

Longevity 323

Chapter 323: The Road Back to Xianyang! Matters of the Past!

At the foot of Hangu Pass, a Junhou shouted down from the gate tower.

"Who goes there? Do you have a pass?"

"Go on," Zhao Feng said to Zhang Ming, who was beside him.

"Yes, sir," Zhang Ming replied, immediately spurring his horse forward and racing toward Hangu Pass.

Upon reaching the base of the wall, Zhang Ming raised the Main General's seal. "Zhao Feng, Main General of the Fourth Main Camp of Lantian, has completed his military duties! By royal decree, he is returning to Xianyang to report!"

A basket was then lowered from the gate tower above.

"Please place the seal in the basket," the Junhou called down immediately.

Zhang Ming placed the seal inside. As the basket was hoisted up, the Junhou took the seal and examined it. The words "Main General" were perfectly clear. Moreover, the seal was specially made by Qin and was incredibly difficult to forge.

It really is General Zhao. The Junhou looked down from the wall with an expression of deep reverence. Zhao Feng's name was renowned throughout the lands. As the youngest Main General in Qin, who in the world didn't know of him?

"Junhou, should we open the gates immediately?" a Sharp Warrior standing beside him asked respectfully.

"Go and inform General Li Xin," the Junhou ordered. "Tell him that General Zhao Feng is on his way to Xianyang to report. General Li will surely wish to meet such an exceptional man."

"Understood." The Sharp Warrior immediately hurried off to do as he was told.

"Open the gates!" the Junhou commanded.

The gates of the ancient, formidable pass began to creak slowly open.

"Let's go," Zhao Feng called out, guiding his horse at a steady pace toward Hangu Pass. He was flanked by his six hundred trusted aides, with Wei Quan riding by his side.

"Mr. Wei," Zhao Feng said, turning to him with a smile, "if I remember correctly, your hometown is Hangu County, isn't it?"

"Yes," Wei Quan answered, a myriad of thoughts reflected on his face.

"What a coincidence. Since we're passing through, I'll take the opportunity to visit your wife and nephews," Zhao Feng added with a gentle smile.

"General," Wei Quan said, looking at Zhao Feng, his expression filled with emotion.

When Zhao Feng had set out on his return journey, he had summoned no one else to accompany him but Wei Quan. He had also granted him a full month of leave, time that was obviously meant for attending to personal matters. Although nearly four years had passed, Zhao Feng had never forgotten the troubles Wei Quan had once confided in him. Zhao Feng had always been grateful to this older brother figure who had looked after him since he enlisted. Even though Wei Quan was now his subordinate, in Zhao Feng's heart, he was still the same Mr. Wei who had taken care of him in the Logistics Army.

"Mr. Wei," Zhao Feng began, "you once told me that it's impossible to survive in this world without power or influence. You said that while the laws of Qin are strict, they don't apply to the privileged. Well, I've become one of those privileged few now. And you are a general of our Qin. Now that we have power and influence, it's time to settle old scores and avenge past wrongs."

Hearing this, Wei Quan's eyes filled with profound emotion, and tears began to well up.

"Alright now, a grown man like you shouldn't be carrying on like that. People will laugh if word gets out," Zhao Feng teased, turning his gaze forward again and riding toward the pass.

Watching Zhao Feng's retreating back, Wei Quan was overcome with gratitude. My life has been yours ever since you saved it. I, Wei Quan, swear that my descendants and I will be loyal to you for generations. If I break this oath, may heaven and earth strike me down.

After they entered Hangu Pass, the Junhou who had been on the wall had already come down to greet them, accompanied by a host of Sharp Warriors. When they saw Zhao Feng, they all bowed in unison.

"Greetings, General Zhao!"

These were not men from the Lantian Camp, but Sharp Warriors from the Hangu Pass Camp, tasked with guarding the pass. Although they had never fought alongside Zhao Feng, his great fame was, of course, well known to them.

"You have all worked hard guarding Hangu Pass," Zhao Feng said to the men with a slight smile.

"Compared to General Zhao, who expands Qin's territory and destroys its powerful enemies, our duty of guarding the pass is a simple one," the Junhou replied admiringly. "Your accomplishments in the campaign to destroy Zhao were truly exceptional and have earned the admiration of every officer and soldier."

"Every Sharp Warrior of our Qin is as fierce as a tiger or a wolf. If the Hangu Pass Camp had been sent to battle, the outcome would have been the same," Zhao Feng replied with a smile.

"General Zhao is not wrong about that. If my Hangu Pass Camp were to go to war, we certainly wouldn't be outdone by the Lantian Camp."

At that moment, a gruff voice sounded from behind them. A War General, surrounded by his trusted aides, approached Zhao Feng with powerful, deliberate strides.

"Greetings, General Li," the surrounding Sharp Warriors chorused, turning to salute the newcomer.

Zhao Feng and his trusted aides turned their eyes toward him.

"I have long heard of General Zhao's great name. Seeing you now, you are indeed as young as the rumors claim," the War General said as he came to a stop, his gaze sweeping over Zhao Feng unabashedly.

"You must be General Li Xin," Zhao Feng said with a faint smile.

"I'm surprised General Zhao knows of me," Li Xin laughed heartily.

"There is a register of all of Qin's Main Generals. I am aware that General Li Xin is the one who guards Hangu Pass," Zhao Feng replied.

"Is General Zhao on his way to Xianyang to report?" Li Xin asked.

"My military duties are complete. I am returning to Xianyang to report to the King, as commanded," Zhao Feng answered openly.

"An audience with the King in the capital," Li Xin sighed. "General Zhao, you are truly the envy of us all."

"The day will come when General Li also achieves great merits for the nation," Zhao Feng replied.

Li Xin smiled and nodded. "Then I shall count on your auspicious words. I've long heard that General Zhao's command of troops is extraordinary, that no city can stand in your way, and that you lead from the front with your own formidable courage.

"Across the lands, is there any nation left that does not know the name of General Zhao? Here in Qin, which of our million Sharp Warriors does not see you as the standard to aspire to? I am no exception.

"General Zhao," Li Xin declared, his voice firm, "should war break out again, I, Li Xin, will prove that I am no weaker than you."