

Mythical 82

Chapter 82: Liu Ye and Man Chong

Liu Ye's arrival was marked by solemnity. First, he submitted a formal letter of introduction, then sought endorsement from the Imperial Clan Office before officially joining Liu Bei's ranks. This method of entry made future betrayal unthinkable due to the immense shame it would bring. Historically, Liu Ye only defected to Cao Cao's side when he saw no hope left. With hope restored, he was willing to take a gamble.

Chen Xi was very familiar with Liu Ye and Man Chong. Their abilities, though often overshadowed by the famed Five Strategists of the Cao family, were not to be underestimated. The two were polar opposites: Liu Ye was adept at tailoring his words to his audience, while Man Chong was a stern and impartial official, a complementary duo.

Liu Bei was thrilled with the addition of these two. After working so hard, he finally had a member of the Liu family acknowledging and joining him. And not just any member, but Liu Zi-Yang, renowned as a talent capable of assisting the world.

With Chen Xi's suggestion, Man Chong was assigned to handle legal affairs and improve the civil administration. Man Chong was known for his strict enforcement of the law. When serving under Cao Cao, he had no qualms about arresting Cao Hong for misconduct and was equally ruthless with influential families. When Yang Biao of the illustrious Yang family committed a crime, Man Chong arrested him without hesitation.

Although strict, Man Chong did not misuse his authority. He adhered strictly to the law as written. Chen Xi often wondered how Man Chong would handle it if Liu Ye committed a crime.

Chen Xi calmly told Liu Bei that Man Chong was fair and incorruptible, making him perfect for legal matters. So, Liu Bei put Man Chong in charge of law enforcement and civil administration. Taishan was just beginning to prosper, and some corrupt officials were already lining their pockets. Without Man Chong's presence, Chen Xi might have had to launch an anti-corruption campaign himself.

Liu Ye was assigned to work with Lu Su in handling political affairs. Lu Su was skilled at assessing the current situation and making decisive decisions, especially when the situation was chaotic. Liu Ye excelled at predicting future trends and devising strategies but often found himself overwhelmed by his own ideas, unable to choose the best course of action.

Liu Ye was an enigma. He had all the qualities of a top-tier strategist: he was never short of brilliant plans or cunning strategies and had a keen eye for assessing situations. However, he never became the top strategist because he often second-guessed himself to the point of paralysis, unable to choose from the many strategies he devised.

When Chen Xi handed Liu Ye to Lu Su, he told Lu Su not to be swayed by Liu Ye's seniority and to treat him as a subordinate. If Liu Ye ever got stuck in his thoughts, Lu Su was to tell him to make a decision quickly and move on.

Initially, Lu Su didn't understand Chen Xi's advice. After working with Liu Ye for a few days, he realized that Liu Ye's intelligence was top-notch, and his strategies and political insight were excellent. However, Liu Ye's habit of overthinking often left him with a pile of potential solutions and no clear direction. This was where Lu Su's decisiveness came into play. He would quickly pick the most suitable solution from Liu Ye's suggestions, solving the problem efficiently.

This collaboration worked well. Liu Ye would handle the complex political matters, propose multiple solutions, and Lu Su would choose the best one. Chen Xi, meanwhile, was freed from these responsibilities.

Historically, Liu Ye faced a similar situation in Cao Cao's camp. Cao Cao had the ability to discern the best strategies, whereas Liu Bei lacked that capability. Liu Ye's numerous solutions would only confuse Liu Bei.

With nothing to do, Chen Xi stayed in the political office, watching Lu Su and Liu Ye work. Sun Qian, recently acquired from Zheng Kang-gong in exchange for a long essay, was also present. Sun Qian was originally recommended for Xu Province but was redirected to Liu Bei due to the essay trade, and both parties were pleased with the outcome.

Fazheng, on the other hand, was under Guo Jia's tutelage. Guo Jia had gone to assess the situation in Qing Province, planning a strategy that could potentially eliminate a million Yellow Turbans and seize a large portion of Qing Province. Thus, he was on a leisurely official trip.

"Boning?" Chen Xi asked, having completed the winter and spring plans, looking at the others in the office and casually bringing up a topic.

"Boning is out arresting people," Liu Ye replied without looking up. "He's been interrogating a lot of corrupt officials recently. He found some loopholes in the law and is working on drafting new laws, but we're not sure if they will be approved..." Liu Ye's tone turned somber. Despite being a member of the Imperial Clan, even he couldn't guarantee that the emperor would approve Man Chong's new laws, given the many vested interests involved.

"Oh, drafting laws? Great, let Boning finish and we'll carve them on stone tablets to trial here in Taishan," Chen Xi said nonchalantly.

"What?" Lu Su, Liu Ye, Sun Qian, and Jian Yong all looked up in shock.

"It's a trial, not an implementation. The national law allows local governors to trial any method beneficial to governing their territory. The governor's position is equivalent to a county magistrate, so..." Chen Xi explained casually.

Lu Su and Liu Ye were dumbfounded. This was actually possible. Recalling the Han laws, it indeed allowed governors to trial new governance methods. The governor's position being equivalent to a county magistrate meant that Chen Xi could authorize Man Chong to trial his new laws in Taishan.

"This might not be appropriate..." Sun Qian hesitated, having been deeply influenced by Confucian principles of respect for the emperor.

"I'm just following the national laws," Chen Xi shrugged. "How boring. You guys continue with the politics. I'll go check on the talent recruitment platform. So far, we've mostly recruited officials. When will we get more talents like Zijing or another like Fengxiao?"

Chen Xi sighed as he sneaked away. He was tired of staying in the political office. According to Han laws, one wasn't allowed to leave before the designated time. Even if sick, one had to lie inside.