

Longevity 227

Chapter 227: Victory Reaches Xianyang, Ying Zheng Rejoices! (Part 2)

"How could I not come to offer my congratulations?" Yang Duanhe said with a smile.

"On this campaign, General Yang, your achievements are anything but insignificant," Zhao Feng replied with a smile.

With a wave of his hand, Yang Duanhe said very seriously, "Ah, compared to General Zhao's achievements, mine are nothing but a joke."

"The troops originally under your command were far inferior in combat strength to the Sharp Warriors under mine. Yet, you managed to crush Wei Wuji with those forces. Now, you have even taken Lincheng with tens of thousands of troops, opening the path to the Zhao state."

This statement was not an exaggeration, but a fact. Zhao Feng's military achievements were enough to overshadow any of Qin's main generals. These accomplishments were his qualifications for becoming a Shangjiangjun.

"How did today's assault go, General Yang?" Zhao Feng asked with a smile.

"The defending Zhao general is named Yan Ju. He was appointed by the King of Zhao to replace Lian Po. This man is considered one of Zhao's rising war generals and does have some capability in commanding troops. Jinyang City's walls are high and thick; it won't be easy to breach."

"In this battle," Yang Duanhe said truthfully, "our army will suffer significant casualties."

"Indeed," Zhao Feng nodded. "This battle's success will depend on the plans of the Shangjiangjun and yourself."

His words also carried another meaning: he would not vie for the credit of taking Jinyang.

Despite Yang Duanhe visiting Zhao Feng with a friendly and amicable demeanor, his visit also served to probe him. The fall of Jinyang was a great merit, the very key to defeating Zhao. With Zhao Feng currently in the spotlight, if he also claimed the credit for Jinyang, Yang Duanhe would surely be discontent, even if he said nothing openly. His subordinate generals would feel the same.

Struggles were incessant in the court, and the same was true in the military when it came to competing for achievements. Blocking another's path to promotion was a sure way to make an enemy.

"I will ensure this battle is fought splendidly. Once Jinyang is breached, the path forward will be open," Yang Duanhe said with a smile. "Then, General Zhao, you can once again achieve great merit for Qin."

"I await the day General Yang breaks Jinyang," Zhao Feng promptly replied.

「Jinyang City!」

"The Qin Army's sudden attack seemed fierce, but it was merely a probe," Yan Ju said slowly. "The real battle is not far off."

"For now, only one of the Qin Army's main camps has arrived. Another is still on its way," a Zhao officer reported.

"I have 200,000 troops defending Jinyang, with ample supplies and high, thick walls," Yan Ju said coldly. "We have nothing to fear from two Qin camps, or even if two more were to come."

Although most of the troops in the city were Prefecture Soldiers, defending a city played to their strengths and compensated for their weaknesses. Yan Ju may have been a favorite of Zhao Yan, but he was certainly capable.

"Report!" a general shouted, rushing in anxiously. "We've clarified the situation regarding General Lian Po's sudden move south!"

"Speak," Yan Ju commanded immediately.

"Qin General Zhao Feng has taken Wei's Lincheng and is marching north into our Zhao state. General Lian Po led his troops to confront Qin General Zhao Feng, and now... now..." The reporting general's face filled with sorrow.

"Now what? Say it," Yan Ju pressed, his expression changing slightly. He wasn't worried about Lian Po; on the contrary, if the King of Zhao's wish came true, it would be best if Lian Po were dead.

"General Lian Po has died in battle for our nation."

"His entire force of 20,000 soldiers has been wiped out, all of them killed by Qin General Zhao Feng," the general reported in a mournful tone.

"Lincheng? Zhao Feng?" Yan Ju was startled, but then he instantly understood. "What kind of troops did Wei Wuji post to defend Lincheng? Wasn't it supposed to be foolproof? How did Zhao Feng still manage to capture it?"

"Wei... they have harmed Zhao," Yan Ju said, his voice laced with anger.

"General," one of the Zhao generals began, "the Qin Army attacking from Wei is now a certainty. But with General Lian Po dead, what are we to do? The old general's body has fallen into the hands of the Qin Army. Are we to just stand by and watch?" His words implied a desire to retrieve Lian Po's body.

"The King's edict orders us to defend Jinyang at all costs. Do you wish to leave the city to engage them?" Yan Ju said coldly. "If Jinyang falls, none of us will be able to answer to the Great King."

Yan Ju couldn't care less about Lian Po's body. However, now that Lian Po was dead, he could be useful once more.

"General Lian Po was a cornerstone of Zhao. The People of Qin are vicious, but the old general must not have died in vain," he announced. "Issue my command! Inform the entire army of the old general's death. Spread the news of the evil of the People of Qin, of their cruelty. We must swear to defend

Jinyang City to the death and give the Qin Army no chance to breach it. We must hold out until the elite royal army of Zhao returns. Then, we will march out and avenge the old general!"

Hearing this, the Zhao generals responded in unison, "Yes, sir!" Their eyes flickered with hatred and rage toward the state of Qin.

For the Zhao army in Jinyang City, their mission was now twofold: defend the city at all costs, and then, avenge Lian Po. Yan Ju intended to use Lian Po's prestige to galvanize the fighting spirit of his entire army.

「Zhao, Handan!」

"That old fool Lian Po is finally dead," Zhao Yan laughed excitedly in his bedchambers after receiving the news. "It's a good thing he's dead! With Lian Po gone, I'd like to see who dares to help Zhao Yi now. We'll see if Zhao Yi still dares to defy me."

"Congratulations, Great King! Felicitations, Great King!" Guo Kai, who stood bowing in the hall, immediately chimed in with a smile.

"Prime Minister," Zhao Yan said, looking at Guo Kai with praise, "I'm fortunate to have had you planning for me. Now that Lian Po is dead, we can use his reputation to inspire the people of Zhao to unite in their hatred of Qin. It's truly killing two birds with one stone."