

Longevity 147

Chapter 147: Ying Zheng: What? It Was Zhao Feng Who Saved Tai Hou? (Part 3)

"Facing the unarmored Logistics Army stationed outside the city, which numbered no more than ten thousand, Bao Yuan's elite troops were more than capable of slaughtering them. Yet, what was the result of the pursuit? United by Zhao Feng alone, thousands from the Logistics Army fought a bloody battle against Bao Yuan's elite Han soldiers. They fought to the death without retreating, completely thwarting Bao Yuan's strategy. Ultimately, Bao Yuan himself died at Zhao Feng's hands.

"Afterward, this young man cast aside his previously quiet demeanor. He broke through several of Han's cities, conquered the Han Capital, and even captured the King of Han. This is not something that can be achieved by mere luck. If you had such luck, could you accomplish the same?" Wei Wuji asked his nephew.

Hearing this, Wei Bo fell silent, lost in thought. A moment later, he shook his head. "I could not."

A hint of gratification appeared in Wei Wuji's eyes. "It is good that you understand. This young man is, first, brave and fierce. Second, he is a skilled commander. Third, as you mentioned, he has extraordinary luck, but that is the least of his qualities.

"What a pity," he continued. "If only he had been born in our state of Wei. If he were one of us, I would willingly take him as my direct disciple to inherit my legacy. He could then protect Wei in my place, and I would know our nation has a future guardian. Why is Qin so uniquely blessed?" Wei Wuji said with a touch of bitterness.

Listening to his uncle—a man he revered as a War God—praise a foreigner so highly made Wei Bo deeply resentful. He had studied at his uncle's side for years without receiving a single word of praise, yet here his uncle was, lauding a foreigner and even offering to make him his successor. If word of this got out, it would undoubtedly send shockwaves through the entire Wei court.

"Your Majesty," Wei Bo asked, his voice thick with resentment, "does he truly deserve such high regard from you?"

Wei Wuji chuckled. "If he were a man of Wei, or even willing to defect to our side, then of course he would be worth it. What a shame he's a man of Qin!"

"Your Majesty, one day, if I face Zhao Feng in battle, I will kill him," Wei Bo declared, his eyes blazing with fighting spirit. "I will prove that he is not my equal."

Wei Wuji didn't grow angry. Instead, he smiled. "Then I shall look forward to that day."

Using Zhao Feng to foster greater ambition in his nephew was a worthwhile endeavor.

I will definitely do it, Wei Bo vowed inwardly. Though he had never met the man, his heart was already filled with a murderous intent for Zhao Feng.

If Bo'er could actually slay Zhao Feng on the battlefield, perhaps then I would truly have a successor capable of protecting Wei in my place, Wei Wuji thought to himself. He was growing old and did not have many years left. He dreamed of cultivating a successor to protect the nation, but it seemed an impossible task. This nephew of his, after all, just didn't have what it takes.

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「In Xianyang, inside the Morning Discussion Hall!」

Ying Zheng's face was grim. A terrifying, furious pressure enveloped the entire hall, and under its weight, not a single courtier dared to utter a sound.

"How long has it been?" Ying Zheng's voice was cold. "Nearly half a month. A chase spanning a thousand miles. And the Tai Hou has yet to be brought back. I am deeply disappointed in all of you."

The ministers in the court all knitted their brows, daring not to speak.

"Yu Liao. Li Si," Ying Zheng called out. "Tell me, when will you bring the Tai Hou back? Do you have any idea what a check it would place on Qin should she fall into the hands of another state?" he roared.

Under his fiery gaze, even the once highly trusted Yu Liao and Li Si were at a loss for words.

By now, with nearly half a month passed and Concubine Zhao still not recovered, Ying Zheng's mind was in turmoil. This was not only because Concubine Zhao was his birth mother but, more importantly, because of her status as the Tai Hou of Qin. The consequences of her capture by another state were too severe for Ying Zheng to even contemplate.

"Your Majesty, please quell your anger." At that moment, Han Fei, now dressed in the official robes of Qin, stepped forward and spoke loudly. "The Tai Hou's abduction was clearly planned long in advance. Although Yong City was our former capital, its defenses are not as stringent as Xianyang's. Moreover,

there were foreign spies inside the Yong City Royal Palace. Given this, the Tai Hou's abduction was simply impossible to prevent.

"From what we can tell, the architect of this plot is quite resourceful. They created a five-pronged diversion, using four routes to draw away Qin's forces while the fifth group escaped unseen down the Wei River. The only thing Your Majesty and we, your subjects, can do now is to trust the pursuing Sharp Warriors. They will never allow the Tai Hou of Qin to be taken across the border, nor will they let her become a bargaining chip for other nations to use against Qin."

Hearing Han Fei's words, the furious Ying Zheng managed to rein in some of his anger. He held this recently defected, famous minister in high regard.

"I would rather the Tai Hou died for the nation than have her affect the Great Qin Destiny," Ying Zheng said gravely.

As he spoke, everyone present understood the chilling intent behind his words. To a sovereign, it was better for Concubine Zhao to die than to fall into the hands of another state. Perhaps this was the heartlessness of an emperor.

Just then, a voice rang out.

"REPORT!" Ren Xiao announced excitedly as he rushed into the hall. "Tu Sui, the Imperial Guard Commander of Yong City, requests an audience!"

Ying Zheng's expression shifted instantly. "Summon him!" he snapped.

Zhao Gao immediately shouted toward the entrance, "By the decree of the Great King, summon Tu Sui, the Imperial Guard Commander of Yong City, for an audience!"

In response, Tu Sui, who had already exchanged his battle armor for a military uniform, hurried into the hall. Despite holding a noble title, he did not hesitate for a moment, dropping to his knees the instant he entered the great hall.

Every minister's gaze fell upon him.

"Tell me," Ying Zheng stared at Tu Sui, his voice a low, cold demand, "has the Tai Hou been brought back?"