

Longevity 283

Chapter 283: Capturing the King of Zhao! Ying Zheng Ascends Longtai!

As Zhao Feng noticed Zhao Yan, he immediately steered his horse over at a slow pace.

"Lift your head," Zhao Feng said coldly.

Faced with the merciless Zhao Feng, Zhao Yan dared not disobey. His so-called royal dignity had vanished, and he could only tremble as he lifted his head.

When he saw Zhao Yan, Zhao Feng couldn't help but laugh out loud. However, with his face smeared in blood, the sound was exceedingly chilling, making Zhao Yan shudder.

"The king of a great state, looking so wretched and humiliated."

"If I were you, I would've taken my own life long ago," Zhao Feng mocked without mercy.

Towards loyal and brave war generals like Lian Po, Zhao Feng held a degree of respect in his heart, even if they were enemies. But for a king like this, one who clung to life out of fear, Zhao Feng was naturally scornful and paid him no real mind.

Stimulated by Zhao Feng's taunts, Zhao Yan, though terrified, managed to stand. "Do not insult me!" he retorted, looking at Zhao Feng with great anger. "I am the king. Even if I am to die, it is not your place to be so insolent!"

Seeing this, Zhao Feng simply smiled and gestured with his hand. His trusted aide, Zhang Ming, immediately understood and tossed his sword at Zhao Yan's feet.

SHINK.

The sharp blade embedded itself in the ground right before him.

"Don't say I didn't give you a chance," Zhao Feng said with a mocking smile. "I'll give you three breaths. Take your own life."

Looking from the sword to the sneering Zhao Feng, Zhao Yan seemed to snap. He violently drew the blade and brought it to his own neck. But when the cold steel truly touched his skin, he found he couldn't bring himself to apply any pressure. His fear of death was on full display.

"Ah!" Zhao Yan yelled, his arms trembling as he made a weak slash. "Ah..."

With a cry of pain, the sword fell from his hands to the ground. He was left with only a shallow scratch on his neck, barely breaking the skin.

Zhao Feng shook his head and laughed. "And you call yourself a king? You were given a chance to die with dignity, and you refused it. Useless."

He cursed, then gestured with his hand. A few trusted aides immediately stepped forward with ropes and bound Zhao Yan securely.

Zhao Feng had given Zhao Yan the sword purely to mock him; he knew full well the man would never take his own life. If Zhao Yan hadn't been afraid of death, he would have stayed and defended Handan City. If a king dared to die with his nation, the capital of Zhao state would not have been breached. A king's presence on the battlefield is a great inspiration to his troops, yet Zhao Yan had done nothing of the sort.

One recalls that in the past, when Qin faced the allied attack of five nations, Ying Zheng, having only just begun his personal rule, went to the border cities to command the defense. He inspired countless Daqin Elite Soldiers, eventually leading them to a grand victory over the allied forces and saving his nation.

Zhao Yan had always considered himself superior to Ying Zheng, thinking he could surpass him. But in reality, he was utterly unworthy of the comparison. Forget Ying Zheng; he couldn't even measure up to his own brother, Zhao Yi. He was nothing but a failure. If it weren't for his devious schemes, he never would have become the King of Zhao.

"To be honest," Zhao Feng said mockingly, "if you had died just now, you might have been spared from further suffering. But since you chose to live, your fate in our Great King's hands will likely be far from pleasant."

Of course, these words were just to rile up Zhao Yan. If the king hadn't fled, Zhao Feng wouldn't have had to endure the torment of this long chase. True to his words, Zhao Yan's face turned ashen. He was clearly thinking of Ying Zheng and the bitter days that awaited him.

Zhao Feng surveyed the captured nobles from atop his horse and bellowed, "Listen up! Kill anyone who tries to flee! Return to Handan obediently, and you may yet live! Now, all of you, turn around! To Handan! March!"

Under Zhao Feng's menacing authority, the nobles of Zhao state didn't dare refuse. They could only follow, filled with trepidation.

With this single action, seventy to eighty percent of the Zhao state's royal and noble families had been captured. The remaining few who were lucky enough to escape only did so because they hadn't fled with this large contingent. By sticking together, the main group actually had no chance of survival. After all, a large crowd invites pursuit, and Zhao Feng didn't have enough troops to split up and chase scattered individuals.

This only further illustrated Zhao Yan's foolishness. He thought he was safe surrounded by the Imperial Guard Army, not realizing that fleeing alone would have given him a much higher chance of escape. The same was true for the rest of the Zhao nobility. One could imagine that many of them now regretted their decision, realizing that those who had fled alone might have already gotten away.

「Inside Handan City.」

The battle was still raging. A nation's capital is vast. Although some of the Zhao state's more than 300,000-strong army had fled from the rear of the city, their numbers were small. The majority were still trapped inside. Apart from those already slaughtered by Zhao Feng's forces, most hadn't had time to escape. An army's collapse means its discipline is broken; once broken, chaos ensues. Thus, the Qin Army within the city was still clearing out the remaining Zhao Jun. Those who surrendered were spared; those who resisted were slain.

「On the city wall of Handan.」

Ying Zheng and Wang Jian ascended the wall together. Looking down at the war-torn city, wreathed in smoke, Ying Zheng spoke with an air of dominance.

"More than a decade ago, I never would have imagined that I could one day stand atop this very wall and look down upon Handan.

"And the people of Zhao could never have dreamed that the hostage they once held within their city would return, leading an army."

Wang Jian replied with a serious expression, "Great King, you are the sovereign chosen by Heavenly Destiny. In the past it was Han, today it is Zhao. In the future, the Great King will conquer all the various countries, unify the world, and become the one true king."