

Longevity 100

Chapter 100: Zhao Feng Has Been Transferred to the Main Battle Camp! Domineering Ying Zheng! (Part 4)

"Long live Qin..."

Countless citizens shouted, showcasing their pride in their powerful nation.

The heart of Qin's people is like this, truly unrivaled under Heaven. No wonder the soldiers of the Qin Army are all so valiant. In my Han, the people shun the military, yet these people of Qin harbor no fear or avoidance toward their army.

Within the prison cart, Han Fei watched the passionate Qin citizens shouting on both sides, and his heart sank. Just by observing the populace, the disparity was already glaringly obvious.

All of this is perhaps a result of Qin's reforms. Qin's laws are strict, but on the surface, they grant every citizen dignity, Han Fei thought to himself.

Under the escort of Qin Soldiers, Han Fei and the other Han officials were taken to the Xianyang Proclamation Prison.

「Qin Royal Palace!」

Outside the Morning Discussion Hall.

Ying Zheng stood on the steps before the hall, with all the civil and military officials of Qin waiting below. Everyone wore solemn expressions.

At that moment—

BLARE!

BLARE!!!

The resounding horns echoed through the heavens. Under the sound of the horns, Meng Wu was the first to come forward.

"Your Majesty," he reported loudly upon arriving at the plaza, "Shangjiangjun Wang Jian has brought the King of Han. Please give your command."

Ying Zheng's gaze sharpened as he looked out over the plaza.

Wang Jian strode toward the steps, a box in his hands. Behind him, two Sharp Warriors escorted the King of Han.

"Your servant, Wang Jian," he announced, bowing deeply to Ying Zheng. "I have returned from a successful campaign against Han and await your command."

Ying Zheng smiled slightly and lifted his hand. "Shangjiangjun, rise quickly."

"Thank you, Your Majesty," Wang Jian said loudly.

He then raised the box high and opened it, revealing an Imperial Seal and a map within.

"Your Majesty," Wang Jian declared loudly, "this is the Imperial Seal of Han and its Territorial Map, now presented to you. The land of Han is no more. It has been incorporated into the territory of our great Qin, under Your Majesty's dominion."

Ying Zheng gestured with his hand. Zhao Gao, who was serving nearby, quickly descended the steps, took the box, and knelt before Ying Zheng, lifting it high.

Ying Zheng reached out and picked up the Imperial Seal of Han. His gaze shifted, landing on Han An, whose face was a mask of defeat and panic.

"Han An," Ying Zheng's authoritative voice boomed. "Do you not accept this?"

As his voice fell, the gaze of every Qin minister fell upon Han An. Under such pressure, Han An could no longer bear it and collapsed to his knees.

"I... I dare not," Han An stammered.

"I have heard," Ying Zheng said coldly, "that you transferred the entire Han treasury out of the country and that many of your ministers and their children were moved out as well. It seems you still harbor resentment and wish to remain an enemy of our great Qin."

Han An's scalp tingled, and cold sweat streamed down his face. "I... I..." He was so frightened he could hardly speak.

Seeing this, many of Qin's ministers stared coldly, their faces full of mockery.

This is the king of Han. Compared to our Great King, it's the difference between a True Dragon and an ant. No, he's not even worthy of comparison, many ministers thought coldly.

But one person turned his head away, unable to bear watching. It was Zheng Guo. As a former citizen of Han, watching his former sovereign subjected to such abject humiliation filled him with indescribable emotions.

"Rest assured," Ying Zheng said in a deep voice. "I will not kill you. Killing a man like you, who clings to life and fears death, would bring me no sense of achievement."

Han An's heart eased, and he said repeatedly, "Thank you, King of Qin, for the grace of sparing my life! Thank you, King of Qin!"

"However..." Ying Zheng's voice rose again.

Han An's face changed once more as he looked on in terror.

"If those former ministers of yours dare to rebel against our great Qin, you will be the first to die," Ying Zheng said coldly, a murderous glint in his eyes.

Han An's expression froze. He wanted to speak but didn't know what to say. Although he had been a king, his former officials and nobles had always prioritized their own interests. Now that he was a prisoner, why would they care if he lived or died?

"Guards!" Ying Zheng commanded with authority.

A group of palace Imperial Guards immediately ran over.

"Imprison the King of Han in the Proclamation Prison. Provide him with three meals a day. Without my imperial edict, he is not permitted to die," Ying Zheng ordered with a wave of his hand.

At the command, several Imperial Guards seized the King of Han and dragged him away. At that moment, the former king didn't dare to utter a single word, terrified that Ying Zheng might change his mind and have him killed on the spot.

After the King of Han was taken away, Ying Zheng turned his gaze to Wang Jian. Then, he slowly began to walk down the staircase.

Seeing this, the expressions of the court officials all changed, their faces filled with awe.

"Your Majesty, you must not!" Wang Jian immediately cried out.

For a king to descend the steps to greet a subject was a tremendous honor and sign of grace. Naturally, Wang Jian was filled with apprehension.

But Ying Zheng paid him no heed. Under the watchful eyes of all his officials, he descended the stairs, came before Wang Jian, and then took his hand and raised it high.

"In the past, Lao Ai rebelled. The army attacked Xianyang, and the Royal Palace fell. I was in Yong City, without support. At that time, Shangjiangjun Wang Jian was the Main General. To rescue me and to save Qin, he led one hundred thousand troops on a forced march day and night to crush the rebel army in Yong City and secure the stability of our Qin.

"Now, Shangjiangjun has led the troops to conquer Han. His planning of the attack and his tireless efforts have been of the highest merit. With Wang Jian, Qin has no worries," Ying Zheng declared loudly, his words conveying the high regard in which he held the general.

Watching Wang Jian being treated with such respect and esteem, many of the civil and military officials revealed expressions of envy.

"I am a minister of Qin. It is my duty to serve Your Majesty," Wang Jian declared loudly.

"Shangjiangjun Wang Jian is a role model for all ministers," Ying Zheng laughed heartily. "I will rely on him with all my strength."

Then, holding Wang Jian's hand, he led him up the stairs. When they reached the top, Ying Zheng turned to face the assembled court.

"Shangjiangjun has rendered great service in the conquest of Han!" he proclaimed. "His noble rank shall be elevated by one level! Grant him one thousand acres of fertile farmland, one hundred beautiful women, one thousand servants, one thousand pieces of gold, one hundred thousand coins, one hundred jade swords, bows and arrows, and long spears!"

This time, Ying Zheng not only bestowed upon Wang Jian the greatest honors befitting a subject but also granted him everything his position could possibly be given.

"Your Majesty's gifts are too generous. This servant is overwhelmed," Wang Jian replied, still maintaining a humble demeanor.

He was very clear on the art of survival at court. To appear too sharp or capable was certainly not a good thing. And in history, Wang Jian was indeed a master of this art. When in command of the army, he would often write to Ying Zheng to request rewards. He did this to tarnish his own reputation, deliberately creating flaws on his record. After all, a minister who desires nothing is a man to be feared.

But at this moment, the greater the honor bestowed upon him, the more uneasy Wang Jian became.

I have not forgotten the matter concerning Zhao Feng for a moment! If I am truly forced into a betrothal, it will be a disaster!