

## Longevity 104

Chapter 104: Zhao Feng's Background Presented to Ying Zheng

"Yan'er."

"What are you doing cooped up in your room all day?"

"Your father is about to return, yet you still won't come out."

Mrs. Wang's voice, tinged with helplessness, came from outside the room. Ever since Wang Yan had returned to the manor, she had hardly gone out, always staying within her own courtyard and her room.

"Coming," Wang Yan responded. She looked down at her belly, extinguishing the thought she had just had. If I died, wouldn't two lives be lost?

Afterward, Wang Yan opened her door.

Mrs. Wang walked in slowly, glanced around, and said, "Honestly, what's the point of holing yourself up in your room all day? You've been back for so long."

"Mother, I don't want to go out," Wang Yan replied softly.

"Very well," Mrs. Wang said with a smile. "Come with me to the hall to wait. Your father should be back before long."

At that moment, a clear, crisp voice sounded from outside. "Auntie."

A little boy of about four or five ran in and hugged Wang Yan's leg.

"Li'er." Wang Yan smiled faintly, squatting down to gently embrace the little boy.

This little boy was obviously Wang Li, son of Wang Ben and eldest grandson of Wang Jian, as recorded in history. At present, however, he was just a five-year-old child. He was born to Wang Ben's wife, who had passed away from postpartum hemorrhage. In this era, childbirth was like stepping halfway through the Ghost Gate; the slightest complication could lead to death. Therefore, after Wang Li was born, he was raised by his grandmother, and Wang Yan also looked after him regularly.

"Auntie," Wang Li said, looking up at Wang Yan with a wronged expression, "why won't you play with Li'er anymore?"

"Auntie hasn't been feeling well recently," Wang Yan said gently. "I'll play with Li'er once I'm feeling a little better."

"Yan'er," Mrs. Wang said, her face filled with worry. "You've been so gloomy ever since you came back. What's really the matter? Tell your mother. It's not good to keep everything bottled up inside."

Mrs. Wang, just like her husband Wang Jian, doted on this daughter of hers.

"I'm fine, Mother," Wang Yan said, remaining outwardly composed despite the turmoil in her heart.

"Alright, let's go to the manor hall and wait for your father." Seeing this, Mrs. Wang didn't press further. She took Wang Yan by the hand and led her out of the room.

「Within the Zhangtai Palace!」

Ying Zheng and Wang Jian sat opposite each other.

"Senior General, although you did not personally lead the troops in the attack this time, all the strategizing and deployment of forces passed through your hands," Ying Zheng began with a smile.

"What are your thoughts on the Yingchuan region?"

"Ever since the Great King took personal control of the government, you have been gradually eroding the national power of Han. Conquering Han is not a difficult task," Wang Jian replied with a smile.

"When all is said and done, it seems I have gained the Great King's favor this time and received credit for this military achievement for free."

Ying Zheng smiled faintly and poured a cup of wine for Wang Jian, then another for himself. Wang Jian immediately lifted his cup in deference.

"Senior General, I have always remembered how you rescued me from danger in the past," Ying Zheng said meaningfully. "You are too modest, too cautious. You are underestimating me."

Wang Jian's hand, holding the wine cup, trembled slightly. "I wouldn't dare," he said hastily.

"What do you think of your future son-in-law?" Ying Zheng asked, his smile returning.

"This young man is a brave warrior and possesses the talent of a general," Wang Jian stated at once.

"After a few more years of training in the army, he will surely become a pillar of support for Qin."

"Hehe," Ying Zheng chuckled. "I know you, Senior General. You have never praised even Wang Ben so highly. It seems this Zhao Feng truly has something special about him."

"If nothing else," Wang Jian said with a smile, "I hold him in high regard simply for his temperament and sense of responsibility."

Ying Zheng's interest was piqued. "I'm quite curious. Do tell."

Upon hearing Wang Jian's account—in which he recounted Zhao Feng's candid confession of his love for Wang Yan but omitted the part about Zhao Feng's threats and his display of superhuman strength—a look of admiration flashed in Ying Zheng's eyes.

"This Zhao Feng does seem to be a responsible man."

"Therefore, I boldly refused Mr. Fusu's marriage proposal, not only for my daughter's sake but also because I didn't want to tear apart such a loving couple," Wang Jian continued. "I hope the Great King will not be offended."

"I have said it before," Ying Zheng declared. "Forcing a marriage apart is something other kings might do, but I will not. As for that incident back then... surely you have heard of it, Senior General, even if you did not experience it firsthand?"

Ying Zheng let out a faint laugh and drained his cup in one go.

Wang Jian was taken aback for a moment before something clicked in his mind. "I have indeed heard of that incident. It's just that so many years have passed, I thought the Great King had already forgotten."

"Forgotten?" Ying Zheng scoffed coldly. "Haha. How could I forget?"

However, he said no more on the subject. "Senior General, finish this pot of wine with me, and then you may return to your manor. Your wife and daughter are likely already waiting for you."

"As the Great King commands," Wang Jian naturally complied.

After they finished the wine, Wang Jian took his leave.

Ying Zheng returned to his throne and resumed reviewing memorials. "What is your assessment of Wang Jian's refusal of the marriage alliance?" he asked suddenly, still focused on his documents.

"Replying to the Great King," a calm voice responded. Dunruo had appeared before the throne at some unknown moment. "The Senior General is a wise man, so he naturally acts wisely. His claim about his daughter being in love is likely true. The key point, however, is that the Senior General himself has no desire to be entangled with the Royal Family. Once engaged to Mr. Fusu, he would be forced to take Mr. Fusu's side."

Ying Zheng's carving knife paused. He looked up at Dunruo, his voice deepening. "Do you think I will not name Fusu as Crown Prince?"

The words had barely fallen when Dunruo knelt. "I dare not speculate on the Great King's intentions. The matter of the Crown Prince can only be decreed by the Great King."

Ying Zheng's gaze returned to his work. "Zhao Feng," he asked calmly. "Have you investigated him thoroughly?"

"Replying to the Great King, the investigation is complete," Dunruo answered immediately.

"Read it," Ying Zheng commanded, resuming his carving.

"Zhao Feng. Registered in Shaoqiu County, Sha Village. Family of three: one mother, one sister."

At this, Ying Zheng's carving knife paused again.

"His father, Zhao Da, held a first-rank title of nobility and was killed in action at the Qin-Zhao border over a decade ago. Zhao Feng inherited his father's lands..."

The faint ripple in Ying Zheng's heart instantly vanished. Dunruo continued to report all of Zhao Feng's details in a loud, clear voice.

"That concludes all the details on Zhao Feng. I can confirm that there is no possibility of Zhao Feng being a spy for another state, nor of him being cultivated by one.

"His combat prowess is formidable, likely due to an innate gift for overwhelming strength.

"He was assigned to the Logistics Army because he was concealing his abilities.

"The reason for this is that he and his sister are twins. Their birth depleted their mother's vitality, leaving her frail and frequently ill. Zhao Feng wishes to return home to care for her and fulfill his filial duty."