

Mythical 43

Chapter 43: Destined to Replace Them

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Liu Bei's words shifted the blame for the earlier failure squarely onto Lu Bu. After all, these men were mostly Hua Xiong's former troops, and Hua Xiong's performance had satisfied Liu Bei in terms of loyalty and valor. Therefore, Liu Bei wouldn't slight Hua Xiong over such minor issues.

"Zijian, do you have confidence in fully controlling these men?" Chen Xi asked, frowning. Although he had anticipated dealing with Hua Xiong's troops after capturing Hua Xiong, he hadn't expected Lu Bu to bring all of Hua Xiong's former troops. This made things more complicated.

"Sir, there's no need to be so cautious. Since we've already pledged allegiance to our lord, my former troops should not be treated differently. Captives are captives, and military merits are military merits. They should not be given special treatment just because they were once my troops," Hua Xiong said solemnly, displaying his rigid adherence to military law and principles.

Chen Xi and Liu Bei exchanged glances, and seeing Liu Bei's nod, Chen Xi turned to Hua Xiong. "Select your former troops and reorganize them under your command. I believe your previous coordination with them will allow them to regain their combat effectiveness quickly. As for the rest, leave them to Lord Xuande. However, if your troops do not perform to standard, don't blame me for disbanding your unit."

"Understood!" Hua Xiong replied loudly, though his voice betrayed a hint of joy.

Military law is military law, and personal feelings are personal feelings. While Hua Xiong could prioritize military law over personal feelings, it was certainly better to consider both. After all, Chinese society had always valued personal relationships.

Hua Xiong quickly selected his former troops. These men clearly had no trouble following Hua Xiong's commands. Under Hua Xiong's leadership, the reorganized unit soon formed a solid and cohesive cloud of red energy, like a fiery sunset.

Similar to Guan, Zhang, and Zhao's formations, this fiery cloud centered around Hua Xiong and covered his troops. It even appeared more imposing than the formations of the others, indicating that Hua Xiong was indeed a capable cavalry commander.

After Hua Xiong selected 4,000 men, Guan Yu and Zhang Fei could hardly contain their excitement. They had initially thought the Xiliang cavalry were a disgrace, but now, under Hua Xiong's command, they showed their true elite nature.

Seeing Guan Yu and Zhang Fei happily leading 1,500 cavalry each on the plain, Chen Xi didn't know what expression to make. "Second Brother, you're too easily pleased. It's just 1,500 cavalry. You don't know how good things will get!"

Well, Chen Xi didn't bother to stop them. He knew that, during the chaos caused by Dong Zhuo, only Dong Zhuo, Gongsun Zan, and Ma Teng had significant cavalry forces. Even then, Ma Teng's cavalry came from the Xiliang region, which was also Dong Zhuo's domain.

In summary, cavalry units were rare. Later on, even during key battles like Guandu or after the Battle of Red Cliffs, cavalry remained scarce. Both Yuan Shao and Cao Cao knew that horses were strategic resources not to be overly traded. Thus, despite the large number of wild horses on the grasslands, the number of cavalry was limited.

"Lord Xuande, inform Generals Guan and Zhang that we need to return to camp. We must observe the other lords' reactions before we follow our own path. If Li Ru uses Luoyang as bait, leaving behind other temptations to divide the lords is only natural. Let's see if those temptations are enticing enough," Chen Xi said, watching as Guan and Zhang gradually organized their formations before turning to Liu Bei.

"Zichuan, is Li Ru really as terrifying as you say?" Liu Bei asked, puzzled by Chen Xi's words.

"When dealing with this man, never take chances. Otherwise, a promising situation could be turned into chaos by him. It's a pity he chose the wrong master. If he had a more stable leader in Dong Zhuo's position, the world would already have changed hands!" Chen Xi said candidly.

Seeing Liu Bei still unsure, Chen Xi sighed and addressed Hua Xiong. "Zijian, from Xiliang to Luoyang, before Dong Zhuo was corrupted, did Li Ru's strategies ever fail?"

"Huh?" Hua Xiong was taken aback, not expecting the question to be directed at him. After thinking deeply, his expression grew serious. "No, he never failed. I hadn't noticed before, but he seemed to always hide his traces, completely blending into the Prime Minister's shadow!"

"See? Terrifying, right? Zijian served under him for so long and enjoyed the benefits of his strategies but never noticed he had never failed. So, Lord Xuande, do not underestimate him," Chen Xi said, spreading his hands innocently.

Chen Xi already knew that before coming to Luoyang, Li Ru's strategies had never failed. It wasn't just because Dong Zhuo could discern right from wrong, but also because Li Ru was incredibly competent. Moreover, there were no true strategists opposing Li Ru at that time; only minor players.

Liu Bei sighed. "There are indeed many talented people in this world! Even a mere Dong Zhuo has Lu Bu and Li Ru serving him!" He then looked at Chen Xi, whose innocent expression made him feel better. Looking at his four great generals, his mood lightened further.

"Lu Bu fell to my second and third brothers and Zilong, and Li Ru was outsmarted by Chen Xi. They will inevitably break with Lu Bu. I have better scholars and stronger generals than Dong Zhuo. One day, I will surely replace him!" Liu Bei thought to himself.