

Longevity 267

Chapter 267: Beneath Handan City! Dunruo's Shock: Where Does This Force Come From? (Part 4)

Let's not talk about the Zhao state anymore. In Qin, all the cavalry combined probably don't exceed 80,000, and that includes those from the Northern Frontier. The Zhao state should have a bit more, but not by much. As the main force against the Xiongnu, the Frontier Army is also cavalry-based. There are 70,000 cavalry stationed in the Dai Territory. The ones who have come this time couldn't possibly be all of them.

Maintaining a cavalry is not easy. The resources required are much greater than for foot soldiers, especially the warhorses. In this era, without the "Three Treasures of Cavalry Warfare," a warhorse would generally have to retire after just a few years. They were nowhere near as enduring as the horses that came after the advent of these "Three Treasures."

"Thirty thousand cavalry... that's a terrifying number," Wang Ben sighed. "Moreover, Pang Xuan has learned his lesson from the defeat at Wu'an City. He realized the danger of routed soldiers breaking through his own lines, so he established this Supervisory Army. He's using their families as leverage. Although it's cruel, it's not a bad way to manage an army. With this method, the Zhao Jun obviously won't have routed troops on that scale anymore. The Zhao Jun garrisoned inside Handan City, along with the Zhao Imperial Guards, number no less than 200,000. Add another 100,000 from the Frontier Army, and given that Handan is the capital of the Zhao state with extremely strong defenses..."

"Breaching the city will be incredibly difficult," Yang Duanhe said helplessly.

Back before Wu'an City, both generals were full of vigor, vying for glory. But now, truly at the foot of Handan City, they felt an unspeakable heaviness. Obviously, they lacked confidence in their ability to breach Handan City.

"What's the matter?" Zhao Feng smiled. "Do you two generals no longer desire the merit of breaching Handan? This would be a greater military achievement than breaching Wu'an City."

"This battle will be a true bloodbath. Breaching Handan is easier said than done," Wang Ben sighed. "In the past, General Wang He led 300,000 troops to attack Handan. He lost nearly 100,000 men without breaching the city and eventually committed suicide before its walls. That event is still vivid in my memory."

He naturally knew about the past event, for he had once served under Wang He, though only as a Wanjiang. The brutality of that battle was no less than that of Changping. Just as Changping is a bloody debt the Zhao state prefers not to speak of, the battle before Handan City is one that Qin would rather not mention. It even came to be known as King Ying Zheng of Qin's disgrace.

This was because Lv Buwei was also involved in the matter. In his rage, Ying Zheng attacked the Zhao state. Although he initially captured cities all the way to Handan, he was ultimately defeated. This also cost Qin a substantial amount of its national power. And it was because of this event that a shadow likely lingered in the hearts of both Wang Ben and Yang Duanhe.

"The past is the past. Now is now." Zhao Feng laughed. "A War General of Qin never admits defeat."

He then stood up and bowed to Wang Jian. "I request to lead the charge as the vanguard in the attack on Handan!"

Hearing Zhao Feng's words, Wang Ben and Yang Duanhe looked on in surprise. At this moment, a peculiar thought surfaced in both their minds.

A newborn calf doesn't fear a tiger.

Although Zhao Feng had truly accrued many military achievements, breaching the city would be anything but simple, judging by Handan's current defensive layout. Pang Xuan had learned his lesson from the defeat at Wu'an City. The situation was very different now. Handan would be ten times more difficult than Wu'an City.

"General Zhao," Yang Duanhe advised, "you are still young. You don't understand the dangers of this battle. Although your command has the most surviving Sharp Warriors among my three main camps, if you are not careful in this battle, you risk the annihilation of your entire force. The matter of attacking Handan requires careful planning."