

My System 371

Chapter 371 - Tomorrow's Yellow Flower, The Worries of an Old Father _4

There are many benefits to this approach. Firstly, it ensures the selection of the best possible candidate for the throne to the greatest extent, and secondly, it appeases other members of the royal family. As long as your descendants show promise, who's to say they won't be able to pass the four great challenges and become the emperor of the Great Yan Dynasty?

As a result, it is unlikely that any of the princes who have been ennobled would betray Great Yan.

After all, the throne is passed down within the Great Yan Imperial Family.

This is much better than in Great Zhou, where it avoids many bloody incidents.

At the same time, Cheng Guang also understood that each kingdom is different.

Located in a remote area, the Great Yan Dynasty doesn't have many resources. Apart from being able to manufacture weapons and armor, there isn't much else to boast about. Survival depends on the goods from other dynasties.

Because of this, the members of the royal family don't yearn so much for the throne.

There is a bit of a gap in resources and treatment, but it's not too significant.

In contrast, the Great Zhou Dynasty, blessed with rich lands, simply holding a single prefecture could yield revenue equivalent to several years' income from numerous princes' lands in Great Yan. Stay updated via empire

The thirst for the throne is far more intense in the Great Zhou Dynasty than in Great Yan.

Even with the four great challenges, the competition will still be much fiercer in Great Zhou than in Great Yan.

Letting those princes of Great Zhou compete, and even involving the children of other princes, it would be difficult for the Great Zhou Dynasty not to be in chaos. In the end, it would likely tear the Great Zhou Dynasty apart.

"The Crown Prince of the Eastern Palace, Commandery Princess of Prince Ning."

"These two are the cause of the turmoil in Great Yan."

"It is very likely that one of them is the remnant of Great Chu."

Cheng Guang murmured to himself.

He had roughly guessed the identity of the remnant of Great Chu within the Great Yan Dynasty by now - whether it was the Crown Prince of the Eastern Palace or the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning, both held extremely high status within Great Yan.

His deduction aligned with his previous assumption that the remnant of Great Chu held a high position within Great Yan.

But at present, he could only be certain that one of them, either the Crown Prince or the Commandery Princess, was the remnant.

Which one it was, he still didn't know.

He would need to investigate further to confirm.

Cheng Guang contemplated this, as he gathered the documents from his desk.

Great Yan's emperor would soon restart the four great challenges, and the Crown Prince of the Eastern Palace felt insecure facing the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning.

Allowing the young lady in the yellow dress to leave the Eastern Palace may very well have been with the intent to provoke the Commandery Princess into action. If the Commandery Princess made a move, just the act of being accused of murdering the Crown Princess Consort or showing disrespect would be enough to hold her accountable.

Even if it didn't directly disqualify the Commandery Princess from participating in the four challenges again, it would still diminish her reputation among the officials.

The Crown Prince's plan was a clever one indeed.

But Commandery Princess Ning was no fool either.

She did not take the bait at all.

Both of them harbored no simple schemes - regardless of which one was the remnant of Great Chu, either matched Cheng Guang's impression of them.

Cheng Guang put away the documents and glanced at the darkening sky out the window.

The night deepened, with a bright moon suspended high.

Because he was in the Great Yan Dynasty, even the moon seemed tinged with a red hue.

Cheng Guang looked at the sky and, after some basic meditation and visualizing the Proving Dao Map for a while, got up and slipped into his bed, closing his eyes to sleep.

The bed linens were all brought from Duke Zhen's Mansion by Qing Luan, carrying a familiar scent, which made it easier for Cheng Guang to fall asleep, and he soon drifted off.

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The next day.

Cheng Guang opened his door, and the warm sunlight seemed to burst in eagerly as soon as the door moved.

Cheng Guang woke early and even though the terrain of the Great Yan Dynasty was notoriously hot, the morning temperature still felt a bit chilly due to the drastic difference between day and night.

Icy crystals floated in the air, resembling dissipating mist, which appeared rather dreamlike.

Cheng Guang splashed himself with some cool water, washed up simply, and then practiced his exercises in the courtyard.

By the time the sun was high in the sky, both Qing Luan and Qin Yanqiu had also woken up.

After eating breakfast prepared by Qing Luan, Cheng Guang left the residence and headed for the teahouse.

Upon sitting down in the teahouse, Zhang Rui respectfully presented Cheng Guang with a cup of tea.

"Princely Heir."

Cheng Guang took the tea, sipped the warm liquid, and looked at Zhang Rui, asking, "Do you know when the Great Yan Imperial Family will restart the four great challenges?"

Zhang Rui was taken aback by Cheng Guang's question, seemingly not expecting it. After a moment of surprise, he quickly replied:

"Princely Heir, it seems that the four great challenges are restarting today."

Cheng Guang heard this with a hint of surprise.

"Today is the day the four great challenges restart? Carrying the succession of Great Yan's imperial throne, how is there no commotion whatsoever outside?"

Cheng Guang was puzzled.

If he hadn't asked about it himself, perhaps Zhang Rui would not have volunteered the information.

Furthermore, inside Skyfire City, the capital of Great Yan Dynasty, there was no buzz about the four challenges, a trial related to the future succession of the throne of Great Yan.

Weren't they interested?

Zhang Rui discerned Cheng Guang's bewilderment and responded with a wry smile:

"There would be no buzz even if people wanted one, since the four challenges are held within the Great Temple of the Great Yan Imperial Family, a place ordinary people simply can't access nor see. Hence, while initially, the people of the world would take an interest, now they hardly pay attention to the challenges, waiting only to hear the outcome."

"Did the Princely Heir ask about the four challenges with the intent to witness them himself?"

"However, even with the Princely Heir's esteemed status, access to the Great Temple is impossible. No one can enter the Great Temple except for those part of the Great Yan Imperial Family."

Chapter 372 - Tomorrow's Yellow Flower, The Worries of an Old Father _5

Zhang Rui finished speaking, his face showing helplessness.

Cheng Guang nodded slightly, not particularly concerned, and turned to look at Zhang Rui, asking, "Do you know where that Commandery Princess of Prince Ning currently resides?"

Zhang Rui nodded slightly and said, "I do know. The Commandery Princess of Prince Ning is currently residing in the Prince Ning Mansion near the Imperial Palace."

"The Commandery Princess of Prince Ning rarely goes out and is very mysterious, with very few people having seen her true face."

Cheng Guang tapped the table lightly, pondered for a moment, and then asked, "What about the identity of this Commandery Princess of Prince Ning? Is she the biological daughter of Prince Ning?"

For Cheng Guang, it was simple to determine whether it was the Crown Prince of the Eastern Palace who was the "remnant of Great Chu" or the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning who was the "remnant of Great Chu."

One just needed to know whose identity had discrepancies.

Speaking of remnants of Great Chu, naturally, they could not be people from the inner ranks of the Great Yan Dynasty.

There may not be glaring holes in the identity story, but it's not without its nuances.

After Cheng Guang's question, Zhang Rui looked slightly shocked, as if he didn't expect his own Princely Heir to ask such a bold question.

He hurriedly said, "Princely Heir, the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning is presumably the biological daughter of Prince Ning. If she were not his own, why would he go to such lengths for her?"

Cheng Guang asked, noncommittally, "And her mother?"

Upon hearing Cheng Guang's question, Zhang Rui was taken aback, thought for a moment, and slowly shook his head, "Princely Heir, it is said that the mother of the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning died in childbirth."

"For many years, it has been Prince Ning who has raised the Commandery Princess on his own."

Upon hearing this, Cheng Guang's eyes showed a strange expression, but he said no more. "What about the mother of the Crown Prince of the Eastern Palace, the current Empress? How is she?"

Zhang Rui did not know the purpose behind Cheng Guang's questions but still answered in detail, "The current Empress has always been deep within the confines of the palace, although she seldom goes out, she should be fine."

Cheng Guang mulled over this information in his mind.

The Crown Prince of the Eastern Palace has his birth mother.

But the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning does not.

Although it cannot be excluded that the Crown Prince, Li Zhongxin, like himself, is pretending to be a pretender from Great Chu, the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning is still more suspicious.

Cheng Guang decided to make contact with the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning first.

He rose and called for Qin Beifeng.

This time, Cheng Guang intended to take Qin Beifeng with him to meet the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning.

If that Commandery Princess of Prince Ning was indeed the remnant of Great Chu, then she would certainly recognize Qin Beifeng. Upon seeing Qin Beifeng, the presence of an old acquaintance might cause her to reveal some flaws.

It was also possible she might not show any signs at all.

After all, during this period, Qin Beifeng had been in frequent contact with the "remnant of Great Chu" but had not managed to reveal any information at all; it was very likely that she had already gone into hiding.

The identity of the "remnant of Great Chu" within Great Yan was unknown to Qin Beifeng, who couldn't confront her directly and had to wait for the other party to make contact first.

The other party was in the shadows.

They themselves were in the open.

It might well be that in these past few days, all of their actions had been watched closely by the "remnant of Great Chu." Enjoy exclusive adventures from empire

The other party knew that Qin Beifeng had been brought over by him.

If their plan along with Qin Beifeng had been foiled by him, they would not have a favorable view of him, and they might already be grinding their teeth in the dark.

Cheng Guang chuckled to himself, regardless, taking Qin Beifeng with him would not be a mistake.

Cheng Guang, with Qin Beifeng in tow, headed to Prince Ning Mansion.

The Prince Ning Mansion was in the inner city of the Great Yan capital, Skyfire City, close to the Imperial Palace.

It was quite a distance from the teahouse where Cheng Guang was.

After walking for a good while, they finally reached the place.

Upon arriving at Prince Ning Mansion, Cheng Guang looked up at the purple and red Entrance Hall and instructed Qin Beifeng to go forward to knock on the door.

Qin Beifeng nodded slightly and complied.

Moving forward.

Before he reached the Entrance Hall.

Several guards quickly came forward to meet him.

The bearing and aura of Qin Beifeng were such that the guards dared not neglect him.

Qin Beifeng, who had been cautious in front of Cheng Guang, regained the demeanor befitting his status in the Northern Expedition Army when facing these guards.

Even without deliberately revealing his aura, his mere presence was akin to facing a steep and insurmountable mountain for the guards in the Prince Ning Mansion.

The oppressive atmosphere left them breathless.

"May I ask the purpose of your visit to Prince Ning Mansion?" inquired a middle-aged guard with a hand-clasped salute.

Qin Beifeng replied, "My master wishes to meet with the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning; I kindly ask you to relay the message."

Upon hearing this, the middle-aged guard was startled and then turned his gaze to the handsome, distinguished young man behind Qin Beifeng.

"This is?"

"Great Zhou, Town-Nation Duke's Heir."

As Qin Beifeng's words fell, the middle-aged guard's pupils contracted, realizing the noble status of his visitor. Although he didn't know why the Town-Nation Duke's Heir of Great Zhou had come to see their

Commandery Princess, he did not dare to delay and quickly signaled to those nearby to go inside and inform the Commandery Princess.

In the meantime.

The middle-aged guard stepped aside slightly and said to Cheng Guang and Qin Beifeng, "Crown Prince, please enter."

"I have already sent someone to notify her, the Commandery Princess will likely come to meet with the Crown Prince. You may wait here."

"If the Commandery Princess is delayed and unable to see the Crown Prince, we hope the Crown Prince will understand."

Hearing this, Cheng Guang gave the middle-aged guard a few more glances, noting the guard spoke impeccably; he must have received numerous important guests and his speaking skills were honed.

Cheng Guang realized that during this time, aside from himself, there might have been many other notable people—officials and nobility—seeking an audience with the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning.

Chapter 373 - 114: Tomorrow's Yellow Flower, The Worries of an Old Father _6

Others might simply wish to catch a glimpse of this very mysterious figure capable of competing with Li Zhongxin, the Crown Prince of the Eastern Palace, for the throne of Great Yan.

But Cheng Guang's ambition did not lie there.

He just wanted to peel away the layers of this Commandery Princess of Prince Ning, to see her true face.

Cheng Guang was indeed curious - if this Commandery Princess really was a "remnant of Great Chu," how had she become the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning?

Her bloodline could be dealt with, after all, the royal families of the world all originated from the same line in ancient times, and the bloodline of the royal family of Great Chu was not much different from that of Great Yan. Unless one examined it closely, they were nearly identical.

The only trouble was her background.

It couldn't possibly be, like himself, that she used Different Treasures to alter her appearance and replace the original Commandery Princess of Prince Ning, could it?

Coming to this conclusion, Cheng Guang couldn't help but feel a sense of absurdity.

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Cheng Guang followed the middle-aged guard, heading straight for Prince Ning Mansion.

They reached the welcoming courtyard of Prince Ning Mansion.

Not far from the mansion's gate, after passing the rear of Prince Ning Mansion, they arrived at the location by traversing a few long corridors.

The welcoming courtyard of Prince Ning Mansion was enormous, with many smaller courtyards, numerous artificial hills, trees, and flowers of varying heights arranged tastefully, as well as a hillside.

Though it was early March, the entire hillside was lush and teeming with thick greenery, blanketed with mists that hadn't dissipated, like delicate silk, a sight too beautiful to describe.

Cheng Guang walked along the hillside for roughly a quarter of an hour when two figures approached from afar.

The middle-aged guard leading Cheng Guang paused at the sight of the two people, slightly surprised that the visitors came to greet them personally. From a great distance, he stopped and bowed deeply to the two.

"Commandery Princess."

Commandery Princess?

Was the person approaching the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning?

Cheng Guang looked up to carefully examine the newcomer.

The Commandery Princess of Prince Ning was dressed in a silver-trimmed brocade gown with dark clouds embroidered on it, her trailing hem moving rhythmically with her lotus steps, her face radiant with a smile.

Her arms were as white as lotus roots, a silver sash cinched at her waist, one end seeming to twist around her hand, dancing in the wind.

Her slender collarbone was slightly exposed, complementing the plum blossoms on the neckline, fresh and elegant. Her face was delicate, her eyes bright, exuding a noble and graceful aura.

The Commandery Princess of Prince Ning was quite attractive.

Yet she bore little resemblance to himself.

This was very strange.

Under such circumstances, there were two possibilities: if the Commandery Princess was the illegitimate child of the Emperor of Great Chu, she likely resembled her mother rather than the Emperor of Great Chu, just as he did.

Or she might not be related to the Emperor of Great Chu but instead be the offspring of some member of the royal family of Great Chu who possessed the royal bloodline.

While Cheng Guang was scrutinizing the Commandery Princess,

She, too, was scrutinizing Cheng Guang.

Cheng Guang, still in his brocade clothes, had eyebrows that were neither thick nor thin, handsome features, and a clear, deep profile. He was filled with an air of nobility yet carried the moistness of a spring breeze.

As the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning drew near,

Cheng Guang, without losing decorum, greeted her with a smile.

"Your Highness Commandery Princess, I hope you can forgive my boldness in disturbing you."

The Commandery Princess, eyeing this legendary Princely Heir of Duke Zhen's Mansion, found that he differed greatly from what she had imagined.

Hearing Cheng Guang's words, she lightly covered her lips with a smile and said, "What kind of words are these coming from the Princely Heir? Your status is not something I can compare to."

"Please enter the courtyard, Princely Heir. While my Prince Ning Mansion may not be as luxurious as Duke Zhen's Mansion, we still have some simple fare to offer."

Cheng Guang, without ceremony, smiled and nodded in response.

Following behind the Commandery Princess, he proceeded towards the courtyard.

Walking behind the Commandery Princess, Cheng Guang noted her graceful figure tightly swathed in her robes and thought she had a quite desirable body.

After eyeing the contours of the Commandery Princess's body, Cheng Guang glanced back at Qin Beifeng.

Qin Beifeng was also observing the Commandery Princess.

Looking puzzled.

It seemed he had noticed something,

Yet he was uncertain.

Cheng Guang was tempted to ask, but it was not appropriate to inquire directly.

He had also noticed,

That upon her arrival, the Commandery Princess had focused all her attention on him and did not glance at Qin Beifeng.

She showed no signs of any unusual expression towards Qin Beifeng.

He behaved very naturally.

At first, Cheng Guang had not harbored many suspicions regarding the performance of the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning, but upon seeing Qin Beifeng's demeanor, some thoughts still arose in his heart.

Cheng Guang realized something.

The Commandery Princess of Prince Ning had behaved quite well, not revealing anything out of the ordinary in his presence.

However.

Behaving too well was also an issue.

After all, Qin Beifeng was a strong practitioner whose Cultivation Realm had reached the Ninth-order Martial Emperor Realm. Even if the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning hadn't met Qin Beifeng before, upon sensing his aura, she should have inevitably glanced his way a few times.

But this Commandery Princess of Prince Ning did not.

Being overly deliberate instead became a problem.

As Cheng Guang pondered this in his heart with a smile at the corners of his lips, he quietly followed behind the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning, walking towards the courtyard.

Upon reaching the courtyard,

The Commandery Princess of Prince Ning asked Cheng Guang to take a seat and instructed the servants to pour tea for him.

At the same time, the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning sat to one side, lifted her teacup, took a sip, and after that, with her stunningly beautiful visage, she turned towards Cheng Guang and smiled, "May I ask the Princely Heir, what brings you to the Mansion today?"

"The Crown Prince's purpose for coming here should be different from that of others," she added.

Hearing the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning speak thus, Cheng Guang, his lips curled in a smile, did not directly answer but instead counter-asked.

"Oh? Why do you say that?"

"I am rather curious as to what brings other people to your Highness, the Commandery Princess."

When the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning heard Cheng Guang's words, she paused briefly, her exquisite face unchanged, and after taking a breath, she spoke.

"It's just a feeling, I feel that the Princely Heir is different from the others," she explained.

"Even in my references to others, they either come simply to meet me, the mysterious Commandery Princess of Prince Ning, with that intention, or I don't meet them at all."

"Otherwise, they are betting on me, in case that in the four major challenges, I overpower the Crown Prince of the Eastern Palace and become the future emperor of the Great Yan Dynasty, then they would have some association with me and naturally, I would not treat them unkindly."

When the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning said this, her lips curled slightly, and she raised her beautiful eyes to look at Cheng Guang and smiled, saying: Stay updated through empire

"With the status of the Princely Heir, you're not likely to be curious about me. Besides, as you are not a Great Yan official and hold a high status, it's unlikely you need to rely on me for anything and wouldn't think to bet on me to establish a relationship."

The Commandery Princess of Prince Ning spoke thus, and Cheng Guang shook his head with a smile on his lips.

"Your Highness, you are mistaken still," he said.

Her beautiful face from the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning paused again, and as she looked at Cheng Guang and exhaled slowly, she smiled and said:

"How so? Does the Princely Heir wish to bet on me, so that after I inherit the throne in the future, I fear there is nothing I could offer to the Princely Heir," she queried.

Cheng Guang shook his head, "No, that's not what I mean," he clarified.

The Commandery Princess of Prince Ning was puzzled, her brow furrowing slightly as she looked at Cheng Guang, somewhat failing to grasp his meaning.

Just as the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning was about to speak and ask for clarification, Cheng Guang probably smiled and said.

"I belong to the first type of person," he admitted.

"I am simply curious about Your Highness, the Commandery Princess, that is all," he revealed.

With Cheng Guang's words,

The hand of the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning that was holding the teacup involuntarily trembled a few times, and her beautiful eyes narrowed slightly.

It was clear that she did not expect Cheng Guang, the Town-Nation Duke's Heir, to play his cards in such an unconventional manner.

Her lips pursed slightly, and she opened her mouth to say something.

But the words seemed to fail her.

Cheng Guang had said that he was curious about her, which was why he came to see her.

Yet, she had just said that she generally does not meet those who simply come out of curiosity to see her.

Now, it had backfired.

No sooner had she finished speaking than she faced the opposite reality.

Choked by Cheng Guang's words, the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning looked at the smiling Town-Nation Duke's Heir before her, her heart filled with bewilderment.

What to do now?

Should she just pick up her tea and show him the door?

The Commandery Princess of Prince Ning wanted to talk more with this Town-Nation Duke's Heir; she didn't want to let him go so easily.

Moreover...

The Commandery Princess of Prince Ning's gaze fleetingly glanced at Qin Beifeng, who stood behind the Town-Nation Duke's Heir.

Her tightly furrowed brow relaxed slightly.

Chapter 374 - 115: The Reluctant Inner Thoughts of Prince Ning and the Commandery Princess

Prince Ning's Commandery Princess was lost in thought when she chuckled lightly and responded with feigned nonchalance, "Princely Heir is jesting. With your status, surely you did not come just to meet me."

After saying that, the Commandery Princess continued, "I have long heard of the Princely Heir from the Great Zhou Dynasty. Having the honor to meet you today is indeed my fortune."

The underlying meaning in Commandery Princess's words was clear, she did not wish to dwell too much on this topic.

Casually steering the conversation away, she subtly paid Cheng Guang a compliment.

If Cheng Guang didn't know that the Commandery Princess was very likely a remnant of Great Chu, facing her compliment, he would have inevitably felt somewhat pleased.

After all, although the Commandery Princess was just that, within the Great Yan Dynasty, she could still be considered among the zenith of its elite.

Not to mention, the Commandery Princess had passed the four major trials, positioning herself to compete with the Crown Prince, Li Zhongxin, from the Eastern Palace for the throne. The future Empress of Great Yan could very well be this very Commandery Princess.

Hearing the Commandery Princess' words, Cheng Guang smiled slightly, then also decided not to exchange too many pleasantries with her.

Although Prince Ning's Commandery Princess's actions were very covert, and her behavior revealed little out of the ordinary, it ultimately aroused a smidgen of suspicion in Cheng Guang.

Firstly, someone of the Commandery Princess's standing, in the strictest sense, though perhaps not quite his equal, certainly wasn't far behind. There was no need for her to be so cautious about maintaining his face, deliberately shifting the topic to save his dignity, insisting he stay longer.

Secondly, while the Commandery Princess did not display much oddity on the surface, her gaze still couldn't help but sweep over Qin Beifeng inadvertently, lingering on him for a moment before moving away quickly, showing neither curiosity nor any other emotion towards Qin Beifeng who stood behind Cheng Guang.

Both points were illogical, making Cheng Guang believe nearly for certain there was little difference between this Commandery Princess and conclusive proof.

Cheng Guang thought for a moment and then, smiling softly, inquired, "Commandery Princess, I actually do have a matter to discuss today."

Prince Ning's Commandery Princess picked up her teacup, took a small sip, and asked, "Please, Princely Heir, speak your mind."

Cheng Guang answered with a light smile, "Has the Commandery Princess heard about the rumors of a remnant of Great Chu within the Great Yan Dynasty recently?"

The hand that the Commandery Princess used to hold her teacup paused slightly, her brows furrowed with confusion. She knew that Cheng Guang, the Princely Heir, had come to Great Yan Dynasty without reason, bringing Qin Beifeng along, potentially to seek out the "remnant of Great Chu," just like the other dynastic powers.

She was aware, but she didn't understand, why Cheng Guang would come to her for this?

Had he discovered her true identity?

It wouldn't make sense otherwise.

Full of doubts, the Commandery Princess managed to keep her expression unchanged and said, "I have heard something, but do you, Your Highness, really think I know the whereabouts of this remnant of Great Chu?"

Cheng Guang nodded, smiling, "Maybe. That's why I came to ask the Commandery Princess."

"I have a feeling that before too long, this remnant of Great Chu won't be able to hide anymore and will be exposed right here in Skyfire City."

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Upon hearing these words from Cheng Guang, the Commandery Princess's hand holding the teacup trembled imperceptibly, causing ripples in the clear tea.

Her eyes fell upon Cheng Guang as she asked, "To be exposed in Skyfire City?"

"Why would the Princely Heir say such a thing? Do you think that the remnant of Great Chu, who is under the watch of the World Royal Family, is hiding right here in Skyfire City?"

"Is it just your own conjecture, or do you have any evidence?"

Cheng Guang shook his head with a faint smile, "It's more of a hunch."

"A hunch..." The Commandery Princess's brows furrowed once more, then she shook her head, "Your Highness's hunch is truly absurd. Although the Heavenly Machine Elder from the Heavenly Machine Pavilion deduced the remnant of Great Chu is hiding within the Great Yan Dynasty, even he couldn't determine the exact location."

"Moreover, so much time has passed that the remnant of Great Chu might have already fled. It's uncertain if they are even in Great Yan Dynasty anymore, and it's unlikely they would expose themselves in Skyfire City. Everyone knows that Skyfire City is where the Great Yan royal family resides, and it currently serves as the center of convergence for royal powers from across the world.

For a remnant of Great Chu to hide in Skyfire City would indeed be a most unwise decision."

As the Commandery Princess spoke, Cheng Guang nodded as if in agreement, "Indeed, what the Princess says is true. Hiding in Skyfire City would not be very wise indeed. Hiding elsewhere, if exposed, at least allows the possibility of escape, but once exposed within Skyfire City, it would seem the remnant of Great Chu would have a hard time flying away."

After hearing Cheng Guang's words, the Commandery Princess fell silent for a moment and looked up slightly, observing Cheng Guang.

She noticed that ever since Cheng Guang, this distinguished Princely Heir, had entered, his gaze had been fixed on her.

The eyes that looked upon her did not betray much fascination with her appearance, but rather seemed to observe her as one might a curious object, studying her incessantly.

This caused the Commandery Princess to harbor doubts, feeling slightly uneasy under the scrutiny of Cheng Guang's gaze.

The Commandery Princess pursed her lips slightly, about to say something, when she heard Cheng Guang speak up again.

"By the way, Commandery Princess..."

Chapter 375 - 115: The Reluctant Inner Thoughts of Prince Ning and the Commandery Princess _2

Cheng Guang set down his teacup, gazed into Commandery Princess Ning's beautiful eyes, and asked indifferently, "The Commandery Princess just mentioned that among the Great Yan Dynasty, there is news of Great Chu remnants. It was disseminated by the Heavenly Machine Elder from the Heavenly Machine Pavilion. What exactly are the Heavenly Machine Pavilion and Heavenly Machine Elder?"

I haven't heard of them before."

Cheng Guang looked at the gorgeous visage of Commandery Princess Ning with a calm demeanor, but his heart had already been set adrift in a storm.

Who exactly was this Heavenly Machine Elder, and how could it be that news of the Great Chu remnants hiding within the Great Yan Dynasty came from him?

Furthermore.

He had somehow calculated it.

How did he calculate it?

Peering into the heavenly secrets?

No matter what means the Heavenly Machine Elder used,

Cheng Guang suddenly felt doubtful at this moment; if it weren't for the existence of the Restraint Pearl on his person, could this being known as the Heavenly Machine Elder have calculated his presence?

Just the thought sent a chill down Cheng Guang's spine.

Commandery Princess Ning, upon hearing Cheng Guang's question, looked at him and seemed to discern from his expression that he truly was unaware of the existence of the Heavenly Machine Elder, so she began to explain:

"It's normal for the Princely Heir to be unaware of the Heavenly Machine Elder."

"The Heavenly Machine Elder is the master of the Heavenly Machine Pavilion. He lives reclusively, possessing profound cultivation, and no one knows his age. The Heavenly Machine Elder occasionally opens his pavilion. As long as one can afford the price, he can divine the secrets of heaven for them."

"Since the price the Heavenly Machine Elder requires is significant, apart from the World Royal Family, there are few from the Sects with the power to afford it, so very few within the Four Directions Mortal World are aware of his existence."

"Some time ago, when the Heavenly Machine Elder opened his pavilion, he unusually didn't wait for others to pay the price before giving answers. Instead, he directly announced the news that Great Chu remnants were hidden within the Great Yan Dynasty."

Commandery Princess Ning's expression turned slightly ugly as she spoke resentfully, "Who knows why that Heavenly Machine Elder did what he did, but once he spoke those words, the World Royal Family believed them. The Heavenly Machine Elder has never been wrong about anything. Regardless of his intent, they all acted upon hearing the news."

"After the Heavenly Machine Elder released this piece of news, he closed his pavilion and did not receive visitors. Hence, even if people from the world wanted to ask the Heavenly Machine Elder to calculate the exact location of the Great Chu remnants, there was no way to do so."

Cheng Guang listened to Commandery Princess Ning's words, nodded slightly, raised his teacup to his lips, but before he could take a sip of tea, he placed the teacup down again.

Cheng Guang felt that something was amiss.

This Heavenly Machine Elder, whose identity and status were so exceptional, whose calculations and revelations were without fail, was precisely why the World Royal Family, upon learning the possible emergence of the Great Chu remnants within the Great Yan Dynasty from him, didn't harbor the slightest doubt and all took action.

Cheng Guang didn't quite understand.

Why would this mysterious Heavenly Machine Elder suddenly announce the news of the Great Chu remnants?

The Heavenly Machine Elder, who lived for an unknown length of time, was a being whom the World Royal Family sought to curry favor with. In a sense, he was the most uniquely placed person in the world.

Back when Great Chu was prevalent, it's likely that they had not offended the Heavenly Machine Elder and might have even sent him a good deal of resources.

Regardless, the Heavenly Machine Elder would have no reason to target Great Chu.

Why, then, did he suddenly reveal the news of the Great Chu remnants' existence this time?

What was the reason for this?

The more Cheng Guang thought, the more bewildered he became.

Compared to Cheng Guang, Commandery Princess Ning was even more bewildered. Every time Heavenly Machine Elder was mentioned, Commandery Princess Ning's exquisite face stiffened, a few lines of frustration appearing on it.

The emotions on Commandery Princess Ning's face only showed for a moment before she quickly concealed them.

She turned to Cheng Guang and said, "Princely Heir, if you wish to obtain news of the Great Chu remnants from me, you need not bother further. You should know that I seldom venture out. Within the entire Great Yan Dynasty, my influence is minimal, and my intelligence capabilities are inferior to those of your Bureau of the Lamp."

"So if you wish to know where the Great Chu remnants are, you might as well seek them out yourself."

"I regret that I cannot be of much help."

After speaking, Commandery Princess Ning picked up her teacup again, her gesture signaling the end of the visit.

Cheng Guang gave a slight smile. His main purpose in coming here was to observe Commandery Princess Ning.

Having seen Commandery Princess Ning, he guessed that she was likely to be a remnant of Great Chu; thus, his goal for this visit had been achieved.

However, what puzzled Cheng Guang was,

Why hadn't his mission status indicated as complete?

Was it only when he pointed at Commandery Princess Ning and declared, "You are the remnant of Great Chu, and I have found you," that the task would be considered complete?

If he did that,

Wouldn't it be too foolish?

Cheng Guang's mouth twitched slightly.

At this moment, Commandery Princess Ning believed her cover was impeccable, and indeed it was, for if he hadn't had prior enlightenment, noticing that Commandery Princess Ning could likely be the Great Chu remnant would not have been easy.

Although he now fairly certainly knew Commandery Princess Ning was likely that "remnant of Great Chu," he had no evidence yet.

If he pointed directly at Commandery Princess Ning declaring her as the remnant of Great Chu, even if he completed the task, she might outwardly say nothing but turn against him in secret, possibly even harboring harmful intent towards him.

Cheng Guang's former identity, after all, was the Crown Prince of Great Chu. Thus, he had no desire to directly confront "the remnant of Great Chu."

Chapter 376 - 115: The Reluctant Inner Thoughts of Prince Ning and the Commandery Princess _3

Once a conflict arose, Cheng Guang would struggle to explain himself and to prove his identity.

At the moment, apart from Cheng Guang's face bearing a striking resemblance to the former empress of Great Chu, there was nothing left on him that had any relation to the Great Chu royal family.

The blood of the Great Chu royal family had been completely drained from him and replaced with the ancient royal bloodline of Great Xia.

He essentially had no way to prove his own identity anymore.

After pondering for a moment, Cheng Guang decided to stand up and leave, planning to formulate a strategy later.

At the same time, Cheng Guang was certain that if his observations and conjectures were not wrong, this seemingly dignified, beautiful-faced Commandery Princess of Prince Ning was indeed that remnant of "Great Chu."

Once he confirmed the identity of the Great Chu remnant within the Great Yan Dynasty, Cheng Guang felt a sense of relief, yet at the same time, he felt somewhat troubled when he looked at the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning.

Although he had already confirmed that the Commandery Princess before him was the "Great Chu remnant," he did not yet know the identity of the Commandery Princess.

What relationship did the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning have with him? How had she managed to evade the ferocious pursuit of the Northern Expedition Army's Iron Cavalry, survive, and hide herself within the Great Yan Dynasty to become the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning?

All of this enveloped Cheng Guang in layers of immense enigma.

Cheng Guang was deeply perplexed but had no way to directly inquire with the Commandery Princess at the moment.

For now, his only option was to leave and plan his next moves later.

Cheng Guang stood up, bidding farewell to the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning.

As he was about to leave, Cheng Guang reminded her with a meaningful note.

"Your Highness, during this period, I believe that the Great Chu remnant might reveal their true colors, and the Great Yan Dynasty will be in chaos. It would be wise for Your Highness to be extra cautious."

The Commandery Princess of Prince Ning was unclear about the purpose behind Cheng Guang's words. Although puzzled, she verbally agreed nonetheless.

Seeing that the Commandery Princess did not take his words to heart, Cheng Guang did not mind and simply added, "I heard that tonight Your Highness will once again participate in the Four Great Trials. I wish you the best of luck in defeating Li Zhongxin and inheriting the Great Yan throne in advance."

The Commandery Princess of Prince Ning responded with a smile and proceeded to see Cheng Guang off.

Standing in front of the mansion, as she watched Cheng Guang leave, the Commandery Princess's smile slowly faded from her splendid face.

She watched Cheng Guang, feeling the need to rub her brows.

She couldn't help but murmur to herself with great speculation.

"This Town-Nation Duke's Heir is very odd."

"He speaks in riddles, and when he looks at me, it's as if he sees through my identity."

"Additionally, why do I feel an inexplicable sense of kinship with this Town-Nation Duke's Heir? It's just too strange."

Lost in her thoughts, the Commandery Princess found her mind growing increasingly cluttered.

The Town-Nation Duke's Heir mentioned that the Great Chu remnant would likely reveal themselves, causing chaos in the Great Yan Dynasty.

Doesn't that mean I'll be exposed?

With my careful approach, how could I be so easily discovered?

What is the Town-Nation Duke's Heir's intention in telling me these things?

Unable to comprehend or see through Cheng Guang, the esteemed Town-Nation Duke's Heir, the Commandery Princess shook her head.

She pushed aside the tangled thoughts in her mind and turned her attention to Qin Beifeng.

Watching Qin Beifeng following Cheng Guang, moving further away.

Her beautiful eyes revealed a touch of helplessness.

She was aware that Qin Beifeng had tried to contact her multiple times.

Qin Beifeng claimed that if she could meet with the noble Town-Nation Duke's Heir, Cheng Guang, he could regain his freedom and return to her side as her protector.

But now, at the risk of exposing her identity just to meet with the Town-Nation Duke's Heir to free Qin Beifeng so he could stay by her side, it simply wasn't worth it for the Commandery Princess.

At the moment, her identity was not in danger of being exposed, nor did she greatly need Qin Beifeng's assistance. Stay tuned for updates on empire

For now, it was best to let Qin Beifeng stay with Cheng Guang, the Town-Nation Duke's Heir.

Considering everything Qin Beifeng had done in North City, he should have been executed by now, but he was still alive, which suggested that Cheng Guang, the Town-Nation Duke's Heir, or his supporter, Duke Zhen Guo, Cheng Shiyuan, still saw some value in Qin Beifeng and would not deal with him in the short term.

At least Qin Beifeng was safe for the time being.

After the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning let out a light sigh,

She turned around to go back to her mansion.

At this moment, the most important thing for her was to overcome Li Zhongxin in the Four Great Trials and inherit the Great Yan throne. If she could succeed to the throne of the Great Yan Dynasty, she would have even more tactics at her disposal.

Perhaps it would be easier to save Qin Beifeng in the future.

.....

Cheng Guang took Qin Beifeng back to the tea house.

Afterward, he did nothing further, waiting for the Four Great Trials to be held in the Great Temple of the Great Yan Imperial Palace that night to decide the next Emperor of the Great Yan Dynasty.

Such an event should have captivated the attention of the whole world.

Since not everyone was permitted to enter and witness the ritual in the Great Temple of the Imperial Palace,

The re-initiation of the Four Great Trials did not make much of a stir or create much commotion.

Perhaps only after the Four Great Trials concluded and the Great Yan royal family announced the selection of the next Emperor would it cause a significant ripple.

Cheng Guang stood at the top of the tea house, his robes fluttering as he gazed towards the location of the Great Yan Imperial Palace.

The Great Temple was deep inside the Imperial Palace.

As dusk fell, suddenly, sounds of bell ringing emanated from deep within the Imperial Palace.

Dong—

Dong—

Dong—

The bell tolls were like thunderous drums, and also like the dazzling sun, illuminating all directions.

Chapter 377 - 115: The Reluctant Inner Thoughts of Prince Ning and the Commandery Princess _4

All in Skyfire City heard the tolling of the bell, their gazes involuntarily turning towards the depths of the Great Yan Imperial Palace.

A faint glimmer began to emerge from the depths of the Great Yan Imperial Palace. The light, at first very weak, grew increasingly powerful.

Until it became a pillar of light, bursting forth from the depths of the Great Yan Imperial Palace.

The vast aura, like waves, formed invisible currents of air that ravaged the surroundings.

Cheng Guang looked towards the direction of the distant Great Yan Imperial Palace, and when he felt the aura's oppressive force, he found his breath catch slightly.

"Princely Heir, the four major trials have begun. Three tolls of the bell signify the commencement of the four major trials,"

"It's just... this time, the four major trials seem a bit unusual."

By Cheng Guang's side, Zhang Rui spoke respectfully, but as his voice trailed off at the end, a look of surprise and uncertainty crossed his face upon seeing the column of light that blossomed in the depths of the Great Yan Imperial Palace.

Cheng Guang, looking at the scene in the Great Yan Imperial Palace from afar, asked with an unchanged expression, "How so?"

Stroking the beard on his chin, Zhang Rui replied respectfully, "The Princely Heir may not be aware, but the Great Yan Dynasty's four major trials, in fact, take place within a Secret Realm. This Secret Realm is a creation of the ancestors of the Great Yan royal family, who exhausted innumerable resources and great effort to anchor it into place."

"This Secret Realm is unique; entering it and facing the trials, one can gain certain benefits after passing them. Since there are four trials, they are called the four major trials, and the Great Yan royal family also uses this Secret Realm as a tool to select a successor for the throne."

"Every time the four major trials are initiated, the Great Yan Dynasty expends considerable effort, and there's always a significant commotion. However, the momentum of this opening is much more intense than in the past, and it's unknown whether the Great Yan Dynasty has increased the difficulty or made adjustments to the four major trials."

After Zhang Rui finished speaking, Cheng Guang nodded slightly, though he was not surprised.

After all, he knew that during the last set of four major trials, the Crown Prince from the Eastern Palace, Li Zhongxin, and the Commandery Princess from Prince Ning had both passed the trials together. The normal difficulty of the four major trials wouldn't be enough to differentiate between the two, so an increase in difficulty was necessary.

The aura of the newly initiated four major trials was much stronger than the last time, which was to be expected.

Cheng Guang stood with his hands behind his back, his robes fluttering, as he silently gazed at the pillar of light that seemed to pierce the heavens and the earth.

He was waiting for the end of the four major trials.

In his system task prompt, there was no mention of "Great Chu remnant" inheriting the Great Yan Dynasty throne, which also meant one thing—this time, the Commandery Princess from Prince Ning would not have an easy time participating in the four major trials.

If things went as expected, it would be unexpected.

Cheng Guang was prepared in his heart, but he still had no idea what kind of mishap the Commandery Princess from Prince Ning might encounter in the four major trials, and his heart was still filled with some unknown.

He looked at the pillar of light in the sky.

Silently waiting.

In Skyfire City, aside from Cheng Guang and a few others with vested interests, not many paid much attention to the pillar of light flickering within the Great Yan Imperial Palace. Read the latest on empire

For them, not being able to see what was happening within the four major trials, merely witnessing the pillar of light or the commotion at the start of the trials, was of little significance.

So after a brief glance at first, everyone quickly lost interest and went about their own affairs.

Time passed, though it was unknown how much.

Suddenly, there was a change at the site of the pillar of light in the sky.

Cheng Guang took notice.

A figure gradually walked towards the high space above the Great Temple in the Great Yan Imperial Palace where the pillar of light manifested. With a light touch on the pillar, the figure then vanished without a trace.

The figure was hazy and indistinct.

If Cheng Guang had not been paying constant attention, even he might have failed to notice the figure's appearance and its actions.

After the figure lightly touched the pillar of light,

The pillar, emanating from within the Great Temple of the Great Yan Imperial Palace, began to tremble slightly, and a picture, like a projection, appeared.

Within the pillar, a huge image formed.

Stretched across the skyline of Skyfire City.

This change was hard to ignore.

People all over were startled by the commotion, hurriedly craning their necks to gaze in the direction of the pillar.

Cheng Guang looked closely and discovered that the scene was not an image from within the Great Temple of the Great Yan Imperial Palace, nor a scene of Crown Prince Li Zhongxin and Commandery Princess from Prince Ning participating in the four major trials.

It seemed to be...

The inner heart of the Commandery Princess from Prince Ning!!

The introspective trial within the four major trials had been projected and revealed?

Cheng Guang was stunned with just one glance.

Who was that figure that appeared near the pillar of light?

How could they possess such miraculous means as to display the Commandery Princess from Prince Ning's innermost feelings?

Cheng Guang was shocked.

He had originally anticipated that the Commandery Princess from Prince Ning would expose her own identity through a problem with her bloodline or due to some error she committed, which would lead to the revelation of her identity.

Whatever the reason, it would mostly be due to an issue with the Commandery Princess from Prince Ning herself, which would potentially expose her identity.

Otherwise,

the Commandery Princess from Prince Ning would not likely reveal her identity as a remnant of Great Chu.

But this scene made Cheng Guang suddenly realize.

the Commandery Princess from Prince Ning's exposure was not due to her own issues but the intervention of someone else.

That person who appeared near the pillar seemed to have known all along that the Commandery Princess from Prince Ning was, in fact, a remnant of Great Chu.

Instead of directly exposing the identity of the Commandery Princess from Prince Ning, they waited until she participated in the four major trials to use their means to display her innermost thoughts.

Chapter 378 - 115: The Reluctant Inner Thoughts of Prince Ning and the Commandery Princess _5

Let Commandery Princess of Prince Ning expose her identity to the world herself.

Who exactly is that person?

Why, upon knowing the identity of Commandery Princess of Prince Ning, did they not reveal her directly, nor act against her in advance, but wait until such a time?

And furthermore...

If it weren't for his constant vigilance, that person might have done all this without anyone noticing, then hid behind the scenes.

What was his purpose in doing all this?

A chill inexplicably rose from the depths of Cheng Guang's heart.

He lifted his eyes to gaze at the image within the pillar of light in the heavens.

It only took one glance.

And he was stunned.

Because...

The scene within the image was that of the Imperial Palace of Great Chu!

Within that image in the pillar of light.

It was the Imperial Palace of Great Chu.

Below the Imperial Palace of Great Chu.

A girl in a pink dress played happily, running around a huge cherry blossom tree.

By her side were several other figures, whose faces were too blurry to make out.

But from the robes they wore, it could be seen.

Those people were the Emperor of Great Chu and some officials.

Cheng Guang observed the faces of the Emperor of Great Chu and those around him and realized that the Emperor of Great Chu in this image did not exactly match the Emperor he remembered from his previous life's memory, though they shared a resemblance.

The Imperial Palace of Great Chu in this image also seemed to be much more ancient.

A hint of confusion arose in Cheng Guang's mind, but before he could sort through his thoughts,

A heavy voice came from within the image in the pillar of light.

"Your Majesty, the princess can no longer bear it; such an incurable disease is beyond anyone's power in this world. For now, she can still walk, but as time passes, her body will become more and more rigid until she can no longer move at all, eventually breathing will even become a problem."

"The only option is to seal the princess away and use the destiny of Great Chu to nurture her body. One day in the future, the princess will recover."

The face of the indistinct Emperor of Great Chu sighed, "It can only be so."

A beautiful woman by the side of the Emperor of Great Chu couldn't stop crying.

The little girl who was merrily running under the cherry blossoms noticed her father and mother hiding behind the door. Seeing her own mother crying, she was first stunned, then hurriedly plucked a cherry blossom and ran to give it to her mother.

"Mother, don't cry, Jing'er is being good, won't make mother angry, won't make mother sad again."

The girl, thinking she had done something wrong like a child who has erred, apologized, then stood on tiptoe, gently wiped away the tears from the beautiful woman's eyes and placed the freshly picked cherry blossom in her mother's hand.

The beautiful woman tenderly stroked the girl's head, her voice somewhat choked.

"Your Majesty, how long must we seal her away like this?"

"Will we get to see Jing'er again in our lifetime?"

With tears in her eyes, the beautiful woman looked towards the dignified man beside her.

The dignified man sighed with helplessness, "Perhaps a hundred years will suffice, or it may take a thousand. Regardless, not wanting Jing'er to suffer such great pain in her fleeting life, we must do this."

The young girl couldn't hear what her father and mother were saying.

But she saw her father stroke her forehead,

and she fell into complete darkness.

When the girl awoke again,

she found herself lying in a crystal coffin, buried deep underground. Perhaps due to the torrential rain that day, or perhaps because of the battles among the mighty,

her coffin was inadvertently opened.

Upon awakening, the young girl was frozen by the endless darkness around her and the endless cries of killing in her ears.

When she dug through the dirt in front of her with her hands,

what she saw were corpses scattered everywhere, blood staining the ground.

The once majestic and splendid Imperial Palace of Great Chu had been completely reduced to ruins.

The girl couldn't understand why her home had become like this when she woke up again.

She cried and called out, lifting her dress, calling for her father and mother.

At that moment, the girl seemed to have been abandoned by the whole world.

The world had turned to shades of gray.

The image ended there, suddenly shattering like a bubble, and stopping abruptly.

Everyone who had seen the scene within the pillar of light was stunned.

"What is this??"

"It looks like the Imperial Palace of Great Chu, is that girl in the image the princess of Great Chu from those days? Could she be the remnant of Great Chu?"

"Why would this memory image of the Princess of Great Chu appear in this pillar of light??"

"I can't make sense of it."

"Could it be that these scenes are related to the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning who is currently undergoing the four grand trials?"

As the image shattered like a bubble and dissipated, all who watched this scene within Skyfire City were at first briefly stunned, then a wave of uproarious voices swept through.

After a brief moment of confusion, they quickly realized that this phantom image couldn't have appeared for no reason.

It was very likely related to Crown Prince Li Zhongxin, who was undergoing the four grand trials, and the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning.

But Crown Prince Li Zhongxin was a man, far too different from the young girl in the image.

Many people immediately connected the pink-dressed girl within the phantom image to the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning.

This pink-dressed girl was very likely the remnants of Great Chu hiding within the Great Yan Dynasty.

Doesn't that mean that the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning is the remnant of Great Chu!?

At this thought, everyone felt a tingling sensation on their scalps.

Chapter 379 - 115: The Reluctant Inner Thoughts of Prince Ning and the Commandery Princess _6

At the same time.

One message after another was sent out from Skyfire City.

The originally calm Skyfire City suddenly began to surge with undercurrents.

Cheng Guang stood on the top of the teahouse, looking at the gradually dissipating scene in the distance, his eyebrows involuntarily knitting together.

"Is this Commandery Princess of Prince Ning the daughter of a former Emperor of Great Chu?"

"She had contracted a terminal illness and was sealed away."

"Only after the downfall of Great Chu did she accidentally break the seal..."

Cheng Guang murmured to himself, slowly realizing.

No wonder why the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning, clearly of the Great Chu imperial family, did not recognize him.

Although his appearance did not resemble that of the Great Chu Emperor, he bore a resemblance to the Empress of Great Chu.

If the Commandery Princess was indeed of the imperial family of Great Chu, she should have seen the Empress.

Perhaps she would associate his face with that of the Empress.

Yet, she showed not even the slightest sign of familiarity towards him.

All of this, it seemed, was because the Commandery Princess belonged to a time many dynasties before his own.

Thinking of this, Cheng Guang turned his gaze towards the Imperial Palace of Great Yan.

He took a slow breath.

Suppressing the complex emotions in his heart.

He pondered what to do next.

It was at this moment.

A cold and emotionless system notification sound rang in Cheng Guang's ear.

[Task completed.]

[Would you like to receive your reward?]

.....

Inside the Imperial Palace of Great Yan.

Within the Great Temple, inside the Secret Realm.

The Crown Prince Li Zhongxin and the Commandery Princess of Prince Ning were both meditating with closed eyes on the Mountain of Inquiry.

The Commandery Princess's eyes were tightly shut as if recalling some terrifying scene, causing fine beads of sweat to form on her pale forehead.

Her beautiful features turned slightly pale.

It was unknown how much time had passed.

Only then did the Commandery Princess slowly open her eyes, filled with exhaustion. She gently lifted her jade hand for a glance at Li Zhongxin, who was still immersed in the trial of the Mountain of Inquiry, and she let out a sigh of relief.

This time, the test of character at Mountain of Inquiry, within the four major trials, was even more difficult than the last. Had she not been well-prepared and strong-willed, it might not have been so easy to pass.

Since Li Zhongxin had fallen behind her in this trial, it was unlikely for him to overtake her in the remaining challenges.

The throne of the Great Yan Dynasty would fall into her hands, and it seemed no other mishaps would occur.

The Commandery Princess pondered, took a deep breath, and retracted all signs of weariness from her beautiful eyes as she walked towards the next trial.

The last test was a challenge of Qi.

Qi, this kind of thing, was originally an elusive existence.

One could only submit to fate.

If you were to ask which test the Commandery Princess felt most uncertain about, it was this last one, the test of Qi.

The Commandery Princess walked slowly towards the next trial.

For a moment, the world around the Commandery Princess seemed to spin, and many of the surrounding scenes began to distort.

"This..."

The Commandery Princess was startled by this sudden change, but fortunately, the transformation did not last long.

The next moment.

The Commandery Princess reappeared inside the Great Temple of Great Yan.

A faint golden glow emitted from her being.

The Commandery Princess opened her beautiful eyes, surveying her surroundings, expecting to be met with shocked, exclamatory, and admiring gazes from those around her.

What the Commandery Princess hadn't anticipated was.

The sight that greeted her in the Great Temple was the aged Emperor of Great Yan and the watchful eyes of the imperial kin.

There was shock indeed.

But more than that, there was fear.

It was not due to the faint golden aura signifying her deep Qi, but something else.

Overcome with shock, the Emperor of Great Yan and the imperial kin silently observed her, finding themselves unable to speak for the moment.

What had happened?

The Commandery Princess was confused.

The Commandery Princess looked at the Emperor of Great Yan and the gathered imperial kin with a puzzled expression.

And the imperial kin, their faces a mixture of shock and the semblance of having seen a ghost, stared at the Commandery Princess.

Both sides fell into a strange silence.

At this moment, none of them noticed.

Outside the Great Temple, up in the vault of the sky, a person seated on the clouds peered through the layers of mist, eyes intently fixed upon the figure of Prince Ning's Commandery Princess inside the Great Temple.

Upon seeing the pale golden light around Prince Ning's Commandery Princess, he seemed quite satisfied and nodded slightly.

...

Prince Ning's Commandery Princess eventually could no longer withstand the strange stares of the Great Yan royal relatives around her and was about to break the deadlock by asking what was happening.

Inside the Great Temple, another light flashed.

Li Zhongxin's figure appeared within the Great Temple.

Li Zhongxin, coughing and with a pale face, surveyed his surroundings, and when he saw Prince Ning's Commandery Princess standing at the center of the Great Temple, he was utterly stunned.

He had thought he was fast enough.

But he hadn't expected Prince Ning's Commandery Princess to be even faster.

The realization that Prince Ning's Commandery Princess had emerged from the Secret Realm before him, thereby having passed the four major trials, meant that the future imperial throne of Great Yan had nothing to do with him anymore.

Li Zhongxin's face, already pale, now turned even paler.

As pale as paper.

"This... Your Majesty..."

"This..."

Li Zhongxin looked toward his father, the emperor, and the host of imperial relatives, feeling utterly defeated.

Just as he was about to seek his father's help in salvaging the situation.

He then heard the aged Great Yan Emperor slowly speak.

"Xia Dong... let's just call you that for now, what is all this about?"

"How does a person from Great Chu appear in my Great Yan?"

"What about Prince Ning... what is this all about?"

The aged Emperor of Great Yan gazed at Prince Ning's Commandery Princess, the shock in his eyes yet to fade away, but even amidst his great astonishment and having been startled by the event, he did not directly act against the Commandery Princess.

After all, Prince Ning's Commandery Princess was a princess of Great Yan and Prince Ning's daughter.

Even if the Great Yan Emperor wished to act, he had to consider the consequences as well as respect for Prince Ning and the dignity of the Great Yan Dynasty.

Although the sudden apparition of the shadowy images alone could not prove anything,

It was already suggestive enough.

Upon hearing the words spoken by the Great Yan Emperor, Prince Ning's Commandery Princess first froze, her beautiful pupils involuntarily contracted slightly as she was struck with tremendous shock.

Clearly, she had not anticipated that the Great Yan Emperor would say such things.

At the same time, she had no idea how her identity had been exposed.

Nevertheless, Prince Ning's Commandery Princess was, after all, somewhat composed. Despite the great turmoil inside, she managed to keep a composed facade and asked with a smile, "Your Majesty, what do you mean by this? I'm a bit confused."

The Great Yan Emperor sighed.

He did not elaborate further,

Instead, he instructed someone nearby to take out the Image Preservation Stone.

When that person channeled Qi into the Image Preservation Stone, an image materialized.

The image displayed was the one revealed in the beams of light blooming from the opening of the four major trials within the Secret Realm.

Prince Ning's Commandery Princess only glanced at it for a moment before her complexion turned deathly pale.

She looked at the shadowy image in disbelief, then back at the Great Yan Emperor.

At that moment, Prince Ning's Commandery Princess could not understand why the mental imagery produced during her test at the Mountain of Inquiry would be displayed in such a way.

This scene's commotion was probably seen by the entire Skyfire City.

Even as shrewd as Prince Ning's Commandery Princess was, the situation caused some panic within her. Though her expression remained unchanged, her hands were already quietly clenched tightly together.

She slightly parted her red lips, wanting to make some explanation.

But she found herself unable to utter a word.

For some reason, in this helpless situation,

Her thoughts suddenly turned to the Town-Nation Duke's Heir who had visited her mansion that morning.

The Town-Nation Duke's Heir had spoken words to her,

Hinting that the remnants of Great Chu would be exposed in Skyfire City.

He also cautioned her to be careful during her participation in the four trials.

Could it be that the Town-Nation Duke's Heir had known her identity from the start?

Was he warning her that morning?

But why...

Why was Cheng Guang, the Town-Nation Duke's Heir, able to discover her identity?

And how did he know that she would be exposed in Skyfire City?

It all seemed to have been perfectly predicted by him!!

As Prince Ning's Commandery Princess considered this, her previously calm heart was suddenly thrown into tempestuous waves.

Chapter 380 - 116: The Great Wind Rises!

Under such circumstances, Commandery Princess Ning fell silent.

She discovered that at this moment, no matter what she said, it all seemed very feeble.

The Emperor of Great Yan sighed, the current silence of Commandery Princess Ning seeming to confirm the facts.

After he sighed, he looked at Commandery Princess Ning with a complexity of emotions in his heart.

He could not say that he liked Commandery Princess Ning, but neither did he dislike her.

Previously, the Emperor of Great Yan had been convincing himself that if Commandery Princess Ning passed the four major challenges first, even if unwilling, he would pass the imperial throne to her.

He would not break the ancestral customs.

He had been mentally prepared, but he had not expected such an incident to occur in the end.

Commandery Princess Ning...

Turned out to be the remaining descendant of Great Chu.

The Emperor of Great Yan's aged eyes gazed upon Commandery Princess Ning's resplendent beauty, and he slowly started to speak, his voice hoarse.

"Your identity has now been exposed."

"During the opening of the Secret Realm and the restarting of the four major anomalies, the images from your mind's trial of conscience were revealed."

"I fear countless messages have been sent out from within the capital, and upon receiving the news, the World Royal Family will soon gather here in Skyfire City. You better escape quickly."

"Although I do not know what the situation is with Prince Ning, why he would recognize you, a remaining descendant of Great Chu, as his daughter... in this situation, even he cannot protect you."

The Emperor of Great Yan had always considered Prince Ning's dignity, as well as that of Great Yan, and had not made a move against Commandery Princess Ning.

If the Emperor of Great Yan had wanted to make a move, it's likely that the moment Commandery Princess Ning left the Secret Realm, he would have suppressed her single-handedly.

Although he was old and weakened now, his cultivation in the Heavenly Human Realm was still there, and it was easy for him to deal with Commandery Princess Ning.

Commandery Princess Ning looked at the Emperor of Great Yan with stunned eyes, clearly not expecting that after her identity had been inexplicably exposed, the Emperor would let her go.

The World Royal Family was watching her, and the Emperor of Great Yan was going to let her off so easily?

Commandery Princess Ning did not believe it.

She looked at the Emperor of Great Yan's sunken eye sockets and wrinkled face, her own majestic beauty unchanged, but she bowed slightly toward the Emperor and the rest of the Great Yan royal kin, then slowly retreated backwards.

After exiting the Great Temple,

Commandery Princess Ning did not hesitate, quickly using the Power of the Primordial Spirit, and the pure white Power of the Primordial Spirit flowed out from her brow center, like ethereal flowing light, lifting her body as she flew away through the air.

The figure of Commandery Princess Ning quickly disappeared from the Great Temple.

Inside the Great Temple, silence was restored in an instant.

The air seemed as if it had frozen.

The Emperor of Great Yan's aged and slightly murky eyes lifted slightly, looking towards where the figure of Commandery Princess Ning vanished into the horizon, his expression unchanged.

"Your Majesty, are we just letting her leave like this?"

"After all, she is the remaining descendant of Great Chu. Once it was predicted on the gold list that if Great Chu rises, the world would unite. If the prediction is true, then her value as the only remaining descendant of Great Chu is immeasurable."

By the side of the Emperor of Great Yan, an elder dressed in a Python Robe slowly inquired.

The Emperor of Great Yan shook his head.

"Ultimately, we have to consider the face of Great Yan, as well as that of Prince Ning. She has been hidden in Great Yan for so many years and has been Prince Ning's daughter for just as long. Perhaps Prince Ning has known her identity all along and has been protecting her."

"Not long ago, Prince Ning was able to withdraw from the Border Area battlefield to seek justice for her, and if he finds out later that we made a move against her, who knows what troubles it will cause."

"So, we cannot make a move."

Having said this, the Python Robe elder beside the Emperor sighed, was about to nod in agreement when he heard the Emperor speak again.

"We cannot make a move, but if others do, that's beyond our control."

As the Emperor of Great Yan said these words, his aged eyes flickered slightly, his gaze falling on the Python Robe elder nearby.

"Longhu, you understand my meaning, don't you?"

When the Python Robe elder heard the Emperor of Great Yan's words, his face showed a hint of shock, but then he nodded slightly, without hesitation, took a step, and his figure instantly vanished from the spot.

The Emperor of Great Yan, looking into the distance in the direction where Commandery Princess Ning had left, started slowly rotating the Zitan Buddha Beads in his hand.

"Longhu is the Ancestral Master of the Heavenly Heart Mountain of my Great Yan nation, rarely venturing out, and few must know of his ascension to the Heavenly Human Realm."

"With Longhu making a move, I suppose no one from the World Royal Family will be able to contend for what belongs to Great Yan."

"The remaining descendant of Great Chu... just what secrets does Great Chu hold..."

"Regardless, the remaining descendant of Great Chu that has surfaced in my Great Yan must belong to Great Yan, and others should not attempt to take it."

The Emperor of Great Yan gazed into the distant night sky, murmuring to himself.

The royal kin surrounding the Emperor of Great Yan remained silent, not daring to speak.

Although the Emperor of Great Yan said he would not make a move against Commandery Princess Ning, it was only on the surface, saving some face for Prince Ning.

But making a move in secret, that was beyond Prince Ning's control.

At this time, Prince Ning was far away on the Border Area battlefield, unaware of the developments here.

By the time he found out and attempted to hurry back, everything would've already been settled and too late.

At that point, as long as the Emperor of Great Yan did not confess, Prince Ning could only stew in his frustrations, unable to do much.

The thoughts of the royal relatives surrounded the Emperor of Great Yan, but they quickly understood the Emperor's mindset.

Li Zhongxin, sitting to one side, still hadn't reacted. Having just come out, seeing Commandery Princess Ning exit before him made him feel an intense sense of loss.