

## Longevity 146

### Chapter 146: Ying Zheng: What? It Was Zhao Feng Who Saved Tai Hou? (Part 2)

"While using his mother to force his hand was a despicable tactic, it was ultimately just another way to deal with Qin. Regrettably, it still ended in failure," Wei Wuji sighed.

"Perhaps Lord Xinling overthought things," one of the officials at his side offered. "Qin's pretext for attacking Han was Han's provocations at the border. Later, Han advocated for a campaign against Qin, and that's what led to their destruction. Our Great Wei has been on friendly terms with Qin for years; they have no reason to move against us. If they did, the other states wouldn't stand for it."

Hearing this, a flicker of disappointment crossed Wei Wuji's eyes. "I wonder how many in the court think as you do. The so-called 'just cause' might be useful at a critical moment, but when a state becomes so powerful that it no longer fears the others, such a pretense becomes a worthless notion. To our Great Wei, Qin is already an overwhelming behemoth. If Qin were to attack us, we would surely be no match for them."

"Ultimately, it's best not to give Qin any pretext. That way, we can still hope for aid from other states. But if we give them a reason, the other states will have no cause to send reinforcements."

"How I regret it," Wei Wuji said, the remorse in his eyes difficult to conceal. "When the King of Han first sought aid, I should have sent troops immediately instead of waiting for Zhao's response. Doing so might have saved Han and preserved one more state capable of resisting Qin."

He was old now and didn't have much life left. All he wished was to protect Wei in his remaining years and prevent it from being destroyed by Qin. The stronger Qin became, the heavier the worry weighed on his heart. Once, there were grand alliances that stood against Qin; now, all the states feared Qin's might and no longer dared to unite. Such alliances were a thing of the past. The tables had turned.

Listening to Wei Wuji, the subordinate beside him fell silent.

"What is the situation with Minister Zhao?" Wei Wuji asked.

"Reporting to Your Highness," the subordinate replied promptly. "General Cao, stationed at the Wei River, says the distance was too great and ships obstructed the view. He couldn't see clearly if Minister Zhao was captured, killed, or managed to escape alive."

"It would be a blessing if that Minister Zhao were dead," Wei Wuji said coldly.

Hearing this, the subordinate was deeply puzzled. "Your Highness, haven't you always conversed pleasantly with Minister Zhao? He seemed to hold you in high regard as well. If he died, wouldn't that be a bad thing for our Great Wei?"

"Guo Kai is nothing but a petty man driven by greed," Wei Wuji said solemnly. "I only associated with him because he is deeply favored by the King of Zhao. But it's undeniable that he is a slanderous courtier who cares only for wealth and profit. If he were to die, the court of Zhao would once again listen to Lian Po and Zhao Yi. Now *that* would be a good thing for our Great Wei."

Wei Wuji trusted this subordinate deeply, so he spoke the truth. It had to be said that Wei Wuji, hailed as one of the Four Lords of the Warring States, possessed a truly unique and penetrating vision. Guo Kai was indeed a petty man.

"Your Highness speaks wisely," the subordinate concurred.

"Have we ascertained the situation with Qin's garrison in Wei City?" Wei Wuji asked, returning to the matter at hand.

The subordinate immediately produced a bamboo slip and respectfully presented it. "This is the military report from Wei City. Please peruse it, Your Highness."

Wei Wuji took it and unrolled it at once.

"Zhao Feng," he murmured, his brow furrowing. "So it's him guarding Wei City. It seems Wang Jian is being extremely cautious of our Great Wei."

"Your Highness," the subordinate said, completely perplexed. "Zhao Feng just got lucky. Why do you attach so much importance to him?"

"Wei Bo," Wei Wuji said, turning to him. "Do you know why the former king placed you by my side?"

"I do not, Your Highness," Wei Bo replied respectfully.

"By birth, you are also royalty of our Great Wei. You are the king's younger brother and my own nephew," Wei Wuji explained, a sigh escaping him. "I am old now and don't have many years left."

Wei Bo immediately shook his head, his expression grave. "Your Highness is in his prime. You must not speak such things."

"The king has only been on the throne for three years and still relies on me for many matters," Wei Wuji continued. "The former king placed you by my side when you were just a teenager. He intended for me to train you to become the king's right-hand man, so that one day you too could be a pillar of our state of Wei.

"The world is not what it once was. Qin is strong, and the other states are weak. The old games of checks and balances through alliances have been shattered. You have been by my side for many years; you should know that you must never judge things by their surface.

"Take this Zhao Feng, for example. Since you've been with me, you should be well aware of his situation. Tell me about him. What kind of person is he?" Wei Wuji asked, looking straight at Wei Bo.

"According to our intelligence, Zhao Feng was originally a common soldier in Qin's Logistics Army. He was promoted by a stroke of luck after killing the son of Bao Yuan," Wei Bo began. "Later, by another coincidence—or perhaps just good fortune—he killed General Bao Yuan himself. Only then was he transferred to one of Qin's main combat battalions. Ultimately, the man is simply too lucky. If he hadn't run into Bao Yuan and his son, he'd probably still be an ordinary grunt in the logistics corps," Wei Bo concluded, his tone still tinged with disdain.

Upon hearing this, Wei Wuji shook his head in disappointment. "In your eyes, perhaps you only see this man's luck. And it's true, he is very fortunate. Without Bao Yuan and his son, he might still be in the Logistics Army, never to rise through the ranks.

"But you fail to see his ability. Bao Yuan led nearly eight thousand elite soldiers to hide in Yang City for a surprise night attack. His goal was to sever Qin's supply lines and buy more time for Han's survival. Although the plan was risky, it was a necessary gamble. If successful, it could have prolonged Han's existence."