

Longevity 45

Chapter 45: Vanguard Army's Advantage! Soldiers at the Gates of the Han Capital!

"Capital Commandant."

"We are now less than ten miles from the Han Capital. Are there any orders from above?" Zhang Han asked, looking at Zhao Feng with anticipation.

"You want to be the vanguard?" Zhao Feng saw through Zhang Han's thoughts at a glance.

"Hehe." Zhang Han chuckled in response. "This is a great opportunity to reap major merits. Whoever breaches the city first will certainly claim the chief merit. How could I not want that?"

"To breach the city first means bearing the brunt of the enemy's fiercest defense. It's a matter of life and death. Aren't you afraid?" Zhao Feng asked curiously.

"Capital Commandant, having just come from the Logistics Army, you might not be aware of the vanguard's situation?" Zhang Han asked with a smile.

"What situation?" Zhao Feng blinked, genuinely unaware. "Let's hear it."

"If you are in the vanguard, compensation for dying in battle is doubled. If you survive, the military merits you earn for killing enemies are also doubled," Zhang Han said with a serious expression.

"Furthermore, if you have any children, they will be exempted from military service, and the Imperial Court will provide for them until they are fourteen."

Zhao Feng was slightly surprised, but he quickly understood. "No wonder everyone in the main fighting camp is eager to be the vanguard. If the vanguard succeeds, military merits are doubled."

"Exactly," Zhang Han said with a look of reverence. "This rule was personally set by the Great King. Before the Great King established this rule, not many dared to join the Vanguard Army."

Perhaps this is because great rewards beget brave men! Emperor Qin Shi Huang truly saw through human nature!

Zhao Feng thought to himself.

The system of rewards for the vanguard was designed to address every concern of the Sharp Warriors. First, military merits were doubled as an incentive. Second, compensation for death was doubled. And third, their families would be provided for. With these measures, the Sharp Warriors had no worries left. Who then would not fight for such a chance?

"Going by what Marquis Zhang has said, the entire army must be scrambling for that position," Wei Quan spoke up from the side. "Our Commandant Camp will probably have a hard time getting an opportunity."

"Indeed!" Zhang Han added, nodding. "I wonder if our Commandant Camp will even have a chance."

"It's useless to discuss this now. Everything depends on the arrangements from above," Zhao Feng said with a laugh, his tone casual but filled with confidence. "If it really is our Commandant Camp's turn, then I will lead you to seize this military merit."

Hearing Zhang Han describe the benefits of being the vanguard and breaching the city, Zhao Feng was naturally tempted. He had now joined the main fighting camp and become a commanding Capital Commandant. Since he was here, he would make the most of it.

Zhao Feng's mindset had already shifted. He needed to seek military exploits, ascend the ranks, and prepare for the End of Qin and a future grand dominion. All of this required greater power and authority. Then there was his mother and the precious blood ginseng in the Royal Palace. And there was Wang Yan. All of it required power. Zhao Feng was determined to strive for it with all his might.

Listening to Zhao Feng's words, Wei Quan felt even more certain. He knew Zhao Feng too well. Mr. Zhao must have encountered something.

At that moment, a messenger from Chen Tao's unit arrived.

"Is Commander Zhao here?" the messenger shouted.

Zhao Feng stood up immediately. "Present."

"By General Chen's command, tomorrow all archers of the Wanjiang Camp will gather to fire upon the Han Capital. General Chen orders Commander Zhao to prepare for the deployment," the messenger promptly relayed.

"Please tell General Chen that I have been informed," Zhao Feng replied with a fist salute.

The messenger returned the salute, then quickly turned and left.

"It looks like our general didn't manage to seize the opportunity to be the vanguard, so you can all rest easy," Zhao Feng said with a smile as he sat back down.

"I wonder which Wanjiang Camp got the opportunity," Zhang Han said, somewhat curious.

"What does it matter which camp it is?" Zhao Feng said with a smile. "Once the city is breached, I'll lead you all charging in, and we can still claim military merits just the same. I've heard there are quite a few Han Soldiers in the city."

"That's true," Zhang Han chuckled.

"Alright," Zhao Feng said, waving his hand. "We have a big battle tomorrow. Everyone, return to your tents and get some rest. I'm heading back as well."

He walked towards his own tent and lay down directly on the prepared bed. After returning to his tent, Zhao Feng closed his eyes slightly. His spiritual power unfolded.

I still can't sense any of nature's spiritual energy. Could it be this world doesn't have it, or is my spiritual power still too weak? Sigh, it doesn't matter. I'll just keep cultivating the Dragon Elephant Scripture. It's been less than ten days, and it already increases all my attributes a little each day. That's without the aid of nature's spiritual energy. If I can sense and harness it in the future, the daily increase in my attributes will surely be substantial.

With that thought, Zhao Feng began to circulate the Dragon Elephant Scripture and commenced his cultivation for the night.

「The next day!」

BLARE!

BLARE! BLARE!

BLARE! BLARE! BLARE!

The resounding call of war horns echoed outside the Han Capital, Xinzheng.

"The Qin Army is about to attack!"

"Quickly, get to the walls!"

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As the horns of the Qin Army resounded, panic swept through the Han Soldiers within Xinzheng City. The horns had sounded, and even though the Qin Army hadn't advanced yet, the morale of the Han Soldiers had already plummeted. For the Han Capital, the enemy was already at the gates. The vast majority within the city understood that holding it was impossible.

"What's with all the chaos?" a stern voice demanded. "What are you panicking for? General Cao, are these the soldiers you lead?"

Observing the disordered, panic-stricken Han Soldiers in the city, who were completely without formation, Zhang Ping approached with furrowed brows.

"Prime Minister," the commanding general, Cao Yi, said as he hurried over, his face filled with fear. "I am incompetent."

The state of Han had been in decline for some time. Bao Yuan had been its last general with any real capability to lead troops. It's easy to find a thousand soldiers, but difficult to find a good general. This has always been true, and now, Han no longer had any capable generals. Without competent leadership, the army was weak.

"You..." Looking at Cao Yi, Zhang Ping's eyes filled with disappointment. But he had no other options. The man before him was already the most capable general in Xinzheng City.

"Where are the Imperial Guards?" Zhang Ping bellowed.

"Present!" thousands of Imperial Guards shouted in unison from within the city.

"Five thousand Imperial Guards will be converted into the Supervisory Army. Anyone who dares to abandon their defensive position or flee in the face of battle will be executed!" Zhang Ping declared loudly. "Anyone who dares to disrupt military discipline will be executed!"

"Today, the enemy is upon us. I, the Prime Minister, will personally oversee the defense atop the city gates and hold back this formidable foe."

"We shall obey the Prime Minister's orders!" the Imperial Guards echoed.

They pulled out their weapons and scanned their surroundings vigilantly. Under the pressure of life and death, the defending Han Soldiers and even the slaves became more cautious, which helped to alleviate the initial chaos.

"Tell all the soldiers," Zhang Ping announced, his voice carrying across the walls, "do not think that our great Han is defeated! I have already received news that million-strong reinforcements from both the Zhao state and Wei are on their way. If our capital can hold out for one month, we will surely see our reinforcements arrive to annihilate the Qin bandits!"

Hearing this, the despairing Han Soldiers managed to recover a sliver of their morale.

