

Longevity 304

Chapter 304: I, Hereby Promote Zhao Feng to Shangjiangjun!

Hearing Ying Zheng's words filled with anger, the Yan minister kneeling in the great hall turned pale and hurriedly said, "King of Qin, my state of Yan has always been grateful to Qin. This act of war was not our king's intent but was because our Crown Prince insisted on acting on his own accord. Our king has said that Yan is willing to compensate Qin. Besides compensation, even if the King of Qin demands the life of our Crown Prince, Yan will have no complaints whatsoever. We beg the King of Qin for forgiveness."

Saying this, the Yan Envoy kowtowed, filled with trepidation.

"Why did Qin send troops?" Ying Zheng's face remained cold and detached. "It was because your state of Yan pleaded for aid. If not for Qin, would Yan even exist? If not for Qin, you would have become captives of Zhao. How dare you stand in my court and speak? Your state of Yan has broken faith and betrayed us, yet you still expect my forgiveness?"

Clearly, Ying Zheng would not rest until he had made an example of Yan and extracted a heavy price. If merely driving the Yan Army out of Zhao Territory yielded little benefit, it would be foolish not to take full advantage now that the Crown Prince of Yan had fallen into Qin's hands.

Sensing Ying Zheng's overwhelming rage, which suggested he was ready to declare war and annihilate Yan, the Yan Envoy panicked. Gritting his teeth, he said, "The state of Yan is willing to pay Qin double the originally promised war funds. We implore Qin to pardon our state."

Hearing this, Ying Zheng's expression softened slightly, but he remained silent.

"Great King," Yu Liao stepped forward and spoke loudly. "This gesture shows Yan's sincerity. I believe that since Qin and Yan are bound by an alliance, and Yan is now sincerely atoning, Qin should grant them an opportunity to reform."

"I second the motion," Wang Wan also stepped forward. "In consideration of our alliance, I beseech the Great King to give Yan a chance."

"We second the motion," the entire assembly of civil and military ministers chimed in.

Seeing this, the Yan Envoy's heart relaxed, and he looked toward Ying Zheng with renewed hope.

Under the "persuasion" of his ministers, Ying Zheng's face showed a hint of hesitation. Finally, he made his decision. "In light of the alliance between Qin and Yan, we will let this matter rest for now. However, once the war in Zhao is settled, all the resources Yan promised to Qin must be delivered. Otherwise, I will not let this go."

The Yan Envoy immediately bowed. "Thank you, King of Qin, for your magnanimity."

"You may leave," Ying Zheng said, waving his hand. The Yan Envoy then respectfully exited the great hall.

After he departed, Yu Liao said with a great laugh, "Congratulations, Great King! Yan intended to snatch the fruits of Qin's victory, yet now they have toiled in vain and must compensate us instead."

"Indeed," Li Si added with a smile. "Qin has gained much this time. The money and grain from Yan will help replenish our national treasury."

Amidst the chorus of congratulations, Ying Zheng raised his hand, and the great hall fell silent in an instant.

"Two days ago, I received a report," Ying Zheng declared with an authoritative voice. "The Senior General has already mobilized all forces from the Lantian Camp to attack the cities in Zhao Territory. Within a month, Zhao Territory will belong to Qin."

"Once Zhao Territory belongs to Qin, only Dai Territory will remain, and it will be no match for us," Yu Liao stated loudly. "I suggest that General Meng Wu switch from a defensive delaying tactic to an offensive one, attacking Dai Territory from the north. At the opportune moment, the Senior General can lead the main army north to attack Dai Territory and annihilate Zhao in one fell swoop."

"This proposal is approved," Ying Zheng nodded at once. "Draft the decree. Order Meng Wu to attack Dai Territory with full force."

Previously, when Lantian Camp attacked Zhao, the main offensive was directed at Zhao Territory, with Meng Wu's one hundred thousand troops serving mainly to hold back the Zhao Border Army. Now that the tide of war had turned, the strategy naturally shifted to offense.

"Chancellor Wang," Ying Zheng said, turning to Wang Wan. "Devote all efforts to allocating provisions and supplies."

"Your servant obeys the edict," Yu Liao and Wang Wan replied in unison.

"The annihilation of Zhao will happen within the year," Ying Zheng said, looking at his ministers with anticipation. "My lords, unifying all under Heaven is not a task I can accomplish alone. It requires the strength of all of you."

"We swear our loyalty to the death to the Great King!" the ministers cried out.

"Now," Ying Zheng began slowly, his expression becoming exceptionally solemn, "I have an announcement to make."

All the ministers in the hall turned their gaze to Ying Zheng on his high throne.

"I will have a battle report read for you, my loyal ministers," Ying Zheng said with a wave of his hand.

At his side, Zhao Gao immediately picked up a prepared battle report, held it high, and addressed the assembled ministers in the court.

"The Battle for the Zhao State. The Zhao Army was entrenched in Wu'an City with a force of over 300,000 men. The Zhao general, Pang Xuan, held the city, rendering it impregnable. Zhao Feng, Main General of the Fourth Main Battalion of the Qin Lantian Camp, led the vanguard. He led his men from the front, broke through the city gates in a single day, and charged into Wu'an City. After a bloody battle, he breached the city, crushing the 300,000-strong Zhao Army and forcing them to retreat to Handan.

"The Battle of Handan. Zhao Feng again led the vanguard, fighting fiercely for six days and six nights. He slew Pang Xuan, breached the Zhao Capital, and swept through the royal palace of the Zhao state, utterly defeating the Zhao Army. By this battle's end, nearly 100,000 Zhao soldiers were slain and nearly 200,000 were captured. The King of Zhao fled. With his trusted aides, Zhao Feng pursued him north, slaying a thousand soldiers of the Zhao Imperial Guard Army and capturing the King of Zhao along with over a thousand of his princes and nobles.

"With Handan secured, the army marched again. The state of Yan, acting without honor, sent troops into Zhao to seize the fruits of Qin's victory. Zhao Feng led his forces to deliver a crushing blow to the Yan Army, slaying over 20,000 of their soldiers in one battle, capturing the Crown Prince of Yan, and conquering dozens of Zhao cities."

As Zhao Gao's voice trailed off, the gazes of all the ministers converged on Ying Zheng. Deep down, every one of them was reeling with shock. The majority had been unaware of these battle reports, as they had not yet been officially presented to the court.