

Es. Benefits 691

Chapter 691 The Provoked Lu Yi_3

The more arrogant the subordinates of the North Prince were, the better it was for him. If one day he and the North Prince had a falling out and war ensued, these arrogant generals could become a disaster for the North Country.

However, Lu Yi soon discovered that Xuanyuan Chen was not arrogant. On the contrary, the time Xuanyuan Chen estimated was somewhat conservative.

Meanwhile.

On the opposite riverbank.

A general clad in armor looked at the military camp where North Country's soldiers were stationed and confidently said, "I have long heard that North Country's soldiers are brave and good at fighting, very impressive. Let this general have a good experience. I want to see just how formidable North Country's soldiers really are!"

...

Early the next morning.

Lu Yi was still sleeping in his tent when the deafening sound of drumming woke him up. He awoke to find his face looking very ugly.

He said to the trusted aide outside his tent, "Chen Lie, what happened?"

The guard immediately entered the tent and said, "Your Highness, General Xuanyuan has launched an attack!"

Hearing this, Lu Yi's face instantly darkened.

Although Xuanyuan Chen and his men were not his own subordinates, they were sent by the North Prince Faction to help him capture Heyang County. Yet these fellows didn't even inform him before launching the attack, just started drumming as if he didn't exist at all.

Though he was displeased, Lu Yi didn't say much. He got up, dressed, skipped breakfast, and went directly to the front. He wanted to see how North Country's soldiers fought.

As soon as Lu Yi reached the frontline, the artillery positions let out deafening roars. Lu Yi wasn't far from the artillery positions, and each blast felt like a direct hit to his innards, causing his body to involuntarily tremble with the sound of the gunfire.

Soon, Lu Yi saw the opposite riverbank get enveloped in clouds of dirt. He hurriedly asked someone to bring him a telescope to observe the situation on the other side.

Seeing the cannonballs explode and blow Huai Prince's soldiers to pieces, Lu Yi's legs started to tremble uncontrollably.

Was this the power of these weapons?

How terrifying!

Lu Yi finally understood why neither the Barbarian Tribe nor Great Wu were a match for North Country. The firepower of these cannons was akin to that of a Grandmaster, and crucially, there were enough of them.

As long as North Country could keep producing them, even if some nation or power had many Grandmasters, they might not be a match for North Country. The continuous barrage from these cannons might even exhaust a Grandmaster to death.

Watching the cannonballs relentless harvest the lives of soldiers on the other bank, Lu Yi's face turned pale. This was no war; it was a one-sided slaughter.

With the power of these cannons, would it take three days to reach the opposite shore?

No, even two hours might be unnecessary!

Lu Yi quickly noticed that North Country warships had already started crossing the river.

These warships were hastily modified, but the ships were equipped with things like mortars—small cannons. As the warships drew near the opposite shore, a few surviving Huai Prince's soldiers tried to resist stubbornly, only to be dispatched after a few blasts.

The bombardment lasted for only about an hour, and soon Lu Yi's trusted aides' military flags were planted on the riverbank fortifications across the way.

Xuanyuan Chen and his men were only helping Lu Yi seize Heyang County, so the flags could not bear the emblem of the North Country.

Seeing the flag fluttering on the flagpole, Lu Yi sat down hard on the ground.

In theory, once North Country's soldiers successfully crossed the river, it wouldn't be long until he could take Heyang County, and soon he would be able to make a comeback. He should be happy—yet he couldn't feel any joy at that moment.

The thought that he might have to face the cannons of North Country in the future filled Lu Yi with fear.

If he had led a traditional army to launch a river-crossing battle, it would have probably taken months to achieve success, whereas the army of the North Country needed less than two hours to eliminate the defending troops across the river.

What kind of war was this...

If one day the North Prince led his troops southward, could it be that less than a month would be needed to directly take down the Capital City and change dynasties?

Lu Yi's trusted aide quickly supported him, "Your Highness, what's wrong?"

"Your Highness, are you alright?"

"Your Highness..."

At this moment, Lu Yi's gaze was vacant, as if he could no longer hear the sounds of the outside world, like he was sitting on the ground, staring at the artillery smoke on the opposite bank of the river.

After what seemed like an eternity, Lu Yi's ears gradually began to pick up the voices of his aides, and he said weakly, "Help me up."

The aides hurriedly helped Lu Yi to his feet and escorted him back to the tent.

The scene witnessed today was a profound shock to Lu Yi; he had never imagined that war could be so swift.

After General Xuanyuan's troops occupied the other side of the river, he came to the outside of Lu Yi's tent. He intended to symbolically report the battle situation to Lu Yi, but Lu Yi's aides stopped General Xuanyuan, saying, "General Xuanyuan, the Prince is indisposed, he has entrusted you with full responsibility for this war. You can report to him after Heyang County has been captured.

There is no need to report to him in the meantime."

General Xuanyuan did not persist; he clasped his hands, saying, "I understand, then the Prince should rest well."

...

One day later.

Inside Shunan City.

Lu Yong was enjoying the service of the beauty, when suddenly a group of generals stormed into the hall.

"Prince, this is terrible!"

"Prince, Prince Lu Yi is coming for us!"

...

The sudden influx of generals sent Lu Yong into panic; his body instantly stiffened, and his overweight form was unable to rise, lying on top of the beauty.

Lu Yong said in terror, "How is that possible!"

"Impossible, with Quanping River as a barrier, how could the North Country's soldiers cross over so quickly!"

Seeing Lu Yong flattened on the beauty, in a state of panic, trying to get up but unable to, the generals grew even more distressed.

They were already battered and defeated, barely finding a stable place. They thought they could continue their extravagant lifestyle here, only to have it quickly shattered by Prince Lu Yi.

At that moment, a general suddenly remarked, "You all saw the weapon North Country used just now. If this continues, our deaths are certain."

Another general suggested, "Why not surrender? Prince Lu Yi is in need of men now; he certainly won't make things difficult for us."

Hearing their words, Lu Yong, who was lying on top of the beauty like a fat pig, chimed in, "Yes, surrender! I surrender!"

However, no sooner had he spoken than everyone's gaze turned sharply towards Lu Yong, their eyes filled with ruthless killing intent.

The next moment, a general drew his sword and pierced both Lu Yong and the beauty with a single thrust.

Lu Yong couldn't fathom, even in death, that it was these very people who had supported him in taking over his father's position, and now they had turned on him so abruptly.

Chapter 692 - As Long as the North Prince Falls in Love with Me_1

After Lu Yong died, his subordinates carried Lu Yong's head over to the soldiers of North Country and surrendered.

It took Xuanyuan Chen less than half a month to take down the entire Heyang County after launching the attack.

Although Lu Yi remained within his own tent all this while, he was aware of the occurrences outside.

He had actually anticipated the outcome for Lu Yong from the very first day of the war. Xuanyuan Chen had completed the river crossing battle in merely one day, and after the Huai Prince's subordinates had been bombarded by the artillery of North Country, how could they possibly harbor any thoughts of resistance?

After Xuanyuan Chen had taken control over the entire Heyang County, he once again visited Lu Yi's tent. Xuanyuan had not sought Lu Yi during these days, knowing that Lu Yi was somewhat shaken up and reluctant to meet with others for the time being.

However, now that Heyang County was taken and the Huai Prince had lost his head, with the Prince's subordinates having surrendered to Lu Yi, it was now Lu Yi's turn to enter the stage.

When Xuanyuan Chen arrived at Lu Yi's tent, he called out loudly, "Your Highness, Heyang County has been taken. The Huai Prince's subordinates have delivered the Huai Prince's head. What do you think should be done next?"

Upon hearing Xuanyuan Chen's voice, Lu Yi inside the tent began to cough violently.

The trusted aide outside the tent hurriedly said, "General Xuanyuan, the prince has been ill these past few days and has yet to recover. Perhaps you should first take those people into custody, and we can revisit the matter once His Highness is better."

After hearing the trusted aide's words, Xuanyuan Chen said, "Alright then."

Xuanyuan Chen did not think much of it and left the encampment, heading directly to the opposite shore of the river.

Several days passed, and Lu Yi's illness finally showed some signs of improvement. Lu Yi did not choose to execute the Huai Prince's subordinates.

Though he felt in his heart that these men were unreliable—after all, they were those who had carried Lu Yong's head over to surrender—and such men might surrender once or countless times. If a day came when he and Lu Chen went to war, these same men might also kill him to surrender or tie him up to send to North Country.

But there was no helping it. Despite his reluctance in heart, he lacked manpower and had to keep these men around for the time being.

The soldiers of North Country were indeed formidable, yet none of them were his men. Soon, they would return to North Country, and he must seize the time to build an army of his own.

Having witnessed the way North Country waged war, Lu Yi became even more eager. He needed to quickly build his power and then find a way to obtain the artillery schematics from North Country. He could not afford to remain in decline.

When Lu Yi arrived at the capital of Heyang County, Shunan City, he issued a proclamation claiming that corrupt officials now ruled, the Emperor was misled, and as Crown Prince, he would stand up to save Great Sum, eliminate the traitorous officials, and called upon the righteous people of the land to join him and advance to the Capital city to support the Emperor.

Once the call for "Supporting the Emperor in the Capital" was made, quite a few forces chose to align themselves with Lu Yi.

Though the current prowess of Lu Yi seemed modest, these forces were not fools—they saw the enormous backing behind him.

Lu Yi took less than a month to conquer Heyang County, clearly with strong support from the North Prince.

With the backing of the North Prince, it would be effortless for Lu Yi to plot and usurp power, especially since he was already the Crown Prince, the legitimate heir to the throne.

This news quickly reached the Capital city. When the Sum Emperor learned that Lu Yi had gathered a large number of people and intended to support the Emperor in the Capital, he was incredibly joyous.

He had initially thought that Lu Yi would occupy Heyang County and develop it for a while. He did not expect Lu Yi to raise the "Supporting the Emperor in the Capital" slogan so promptly.

Since Lu Yi had already made the call, it suggested that the army under his command would soon march towards the Capital city.

If Lu Yi reached the Capital, perhaps it would not be long before that rebel in the north made his move.

Meanwhile.

In North Country, at the Lu Mansion.

Xue Linglong wore a black gauze dress, semi-translucent, as if her snowy skin could be glimpsed beneath.

At this moment, Yu Tianlu arrived at Xue Linglong's side and handed a piece of intelligence over to her.

Xue Linglong received the intelligence, glanced through it, and then said with a soft laugh, "The military power of North Country truly is impressive. It did not even require a month to occupy the entire Heyang County."

"If the North Prince does indeed lead his troops south, it might take even less than a month for them to reach the gates of the Capital city."

Yu Tianlu then said, "We can almost confirm that the North Prince is the 'Son of Destiny' we're looking for."

"If we could sacrifice him, we would definitely be able to resurrect the Sect Hierarchy, but the North Prince has always stayed in Yan County, and that Celestial from Mysterious Moon Palace seems to also be in Yan County. It won't be easy for us to take the North Prince away."

Xue Linglong said, "That's simple. The North Prince is fond of beauty, so I can sacrifice my charms and seduce him."

"As long as the North Prince falls in love with me, I will find a way to deceive him into willingly sacrificing himself."

Upon hearing this, Yu Tianlu was startled for a moment, then said, "Saintess, this might not be appropriate?"

"After all, you are the Saintess of the Taiyin Divine Sect, the Hierarch's woman. If the Hierarch gets resurrected and finds out what happened between you and the North Prince... he probably..."

Yu Tianlu did not continue, as he believed Xue Linglong understood his implication.

Xue Linglong indifferently said, "If I do not sacrifice my charms, how could I have the chance to get close to the North Prince? And without getting close to him, how can we resurrect the Sect Hierarch?"

"What we need to do right now is resurrect the Sect Hierarch. As for other matters, we can think about them after the Hierarch is resurrected."

"Besides, I have no real intention of offering myself like that. With the Yin Yang Mirror, I can create illusions that are almost real."

Upon hearing this, Yu Tianlu immediately understood.

Right, the Yin Yang Mirror is in the possession of their Saintess. Its capabilities are not limited to just concealing a person's aura and strength; it can also create illusions, and typically, people cannot tell whether those illusions are real or fake.

With this in mind, Yu Tianlu felt relieved.

Next, all they needed to do was to plan carefully on how to get close to the North Prince without him noticing their true intention.

At this very moment.

Inside the North Prince Mansion.

Wu Junwan sat in the pavilion, looking at the intelligence report brought by her servant, and couldn't help but sigh softly.

Murong Xue'er said from the side, "Your Highness, why do you sigh? Is it because the Prince hasn't visited your room for too long?"

Hearing this, Wu Junwan scoffed coldly, "What do you take me for? Do you think I'm some kind of libertine who only knows the pleasures of men and women?"

Murong Xue'er wasn't frightened by Wu Junwan's icy tone, and said softly, "According to the observations of this servant in the past, Your Highness seemed to truly enjoy it."

Wu Junwan said icily, "You dare to speak to me like this only because we are in the North Country."

At this point, Wu Junwan placed the intelligence report she held in front of Murong Xue'er, who took it and saw that it was about Heyang County.

The fact that North Country had conquered Heyang County so swiftly was within Murong Xue'er's expectations; after all, the military might of the North Country was well recognized.

Suddenly, Wu Junwan asked, "Have you ever witnessed the power of a cannon?"

Murong Xue'er replied, "This servant also wants to witness it, but the Prince has always been wary of this servant."

Wu Junwan said, "If I ask him to let me see the cannon up close, do you think he would agree?"

Murong Xue'er responded, "If your Highness asks, this servant believes the Prince would most likely agree."

Hearing Murong Xue'er's words, Wu Junwan sighed again. It would be great if that young man really agreed.

Having been in the North Country for so long, she still had not had a chance to interact with the cannon, except for that time when she saw those metal tubes being carried on the train from a distance when Lu Chen sent Lu Yi off.

She was now very curious about how powerful a cannon really was.

Just then, a familiar man's voice rang out at the entrance of the courtyard.

"If you want to see the cannon, it's not impossible. There happens to be an opportunity this afternoon."

Chapter 693 Does the Empress Like It?_1

Hearing the man's voice, both women turned their heads to look at the entrance of the courtyard, only to see the bad element they hadn't met for almost half a month, swaggering into the yard.

Lu Chen walked directly to Wu Junwan's side and sat down, then naturally wrapped his arm around Wu Junwan's slender waist.

Wu Junwan chuckled and said, "The North Prince is truly a busy man, this Palace has not seen the North Prince for nearly half a month."

Hearing this, Lu Chen replied with a smile, "My fault, I have indeed been quite busy lately."

Wu Junwan said, "As a ruler of a nation, the Prince is so ready to admit fault, wouldn't that be a loss of dignity?"

Lu Chen replied with a smile, "Dignity is for strangers."

Wu Junwan continued, "This Palace has heard that the Palace Master of Mysterious Moon Palace has come to the North Prince Mansion, and the North Prince has been so busy these half a month. Could it be that you have been busy discussing important matters with that Palace Master in bed?"

Hearing this, Lu Chen looked at Murong Xue'er next to him, and asked with a smile, "Xue'er, do you smell a sour scent?"

Murong Xue'er answered expressionlessly, "This servant smells it, very sour."

Seeing these two echoing each other against her, Wu Junwan snorted coldly and then said, "The Prince just said that there would be an opportunity this afternoon to take us to see North Country's cannons. Is the Prince serious about that?"

Lu Chen said, "Of course."

"I will take you there shortly."

Seeing that Lu Chen truly agreed, the two women were immediately very pleased.

Although they had already fallen for Lu Chen and had no intention of causing trouble in North Country anymore, deep down they still had some obsessions.

One such obsession was their desire to know just how powerful North Country's weapons were.

Wu Junwan then continued to ask, "You helped Prince Lu Yi seize Heyang County and assisted him in expanding his influence. Aren't you afraid that when he becomes a force to be reckoned with, you will have no way to control him?"

Lu Chen responded with a light smile, "If I were truly worried about that, I would not have loaned him the troops."

Seeing Lu Chen's nonchalance, Wu Junwan reminded him, "Lending troops to others so casually, and with North Country's weapons, be careful they might steal your North Country's weapons and then use them against North Country."

Hearing Wu Junwan's reminder, Lu Chen pulled Wu Junwan closer to him and said, "I didn't expect you to be so concerned about North Country's affairs now. It seems you've gotten used to your new identity."

Wu Junwan replied emotionlessly, "This Palace only wishes not to see North Country's weapons scattered, bringing more wars to this world."

Lu Chen said, "You are really not a bit frank."

At that moment, Lu Chen let go of Wu Junwan's waist, stood up, and said, "Let's go, follow this Prince to watch the artillery training."

Hearing this, the two women instantly brimmed with interest, and they quickly got up and followed Lu Chen to the Artillery Barracks.

The artillery training was quite noisy, so it was located a distance away from Yan County, and on their way to the Artillery Barracks, they even took a short ride on a train.

Wu Junwan and Murong Xue'er sat inside the train, their minds filled with myriad thoughts.

Compared to a carriage, Lu Chen's private train was much more spacious and luxurious, and even as a Princess, Wu Junwan had never ridden in such a luxurious vehicle in her life.

Lu Chen's private train, just like a moving room, was no different, and indeed the carriage even had a bed inside.

Seeing the bed not far away, Wu Junwan's mind conjured up images of Lu Chen doing wicked things with his wives and concubines on that bed.

Just as the two women were lost in thought, Lu Chen said, "We will sleep on the train tonight; we won't go back."

Hearing this, Wu Junwan and Murong Xue'er were startled, well aware of what they had just been thinking, and a blush rose to their cheeks.

At that moment, a rumbling sound came from the distance, like thunder, and hearing such dense "thunder," the two women were startled.

They didn't believe it was thunder. After all, the skies were clear, and it was unlikely to have such dense thunder sounds.

According to information they previously collected, North Country's weapons were closely associated with the sound of thunder.

It looked like they were approaching North Country's Artillery Barracks.

Just then, the train whistle blew, letting out a "whoo..." sound, and then the train began to slow down, and before long, it came to a stop.

Lu Chen led the two women out of the train, and as soon as they exited, they were greeted with the pungent smell of gunpowder.

Wu Junwan and Murong Xue'er had never smelled such a strong scent of gunpowder, and it made them quite uncomfortable.

Then, by identifying the direction of the sound, the two women quickly located where the "thunder" was coming from and looked in that direction in unison.

Wu Junwan asked, "Is this thunder sound the result of North Country's cannons?"

Lu Chen replied, "Yes, although it's more accurate to call it cannon fire."

Wu Junwan turned to Lu Chen and confirmed, "Are you sure you want to take us to see your soldiers' training? Both Xue'er and I came from an enemy nation to steal intelligence."

Even though they already shared the intimacy of marriage and had enjoyed each other countless times, this kind of relationship might not be very stable. The beauty trap is the most common strategy of all.

Chapter 694 Does the Empress Like It?_2

Even if they professed their deep love for Lu Chen in bed, or even sweetly called him "darling," they could still potentially betray him.

Wu Junwan and Murong Xue'er had always believed that Lu Chen didn't fully trust the two of them, but rather, because of Lu Chen's powerful strength, he didn't fear them stealing any information from the North Prince Mansion.

The cannons of the North Country were the core secret of the nation, and Wu Junwan was still somewhat incredulous that Lu Chen would willingly expose their core secret to them.

Lu Chen smiled and said, "We've come this far; do you really think I'm just teasing you?"

Wu Junwan lightly responded, "I hope you won't regret it later."

Lu Chen didn't mind and directly led Wu Junwan and Murong Xue'er to the training grounds.

When the training soldiers heard that the Prince was coming, they quickly ceased their training and lined up in two rows to wait for Lu Chen's arrival.

Once Lu Chen entered the training field, the soldiers spoke in unison, "Greetings to the Prince! Long live the Prince, long live, long live!"

After entering the training grounds, Lu Chen said, "Don't mind me, continue your training."

Upon hearing Lu Chen's words, the soldiers returned to their original positions.

By then, Wu Junwan and Murong Xue'er's gaze had already fallen on the cannons at the firing range, staring intently at the soldiers' operation process, seemingly afraid to miss even a single step.

After a while, a soldier pulled the cannon's lanyard, and subsequently, a deafening sound emanated, followed by the target area being blown up, sending dust flying chaotically.

Witnessing this stunning scene, both women were stunned.

Wu Junwan felt a twinge in her heart.

No wonder the North Country could so easily defeat the Great Wu Dynasty.

She sensed the realm of these artillerymen; most were at the first tier, with some not even reaching that level — they were simply physically stronger commoners.

An ordinary person could operate such a powerful weapon, and one round from the cannon could kill a Grandmaster or even hinder the movements of a Great Grandmaster. If there were enough of these weapons, the martial artists of other dynasties would be no different from commoners in the face of the North Country.

No, more accurately, no different from ants.

At this moment, the training soldiers performed a volley with the cannons, and in an instant, the distant target range was blasted with numerous large pits, and the rising dust seemed to form a wall several meters high.

Seeing this, Wu Junwan was completely dumbstruck, and Murong Xue'er felt similarly, thinking that if the Da Yue Dynasty really went up against the North Country, they likely wouldn't have a chance of winning.

It seemed that regaining her freedom was only a matter of time, as her original agreement with Lu Chen stipulated she'd be granted her freedom once the Da Yue Dynasty was vanquished.

The North Country possessing such formidable weapons meant the downfall of the Da Yue was a foregone conclusion.

Murong Xue'er suddenly felt a sense of confusion, wondering what she would do once she regained her freedom. Leave the North Country and find a place rich in scholarly atmosphere where she could settle down?

Cannon fire continued to resound, but the thoughts of the two women had already drifted away from the artillery field.

After what seemed like ages, Lu Chen saw the two women were lost in thought, and he spoke up, "Would you like to try it out yourselves?"

On hearing Lu Chen's voice, Wu Junwan came to her senses and said, "It seems you truly aren't afraid of me figuring out the structure of these cannons."

Lu Chen was about to say something when Wu Junwan continued, "There's no need, I've seen enough to know that the use of these cannons is far from difficult, and it's not the launchers themselves that wield the killing effect, but those metal balls."

Seeing Wu Junwan's lack of interest, Lu Chen then said, "Since you're not interested, let's go elsewhere to see how the other soldiers train."

Following that, Lu Chen took the two women to various other training fields.

After an afternoon, Wu Junwan had noticed that in addition to terrifying weapons, the North Country's army had very different training methods and military discipline.

Their army appeared to be more disciplined, achieving the mark of immediate obedience to orders.

This greatly surprised Wu Junwan; such a lustful man actually had an army with such good discipline—it was completely incongruent with the ruler, the North Prince.

As evening approached,

Lu Chen returned to the train with Wu Junwan and Murong Xue'er.

The moonlight tonight was beautifully clear, its rays shining through the train windows into the cabin, casting a saintly glow on people's faces.

Lu Chen led Wu Junwan and Murong Xue'er to the second carriage, where the table was already full of food.

There were no lights turned on in the carriage; instead, candles were lit, making the food look even more appetizing under their flame, and stimulating the appetite.

Wu Junwan was somewhat puzzled, not knowing what Lu Chen was up to.

Lu Chen smiled and said to Wu Junwan and Murong Xue'er, "Please, take a seat."

Without giving it much thought, the two women sat down to enjoy the dinner, and it had to be said, the food of the Prince's Mansion greatly suited their taste; since both had lived in the mansion, they could no longer enjoy food from outside.

At this moment, Wu Junwan said, "I've heard that every evening, the Prince dines with his wives and concubines. Why didn't you go back to dine with them tonight?"

Chapter 695 Does the Empress Like It?_3

Although Wu Junwan had never been to Wind Cloud Court, she had already come to understand the situation within the inner court of the Prince's Mansion quite well.

When Wu Junwan asked this question, Lu Chen casually replied, "Wasn't I supposed to take you to watch the soldiers train today? There's no helping it, we can't make it back in time."

Wu Junwan said, "With the speed of the train, if the Prince wished, you could still make it back in time for dinner at the Prince's Mansion."

Although the Artillery Barracks in Yan County are relatively far, it's not to the extent that we can't make it back, especially since we're taking a train, which is much faster than a carriage.

Even if we went back now, Lu Chen might still make it in time for dinner at the Prince's Mansion.

Wu Junwan distinctly felt that this young man was plotting something.

Lu Chen said, "The two of you have also been at the Prince's Mansion for a while, and I haven't joined you for meals before, so let's consider this evening my compensation."

Wu Junwan said, "Does the Prince really think I am as pretentious as those women in the inner court of the Prince's Mansion?"

Lu Chen chuckled. This woman was truly impervious to oil and salt.

Murong Xue'er directly asked, "Prince, you must have called us out for something important, right?"

Murong Xue'er didn't believe that Lu Chen took them out on a train just to watch soldiers train. If it were only for that purpose, they could have completely gone back tonight.

Not going back meant there was an issue.

This rascal must be thinking of some mischief.

Lu Chen smiled and then replied, "Today is our Empress's birthday. I took her out to relax a bit, to prevent her from getting sick at heart from staying in the North Prince Mansion all the time."

When Wu Junwan heard Lu Chen say this, she only then realized that today was indeed her birthday. Since coming to North Prince Mansion, she hadn't paid much attention to the date, so she hadn't thought of it at all.

She had forgotten her own birthday, yet this young man remembered it. This made Wu Junwan feel a hint of warmth in her heart; the young man was indeed thoughtful.

No wonder this guy hadn't come to see her for half a month, and today he suddenly had appeared in her courtyard. It turned out that he knew today was her birthday and had specifically come for her.

Thinking of this, were all the arrangements within this train specially prepared by this young man?

Despite a strange feeling in her heart, Wu Junwan still stubbornly said, "I do not have the habit of celebrating my birthday."

Lu Chen didn't pay attention to Wu Junwan's words and said, "Let's not talk about that. Let's continue with our meal, and after we finish eating, we still have a lot of things to do."

Upon hearing this, both women instantly realized what Lu Chen was referring to.

Wu Junwan inwardly chuckled. So this was his idea of celebrating her birthday? She understood now; this guy was simply looking for a different place to carry on with those acts.

But soon the two women discovered that what Lu Chen referred to wasn't just about engaging in those acts; Lu Chen truly had made preparations.

After dinner, Lu Chen had the maids take Wu Junwan and Murong Xue'er to the third carriage to bathe. After the bath and changing into the Phoenix Robe, Wu Junwan returned to the first carriage.

Wu Junwan went straight to the bed and lay down. She glanced at Lu Chen, who was standing at the doorway, and said icily, "Let's begin!"

Lu Chen burst into laughter, "Since when did the Empress become so impatient, even more than I am."

Wu Junwan said expressionlessly, "By taking us out here, isn't it just to enjoy our bodies in a different place? When did the Prince become so hypocritical? Just get started."

Lu Chen smiled and, without explaining, said to the maids, "You may begin now."

The next moment, the lights in the carriage went out. Soon after, someone from the second carriage came up with a cart in front of them. On the cart was something strange.

The maidservants said, "Happy Birthday to the Empress, may you be blessed with peace and safety, and remain forever young and beautiful!"

Lu Chen said, "This is a custom of our North Country; on birthdays, we eat birthday cakes."

Cake?

What is that?

Wu Junwan and Murong Xue'er looked at the candlelit cake with full faces of confusion.

At this point, Lu Chen approached the bed and said directly to the maidservants, "You may begin now."

The maid immediately pushed the dining cart to Wu Junwan, handed her a dagger, and on seeing it, Wu Junwan thought the maid was an assassin. She was about to stop the maid when Lu Chen held her tightly, preventing her from moving at all.

At that moment, the maid spoke up, "Your Majesty, please cut the cake!"

With a skeptical look, Wu Junwan took the dagger, then turned to Lu Chen, "Prince, what is this about? Why can't I understand?"

Lu Chen explained, "When people in the Prince's Mansion have birthdays, they eat cake; it's a celebration ritual."

"Just think of it as a gift," he said.

Wu Junwan said, "I have never heard of such a strange gift before."

Lu Chen said, "Well, now you have."

Without giving it much thought, Wu Junwan began to cut the cake.

Normally there are a few more steps to a birthday, but Lu Chen had deliberately omitted the singing of the birthday song and making a wish, mainly because it was Wu Junwan's first birthday, and there was no need to make it too complicated.

Once Wu Junwan was accustomed to it, he would add those steps back in the next time she had a birthday.

After Wu Junwan divided the cake into pieces, she handed the knife back to the maid, who then personally cut a slice of cake for Wu Junwan and placed it on a plate.

Lu Chen said with a smile, "Try it and see how the cake tastes."

Wu Junwan picked up a spoon, scooped up a spoonful of cake, and then put it into her mouth.

A burst of sweetness exploded in her mouth, and Wu Junwan was quite surprised; it was the first time she had ever tasted anything so sweet.

At that moment, the maid also cut pieces of cake for Murong Xue'er and Lu Chen. Although Murong Xue'er didn't understand why they needed to eat this thing, she also tasted the cake.

Wu Junwan then said, "This dessert is delicious; I had no idea the North Prince Mansion had such tasty sweets."

Hearing Wu Junwan's praise, Lu Chen smiled and then said, "There's another event planned for tonight."

No sooner had Lu Chen finished speaking than a loud "boom" sounded, much like thunder.

Immediately afterward, a burst of colorful stars exploded in the sky, then fell like star showers.

Wu Junwan and Murong Xue'er were stunned at the sight.

The two women initially thought it was some kind of unusual phenomenon, but as more and more colorful stars exploded, the entire train carriage was illuminated.

Under the night sky, the light from the fireworks shone into the train, casting Wu Junwan's and Murong Xue'er's incredibly beautiful faces in relief.

After who knows how long, Lu Chen's voice rang in Wu Junwan's ear, "Does the Empress like it?"

Chapter 696 Wu Junwan: The Prince Indeed Has Some Skill_1

Hearing Lu Chen's voice, Wu Junwan finally came back to herself, her fair face slightly blushed under the reflection of the fireworks.

"I thought all you knew was to do that sort of thing with women, I didn't expect Prince to also use these tricks to make women happy," she said.

"It's just too bad, these little tricks have no effect on me," she added coolly.

Standing to the side, Murong Xue'er heard Wu Junwan's words and couldn't help but look down on her. Wu Junwan's face was blushing so hard, she was nearly burning up, yet she was still putting on a tough front.

It seemed she was accustomed to being a person of high status and wasn't willing to admit she had been subdued by this man.

At that moment, Murong Xue'er said, "Congratulations, Prince, on thoroughly capturing Her Highness's heart."

Hearing Murong Xue'er's sudden remark, Wu Junwan coldly responded, "Heh, ridiculous."

Seeing Wu Junwan with a flushed face, yet still maintaining a cool demeanor, the corners of Lu Chen's mouth lifted slightly. He enjoyed seeing Wu Junwan's stubborn facade.

As the splendid fireworks continued to bloom in the sky, Wu Junwan had some cake and then placed the plate on the serving trolley.

The palace maid hastily brought a silk handkerchief, with which Wu Junwan wiped her red lips and said, "I have finished eating, take it away."

Hearing Wu Junwan's words, Murong Xue'er also placed her plate on the serving trolley.

Although the cake truly was the most delicious dessert Wu Junwan had ever tasted, she had already had dinner and couldn't eat much.

Moreover, she wasn't in the mood to eat; it had been half a month since she had last matched wits with the young man before her.

Today, this young man had suddenly taken her out and had staged this whole scene, which was causing Wu Junwan to struggle to contain her urges.

It had to be said that this young man had a knack for dealing with women. Although Wu Junwan wouldn't admit it aloud, in her heart, she had already acknowledged Lu Chen's little tricks.

After the serving trolley was taken away, the other palace maids seemed to understand the situation and quickly drew the train's curtains.

The room was then lit with a dim, yellowish ambient light. Under its glow, Wu Junwan's pale skin took on a yellowish hue, but it made her look all the more enchanting and passionate.

Wu Junwan spoke indifferently, "If all of this was prepared for that little palace maid beside you, she'd probably be so moved that she would willingly become your female slave for life. Sadly for you, it was all prepared for me, so it seems Prince is in for a disappointment."

The "little palace maid" Wu Junwan referred to was naturally Murong Xue'er.

Lu Chen gave a slight smile, then swiftly laid Wu Junwan down on the bed and looked down at her, saying, "Oh, is that so? Then it appears Her Majesty is a woman with an unyielding heart."

"But what I am best at is dealing with unyielding women like you," he continued.

With a poker face, Wu Junwan said, "Then I really want to see what other methods the famous North Prince has."

Wu Junwan's tone was clearly provocative, and Lu Chen chuckled. He found this woman quite interesting.

Then Lu Chen leaned down and kissed Wu Junwan's red lips deeply, "Mmm, mmm, mmm..."

After Wu Junwan struggled faintly for a moment, she raised her arms and wrapped them around Lu Chen's neck.

Seeing this, Murong Xue'er smirked with a hint of disdain.

What Princess Wu, in the North Prince Mansion, in front of the North Prince, she ends up just the same as her.

Wu Junwan was no different!

For some reason, ever since she saw the fall of such a noble person like Wu Junwan, Murong Xue'er felt a sense of relief within her heart.

She had always felt that she had been conquered by this bad man too quickly, thinking of herself as a shameless woman.

Now that she saw even the Princess of Great Wu couldn't stay away from the North Prince, she suddenly felt that being conquered by the North Prince was not such a disgraceful thing.

This bad man certainly had some skills.

But then again, this couple was doing indecent things in the carriage while making her watch. Wasn't this a bit too tormenting for her?

It made her feel like a concubine maid, although she indeed was a maid serving the Yue Emperor. But after coming to North Country, she had at least held the position of an envoy.

While Murong Xue'er was feeling somewhat emotional, Lu Chen and Wu Junwan had already lost themselves in passion.

"My darling Wanyan, call me darling..."

"Uh... darling..."

Upon hearing Wu Junwan's voice, Murong Xue'er let out a soft hum, immediately got up, and prepared to step aside, but just as she rose, she was pulled back by that despicable man.

Before she could even react, Lu Chen's lips sealed her red ones.

One was the esteemed and noble Princess of the dynasty, and the other a cool and elegant great talent - these two together sent Lu Chen's inner ferocity climbing to its peak.

After what seemed like an eternity, Wu Junwan's body suddenly emitted bursts of golden light, which didn't shoot straight into the sky but instead swirled around her.

Then a massive, luminous tornado cloud gathered above the train.

Seeing this, both Lu Chen and Murong Xue'er were stunned.

Lu Chen immediately understood what was happening. Although there was no pillar of light emanating from Wu Junwan's body, her aura was already akin to his own.

That meant Wu Junwan had now entered the Unity Realm, she was a Pseudo Celestial!

Lu Chen felt his eyes had been opened; Wu Junwan had actually attained the Unity Realm and become a Pseudo Celestial under these circumstances.

What test would this world impose on her?

Curiosity filled Lu Chen's heart.

At this moment, Wu Junwan looked at her body, emitting golden light with a hint of confusion, but Lu Chen quickly snapped out of it.

Not knowing whether Wu Junwan's current state would bring him a different sensation, Lu Chen threw Murong Xue'er aside without waiting for Wu Junwan to react, and once again, she was dragged back by Lu Chen.

Practice proved that Wu Junwan's state did indeed bring a different feeling to the experience.

Soon the golden light on Wu Junwan's body retreated back into her, and the celestial phenomenon in the sky gradually dissipated.

...

Early morning.

The sunlight crept through the train window and shone into the carriage, which was a complete mess, with a torn Phoenix Robe lying in the aisle.

Lu Chen was embracing Wu Junwan, who was half-lying on top of him, while Murong Xue'er lay beside them.

Although Lu Chen's private train carriage was quite large, it was still considerably smaller than a room in the North Prince Mansion, and the bed inside was on the smaller side.

So, there was no room to lie side by side; they could only lie this way.

When Wu Junwan woke up, she immediately said, "The Princess acknowledges that the Prince does have some skills, very adept at attending to others. From now on, you are my male consort."

Seeing Wu Junwan talking tough again upon awakening, Murong Xue'er chuckled and said, "It's my first time seeing a Princess so helpless against her own male consort, left with no option but to weep and wail."

Displeased by Murong Xue'er's taunting, Wu Junwan snorted and then said, "Should Qingrou ever come to the North Prince Mansion, the Princess will have to ask her how she educates her maids."

Curious about Wu Junwan's comment, Lu Chen said, "Oh? From what you say, it seems you believe that the Yue Emperor will eventually show up at the North Prince Mansion. Didn't you say she would rather die than submit?"

Wu Junwan replied, "If the Prince really has the ability to defeat the Da Yue Dynasty, I might act as a go-between and persuade Qingrou to follow the Prince."

Seeing such a sudden shift in Wu Junwan's attitude, Lu Chen gently stroked her jade back and directly asked, "Talk to me, what was your trial to become a Celestial?"

Caught off-guard by the question, Wu Junwan paused, then coldly replied, "Do you think I would tell you something so crucial to me?"

Seeing Wu Junwan unwilling to talk, Lu Chen didn't press further, instead, he smiled and said, "Even if you don't tell me, I have a good guess. Your trial to become a Celestial probably involves me to a great extent."

Wu Junwan tensed up, realizing Lu Chen had guessed something. If this cunning man knew about her trial to become a Celestial, she couldn't predict how he'd view her. She couldn't let him find out no matter what.

With that thought, Wu Junwan said, "The Prince is as shameless as ever. Why would my trial to become a Celestial have anything to do with you?"

Murong Xue'er felt shocked upon hearing their conversation. No wonder Wu Junwan's body emitted golden light last night – she had entered the legendary Unity Realm and had become a Pseudo Celestial.

That was just too bizarre.

Who would have thought that someone would enter the Unity Realm while engaged in that kind of act?

Chapter 697 No One Can Stop Her from Going Home!_1

Misty World.

Atop a towering, cloud-piercing mountain, a woman clad in purple Cloud Attire stood at the edge of a cliff, gazing at the black mist that enveloped this world in the distance.

This mountaintop was one of the rare places in this world not shrouded by mist.

At that moment, the woman murmured to herself, "It seems that the restriction is about to be broken. I wonder if I will still be able to see those two disciples I took when I return to that world once more."

Although it looked like the restriction was ending, the process was rather lengthy, perhaps ten years, or maybe a hundred years.

For cultivators with long lifespans, a hundred years might not mean much, but for ordinary people, a hundred years was a lifetime.

There was a difference between immortals and mortals.

If her two disciples couldn't break through to the Heavenly Human Realm within their lifetimes, she feared that by the time the restriction disappeared, she would only find their graves upon her return to that Lower World.

Thinking this, the woman sighed slightly.

When she had first gone to that Lower World, she shouldn't have gotten involved in this cause and effect; she suddenly felt some regret about taking those two disciples as apprentices.

At this time, a man dressed in a white robe, looking like a Daoist immortal, appeared behind the woman.

The man glanced at the distant mist and then said with a smile, "Junior sister, it seems the restriction will soon be completely lifted. Once the prohibition is gone, our Misty Immortal Sect will rise again."

Hearing this, the woman's brows furrowed, and she responded, "Senior brother, have you forgotten how we ended up in this situation?"

Hearing this, the man said carelessly, "We were exiled to this place because we weren't strong enough. That's why we should strive to become stronger. One day, I will lead the Misty Immortal Sect back home and obliterate all those former enemies of ours!"

The woman tried to advise him, "Senior brother, some things you should let go of."

Upon hearing the woman's words, the man snorted coldly and then retorted, "Junior sister, you're still so tender-hearted!"

"Those ants from the Lower World are not worth your sympathy, nothing but trash. It's their honor to become nourishment for our Misty Immortal Sect."

The woman coldly stated, "Senior brother, you've changed. You weren't like this before."

Hearing this, the man chuckled, "People change. When I realized our master saw us merely as targets for Reincarnation, I changed."

"This world is cruel. If I remained as naïve as before, the Misty Immortal Sect would have been annihilated long ago."

"I believe that one day, junior sister, you will understand your senior brother."

At that, the man's figure vanished instantly from the spot.

Only the woman in the purple dress remained standing on the mountaintop.

...

The wild northwest.

On the boundless grasslands, a voluptuous woman stood on a hillside, overlooking the distant Barbarian Army.

The woman had a curvaceous figure and was scantily clad, with only a few pieces of silk covering her. Her fair and flat belly was exposed, and her pale body emitted a strong allure. Although her subordinates knew of her cruelty, they couldn't help but let their eyes wander over her.

Just then, a Barbarian General approached the woman, handing her a stack of white papers, "Goddess, here is intelligence on the recent situation of several major dynasties!"

The woman took the papers, murmuring to herself, "I didn't expect the people of this world to have crafted such fine paper so quickly."

As she flipped through, upon seeing the intelligence recorded on the paper, Mu Yunxi was mildly surprised.

"As expected, it's not far off from what I had anticipated; the North Country does present some difficulty."

"Mysterious weapons..."

"No matter how formidable the weapons, they shouldn't be able to withstand the battle formations."

Just then, the Barbarian General in front of Mu Yunxi spoke, "Goddess, the various tribes on the grasslands have finished assembling. Those who refused to submit have already been subdued by our forces."

"Now that the Barbarian Tribes are unified once more, and all the tribal leaders are willing to heed your word, with just one command from you, we will follow you southward and trample over the major dynasties!"

Hearing this, Mu Yunxi chuckled lightly and then said, "How is the practice of the Cultivation Techniques and battle formations coming along?"

This...

The Barbarian General hesitated for a moment, not continuing.

Mu Yunxi stated, "I would indeed love to lead the troops south immediately, but with your current strength, let alone moving south, you'd probably fail to defeat even the weakest Black Dragon Country."

"Have you forgotten the affair with the Tianqi King so quickly?"

The Barbarian General then said, "The Goddess is right; I was too hasty."

Mu Yunxi continued, "Hurry up with the practice of the battle formations. In five years, we will march south and annihilate Great Jue."

Upon receiving a clear timeline from the Goddess, the Barbarian General was instantly excited and quickly responded, "Yes, Goddess!"

At this, Mu Yunxi's gaze once again turned to the distant Barbarian Army practicing their battle formations, and she couldn't help but think to herself.

She only hoped that the North Country wouldn't become an unpredictable factor.

With that thought, Mu Yunxi's eyes hardened with resolve.

No matter who it was, nothing could stop her from going home!

...

With the help of Xuanyuan Chen, Lu Yi quickly established a firm foothold in Heyang County, and not only that, he even raised a large force.

Chapter 698 No One Can Stop Her from Going Home!_2

Within this troop, many were individuals who had fled from feudal states destroyed by the Zhao King.

As soon as Lu Yi had assembled the troop, he immediately expanded the army, and continually spread his territory. Before long, Lu Yi controlled three counties, and his influence was continuously spreading toward the Capital city. Based on the speed of his expansion, it wouldn't take more than a year for the region under his control to border the Capital city.

Lu Yi was also aware that he was merely a chess piece for Lu Chen, but he was not content to remain a pawn; he was eager to become more powerful in a short span of time.

In addition to expanding his own territory and influence, Lu Yi was also preparing a secondary plan. He was trying to establish contact with the Demon Sect to obtain more support from them and then find a way to acquire those weapons from the North Country.

The war that General Xuanyuan had waged against Heyang County had left a profound impact on Lu Yi; he often had nightmares, dreaming that he was being blown to pieces by cannons.

He had now developed a deep obsession with firearms, convinced that he too must possess artillery. Only if he had his own cannons would he not fear the army of the North Country.

However, getting the blueprints for manufacturing cannons was not an easy task. Recently, he had tried to have several forces steal the firearms brought over by General Xuanyuan, but they had all failed.

There were some successes, but the guns they brought back lacked gunpowder. After dismantling them, they couldn't figure out anything of significance.

Lu Yi surreptitiously gathered more craftsmen, attempting to develop weapons similar to those of the North Country.

Lu Yi's covert activities were quickly noticed by the Brocade Guard. Incidents of thieves infiltrating the military camps were highly unusual, especially when it happened more than once. Before long, the news reached Lu Chen's ears.

North Country.

Inside the North Prince Mansion study room.

After listening to Liang Zong's report, Lu Chen became deeply contemplative. After a moment, he spoke up, asking, "Have you found out who is behind this?"

Liang Zong replied, "Your Highness, those thieves are all dead soldiers. As soon as they are captured, they either immediately take poison to commit suicide or detonate their Dantian. We've been left with no clues."

Lu Chen smiled, then said, "Most likely, my brother, Prince Lu Yi, has been rattled by the cannons and has become restless."

Even without identifying the perpetrators, it was not hard to guess.

After all, the incident happened in Heyang County.

Having thought for a while, Lu Chen then said, "Since Prince Lu Yi has already established a firm foothold in Heyang County and formed his own power base, it's time for General Xuanyuan and his forces to return to the North Country."

At that point, Lu Chen picked up a pen and a piece of white paper and began to write. As he wrote, he said, "Send a message to General Xuanyuan, telling him to lead his troops out of Heyang County as soon as possible and return to the North Country."

Liang Zong gave a respectful bow, saying, "As you command, Your Highness."

After finishing the letter, Lu Chen handed it over to Liang Zong.

Liang Zong immediately left the North Prince Mansion to dispatch the military orders.

Just as Liang Zong left the North Prince Mansion, a maid entered the study and said, "Your Highness, Queen Linglong has visited the Prince's Mansion again today."

Hearing the maid's report, the corners of Lu Chen's mouth lifted slightly. Xue Linglong had been visiting daily; it seemed she was very eager to get close to him.

If that was the case, he would grant her the opportunity.

Evening.

Wind Cloud Court.

Lu Chen did not visit Chen Wanrong's room today; he had been going there daily, and Yun Xianxian was already getting upset.

Lu Chen wrapped his arms around Mu Zixuan's waist, his chest pressed against her jade back, his head resting on her fragrant shoulder, and whispered into her ear, "My love, if Linglong visits again tomorrow, could you do me a favor?"

Having just been intimate with Lu Chen, Mu Zixuan responded weakly, "Your... Your Highness, please speak."

Lu Chen continued, "Create an opportunity for me to meet with Linglong alone. She has been coming every day for some time now, obviously with the intent of getting close to me but has yet to find the chance."

"Since she wishes to get close, I'll give her the opportunity."

Hearing Lu Chen mention Xue Linglong, and as if her body responded to the name, Mu Zixuan asked, "Your... Your Highness, you're not planning on making a move on her, are you?"

Lu Chen, smiling, said, "What do you think, my love?"

Taking a few deep breaths, Mu Zixuan replied, "Your concubine understands."

Suddenly, Mu Zixuan thought of something and then said, "Your Highness, there's something I would like to discuss with you."

Hearing this, Lu Chen curiously asked, "My love, if there's something on your mind, please speak freely."

At this, Lu Chen rolled off and turned Mu Zixuan's body toward him, cuddling her from the side.

Lu Chen, looking at Mu Zixuan's blushing cheeks, waited to hear what she had in mind.

Mu Zixuan said, "Your Highness, as the North Prince Mansion's enterprises continue to grow, my abilities are limited. I feel somewhat overwhelmed."

Mu Zixuan had some capability, and managing the internal affairs of the North Prince Mansion was something she could do very well.

At first, the enterprises of the North Prince Mansion were limited, so she did not have much pressure.

But as some businesses grew larger and their numbers increased, Mu Zixuan clearly felt that she was overburdened.

These past few days, she realized that even Yelv Nanyan, a formidable woman, had delegated authority over the treasury to others. It dawned on Mu Zixuan that it was time for her to do the same.

With the increase in responsibilities, she was left without even time to sleep. If it weren't for Lu Chen spending the night at the Wind Cloud Palace, she would probably still be busy dealing with business matters at this moment.

Chapter 699 No One Can Stop Her from Going Home!_3

Hearing Mu Zixuan's words, Lu Chen was taken aback.

Indeed, he had recently neglected the affairs of the Prince's Mansion's industries.

The industries of the Prince's Mansion were rapidly expanding, and these industries were extremely vast, no different from modern large corporations. Mu Zixuan was essentially managing dozens of large companies by herself, and she also had to take care of the internal affairs of the Prince's Mansion. No matter how capable she was, she surely couldn't handle it all.

Lu Chen said, "Right now, there are few reliable people in the North Country, my love. Do you trust anyone to whom we could delegate some industries in the future, someone you can entrust with responsibility?"

Mu Zixuan thought for a moment, then responded, "It's better for the Prince to decide. It's not quite appropriate for your consort to get involved in these matters."

Although Mu Zixuan was the Princess of the North Prince Mansion, she feared that if she casually arranged for people to take over the Prince's Mansion's industries, it would give the impression that she was cultivating her own power. She did not want to trouble herself with such concerns, so it was better to let Lu Chen decide.

Lu Chen thought for a while, then said, "I happen to have someone here who is quite idle. However, her identity is somewhat special, and it's not yet suitable for her to publicly take over the management of the industries."

Mu Zixuan instantly guessed who Lu Chen was referring to, "Is the Prince referring to Princess Wu by any chance?"

Lu Chen said, "Yes, she is not only ambitious but also capable. Keeping her locked in the courtyard, without letting her do anything, makes her uncomfortable."

"I would like to try handing over some industries for her to manage."

Mu Zixuan did not immediately answer Lu Chen. The women of the inner court of the Prince's Mansion were actually somewhat wary of Wu Junwan.

This was because the woman had great ambition; she was originally someone who aspired to become an Empress. Now that she had become Lu Chen's woman, her body and soul might belong to Lu Chen, but that didn't mean her personality could change drastically.

Maybe this woman already had the idea of competing for the position of the Prince's consort, or even aspired to become the Empress eventually.

Wu Junwan had been in the North Prince Mansion for so long, the women of the mansion had almost never visited her courtyard of their own volition, simply because they were guarding against her.

A woman with too much ambition entering the inner court of the Prince's Mansion could easily disrupt their current harmonious environment.

Seeing that Mu Zixuan did not directly answer, Lu Chen asked, "My love, are you afraid that her ambition is too great and that she might eventually do something to harm the Prince's Mansion?"

Mu Zixuan snapped back to reality and said, "Yes, although she's already the Prince's woman, I still have some concerns..."

Mu Zixuan did not continue. She hadn't had such worries when Yelv Nanyan, a consort of the Sky Wolf King, entered the Prince's Mansion. But no matter what, she couldn't put Wu Junwan out of her mind,

At most, Yelv Nanyan was just a consort from a Barbarian Tribe, and moreover, the Sky Wolf King's tribe had been destroyed by Lu Chen; no longer did anyone back Yelv Nanyan. But behind Wu Junwan was a dynasty, and the Great Wu dynasty still existed.

Lu Chen said with a smile, "Don't worry, my love. If her ambition swells too quickly, I will take action in time to suppress it."

Mu Zixuan said, "I leave it to the Prince to decide."

Since Lu Chen had already spoken, Mu Zixuan had no more to say. She trusted that, with Lu Chen watching, that woman probably wouldn't cause trouble.

However...

Mu Zixuan then asked, "Prince, the Princess of Great Wu has not officially married into the North Prince Mansion. If people find out that she has taken over the management of the Prince's Mansion's industries, won't they suspect your relationship with her?"

Wu Junwan had come to the North Country as a hostage, not directly married to Lu Chen. If Lu Chen now handed over so many industries of the North Country to Wu Junwan's control, even a fool would suspect that something had happened between Wu Junwan and Lu Chen.

After all, that would make it difficult to explain to the Great Wu dynasty, and it would certainly cause some within the North Country to worry since Wu Junwan had not officially married Lu Chen.

Lu Chen considered for a moment, then said, "How about this? She can help you manage those industries for now, but they will still be under your name for the time being."

Mu Zixuan asked, "Will the Princess agree to this?"

After all, Wu Junwan once held a high position and was someone who aspired to be an Empress. Now, she could only work under someone else, and what's more, her achievements would be attributed to another woman—she would most likely be unwilling.

Lu Chen replied with a smile, "She will agree."

"Enough about that. I haven't stayed overnight in the Wind Cloud Palace for a long time. Tonight, I will help you stabilize your realm."

Having said that, Lu Chen embraced Mu Zixuan's waist, rolled over, pressing her beneath him, and then kissed Mu Zixuan's lips.

...

Morning.

A ray of warm sunshine poured into the room, casting golden light upon the figure, making the already stunning woman appear even more dreamlike.

When Wu Junwan woke up, she lifted her blanket, exposing her fair skin.

Seeing that her undergarments had been discarded, Wu Junwan let out a cold huff, "It's all that man's fault, making me develop such a bad habit."

Being accustomed to wearing clothes to bed, since arriving at the North Prince Mansion, there had been a time when that man visited every day, which eventually led her to develop the bad habit of sleeping without clothes.

Sometimes she went to sleep fully clothed, only to wake up and find her clothes had been removed, so now she didn't want to wear undergarments to bed at all, finding it uncomfortable. She yearned even more for the feeling of that man's body against hers.

Wu Junwan glanced around the room, sighing softly. She felt all of this was so unreal.

Though she had been taken by that man, she was now completely unable to leave him, and even the conditions for her becoming a Celestial were tied to that man.

The heavens truly loved to play tricks on her.

"Enough, everything is fate. It's my destiny to be so," she conceded.

Chapter 700 Junwan's Trial to Become a Celestial_1

Wu Junwan was never a person who believed in fate; if she had been, she would never have dreamt of becoming an empress. Throughout history, it has always been men who ascended to the emperors' thrones, and the Great Wu Dynasty was no exception.

In the history of the Great Wu Dynasty, let alone an empress, even powerful empresses or empress dowagers rarely appeared.

However, the events of the recent few years, especially those related to the North Prince, have forced Wu Junwan to believe again that it must be predestined.

Not thinking too much about it, Wu Junwan turned to the maidservant in the room and asked, "Is the hot water ready?"

The maidservant promptly replied, "Your Highness, it's all prepared."

No sooner had the maidservant finished speaking than Wu Junwan got up from the bed and, without a stitch of clothing, headed directly to the adjacent bathroom.

As she walked, she said, "Xiao Ya, come and give me a shoulder rub."

"Yes, Your Highness."

Because Wu Junwan was undressed, she entered the steaming bathtub directly, and as she did, her body immediately felt all the fatigue vanish in an instant.

Wu Junwan moved to the center of the bath and slowly squatted down. Just then, she heard the sound of someone else entering the water behind her. Wu Junwan did not sense any danger, assuming it was the maidservant entering the bath to massage her shoulders, so she didn't mind it.

Soon, a pair of hands rested on her fragrant shoulders and slowly started massaging. For a moment, Wu Junwan felt utterly relaxed, her eyes closed.

But she quickly realized that something was amiss. The "maidservant's" hands, which had started gently on her shoulders, moved to the front after a while.

Wu Junwan furrowed her eyebrows and opened her eyes. "Xiao Ya, I asked for a shoulder massage, what are you doing?"

Before Wu Junwan could turn around, a pair of strong arms wrapped around her slender waist, and she felt the intruder's presence. The next moment, Wu Junwan was pulled to the edge of the bathtub.

However, Wu Junwan did not scream or shout. As soon as she noticed the anomaly with her body, she knew what was happening. Wu Junwan snorted coldly and said, "Does the Prince enjoy sneaking around like this?"

The only person who could fill her with such a sense of fullness instantly, she believed, was that cheeky man, nobody else.

Hearing her words, Lu Chen said with a laugh, "I didn't expect my Junwan to be so familiar with me, recognizing me in an instant."

Wu Junwan, expressionless, responded, "Apart from you, I fear there's no one else in this world who can approach me so silently, without me noticing the slightest sign, not even Celestials."

Although she didn't want to admit it, Wu Junwan was acutely aware that her body had indeed let down all defenses against Lu Chen. Unless she saw the man approaching, she would never know of his presence, even if he came to her side at any time, and it was only when he directly did certain things to her that she would immediately realize it was him.

Wu Junwan continued, "What brings the Prince to me so early in the morning?"

She believed that if Lu Chen truly wanted to be intimate with her, he wouldn't have come to her so early in the morning, especially since he had many things to do during the day.

Although Lu Chen was lustful, he was still a Prince who took care of serious matters.

Moreover, there was more time at night, and Lu Chen could play however he wished if he came in the evening.

Clearly, the man had some business with her.

Lu Chen said with a smile, "My wise wife has guessed correctly that I came for a matter to discuss."

Wu Junwan simply said, "Just speak straightforwardly."

Lu Chen spoke up, "You have been in the Prince's Mansion for a long time, staying here every day with nothing to do. Don't you find it a little boring?"

Wu Junwan chuckled lightly and said, "I am the Prince's trophy. Where else should I stay if not in the Prince's Mansion? Does the Prince wish for me to go out and cause trouble, to throw the entire North Country into chaos?"

Lu Chen stated, "If you find it boring, I can arrange some tasks for you."

On hearing this, Wu Junwan paused.

Arrange tasks? If Lu Chen was beginning to trust her, that meant.

And for someone like her, having tasks in the North Prince Mansion meant she would start dabbling in powers, and once she got a taste of power, she would have the capacity to disrupt the North Prince Mansion.

Wasn't this cheeky man afraid she would bring trouble to the North Prince Mansion?

Wu Junwan inquired, "Is the Prince serious?"

Lu Chen replied with a smile, "Since I've brought it up, it's definitely serious. I'm just not sure if you're willing."

Wu Junwan turned her head slightly to look back at Lu Chen and continued to ask, "What does the Prince intend for me to do?"

Lu Chen said, "The industries of the Prince's Mansion are growing more and more. My wife is getting a bit overwhelmed, so I plan for you to assist her, to jointly manage the industries of the Prince's Mansion."

On hearing this, Wu Junwan felt a jolt in her heart.

She was well aware of the importance of those industries in the North Prince Mansion!

If she were to manage the industries of the North Prince Mansion, then she would have the ability to access some of the Mansion's secrets, such as the production techniques and blueprints of various products. She could then completely orchestrate the theft of those items and hand them over to her followers, who could take them back to the Great Wu Dynasty.

Wu Junwan found it hard to believe that Lu Chen could actually trust her this much. Was this man testing her?

Or did he truly have such intentions?

After a moment of stunned silence, Wu Junwan spoke, "Is the Prince testing this princess?"

"Could it be that the Prince doesn't trust me, so he wants to test me to see if I'm still interested in the secrets of the North Prince Mansion?"

Hearing this, Lu Chen laughed and said, "You are overthinking it, I indeed plan to let you be involved with the Prince's Mansion's businesses."

"You are an ambitious and capable woman, I don't want to keep you locked up in the Prince's Mansion like a canary."

Hearing Lu Chen's words, Wu Junwan directly asked, "Doesn't the Prince worry that I might leak the secrets of these businesses?"

Lu Chen said, "That depends on what you're thinking. Do you want to stay by my side for life as my woman, or are you planning to betray me and start anew out there?"

"If you intend to be with me for life, then you'll help the Prince's Mansion. If you don't think I'm worth marrying, then you can try and sneak those business secrets out and deliver them to the Great Wu Dynasty."

Hearing Lu Chen's words, Wu Junwan let out a snort of laughter, "The Prince really is testing this princess!"

Even if she truly accessed those business secrets, her entire being was still in Yan County, and her entourage was also in Yan County. They were constantly under the surveillance of the North Prince Mansion's Brocade Guard.

If she obtained those business secrets, she likely wouldn't be able to get them out, which would only reveal her continued larcenous intentions. So the young man wasn't worried at all about her accessing those business secrets.

Lu Chen said, "To be honest, I don't believe for a second that you would betray the North Prince Mansion."

Wu Junwan asked, "Oh? Why is the Prince so confident? Does the Prince really think that I've been conquered by you, as the floozy next door says?"

Lu Chen said, "That's not the reason."

Wu Junwan pressed further, "Then what is the reason?"

Lu Chen answered, "Because I know your test to become a Celestial is definitely related to me. To become a Celestial, you must be by my side, so I think you won't betray me."

Wu Junwan said, "Isn't the Prince worried that the path I cultivate is the Unfeeling Tao, so to become a Celestial, I need to kill the Prince or betray the Prince?"

Hearing this from Wu Junwan, Lu Chen was taken aback. Indeed, there was this possibility.

However, since the woman had brought it up, it was very likely not the reason.

At that moment, Lu Chen opened Wu Junwan's personal file.

Sometimes, some things are not complicated at all, like if Lu Chen wants to know Wu Junwan's recent activities, he can just look at whether the system has updated her personal file.

Lu Chen rarely keeps a constant watch on his wives' personal data. But since Wu Junwan just mentioned that possibility of betrayal, Lu Chen needed to pay close attention this time, just in case she means it.

[Name: Wu Junwan]

[Status: Princess Wu of the Great Wu Dynasty, daughter of the Martial Emperor, friend of the Yue Emperor, pet of the North Prince, 31 years old, possesses extremely high Martial Arts talent, has entered the Unity Realm. Ever since consummating her relationship with the North Prince, she has

fallen deeply in love with him, and is willing to give up on her long-held dream of becoming the Empress.

Her love for the North Prince has led Heavenly Dao to set a special test for her. She only needs to bear three children for the North Prince, and she will be able to complete the Unity Realm and become a true Celestial. She is currently attempting to hide her condition to become a Celestial.]

[Rating: 98]

[Favorability: 100]

Seeing Wu Junwan's updated file, Lu Chen was taken aback.

He knew Wu Junwan's Celestial test must relate to him, but he hadn't imagined that it would be this condition.

This condition is too simple, isn't it?

Just to bear three children?

Thinking about it, Lu Chen quickly realized that perhaps the test wasn't so simple after all...

Wu Junwan is already a Pseudo Celestial, and he himself is a Pseudo Celestial. For them to have children is extremely difficult.

Let alone three children, he didn't know how many attempts would be needed with Wu Junwan before she could be "hit the target."

Heavenly Dao setting such a test for Wu Junwan... wasn't it just encouraging Wu Junwan to frequently engage in that kind of activity with him?

How could there be such a test?

The Heavenly Dao of this world is really strange.

But thinking it over, now that he knows Wu Junwan's Celestial test isn't about betraying him, he can be unrestrained with Wu Junwan.

Seeing Lu Chen fall into a long silence, Wu Junwan chuckled, "It seems the Prince is starting to worry."

Hearing Wu Junwan's words, Lu Chen came back to his senses, and with a slight smile, he whispered in Wu Junwan's ear, "You did scare me for a moment."