

Mythical 89

Chapter 89: Become the Naval Commander, Xingba!

Chen Xi wiped off a mixture of sweat and rain from his face. He had been caught off guard by the sudden realization of the situation's truth.

"Zi Chuan, why are you here without an umbrella?" Liu Bei, seeing Chen Xi standing in the rain without any protection, was taken aback. The rain was chilly, and he knew Chen Xi's health wasn't the best.

"If I didn't come, things could have gone south. Zhongkang, tie up Gan Ning but don't kill him; he's an important figure." At Liu Bei's words, Chen Xi felt the chill on his body and expanded his mental shield to cover himself. He was already planning to use this as an excuse to skip work the next day and rest at home.

"Rest assured, Governor, such a master isn't so fragile." With that, Xu Chu approached Gan Ning, who was still on the ground. He sealed Gan Ning's internal energy and lifted him effortlessly.

"Zi Chuan, how did you know the bandit leader was Gan Ning? Wen Ze only found out after capturing all the bandits." Liu Bei, pulling Chen Xi under the eaves for shelter, asked curiously.

"This is the mark," Chen Xi said, holding up the golden bell with a wry smile. "This guy was someone I intended to recruit as a naval commander for us. I had planned to introduce him to you, but I didn't know his exact location. Unexpectedly, he came to our territory, which seems to have caused some misunderstanding!"

"Ah?" Liu Bei was stunned, and after a moment, he called Yu Jin over. "Wen Ze, bring me the manager from the Lu family and find out what happened."

Soon, Lu Jun, dressed in scholar's attire and looking slightly pale, approached. "Lu Jun, Lu Juncai from the Lu family in Jiangdong, greets Lord Xuande and Governor Chen."

Chen Xi nodded slightly, knowing Liu Bei would handle the formalities. He subtly observed Lu Jun, the father of the renowned strategist Lu Xun, known for his intelligence but who died young due to poor health.

"No need for formalities," Liu Bei said, waving his hand. "Juncai, business matters can be handled by a manager. Why did you come personally? Moreover, we don't lack this commodity in Taishan."

Lu Jun smiled bitterly. Though he had been escorted to Taishan, he hadn't suffered along the way. He had learned a lot about Taishan, including the strategic planner behind its reconstruction, Chen Xi. Observing the thriving state of Taishan, Lu Jun felt it might be worthwhile to invest more here, considering his family had few heirs.

Lu Jun recounted the entire incident from a neutral perspective, not favoring any side.

Liu Bei and Chen Xi exchanged glances. Chen Xi nodded slightly, indicating the incident was an unintended yet understandable mishap.

"It was my oversight, Juncai. I apologize on behalf of Xingba," Liu Bei said, taking responsibility for Gan Ning's actions. Gan Ning's performance and thoughts had impressed Liu Bei, making him eager to recruit him.

"Juncai, we didn't foresee this situation. Since Xingba didn't harm anyone, let's consider this matter settled. We will compensate for any losses, and we hope you don't decline our gesture," Chen Xi added with a smile, noting Lu Jun's reluctance to accept compensation. Sometimes, giving compensation was a means to foster closer ties.

Chen Xi gestured for Yu Jin, who had a copy of the "Thirty-Six Stratagems," a book Chen Xi had compiled under the pseudonym of Sun Bin from Qingxi. Yu Jin treasured the book and always carried it. Chen Xi planned to have Yu Jin make a partial copy to intrigue Lu Jun.

Gan Ning soon regained consciousness, feeling the pain but also noting he was still alive. Seeing Liu Bei, he angrily shouted, "I, Gan Xingba, have lived an honorable life, yet I was deceived by a villain! Do what you will!"

Chen Xi, seeing Gan Ning's fiery temper, was at a loss. "Lord Xuande, leave Xingba to me. I'll help him understand the reality."

"Be careful, Zi Chuan. Zhongkang, stay close," Liu Bei said, nodding as he left Xu Chu behind.

"Now it's just the three of us, Xingba. Why did you rob the wrong person? You raided Lord Xuande's property, and to make matters worse, you brought Lu's people here, making us anxious. Didn't you notice the difference between Taishan and Yuzhou?" Chen Xi began, addressing Gan Ning directly.

Despite Gan Ning's initial cursing, he started to think about Chen Xi's words. He wasn't stupid, just proud. Realizing the implications, he asked, "So, you thought I was testing the waters for an attack on Taishan?"

"You know it too. If not for this bell, Zhongkang would have killed you." Chen Xi shook the golden bell. "We were trying to recruit you. I planned to introduce you to Lord Xuande as our naval commander. How about it? Join us, and you'll become Lord Xuande's naval commander. I know you have a grudge against Zhongkang for defeating you and that you're skilled in naval warfare. What do you say?"