

Mythical 40

Chapter 40: Wisdom Accumulated Over a Thousand Years

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"Lord Xuande, don't you think your troops are a bit too few?" Chen Xi asked with a playful smile. "We all know what the most elite troops in the world are. Instead of relying on others, we should strengthen ourselves."

"We are like a tree without roots. Having this many soldiers is already a blessing from heaven. Are you referring to the Xiliang cavalry as the most elite troops?" Liu Bei's eyes glinted with understanding.

"Yes, this is a gift I've prepared. As we leave here, we should take them with us. If Zijian can demonstrate the dominance of the Xiliang's first general, we can probably recruit around ten thousand Xiliang cavalry," Chen Xi said with a smile, then indicated Hua Xiong. "The rest depends on you. You've spent a long time in Xiliang; if you have enough prestige, the path ahead will be smoother."

"Before Lu Bu, I was the top general of Xiliang. Even after he came, I still held that position. He is a war god, an undefeated war god," Hua Xiong said with a bitter smile, indicating that there would be no problem using his prestige among the Xiliang cavalry. "But, Zichuan, are you so confident we can capture that many Xiliang cavalry? They are said to be the most elite troops in the world."

"No worries. We're just going to take them. The one leading the Xiliang cavalry to cover the rear will definitely be Lu Bu. He should be about to defeat Cao Cao now, and this is when his doubts are at their peak. When he sees us arriving, he'll remember what I wrote in my letter and turn around to leave immediately. The rest will be up to you," Chen Xi said calmly.

Seeing the puzzled expressions on the others' faces, Chen Xi slowly explained, "I didn't try to recruit Lu Bu in that letter. I wrote to him as a fellow Bingzhou person who had received his kindness, giving him some warnings. I told him that Li Ru would have him excavate the imperial tombs and what damage it would cause him. I also mentioned the fire in Luoyang and suggested he cover the rear to ambush the coalition forces."

"Uh, Zichuan, isn't that giving Lu Bu advice?" Liu Bei asked, confused.

"No, it was to gain Lu Bu's trust and help him understand the situation better. Li Ru would have ordered an ambush anyway. I just hinted that Li Ru might not specify how many pursuits to carry out and that the first pursuit might be a trap, leading to an ambush that could even trap Lu Bu himself," Chen Xi said casually.

"Zichuan, aren't you afraid Lu Bu will deliberately carry out a second ambush?" Zhao Yun asked, frowning.

"Lu Bu doesn't have the time, and he won't put himself in danger. Everything I said is true. Lu Bu will definitely pay attention to the last hint. Especially with Guan, Zhang, and Zhao here, capable of killing him, he'll turn and leave without hesitation. As for the Xiliang soldiers, he won't care as long as they aren't Bingzhou soldiers. I confirmed this with General Hua," Chen Xi explained with a smile, showing his familiarity with these tactics.

"That's true," Hua Xiong said with a bitter smile. "Lu Bu never cares about the Xiliang soldiers, which is why the Bingzhou wolf riders and the Xiliang cavalry have never gotten along."

"Zichuan, you are truly talented!" Liu Bei exclaimed, eyes shining as he looked at Chen Xi.

"Maybe not so much," Chen Xi said, spreading his hands helplessly. "In the future, the relationship between Lu Bu, Dong Zhuo, and Li Ru won't be so good. Lu Bu will always suspect Li Ru and Dong Zhuo want to eliminate him. This suspicion will linger until one of them falls. I don't think highly of Dong Zhuo; he's lost his ambition, and Li Ru probably won't want to help someone without ambition."

"That's ruthless!" Guan Yu and Zhang Fei said in unison.

"There's nothing ruthless about it. I didn't kill anyone or make them kill anyone. Everything I said was true, without a single lie," Chen Xi said, rolling his eyes and beginning to argue. "I didn't sow discord either. As a fellow countryman, it's only natural to consider a fellow countryman's welfare. If Lu Bu really trusted Li Ru, none of this would matter."

Guan Yu, Zhang Fei, and Zhao Yun were speechless but couldn't deny Chen Xi's point. The letter contained no malice, only pure goodwill, but to Lu Bu, it would be seen as the greatest malice.

"Alright, let's stop talking and go collect our troops. These will be our foundation for the future. Avoid unnecessary killing," Chen Xi said, comforting the others with a smile. To him, this was a familiar situation. Sometimes, goodwill shown in the wrong place can be the greatest malice!

Guan Yu, Zhang Fei, and Zhao Yun returned to their camps to lead their troops, ready for a big move. From Chen Xi's words, they could already tell that the ten thousand Xiliang cavalry were almost guaranteed. Chen Xi didn't intend to command the troops himself, so the four of them would likely divide the soldiers among themselves. Though the majority would go to Liu Bei, each of them would get at least a thousand.

"Lord Xuande, can you tell me your ambition?" Chen Xi asked seriously, after sending Hua Xiong aside, though a smile played at the corners of his mouth. He didn't care what Liu Bei's answer was. He needed a reliable leader, not necessarily one with grand ambitions or ruthless tactics.

Chen Xi sought stability. In this chaotic era, any ambition required self-preservation to be achievable. Whether it was restoring the Han Dynasty, revitalizing China, or re-establishing a martial spirit, these goals could only be realized if he stayed alive.

With eighteen hundred years of accumulated knowledge and vision, Chen Xi knew his intelligence might not match the great ministers of this era, but his insights and knowledge would outstrip theirs by far.

Simply put, Chen Xi knew which policies to implement at this time for optimal benefits and their long-term disadvantages. He didn't even need to fill in the gaps. He understood the impacts several hundred years later and could suggest appropriate changes. Could Zhuge Liang predict the Tang or Song Dynasties? That's laughable!

So, to put it bluntly, as long as Chen Xi controlled the political and economic direction, had capable people under him, and a ruler who allowed him to act freely, he could outperform the great ministers of the Three Kingdoms in the short term. This wasn't due to superior intelligence but because of his extensive knowledge and experience.