

Longevity 143

Chapter 143: Why Is Empress Dowager Zhao Ji So Afraid of Me? (Part 3)

"General, may I discuss a deal with you?"

"You've already saved Concubine Zhao. If you let me go, I can give you Ten Thousand Gold Pieces. Whatever you desire, I can provide."

Guo Kai, pinned to the ground, looked up at Zhao Feng with a desperate expression. As a cunning man, he understood that this was his last chance to escape. If Zhao Feng were to let him go, he could flee to Wei. Even if he failed his mission, he could at least save his life; even upon returning home, the King of Zhao would not blame him. But if he fell into Qin's hands, it would be the end. Having personally kidnapped the mother of the King of Qin, he could already imagine the King's thunderous wrath. If he were truly captured and brought back to Qin, he would surely die a terrible death.

Hearing Guo Kai's words, Zhao Feng approached him and raised a hand. The two trusted aides holding Guo Kai down immediately helped him to his feet.

Seeing this, Guo Kai thought Zhao Feng was about to agree to his terms, and a flicker of joy passed through his eyes.

"Prime Minister Guo, when all is said and done, I really should thank you," Zhao Feng said sincerely.

"Thank... what for?" Guo Kai promptly replied with fawning flattery. "If you let me go, I can offer you wealth, and I get to escape with my life. It's a win-win situation."

In this state, he had none of the dignity befitting a Prime Minister, looking for all the world like a simple coward who feared death. Of course, this was perfectly in line with Guo Kai's historical character.

"No." Zhao Feng shook his head. "I should thank you for handing me two great merits on a silver platter."

"One is the merit of rescuing the Tai Hou."

"The other is the merit of capturing you, the Prime Minister of the Zhao state."

"To be honest," Zhao Feng said with a hint of mockery, "I only came out to patrol the Wei River border. I never expected to run into you. I've really hit the jackpot this time."

With a wave of his hand, he commanded, "Tie up the Prime Minister of Zhao. We can't let him die."

"Understood." A trusted aide immediately produced a rope and bound Guo Kai. Panicked, Guo Kai began to struggle wildly.

"General!" Guo Kai cried out in sheer terror. "I am sincere! I have vast assets in the Zhao state. If Ten Thousand Gold Pieces isn't enough, I'll give you twenty thousand! No, you can have all my family's wealth! I only ask that you let me return to Zhao."

"In the face of true power, what use is your wealth?" Zhao Feng asked with a faint smile. "Give up."

Just then, on the opposite bank belonging to the state of Wei, the sound of hoofbeats suddenly thundered. Thousands of soldiers from the Wei Army were converging on the Wei River.

"I am over here! Save me, quickly!"

"Hurry..."

Seeing the Wei Army appear in Wei territory, Guo Kai shouted as if he had seen his saviors.

"It seems you really did prepare all your escape routes," Zhao Feng remarked with a trace of amusement as he observed the Wei Army on the opposite bank.

Guo Kai's meticulously planned operation had been completely ruined by him. If not for Zhao Feng's appearance, he might have actually succeeded in taking Concubine Zhao to Wei.

On the other side of the Wei River, the Wei General in command grew uneasy as he took in the sight of the boats and the clear signs of a fierce battle.

"General, it appears the Prime Minister of Zhao has been intercepted by the Qin Army. What should we do?" one of his officers asked.

"We're too late," the Wei General said, deciding firmly after a moment of internal struggle. "Now that the Prime Minister has fallen into the hands of the Qin Army, any move we make will be seen as an act of war against Qin. It would give them the perfect pretext to invade our state of Wei. We absolutely cannot risk it."

Even though they were on land, they could still strike the enemy with their bows. But he didn't dare. If Qin used this incident as a pretext to wage war on Wei, it would spell disaster for them.

"Are we just going to stand by and watch as the Prime Minister of Zhao is taken away?" another Wei officer asked, clearly unwilling to accept this. They had come this far because of promises Guo Kai had made; otherwise, they wouldn't have mobilized.

Just then, dozens of boats came swiftly down the Wei River. Each vessel carried nearly a hundred soldiers of the Qin Army, all armed to the teeth and radiating a murderous aura.

"There's no chance," the commanding Wei General sighed upon seeing so many soldiers from the Qin Army approaching. He understood that the opportunity was completely lost.

「The scene shifted back.」

"My Lord, look," Zhang Ming said, pointing upstream.

"They must be the ones pursuing Guo Kai," Zhao Feng said, immediately recognizing their purpose as he watched the numerous boats approach. After all, the abduction of the nation's Tai Hou was a matter that required a massive response.

"If not for you, My Lord, leading us to intercept them, those pursuers would surely have faced severe punishment," Zhang Ming remarked with an appreciative smile. "For the Tai Hou to be abducted to another state... countless people would have been executed for such a crime."

"Wait for them to get closer," Zhao Feng said with a slight smile.

At that moment, Tu Sui, standing on the lead boat, also spotted the situation up ahead.

"Commander, it seems our Sharp Warriors have intercepted the villains who kidnapped the Tai Hou!" an excited Junhou announced.

"I see them." Tu Sui stared ahead, his tense expression gradually softening. Heaven's blessing. Our lives are saved this time. He was immensely relieved.

"Reduce speed. Approach slowly," Tu Sui ordered immediately. The boats, which had been at full speed, began to slow.

As the boats drew alongside each other, Tu Sui eagerly leaped onto the vessel where Zhao Feng stood.

Seeing Zhao Feng clad in a Deputy General's battle armor, Tu Sui quickly bowed and asked, "Might I ask which general you are?"

Although Tu Sui was the commander of the Yong City Guards with five thousand soldiers under his command—a rank equivalent to a Capital Commandant of the Sharp Warriors—he was not quite considered a general himself. Had he been a Capital Commandant of the Xianyang Imperial Guards, his status would have been comparable to a Wanjiang. In Yong City, however, this was not the case.