

Longevity 121

Chapter 121: Zhao Ying: Mother, Brother Is Alive and Well! Mrs. Zhao Is Shocked!

Regarding Zhao Feng's promotion to general, some people were genuinely happy for him, his mother, and his sister. Wu Lizheng, for instance, was a typical example. He felt no envy whatsoever. But others, seeing someone who normally lived a more modest life than themselves suddenly become the most formidable person in the village, naturally harbored an unspeakable jealousy.

Zhao Ying hurried toward her family's courtyard, with Wu Lizheng following closely behind. She was eager to share the good news with her mother.

When she arrived home, Mrs. Zhao was already waiting with eager anticipation.

"Ying'er, how is your brother?" Mrs. Zhao immediately stood up and asked, her face wrought with anxiety.

"Mother! Brother is alive, and he's doing wonderfully! You'd never guess how incredible he is now," Zhao Ying exclaimed, her beautiful face flushing red.

Hearing that Zhao Feng was still alive, Mrs. Zhao breathed a sigh of relief.

"As long as your brother is alive, that's all that matters."

"Did they say when he would be back?" Mrs. Zhao asked.

"Mrs. Zhao," Wu Lizheng began with a cheerful grin, "I'm afraid your Zhao Feng will have a hard time coming back anytime soon."

"Mr. Wu, did Feng'er do something wrong?" Mrs. Zhao asked, surprised.

"Let's have Ying'er tell you. But you'd better brace yourself—don't be frightened," Wu Lizheng said with a smile.

Mrs. Zhao still looked puzzled, her gaze falling upon Zhao Ying.

"Mother," Zhao Ying said, bursting with excitement, "my brother has become a general of Qin!"

"A general?" Mrs. Zhao was taken aback, her face a mixture of confusion and astonishment. "What kind of general?"

"The kind that leads soldiers into battle," Zhao Ying replied with a smile, her expression radiating just how happy she was for her brother.

"Could it be a case of mistaken identity? Feng'er has been enlisted for less than a year. Even if he was lucky enough to earn some military merit, he shouldn't have become a general," Mrs. Zhao said in perplexity.

"Mother, at first, I couldn't believe it either. But look, the records from the Imperial Court have arrived! All the military merits my brother has earned are recorded right here. He hasn't just become a general—he's also been appointed as the Left Administrator! Do you know how prestigious that title is? It's a tenth-grade rank!

"Our family will now have a thousand mu of fertile land, and in the future, if brother has sons, they can inherit it all in perpetuity."

"Just look." Excited, Zhao Ying raised the bamboo slips in her hand and passed them to Mrs. Zhao.

Mrs. Zhao had taught both her children to read, so she was naturally literate. She took the bamboo slips, unrolled them, and read carefully. As she absorbed every word, a look of utter astonishment filled her face.

"How is this possible?" she said incredulously, clutching the bamboo slips.

"Mrs. Zhao, it's true," Wu Lizheng said with a laugh. "Your boy Feng has really made a name for himself. A general! You're going to live a comfortable life from now on."

But Mrs. Zhao's face showed little joy. Instead, a deep-seated worry was evident. "If I could choose," she said quietly, "I wouldn't have let him join the army at all."

"Mother, it's no use talking about that now. My brother has already made it and earned so many military merits. The officer dispensing his Annual Salary just told me that the current Great King values

brother greatly. He even issued a Royal Edict to proclaim my brother's achievements throughout the entire army! My brother is now the youngest general in all of Qin!

"For years, we've been grateful to Mr. Wu for letting us farm his three mu of land, but now we'll have more land of our own! We can even collect rent from tenants and won't have to work so hard anymore.

"And do you know how much his Annual Salary is? This year alone, it adds up to a whopping eight hundred stones! We can finally buy better medicine to help you recover," Zhao Ying added, beaming.

Zhao Ying cared little for power and authority; what she truly valued was the ability to give her mother a better life.

"In that case, your brother probably won't be able to retire in a year, either," Mrs. Zhao said with disappointment.

Her greatest hope had been for Zhao Feng to serve two years in the military and then return home. But with his promotion to Deputy General and now to General, that two-year service was nothing but an empty dream. Only the most common soldiers retired after two years. Sharp Warriors couldn't, let alone a rare and valuable War General.

"He definitely won't be able to retire now," Wu Lizheng chimed in with a smile. "But once Feng'er settles in, he will surely come back to see you."

"Mother, now that brother is fine, why do you still look so glum?" Zhao Ying asked with a smile, seeing the troubled look on her mother's face.

"It's good that your brother is fine," Mrs. Zhao merely echoed, but it was clear that she was burdened by heavy thoughts.

We barely survived that vortex back then, which is the only reason Feng'er and Ying'er are alive. Now, Feng'er has had such a turn of fortune and become a general. I just pray he never has to go back to that vortex. If anyone finds out... Feng'er and Ying'er will be in danger. If only our family could live here forever, never venturing out. How wonderful that would be.

At that moment, Wu Lizheng spoke up. "Right, Mrs. Zhao, you should also prepare. That official, Chen Fen, just mentioned that he won't be the one dispensing Feng'er's Annual Salary. The Prefectural Governor himself will be handling it. He might arrive tomorrow or the day after."