

Longevity 306

Chapter 306: I, Hereby Promote Zhao Feng to Shangjiangjun!

"The Secretary's words have merit."

"Chancellor Wang, why don't you tell us who is not convinced?"

"Why does it sound like it is Chancellor Wang who is not convinced?" Li Si immediately chimed in, kicking a man while he was down.

Facing a series of questions from the three men, a hint of annoyance flashed across Wang Wan's elderly face, but he was at a loss for words.

"After all, Zhao Feng is too young," Wang Wan said, unable to provide a rational argument and again using the man's youth to object. "The Senior General commands the great camp, with a force that numbers in the hundreds of thousands. This old minister suggests that we need to consider this matter further."

"If the mere word 'youth' is enough to impede the promotion of a capable general in Qin, that would be going too far," Yu Liao stated solemnly.

At that moment, Ying Zheng raised his hand.

The debate in the court instantly quieted.

"If we use age to hinder the promotion of our war generals, it would disappoint the million Sharp Warriors of Qin who believe in our system of military merit," Ying Zheng said slowly. "Age certainly relates to a person's temperament. But I have seen Zhao Feng with my own eyes. He has a steady heart and a mature character, more than capable of handling such a heavy responsibility. I believe he can perform well in the position of Senior General."

With his words, the matter was settled. No one could change it. Unless Zhao Feng committed treason, the position of Senior General was irrevocably his.

"This old minister understands." Seeing this, Wang Wan knew the decision was irreversible.

"Minister Yu."

"Issue an edict to Wang Jian. Instruct him to have Zhao Feng release Yan Dan," Ying Zheng ordered grimly. "And tell him that after pacifying the Zhao Territory, he is to march north to the Dai Territory. He must conquer Zhao before winter arrives; otherwise, everything will become much more difficult."

"This subject accepts the decree," Yu Liao replied at once.

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Zhao Feng... This young man can no longer be suppressed. A Protector-General, now a Senior General of the entire state. He isn't even twenty years old, yet he's achieved so much... another Bai Qi.

Wang Wan sighed, a heavy expression on his old face. Perhaps because he had previously opposed him, Wang Wan now felt a strong sense of unease about Zhao Feng's rise to power.

"We should try our best to be on good terms with him," Wang Wan said to Huai Zhuang. "As long as he doesn't align himself with any of the other imperial sons, we don't need to be too hostile. But if he truly chooses to oppose us, then we will have to put him in his place."

"Now that he is a Senior General, his domain will primarily be the court in Xianyang. That's a different world from the army," Huai Zhuang added slowly.

Just then, Fusu suddenly asked, a look of doubt on his face, "Chancellors, do you think my Father-King is very disappointed in me?"

Wang Wan and Huai Zhuang were taken aback. "Why would you say such a thing, Mr. Fusu?"

"When I was sixteen, the Father-King allowed me to participate in state affairs. Yet, every time I propose a strategy for the court, he doesn't adopt it. Whenever I suggest a national policy, he ignores it completely," Fusu sighed. "I truly cannot comprehend his hot-and-cold attitude."

"Mr. Fusu," Wang Wan immediately tried to console him, "what kind of man is the Great King? He is the sovereign of a nation, a ruler of rare strategic brilliance. His statecraft and his methods of managing his subjects are beyond your current understanding. As the Eldest Imperial Son of Qin, you are innately superior to the other imperial sons. Besides you, which of them is allowed to participate in state affairs? This is a sign of the Great King's special regard for you."

As their chosen candidate, Mr. Fusu naturally carried the heavy expectations of many court officials and gentry clans. Indeed, a large part of the Ying Clan itself placed great hope in him. Fusu was benevolent and generous. To the gentry, this promised greater benefits in the future. Under a ruler as domineering and wise as Ying Zheng, they had few opportunities because the monarch was simply too clever.

Listening to Wang Wan's reassurances, Fusu nodded. "Perhaps I am overthinking things. It's just that sometimes, I truly feel that my Father-King is disappointed in me."

Huai Zhuang also spoke up. "Mr. Fusu, you are worrying too much. Participating in state affairs is part of your training. I believe that after a few more years of experience, you will surely earn the Great King's esteem. For now, you must do your best to accord with the Great King's will. Your policies for governing must also align with his vision."

Fusu, however, seemed reluctant. "My Father-King is an enlightened monarch, and I am naturally not as capable as he is. But no one is perfect. In my opinion, many of his policies are flawed. For example, his heavy reliance on the Tingwei, his strict laws, and his harshness toward the common people. If it were me, I would be far more lenient."

Wang Wan replied, "Right now, it is the Great King who rules the state. But once you become the Crown Prince, you will have the chance to implement the policies you believe in. The world is vast and the future is long. You must wait patiently, Mr. Fusu."

「Within Zhangtai Palace」

"Your Majesty, your decision today truly shook the court," Yu Liao said with a smile, seated to one side.

"In the court, everything has always been about seniority and reputation, especially for the civil servants. After all, knowledge is held in the hands of the gentry," Ying Zheng said with a light smile, everything under his control. "I can tolerate that. But our military officials are the very foundation of Qin's strength. For them to speak of so-called seniority... that is something I will not indulge. I intend to make Zhao Feng a benchmark for the millions of soldiers in Qin."

"Your Majesty is wise," Yu Liao said at once, clasping his fist. "Using Qin's youngest Senior General as an inspiration will surely galvanize all the Sharp Warriors of Qin."

"However..." Ying Zheng hesitated. "I am still considering where to station the new great camp for Zhao Feng, and whether to staff it primarily with new recruits or with the Penal Battalion."

"This subject believes it would be best to wait for General Zhao to return to Xianyang and discuss it with Your Majesty then," Yu Liao said with a smile. "There is no rush now. After all, destroying Zhao is the current priority."

"Indeed," Ying Zheng agreed, smiling in relief. "I have been too hasty."

"This subject originally thought Your Majesty would only establish the new great camp after completely annihilating the Three Jins. I did not expect you to advance the plan," Yu Liao said.

"Perhaps it is because Zhao Feng has proven to be so exceptional." Ying Zheng laughed softly. "If I do not establish another great camp for him, how could the mere position of a Main General possibly suffice for the merits he has won for Qin?"

"It has been many years," Yu Liao said. "This is the first time this subject has seen Your Majesty value a war general so highly. I believe Zhao Feng will not disappoint you."

"What are your thoughts on Wang Wan and his faction after today's court session?" Ying Zheng asked suddenly.

"Their ideology is rigid, focused solely on their own interests. Furthermore, they have completely manipulated Mr. Fusu," Yu Liao replied respectfully. "Their partisans are all over the court. Your Majesty should take measures to counterbalance them."

Ying Zheng nodded. "Indeed, it is time to do so." He paused. "Fusu... if this continues, how can he possibly be my heir?"

Hearing this, Yu Liao showed no surprise. He was aware of Ying Zheng's ambition: not merely to unite the world in his lifetime, but to establish an eternal Qin dynasty. Naturally, Ying Zheng placed immense importance on his heir. Based on his current performance, Fusu was nowhere near capable of shouldering such a great responsibility.

Of course, Yu Liao had no intention of commenting on the choice of the Crown Prince. After the world was unified, he planned to leave Qin. He had come to Qin only to help achieve unification and usher in a prosperous age; personal glory and wealth held no interest for him.