

Longevity 203

Chapter 203: Wang Jian's Messenger! Zhao Feng's Anticipation!

"Advisement?"

"What is my tutor advising Zhao Feng to do?"

"To advise him to give up the Royal Daughter? To give her to me?"

"If that is truly the case, then the fault is mine."

"Tutor, you have placed me in the position of forcibly destroying another's marriage."

"Although I have never met Zhao Feng, I can imagine his character. He is a young man who has fought to the death to earn countless military merits."

"Never mind a soldier being angered by such a threat; even I, a scholar, would be enraged if I were not of the Royal Family and faced such a thing," Fusu said, annoyed. He was extremely dissatisfied with Chunyu Yue's actions.

This left Chunyu Yue with his head lowered, not knowing what to say.

Perhaps in Fusu's view, Chunyu Yue's actions were wrong. But in Chunyu Yue's view, this was no mistake. Sacrificing the marriage of a mere Deputy General to facilitate the Eldest Imperial Son's ambitions was entirely justified. Any commoner, upon learning it was for the Eldest Imperial Son, would have submitted immediately. But alas, he had encountered Zhao Feng.

"My prince."

"Now that things have come to this, what Grand Tutor Chunyu has done cannot be undone," Wang Wan sighed. "Moreover, Zhao Feng has already become a force to be reckoned with. Our hopes of mollifying and winning him over are gone."

Originally, he had planned to suppress Zhao Feng completely. He never expected Zhao Feng to soundly defeat Wei Wuji, even when faced with the desperate situation of Wei's advancing army. Wang Wan had not foreseen this. The court had not foreseen this. The entire world had not foreseen this.

"If there is a chance in the future, I will personally apologize to Zhao Feng," Fusu declared.

"That must not happen, my prince!"

"Although Zhao Feng is enjoying great prestige at the moment, he is ultimately just a subject. With your status, how could you apologize to him?" Chunyu Yue immediately retorted.

Even Wang Wan nodded. "There is no need for you to do this, my prince. Ever since Zhao Feng began defending Wei City, we have been suppressing him in the court. The situation is beyond redemption."

"Now that we have begun to suppress him, we must continue to do so."

"I do not believe his path will always be smooth," Wang Wan stated gravely.

Seeing Wang Wan speak this way, Fusu looked on helplessly.

Although he held the position of Eldest Imperial Son, everything around him was managed by Wang Wan and the others. Perhaps this was why Ying Zheng was so disappointed in him. If one truly wished to become the Crown Prince, it was essential to have the strategic wisdom of a king—to command one's subjects, not be commanded by them. Fusu... was too soft-hearted.

「Zhao State, Handan. Longtai Palace.」

"What?"

"Wei Wuji was defeated?"

"That's impossible!"

"Qin's forces in Yingchuan are insufficient, and they are wracked with internal strife! How could Wei Wuji possibly lose with an army of 200,000?"

"Impossible!" Zhao Yan roared, his face contorted with anger and shock.

The ministers filling Longtai Palace were similarly stunned.

"How could Wei Wuji have been defeated?"

"The defender of Wei City is just a Qin Deputy General! How could Wei Wuji lose to him?"

"What in the world happened?"

"If Wei is defeated, Zhao will face Qin alone."

"This isn't good."

"What are we to do?"

...

Worry spread among the many Zhao officials in the great hall.

"Great King."

"Wei Wuji has been defeated, and Wei has already withdrawn its troops," Zhao Yi immediately stepped forward to state. "Now, our only option is to recall our troops from Yan as reinforcements. Otherwise, the consequences will be dire."

"No! Absolutely not!" Zhao Yan immediately refused.

Pang Xuan's offensive in Yan was fierce. He had already conquered a thousand miles of Yan territory and dozens of cities, amounting to nearly a third of Yan's entire domain. If the troops were withdrawn, all these victories would be for nothing.

"Zhao's main forces are with Shangjiangjun Pang Xuan."

"If we do not withdraw them, how will Zhao counter the might of Qin?"

"Although we have a 200,000-strong Frontier Army in the Dai Territory, they are pinned down by Qin's Meng Wu. Unless we recall General Pang Xuan as reinforcement, there is no hope of stopping the Qin Army," Zhao Yi said with grave earnestness.

Unlike Zhao Yan, who wanted to expand his territory, Zhao Yi wanted to preserve the very foundation of the Zhao state. Although there wasn't an army at their gates just yet, any discerning person could see how dire Zhao's situation had become.

"Don't we have Lian Po?"

"As long as he can hold Quyang, the Qin Army cannot pass."

"Once Yan is vanquished, Zhao's elite forces will naturally return," Zhao Yan said coldly. He had no intention of withdrawing the troops from Yan.

All that hard-won territory... So many soldiers had died, so much grain and coin had been spent. If he withdrew now, all that celebration would have been for nothing.

"But, Great King..." Zhao Yi began, his face fraught with worry.

Guo Kai immediately stepped forward. "Lord Chunping, the Great King's mind is set. What more is there to say?"

"Although Zhao's elite troops have been deployed to the campaign against Yan, if we truly need reinforcements, we can still mobilize over one hundred thousand Prefecture Soldiers to support Lian Po."

After saying this, Guo Kai immediately bowed deeply to Zhao Yan, his smile remaining sycophantic as he said respectfully, "Great King."

"Even though we cannot recall the elite troops from Yan, we can mobilize the Prefecture Soldiers stationed throughout Zhao. While their combat strength doesn't match our elite forces, they are still young and strong. Against Qin, Zhao only needs to defend. The Prefecture Soldiers will be sufficient."

Upon hearing this, Zhao Yan gave Guo Kai a look of deep satisfaction. Of all the ministers in the court, only Guo Kai truly understood him.

"The Prime Minister is right," Zhao Yan nodded in approval.

"Great King, this must not be done!"

"If the Prefecture Soldiers are redeployed, our cities will be left without garrisons! If General Lian Po truly cannot hold the line, those cities will become utterly defenseless, with no way to stop the Qin Army," Zhao Yi pleaded, still trying to persuade him.