

## Longevity 152

### Chapter 152: The War God's Return to Qin! Royal Edict and Rewards!

After Ying Zheng left, Xia Wuqie gazed deeply at Zhao Ji, who was still muttering the same phrase to herself. After a moment of internal struggle, Xia Wuqie also turned and departed.

「Elsewhere.」

Inside Zhangtai Palace, the two ministers Li Si and Yu Liao stood within the grand hall. Of all the civil and military officials of the court, only these two had been summoned. It was clear the King of Qin had important matters to discuss.

"In the battle at the Wei River crossing, Zhao Feng saved the Empress Dowager and captured the mastermind of the plot," Ying Zheng said, looking calmly at his two ministers. "Do you know who planned this?"

"The Zhao State Royal Guard are the state's strongest Dark Guards. Since they were mobilized, it must have been their commander," Li Si replied after some thought.

"The Tingwei is mistaken," Ying Zheng said with a cold laugh. "This time, the scheme was orchestrated by Prime Minister Guo Kai."

Li Si and Yu Liao exchanged a look of surprise.

"Guo Kai? That man can actually scheme?" Yu Liao asked, astonished. "I heard he only ascended to the position of Prime Minister through the favor of Zhao Yan. They say he's a man without talent or virtue, a craven coward who fears death. He dared to plot such a thing against Qin?"

"It seems we've underestimated his audacity," Li Si added.

Ying Zheng looked at his two officials and spoke slowly. "He is indeed a treacherous scoundrel, just as you have both said—without talent or virtue. Killing him would be pointless. In fact, leaving him in the Zhao state might make him a useful pawn in Qin's future conquest of Zhao."

Yu Liao understood immediately. "Your Majesty wishes to control this Guo Kai, to make him Qin's mole within the Zhao state?"

"The man is greedy for wealth and power, and he fears death above all else. He's extremely easy to control. After Tu Sui brought him back, he recognized that revealing Guo Kai's identity would cause a huge stir, so he kept it quiet. The Zhao state, therefore, likely does not know that Guo Kai has been captured by Qin. You both should understand my intentions," Ying Zheng said with a smile.

"We understand," Li Si and Yu Liao said in unison. "This Guo Kai will certainly be put to use by Qin."

"Go and handle it. Bring me the results swiftly," Ying Zheng ordered with a wave of his hand.

"Your servants take their leave." Li Si and Yu Liao bowed and exited the grand hall.

With Tu Sui heading to Wei City, the Yong City Royal Palace will need a new Imperial Guard Commander. And it's not just the Yong City Royal Palace; it's about time I cleaned house at the Xianyang Royal Palace as well.

Soon after, Ying Zheng called out, "Zhao Gao."

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「Xianyang Proclamation Prison!」

Guo Kai was detained in a solitary cell. Dressed in prisoner's garb, his face was a mask of sheer panic. Throughout the journey, his anxiety had peaked, as he knew no good fate awaited him. Whether for his past transgressions of bullying the young King Zheng of Qin alongside Zhao Yan, or for the recent abduction of the Empress Dowager, Ying Zheng would never forgive him. Under this constant terror, Guo Kai had grown visibly gaunt.

At that moment, a few prison guards arrived outside his cell and unbolted the door.

The sudden noise jolted Guo Kai awake. Seeing the guards enter, he stammered, "W-what is it? What's happening?" His expression made it plain he was terrified beyond measure.

"By order of the Tingwei, we are here to escort you for interrogation," a prison guard stated coldly.

Without another word, two guards stepped forward, hauled Guo Kai to his feet, and began dragging him out of the cell.

"Let me go! Let me go!" Guo Kai screamed in panic, struggling fruitlessly.

Soon, he was escorted into the main hall of the Proclamation Prison. Li Si sat in the seat of honor, with Yu Liao seated to his left.

As Guo Kai was brought in, a prison guard shouted, "Kneel!" and kicked Guo Kai's legs out from under him, sending him sprawling to the floor.

"Guo Kai," Li Si began, looking down at him with a cold sneer. "The grand Prime Minister of Zhao. I never expected to meet you here."

"Tingwei!" Guo Kai pleaded, his face full of terror. "I am the Prime Minister of Zhao! If you harm me, Zhao will be enraged! Let me go back, and I will be eternally grateful to you! I will ensure that Zhao and Qin share an everlasting peace!"

"Guo Kai," Li Si sneered, "don't you think it's a little late for that?"

"Minister Li..." Guo Kai stammered, still frantic.

"You infiltrated Qin and abducted our Empress Dowager. You must be aware of the gravity of this crime. By the king's command, I, the Tingwei, am here to pass judgment on your sins.

"Abducting the Empress Dowager of Qin is an unforgivable offense.

"Waging war within Qin's borders, causing the slaughter of our people and the deaths of many of our soldiers, is a crime punishable by beheading.

"For these two crimes combined, I hereby sentence Guo Kai to be executed by being torn asunder by chariots, effective immediately. Fetch the document and have him affix his mark!" Li Si commanded coldly.

"Yes, my lord!"

Several prison guards moved at once. One pinned Guo Kai down, another grabbed his hand, and a third produced a bamboo slip and a pad of red ink.

Seeing this, Guo Kai began to struggle wildly. "No, don't kill me! I'm useful! I'm the Prime Minister of Zhao! I know many things about the Zhao state, about the King of Zhao! I'm willing to serve the King of Qin! I'm willing to become his subject! Please, don't kill me!" he shrieked in terror, trembling uncontrollably. His fear had reached its absolute peak.

He watched in horror as the bamboo slip drew closer, as his hand was pressed into the red ink, and as his thumbprint was stamped onto the document.

"Reporting to the Tingwei," the prison guard announced loudly, holding up the bamboo slip, "Guo Kai has affixed his mark."

Li Si immediately took it and examined it. A smile touched his lips. With a wave of his hand, he ordered, "Take Guo Kai to the execution ground. The Shaofu and I will oversee the sentence personally."

Upon hearing this, Guo Kai's body went limp, and he collapsed onto the floor, his face a picture of utter despair. The guards, however, showed him no indulgence. They simply lifted his boneless form and began carrying him toward the execution ground.