country?

Wasn't the east side of the North Country the ocean?

Could it be that there were enemies at sea, so the North Country transferred those soldiers to the east to defend against maritime enemies?

Or was the North Country deceiving, making it seem like they were relocating troops to the east, when in fact they wanted to make the Great Sum royal court let down its guard?

With incomplete intelligence, Wu Junwan was unable to judge what the North Country was truly planning.

After thinking for a while, Wu Junwan couldn't come up with a reason, and she didn't continue to speculate further. She looked at the guard in front of her and asked, "How much information have we got about the North Country's mysterious weapon?"

The female guard said, "Your Highness, our people have yet to find any information about the North Country's mysterious weapon. The intelligence gathered is mostly rumors among the common people of the North Country."

Hearing this, Wu Junwan snorted coldly, "All are useless."

Ever since Wu Junwan came back, she had been reorganizing her intelligence organizations. Although she didn't think it was likely that Qianhai Commercial Association would betray her, she felt that their capabilities were increasingly inadequate.

She suspected her reliance on the Qianhai Association was the reason its members had lost motivation to work diligently and only knew how to spend public funds on eating, drinking, and merrymaking.

Therefore, Wu Junwan established another intelligence organization, this time entrusting it to the Qian Family's eldest son, and she even promised him that if he could do better than the Qianhai Commercial Association, she would arrange a fourth-rank official position for him in the future.

Having promised him such benefits, yet he was still of little use, several months had passed and the second intelligence organization had not collected any useful intelligence either.

Wu Junwan muttered to herself, "It seems this palace has placed too much trust in the Qian Family. Truly a bunch of useless people."

Wu Junwan decided to create another intelligence organization, this time without involving anyone from the Qian Family.

At that moment, Wu Junwan suddenly had another thought, and she then said to her female guard, "Write a letter to Qian Dahai, asking him to search for a special kind of tea for this palace, to see if it's possible to obtain some of that tea from the North Prince."

Having said that, Wu Junwan said to a maid by her side, "Go get some of this palace's favorite tea leaves for Yingyue to take to the North Country."

The maid immediately responded, "Yes, Your Highness."

Soon enough, the maid wrapped some of the Dragon and Phoenix Tea that Wu Junwan drank in paper and presented it to the female guard.

The guard took the Dragon and Phoenix Tea and prepared to leave when Wu Junwan reminded her, "Tell Qian Dahai, he must find out the origin of this kind of tea."

"Yes, Your Highness."

Wu Junwan waved her hand, "If there's nothing else, you may leave."

"This subordinate takes her leave."

After the female guard left, Wu Junwan once again picked up the teacup from the table and took another sip, "Who knows if the North Prince improved his realm so quickly because he frequently drinks this kind of tea."

At this thought, the handsome face of Lu Chen surfaced in Wu Junwan's mind.

Thinking of Lu Chen, Wu Junwan sighed slightly. She couldn't help but think, such a handsome and outstanding young man, yet not a man of Great Wu, but rather an enemy of Great Wu, what a pity.

If there ever came a day when Great Wu could eliminate the North Country, she would definitely capture the North Prince and keep him confined, making him her consort.

Thinking this, Wu Junwan murmured, "It's uncertain whether Great Wu will be able to stand against the North Country in the future."

The North Country already had a strong warrior in the Heavenly Human Realm, and coupled with some mysterious and terrifying weapons, though Great Wu had never faced the North Country head on, Wu Junwan knew that the North Country's military strength had essentially caught up with the Great Sum Dynasty.

If a full-scale war were to break out between the North Country and the Great Sum Dynasty, it was not yet clear whether Great Wu could win.

Fortunately, the North Country was still in a relatively weak state at the moment. The North Country prioritized commerce, resulting in most of its necessities coming from other dynasties. By cutting off trade, the North Country could very likely return to its previous state of not having enough food or clothing.

Under such circumstances, as long as the Great Sum Dynasty remained conservative, sent a large army to always hold off the North Country without directly confronting them, the North Country's internals would eventually collapse.

The Heavenly Human Realm, huh?

It wouldn't take too long for Great Wu to also produce a strong warrior in the Heavenly Human Realm. By that time, the North Country's advantage would only be those mysterious weapons.

At that thought, Wu Junwan's lips curved slightly upward. Before she left the North Country, that little man had boasted that one day he would make her his woman; it seemed, in the end, it won't be her becoming his woman, but the North Prince becoming her consort.

One day, she would keep that little man who toyed with her confined and play with him indefinitely.

Chapter 516: Successful Train Test Run_1

North Country.

New Yan County.

Train station, entrance.

By now, the train station entrance was packed with people, as the newspapers of North Country had already published articles about the invention of the train the day before.

The common folk didn't understand what a train was; it was their first time hearing about it. However, after seeing the introduction to the train in the newspapers, they all developed a strong interest in it.

At the moment, the common folk at the scene were fervently discussing the content of yesterday's Yan County newspaper.

"Do you think it's true that there is a carriage that can move without horses pulling it?"

"It's said to be invented by the North Prince Mansion. I think it might be true. Look, the Prince is here. If it were fake, wouldn't the Prince be embarrassed?"

"The newspaper says this train can travel two hundred kilometers in a day and it doesn't need to rest. Two hundred kilometers a day, without horses? It seems a bit too far-fetched."

"Whether it's true or not, we'll know soon enough."

...

While the common folk were discussing, the sound of a steam train's whistle came from afar.

"Toot~~~!"

The people, who had never heard the sound of a train whistle before, instantly became restless.

However, when the common folk saw that the North Prince remained calmly standing on the train platform, they quickly quieted down.

If the North Prince wasn't panicking, then it probably wasn't anything serious.

At that moment, the crowd suddenly became agitated again.

"Look over there!"

"It's coming; it's coming; it's really a carriage with no horses!"

"My heavens! This carriage is so big and long; how much stuff can it haul in one trip!"

"If the North Country had such carriages connecting all its cities in the future, wouldn't we be able to easily travel to other cities?"

"What carriage? Didn't you read the newspaper yesterday? This is called a train!"

...

At this moment, the minds of the members of the various major merchant groups in the crowd were racing.

They made money mainly through regional differences or timing differences. Now that the North Country had such a convenient mode of transport, their horse-drawn carriages were bound to become obsolete.

If the railroads of North Country could be extended to the major dynasties in the future, and if they continued to cooperate with the North Prince Mansion, their goods would not need to take months to reach other places - only a few days or at most about ten days.

This transportation tool named "train" could certainly lead the world towards revolution.

Only...

Would the North Prince Mansion really agree to cooperate with them?

After all, this train looked so mysterious and its hauling capacity was terrifying, not to mention its speed. It was obviously intended for military purposes. With such trains, the ability of the North Country to transport troops towards a certain place in the future would be greatly enhanced.

No matter what happened on the North Country's border, as long as there were railway tracks, the North Country's army could reach the location in the shortest time possible.

In this era of warfare, what they valued was the speed of troop deployment.

Although it was uncertain whether the North Prince would use the train for civilian transportation, people from various major trade caravans still planned to try and talk with the North Prince Mansion. What if the North Prince agreed?

At this moment.

In the crowd, a cold-looking woman dressed in white with black trimmings quietly observed the black train not far away. Her pupils slightly contracted. She was clearly shocked by the North Country's train.

Murong Xue'er muttered to herself, "Who exactly is the North Prince to create such a thing?"

The train was obviously not of this world, or rather, this world should not have such things. Furthermore, according to the intelligence, there were mysterious weapons in the North Country. It was apparent that the North Country still had many things that the people of this world had never seen before.

Murong Xue'er now even believed that the rumors of the North Prince being a disciple of the immortal might be true. Otherwise, how could those things created by the North Prince Mansion appear in this world?

All the major dynasties had developed for thousands, even tens of thousands of years, and they had never seen anything like those created by the North Prince Mansion. Yet, it wasn't long since the North Prince arrived in the North Country, and the North Prince Mansion had already created various things that had never existed in this world before.

At this time, Murong Xue'er couldn't help but doubt whether she could complete the task given by the Empress. She had been in the North Country for some time now, almost a year, but she still couldn't get close to the North Prince.

Given the current rate of development in the North Country, it probably wouldn't be long before the overall strength of the North Country completely overwhelmed the Da Yue Dynasty. Although the North Country still imported a large amount of food from Great Yue, Murong Xue'er had also heard that the North Country had developed many high-yield food crops.

Watching the steel behemoth slowly approaching in the distance, Murong Xue'er made up her mind to take the time to contact Lu Chen. She must dig out all the secrets of Lu Chen. In the future, he would be the Empress's greatest enemy. They must uncover the secrets of the North Country's strength so they could find a way to cope.

Lu Chen stood on the platform, looking at the train drawing closer. He turned his head and smiled at his wives beside him, "What do you think of my train?"

At this time, Lu Chen's women were still in a daze. Although they had long heard about this kind of horseless train, seeing it with their own eyes still left them immensely shocked.

Mu Zixuan then snapped back to reality, looked at Lu Chen, and said, "Your Highness, will all cities have a direct train to Yan County in the future?"

Lu Chen said, "Yes, in the future, if we want to go to any city in the North Country, it will only take a few hours by train, at most a day or two."

"Of course, the railway will not only be laid in the North Country. Someday, the railway will cover the important cities of Great Sum and span the major dynasties."

Upon hearing these words, the women felt a jolt in their hearts. It seemed for the first time they were truly aware of Lu Chen's ambition.

Although they had long known that Lu Chen was ambitious and would achieve great feats in the future, he rarely showed it in front of them. The image Lu Chen presented to them was merely that of a libertine.

Now that Lu Chen spoke of extending the railway to the major dynasties, did that not mean that he intended to unify all dynasties one day?

In fact, Lu Chen thought that once the people of this world realized the various uses of the train, they would inevitably seek to cooperate with the North Country and then the major dynasties would

follow suit by laying railways. His previous words showed no sign of his ambition; it was completely his wives who were overthinking.

As the train gradually arrived at the station, some craftsmen from Great Yu City got off, and the first to disembark was Mo Xing.

Upon seeing Lu Chen, Mo Xing excitedly approached him, "I bow before Your Majesty!"

Lu Chen said, "Rise."

"Mo Xing, you have made a great contribution. Your name will go down in history!"

Hearing this, Mo Xing replied, "I dare not take credit. All of this is Your Highness's achievement. Without Your Highness's blueprints, I could not have built this era-transcending vehicle!"

Lu Chen said, "I plan to establish a Bureau of Transportation. You will be the director of the bureau from now on. You will be responsible for all the railway construction and train upgrades in the North Country."

Upon hearing this, Mo Xing was momentarily stunned, then, realizing what it meant, knelt again, "I will surely not let down Your Highness's expectations!"

Chapter 517: This Young Man is Not Old, But He is Quite Ambitious_1

The appearance of the fire train instantly set ablaze the interest of various dynasties, with people unanimously agreeing that the fire train was certainly not of this world. Furthermore, with the emergence of the fire train, the rumors about Lu Chen's mystical fate once again widened.

As the news of the fire train spread across all the dynasties, the words Lu Chen spoke on the train platform to his wives and concubines also circulated throughout the kingdoms.

This made people realize once again the extent of Lu Chen's ambition.

If the various dynasties were not united, it would be nearly impossible for Lu Chen to lay train tracks across all of them for the North Country to run fire trains. Quite clearly, Lu Chen's statement was an indication that one day he intended to annihilate all the dynasties to establish a unified one, and then he would spread the train tracks across the entire world.

Da Yue Dynasty.

Empress's Bedchamber.

Within the red curtains, the Yue Emperor was clothed in a red golden-threaded phoenix robe, her head adorned with a glittering golden phoenix hairpin, her stunningly cold jade cheeks looking indifferently at the intelligence in her hands.

"Desiring to lay train tracks across all the great dynasties, this young man is not old, yet his ambitions are indeed not small," she mused.

"This is the first time I have encountered someone with such ambition."

At that moment, outside the red curtains, several ministers were kneeling. Then, one of them spoke, "Your Majesty, your servant suggests an alliance with Great Wu, to swiftly eliminate Great Sum and

North Country. Having such an ambitious person near Da Yue, if we wait until North Country grows stronger, it will inevitably become a disaster."

Another minister agreed, "Your servant also believes we should get rid of the North Prince as soon as possible. Recently, a lot of intelligence has emerged from Great Sum, indicating that the North Country's Heavenly Human Realm might not exist at all. It's probable that the North Country's show of force is merely a bluff to buy time for their development."

"Now that North Country already possesses such formidable military strength, if we allow them to continue growing, they will become a great scourge!"

...

Hearing the words of the ministers, the Yue Emperor fell into deep thought. Indeed, North Country posed a tremendous threat to Da Yue, even greater than the Barbarian Tribe to the north.

If they did not eradicate this threat promptly, Da Yue would eventually succumb to North Country.

After pondering for a while, the Yue Emperor said coldly, "North Country is indeed a significant menace to Da Yue's well-being, but, with the Barbarian Tribe being quite active to the north and showing signs of moving south, it is not appropriate for us to be at odds with North Country for the time being."

"However, we must find a way to obtain that secret weapon of North Country and the so-called fire train. Inform Murong Xue'er that I will give her three more months to get close to the North Prince at any cost and acquire North Country's secret weapons and the blueprints for the fire train," she commanded sternly.

Upon hearing the Yue Emperor's words, the ministers outside the curtains refrained from saying anything further.

Indeed, it was not suitable to make an enemy of North Country at the moment, especially since they had yet to attain North Country's secret weapon. The weapon was what they currently feared most. If they couldn't secure it and rashly attacked North Country, they too might suffer greatly.

As she spoke, the Yue Emperor suddenly thought of something else and continued, "Moreover, tell Murong Xue'er to find a way to confirm whether North Country truly lacks a Heavenly Human Realm expert."

News that North Country lacked Heavenly Human Realm masters had been out for months, and various powers had sent people to investigate its veracity. However, since no one had managed to make contact with Zhuge Zhongguang, almost no one could confirm the authenticity of the news. People had to assume that Zhuge Zhongguang had indeed broken through to the Heavenly Human Realm.

If Da Yue intended to take action against North Country, they needed to determine North Country's true strength. If Zhuge Zhongguang had really reached the Heavenly Human Realm, then the difficulty of eradicating North Country would climb another step.

...

Great Wu Dynasty.

Green Cloud Palace.

Wu Junwan leaned on a beauty couch, listening to female guards in the grand hall report on North Country's intelligence.

...

After hearing the specific introduction of the train, Wu Junwan's willow eyebrows slightly frowned, and then she asked, "How much cargo can this train pull at one time?"

The female guard replied, "Not sure, but our people found out that many carriages can be added behind this train. If all these carriages are used to transport people, ten carriages can carry at least two thousand people."

Hearing the female guard's reply, Wu Junwan fell into silence.

Trains did not need to rely on animal power, and hardly required rest, covering two hundred kilometers in six hours, which meant four hundred kilometers in one day. What was most important was that as long as the railway existed, trains could continuously transport troops to the war front, faster than traditional cavalry.

If the border towns of the North Country were all equipped with train tracks in the future, the military transport capability of North Country would greatly increase.

Of course, this was not the most important.

If North Country only treated the train as a means of transportation, Wu Junwan would not feel there was anything special about it. What she cared about most were the words that North Prince had said on the day of the train's test run.

After coming back to her senses, Wu Junwan continued to ask, "Did North Prince really say that he intends to extend the train tracks to all the major dynasties?"

The female guard answered, "That's the rumor. Whether it's true or not, we cannot judge."

Wu Junwan muttered to herself, "If I'm not mistaken, the phrases 'All under heaven is the king's land' and 'The shores of the land within his realm all belong to the king' were also his words."

The female guard said, "Indeed, he said that. Those phrases were even published in the announcement issued by North Country at that time."

Wu Junwan talked to herself, "This young man actually has such great ambition. In that case, Qingrou should be feeling uneasy now."

North Country shared a border with Great Yue, being so close; if North Country grew stronger, North Prince would inevitably choose to eradicate the Da Yue Dynasty first to fulfill his own ambitions.

Thinking of this, Wu Junwan said to the female guard, "Wait here for a moment, I will write a letter to the Yue Emperor. You will send this letter to the Yue Emperor later."

The last alliance failed because the Yue Emperor had no immediate plans to confront North Country, believing that North Country's mysterious weapons were too fearsome. Now that North

Prince had once again shown his ambition, Wu Junwan did not believe the Yue Emperor could remain seated still.

Her good sister, she should agree to form an alliance with Great Wu this time, right?

The ministers in the Great Jue court hall could probably also see what North Prince might do next; they should now support the Yue Emperor to form an alliance with Great Wu, right?

...

North Country.

Hall of Political Affairs.

Lu Chen sat on the throne, listening to officials reporting in the grand hall.

The official currently reporting was from the Agricultural Bureau under the Ministry of Household, detailing the year's pioneering of new land and the promotion of high-yield crops.

After listening to the Agricultural Bureau official's report, Lu Chen said, "It seems that the promotion of high-yield crops is progressing quicker than I anticipated."

Hearing this, the Agricultural Bureau official said, "For the rapid promotion of high-yield crops, the commoners almost all went out to buy grain for consumption, leaving about eighty percent of this year's harvest for seeding."

The commoners knew that the high-yield crops promoted by the Prince's Mansion had particularly high yields, and in order to live without the fear of hunger as soon as possible, they spontaneously left a large amount of seed. The high-yield crops harvested this year were mostly saved for planting the following year.

This led to a very rapid promotion of high-yield crops in North Country. At this rate of promotion, within no more than three years, North Country's food problem could be completely solved.

Chapter 518: Murong Xue'er's Invitation_1

Agriculture was developing in an orderly fashion, while industry had also begun to show some signs of emergence. Now, Great Yu City had nearly become an industrial city.

With the advent of the train, the connection between Great Yu City and Yan County had become much tighter. Some of the commoners from Great Yu City were finally willing to come to Yan County, which in turn, accelerated the development pace of Yan County once more.

At this moment, Lu Chen spoke up, "Alright, that's enough about agriculture. Does anyone else have any other matters?"

Then Mu Changtian stood up and said, "Prince, the Zhao King has already started a war against the Ren Prince. I'm afraid we too must start preparing sooner rather than later."

The civil war in Great Xia had already begun a month ago, with the Zhao King taking the lead in deploying troops to attack the Ren Prince, who hadn't had time to react before the majority of his territory was captured by the Zhao King.

This war was somewhat peculiar; the imperial court did not interfere at all, allowing them to fight amongst themselves. Indignant, the Ren Prince sought to ally with the Huai Prince in hopes of eliminating Zhao Country.

Once a war begins, it's not easy to stop.

The Zhao King's sudden assault on the Ren Prince likely indicated that the princes could no longer contain themselves and wanted to directly establish victory or defeat, vying for the throne.

Most princes had established connections with the seigniors. When seigniors act impulsively, it also means that the struggle between princes has reached a life or death stage.

Mu Changtian felt that if the North Prince wanted to vie for that position, he had to act quickly, heading south as soon as possible to take the supreme seat and then quell the internal strife.

As it stood, only the North Country had the strength to suppress other seigniors within Great Xia's borders.

If the seigniors were allowed to keep fighting, Great Xia might be ruined by their hands, which would not be a good thing for the North Prince.

If he delayed going south and the North Prince became Emperor, he might face a mess of problems and a nation in disarray.

If Great Xia was ruined, rebuilding it would take far more time and effort. The North Prince's ambition was to destroy other dynasties and establish a unified empire. If he wasted time and effort on rebuilding Great Xia, achieving his ambition would take forever.

Of course, that was just what Mu Changtian thought.

At this time, Lu Chen said, "Let them fight if they like to fight. As long as the Imperial Army remains in Qi Country and doesn't mobilize, we'll continue to watch the drama unfold."

Hearing what Lu Chen said, Li Rui replied, "Prince, the situation in the Capital is becoming more and more severe. If the princes continue their struggle, Great Xia is in danger of fragmentation."

"Once Great Xia fragments, it would be difficult to unify it again in the future."

At that moment, Lu Chen turned his head to look at Zhuge Zhongguang, who was sitting in the front row of the great hall.

"What does the Great Scholar think?"

Zhuge Zhongguang began to say, "This old subject believes that the North Country should not take up arms for the time being. However, the Prince is after all His Majesty's child, a seignior of Great Xia, and has the duty to stand up when Great Xia faces a crisis."

"Therefore, this old subject believes that the Prince must make a statement to the court and to the seigniors of Great Xia. Only after the Prince declares his position openly, might the seigniors across the land possibly calm down a bit."

At present, no matter how the seigniors within Great Xia expanded their troops, their military strength could not possibly match that of the North Country. Once the North Prince stepped forward and spoke a few words of deterrence, some seigniors would naturally behave more docilely.

After thinking for a moment, Lu Chen felt there was some merit to this and then said, "In a moment, I will draft a memorial to submit to the court."

"Does anyone have other matters?"

At this time, Liang Zong stood up and said, "Prince, the activities of spies from various empires within the North Country are becoming more and more frequent. I believe that with the current number of Jinyiwei Guard, it is no longer sufficient to monitor the spies from other countries, so I suggest we continue to expand the Jinyiwei Guard ranks."

Upon hearing this, Lu Chen was taken aback for a moment. If it were just a minor increase in Jinyiwei Guard numbers, Liang Zong and Qin Yushan would have the authority to do so without having to report it.

If Liang Zong was the one suggesting an increase, it signified that he intended to recruit a particularly large number of people this time. Only if the expansion exceeded a certain scale would there be a need to proactively report it.

Lu Chen came back to his senses and asked, "How many people does the Brocade Guard plan to recruit?"

Liang Zong replied, "By my estimate, the Brocade Guard needs to recruit at least ten thousand people."

Upon hearing Liang Zong's words, some ministers in the great hall instantly darkened their expressions.

Even though the current Brocade Guard had not caused any conflicts with the ministers of the North Country, everyone knew that the Brocade Guard were the dogs of the North Prince, closely watched by him at all times.

The Brocade Guard were already numerous; now, with the recruitment of another ten thousand, they feared the North Prince would know when they so much as took leave for personal matters.

The ministers' loyalty to the North Prince was still not in question, but loyalty is one thing, and that did not mean they were devoid of personal schemes. Moreover, they felt uncomfortable being watched all the time while conducting their affairs.

After hearing Liang Zong's words, Lu Chen pondered for a moment. The Rain-listening Pavilion had already been discovered by various dynasties as a force under the North Prince Mansion, making gathering intelligence not as easy as before.

Professional tasks should be left to professionals; it would be better to transfer all the intelligence channels of the Rain-listening Pavilion to the Brocade Guard and have them collect information from the various dynasties.

If the Brocade Guard were to be dispatched, then recruiting an additional ten thousand people indeed would not be excessive.

With this in mind, Lu Chen said, "Agreed."

Seeing Lu Chen's approval, some ministers in the great hall felt quite depressed, but they dared not say much.

The Brocade Guard were the dogs of the North Prince, and to strike the dog one must consider the owner. If they attacked the North Prince's dogs, it would imply that they harbored other intentions.

At this moment, Lu Chen spoke to Liang Zong, "When recruiting the Jinyiwei Guard, try to use people from Great Yu City as much as possible."

Liang Zong replied, "Yes, I understand."

The people of Great Yu City were incredibly loyal to the North Prince and thus were most suitable for the Brocade Guard, which valued loyalty above all.

Lu Chen then scanned the great hall once more and, seeing that no one else stepped forward, he spoke up, "If there are no other matters, let us conclude for today."

As his words fell, Lu Chen stood up, flicked his sleeves, and left the Hall of Political Affairs directly.

When Lu Chen reached the gate of the study's courtyard, a female guard from the Prince's Mansion approached him in a flurry, "Greetings to Your Highness the Prince!"

Lu Chen asked, "What's the matter?"

The female guard replied, "An envoy from the Da Yue Dynasty has brought an invitation, inviting you to attend a poetry gathering at the Hundred Flowers Tower in three days."

As she spoke, the female guard handed over the invitation to Lu Chen.

Lu Chen received the invitation from the female guard, glanced at it, and then the corners of his mouth slightly turned upwards.

The one inviting him to the poetry gathering was Murong Xue'er; it seemed that the Da Yue Dynasty could not wait any longer, desiring Murong Xue'er to get close to him as soon as possible to probe the secrets of the North Prince Mansion.

The female guard then continued, "The Da Yue envoy's messenger is still waiting at the mansion gate for Your Highness's reply. Do you plan on attending the poetry gathering?"

Lu Chen answered directly, "Go and tell the messenger that this prince will surely attend Miss Murong's poetry gathering in three days."

"Yes, Your Highness."

"I shall take my leave."

Watching the female guard's departing figure, Lu Chen thought to himself that since Murong Xue'er was willing to come to him, there was no need for him to prolong leaving her in suspense.

Chapter 519: As long as you're beautiful, age is not a problem_1

Lu Chen glanced at the invitation in his hand and, without further thought, continued towards the study.

Just at this moment, the figure of a beautiful, mature woman appeared at the doorway of the study. Lin Wanyun was dressed in a green Cloud Attire, her voluptuous body clinging tightly to the dress, flesh where there should be flesh, slim where it should be slim, with a slender waist and ample hips, radiating the charm of a mature woman.

Seeing Lin Wanyun waiting for him at the entrance to the study so early, Lu Chen immediately guessed there must be some movement from the Mysterious Moon Palace and asked first, "Madam Lin, are you searching for me because there's news from Rongrong?"

Upon seeing Lu Chen, Lin Wanyun immediately said, "Yes, she had a disciple from the Mysterious Moon Palace bring over a letter."

Lu Chen then pushed open the door to the study and said, "Come in and talk."

Lin Wanyun did not overthink it and directly followed Lu Chen into the study.

No sooner had she stepped foot into the study than Lu Chen snapped his fingers. Subsequently, the doors and windows of the study closed, leaving just the two of them alone in the room.

Lin Wanyun's heart trembled slightly, but considering she was there to discuss serious matters with Lu Chen, she thought he probably wouldn't engage her in that sort of thing and hence didn't overthink it.

She handed the letter she was holding to Lu Chen.

Lu Chen took the letter and began to read it carefully.

Lin Wanyun spoke from the side, "Rongrong says the Honorable's strength has already recovered substantially, and it won't be long before she comes to the North Country. The Honorable is someone who can disguise themselves, and her disguising technique is quite formidable, very few people in this world can see through her disguises.

So, in the coming period, try as much as you can not to casually flirt with beautiful women outside, especially those who seem to have an exceptional demeanor, as they are very likely to be the Honorable."

After reading the content of the letter and hearing Lin Wanyun's words, Lu Chen smiled and said, "Alright, I'll try my best not to provoke women outside for the time being."

Hearing Lu Chen agree, Lin Wanyun's mind slightly relaxed. She was afraid that Lu Chen, by chance, might provoke the Honorable in disguise. If that happened, not only would Lu Chen face big trouble, but perhaps Chen Wanrong would also be unable to come down from the mountain thereafter.

But then again, even though Lu Chen had agreed to temporarily abstain from flirting with women outside, his harem already contained so many women.

What if, once the Honorable arrives at Yan County, she discovers that Lu Chen has so many women, seeing him indulging with his women daily, will she view Lu Chen as a licentious man, unworthy of Chen Wanrong's lifelong commitment and then decide to cut off all ties with them upon her return?

Considering this, Lin Wanyun's face revealed a trace of worry.

After finishing reading the letter from Chen Wanrong, Lu Chen scanned Lin Wanyun's face again. Lin Wanyun's brows were slightly furrowed, seemingly anxious about something.

Lu Chen asked with a smile, "Madam Lin, what are you worried about?"

Lin Wanyun was about to answer when Lu Chen reached out and pulled her soft body directly into his arms. Lin Wanyun was stunned for a moment, about to struggle, but in the end, she refrained from moving and allowed Lu Chen to embrace her.

"I'm worried that once the Honorable arrives in Yan County and discovers you have so many women, she might form a bad impression of you."

Hearing this, Lu Chen leaned down, resting his face against her snow-white neck, and whispered softly, "I am, after all, a seignior, a ruler of a feudal state. It's nothing unusual for me to have a few wives and concubines. I believe Rongrong's master will understand the ways of us worldly folks."

Lin Wanyun said, "Not necessarily. The Honorable treats Rongrong as if she were her own daughter. If she learns Rongrong is just a concubine in your presence, she might very well get angry."

Lu Chen's large hand rested on Lin Wanyun's hips, smiling as he said, "Don't you also treat Rongrong like your own daughter? And yet, in the end, you accepted me."

As he spoke, Lu Chen's large hand started to wander.

Lin Wanyun turned her head slightly to look at the man who was hugging her waist from behind, "Who has accepted you!"

A blush spread over Lin Wanyun's face, and she felt a scorching heat on her cheeks, her body growing increasingly restless. In the presence of this scoundrel, she couldn't endure it at all.

There was nothing to be done; every time she and Lu Chen hugged, he would do that sort of thing to her, and now it had become a habit. As soon as Lu Chen embraced her, she would feel affectionate.

Lu Chen said at this time, "Rongrong's master will be coming to Yan County in a few days, and after that, I won't be able to do as I please anymore."

"In that case, why don't we indulge ourselves in advance?"

As he spoke, Lu Chen's mouth drew near Lin Wanyun's ear, gently blowing a breath into it.

"Wanyun, what do you think?"

Just as Lin Wanyun was about to speak, Lu Chen sealed her red lips with his own.

"Mmmmmm..."

Lin Wanyun cursed in her mind, this little bastard, I really thought he had become much more serious lately, that he wouldn't do anything bad in the bookroom, but it turns out he hasn't changed at all.

Lu Chen's kissing soon made Lin Wanyun's body soften, and she completely lost her strength. She knew she couldn't resist, so she could only go along with Lu Chen's misdeeds.

Lu Chen was thinking, ever since Wang Qingci became pregnant with his child, he hadn't done anything bad in the bookroom for a long time. Now, the new bookroom in the Prince's Mansion was much bigger than the old one, with a lot more open space, allowing them to romp around at will.

Lu Chen truly adored Lin Wanyun, this beautiful woman with a soft body and a good temperament who also knew how to cooperate.

In his heart, Lu Chen couldn't help wondering what Chen Wanrong's master looked like. From Lin Wanyun and Chen Wanrong's descriptions, Chen Wanrong's master was also a peerless beauty.

If both of them said that woman was beautiful, then maybe she really was exceptionally beautiful, scoring over 90 points should be no problem at all.

Next, he should think about how to make a good impression in front of that "fairy."

If he could win over that "fairy," then it would be like owning the entire Mysterious Moon Palace.

That way, he could eliminate one more enemy.

The Mysterious Moon Palace was already within the Great Xia territory, and according to the original development path, once he became the Great Xia Emperor in the future, there was bound to be a war between him and the Mysterious Moon Palace.

Having such a powerful force as the Mysterious Moon Palace existing in Great Xia was like having a state within a state, key to the fact that it was uncontrollable and could meddle freely.

He would definitely not allow any uncontrollable forces to exist within his ruling domain.

Of course, if he could establish a kinship with the Mysterious Moon Palace in advance and become one family, then things would be much easier.

Being one family, there would be no need for two separate sides; the Mysterious Moon Palace could still operate within the Great Xia territory.

At that moment, Lu Chen pressed Lin Wanyun down on the desk and then pressed on top of her, asking, "How old is Rongrong's master now?"

Hearing Lu Chen's question, the dazed Lin Wanyun sobered up a bit and replied, "I... I don't know."

"But... I've heard others say... uh... the Honorable seems to be an Immortal, at least... um... several thousand years old."

Lu Chen thought about Lin Wanyun's answer for a moment—several thousand years, huh.

Never mind, several thousand years it is then.

As long as she is beautiful, age is not a problem.

Chapter 520: Murong Xue'er Seeks Guidance_1

Wang Qingci, with her big belly, was helped to the study door by a maid. She was looking for Lu Chen to tell him that she was about to give birth soon, and that she didn't have the energy to manage the Rain-listening Pavilion, so she wanted to temporarily hand over its management to other sisters in the Prince's Mansion.

However, just as she reached the door of the study, she saw the maid there blushing, and at that moment the maid said, "Lady Wang, the Prince and Madam Lin are discussing important matters and it's not convenient to see anyone else at the moment."

Hearing this, Wang Qingci instantly understood what was going on.

Although pregnant Wang Qingci still exuded a bewitching charm, her pregnancy had brought out more of her maternal nature, and she no longer felt any jealousy towards Lu Chen's actions.

Listening to the faint sounds coming from the study, Wang Qingci stroked her big belly and lowered her head to say to it, "You must not learn from your daddy. He's a bad thing who can't stay away from women all day long."

At this moment, Lu Chen was already deeply mired and couldn't extricate himself. Although he was aware that Wang Qingci was outside looking for him, at this point, he had no way of leaving.

Wang Qingci didn't continue to wait at the door of the study either. She believed that Lu Chen should know that she had been there and would come to look for her after he finished his business.

After Wang Qingci left, Lu Chen stayed busy for who knows how long until a disheveled Lin Wanyun came out of the study, holding her torn dress.

Lin Wanyun felt that she needed to be more cautious around Lu Chen in the future; even if there were matters to discuss, she would try to avoid going to the study to consult with Lu Chen.

The study was not a good place; after all, Wang Qingci used to fool around with Lu Chen every day in the old Prince's Mansion's study, and Lu Chen apparently liked to do bad things there.

After Lin Wanyun left, Lu Chen called for the maid to clean the study, and then he continued to stay inside, composing a memorial to the court.

Time flew, and three days for Lu Chen was but the blink of an eye.

Today was the day Murong Xue'er hosted a poetry gathering at the Hundred Flowers Tower; the Hundred Flowers Garden was already filled with many eminent scholars.

To win the heart of the talented Murong Xue'er, they each displayed their own literary brilliance.

Although Murong Xue'er had been an envoy in Yan County for several months, most people knew that she was an important minister beside the Empress of Da Yue, the Empress's most trusted confidant, and that it would be just a matter of time before she got called back by the Empress.

Moreover, many literary scholars had heard that Murong Xue'er was a promiscuous woman, who was sent to the North Country by the Yue Emperor because she kept male consorts.

This gave some hope to these scholars; in their eyes, as long as they could win Murong Xue'er's favor, they might become her favored guest, so the scholars in the Hundred Flowers Garden were even more eager to perform.

At this moment, dressed in white with black trim, Murong Xue'er walked up to the second floor of Hundred Flowers Tower and glanced over the scholars below.

Today, like always, Murong Xue'er's simple and elegant attire highlighted her cool detachment and literary talent, her aura attracting the gaze of all the literati in the garden, unable to help but focus on her.

At this time, Murong Xue'er began to speak, "Thank you all for coming to the poetry gathering I'm hosting. For today's event, there are several themes, and I've specifically invited the Poetry Immortal Wei Li to appraise everyone's poems."

At these words, the crowd stirred.

People hadn't expected that Murong Xue'er would actually invite Wei Li, who, like Zhuge Zhongguang, was an object of admiration among all literati.

However, in recent years, Wei Li had almost no fixed residence, being seen in any dynasty, and he hardly ever accepted invitations from the great dynasties or participated in events.

The poems that people knew of Wei Li were those from before he became famous; there were barely any new works from the present Wei Li.

Of course, this didn't hinder Wei Li's sacred image in the hearts of literati.

Just then, an elderly man with white hair approached Murong Xue'er, causing another stir among the crowd.

"It really is the Elder Wei Li!"

"This is the first time I've heard that Elder Wei Li is attending such a privately organized poetry gathering?"

"Who would have thought that Miss Murong could even invite Elder Wei Li; does that mean Elder Wei has decided to join the Da Yue Dynasty?"

"Didn't Elder Wei say in the past that he would not join any dynasty?"

"Who knows? Maybe he's tired of traveling around and plans to settle down somewhere."

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While people were abuzz with discussion, the white-haired elder spoke softly to Murong Xue'er, "Miss Murong, are you sure the North Prince will attend such a gathering?"

Murong Xue'er smiled lightly and then said, "The North Prince has already promised. He will definitely come today."

Wei Li said, "Then I'm entrusting my matter to you."

Murong Xue'er replied, "Please rest assured, Elder Wei. I will do my best to help you find out about Elder Zhuge's affairs."

Wei Li and Zhuge Zhongguang, held as two sacred mountains in the hearts of literary scholars, with Zhuge Zhongguang's fame always overshadowing Wei Li.

Wei Li had been unwilling for decades to be inferior to Zhuge Zhongguang, so he had tried every means, striving to surpass him, but no matter what he did, Zhuge Zhongguang remained the Literature Saint in people's hearts.