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Chapter 73

Prying Into

At dawn inside Shang Jun's study, Wei Xi reported several different news from over the last few days, "Master, Cang Yue's army has already camped about 50 miles outside of Lin Feng Guan border and there are probably about 70,000 plus people. The army is made up of the previous subordinates of the Wu family who are both strong and have very good fighting ability. However, I have never heard of the general military commander who is called You Xiao."

You Xiao?! Shang Jun's hand that had been originally looking over the account books stopped. How could it be him? Wasn't he only Long Qu Mu's head imperial bodyguard, so how could he be entrusted as a military commander?! Long Qu Mu should know that it was not an easy matter to match and fight the war, so it would be useless even with high martial arts! Shang Jun thought for a moment before he asked, "Is there any movement on Dong Yu's side?"

"Xuanyuan Yi arrived in a rush at the Lin Feng Guan border three days ago with 3,000 soldiers, all in the name of doing a border inspection."

Xuanyuan Yi was also here? He had already guessed that Dong Yu knew something early on, but unexpectedly they had also sent over Xuanyuan Yi; this person had a reputation of being a 'war god' general. He had not thought about this either!

Wei Xi nodded his head and answered, "Yes, moreover, Dong Yu's garrison troop general, Zhang Xiao Fei, has already been transferred out of the Lin Feng Guan border."

Shang Jun secretly sighed; Xuan Tian Cheng was really cautious. Last time, Huang Shi Jie's letter to Cang Yue must have been given to the Imperial Court, so to be safe, Xuan Tian Cheng transferred Zhang Xiao Fei out of the Lin Feng Guan border. Since he had been stationed there for a long time, he (XTC) was afraid that Zhang Xiao Fei had already been bribed by Cang Yue. From the current situation, the war was inevitable because all of the generals had arrived to start the war. His heart was somewhat chaotic, but he continued to show a calm face as Shang Jun faintly instructed, "Continue to look for any changes and be very careful in handling it. Try not to get involved."

Wei Xi answered with a low voice, "Yes."

Shang Jun kept silent, but just when Wei Xi was about to leave, he suddenly asked, "Has the merchant ship already set off for Hai Yu?"

"It has already set off and I received news from the secret bodyguard that Gentleman Qin got on the boat safely." Master seemed to be especially careful when it came to Gentleman Qin's matters; from the time Gentleman Qin left until now, he had already asked three times.

"Then it is good, you go and get busy." It was good that he (QXZ) was already on the boat, so he (SJ) did not have to worry anymore.

"Yes."

Wei Xi calmly retreated and left. After thinking about the war that was about to arrive, Shang Jun's heart could not stay calm. What should he do next then?! Was this war actually his opportunity?!

It was a hot midsummer night; the bright moonlight appeared like water as it clearly illuminated the thousands of army tents neatly erected in the large open area. Inside the army camp, a team of five soldiers were patrolling the camp. On the dense tree next to the camp, a black shadow was hidden between the branches and leaves; two eyes were shining, clear and sharp as they stared intently at the main tent in the middle.

Shang Jun was thinking about whether to get close or not and feeling a little irritated. After thinking for a whole afternoon, he still did not understand his mentality. He wanted to heed Shu Qing's suggestions about not getting involved in politics and to just recuperate, but he also did not want to let go of the matter about Long Qu Mu's actions either. This battle between Cang Yue and Dong Yu might be beneficial to him as You Xiao should not be Xuanyuan Yi's opponent!

While he was still deep in thought, a man who was wearing a white scholar garment unhurriedly appeared in front of the master tent. This eye-catching white figure traveled among a group of uniformed soldiers and it seemed too abrupt. He only stood in front of the master tent for a little while before You Xiao personally went over to invite him in. Shang Jun slightly frowned; what was the identity of this person?! He was suspicious in his heart, so Shang Jun did not hesitate

was the identity of this person? He was suspicious in his heart, so Shang Jun did not hesitate any longer as he relaxed and jumped down from the tree. Under the cover of darkness, he quickly approached the master tent and arrived in front of it. Shang Jun did not dare to get too close. First, because You Xiao had excellent martial arts and second, because he was not certain who the white clothed man was, so it was not good to rush into action.

He went behind the master tent; even though it was farther away from the discussion, it was still the easiest way to not be found out. Using a thin blade hidden in his sleeve, Shang Jun gently cut out a 30 cm opening and pushed aside the corner before narrowing his eyes to watch.

That white clothed man and You Xiao were sitting opposite each other with the man actually sitting on the master seat. Shang Jun was slightly stunned! This person's status must be higher than You Xiao by a lot, otherwise how could a military commander sit at a lower seat?! He tried to get a clearer look at the white clothed man, but unfortunately there was a screen, so Shang Jun could only see his back. From observing his bearing and actions, he could tell the man was cultured and refined. One could perceive an aura of nobility emanating from his body.

"Seventh Gentleman is very good at strategizing, but I am just afraid that it will not be easy. After all, one is an important minister of the Imperial Court and the other is a big family merchant of Dong Yu." You Xiao's voice sounded out with a slight hesitation.

The man smiled heartily and replied with extraordinary confidence, "General You does not need to worry. I will properly handle this on my own."

Having been given his guarantee, You Xiao also smiled and said, "Since it is like this, let's do it according to Seventh Gentleman's arrangements."

"General You is frank and straightforward."

"Not at all, if it were not because of Seventh Gentleman's assistance, I am afraid this would not go smoothly. The time is not early anymore, so Seventh Gentleman should rest early. We can discuss any other details tomorrow."

"Alright, I will take my leave." The white clothed man got up and unhurriedly left the master tent.

Shang Jun suddenly sank into contemplation then quickly stood up and relaxed his hearing. He clearly overheard the discussion a moment ago. Who was Dong Yu's big family merchant they were talking about? Was it Shu Qing?! What was the strategy that they were talking about again? Shang Jun was still in thought when You Xiao's cold voice came over from inside the tent and said, "Come out."

Shang Jun was deeply alarmed as he held his breath against the tent. He saw You Xiao's sharp eyes looking straight in the direction he was in. He had been very careful, but still he was able to find him? You Xiao walked over step by step and each step was slow but strong, as if he were stepping on the enemy's heart each time. Shang Jun's palm was sweating when he touched the soft sword on his waist; he did not plan on showing himself this time. You Xiao was a difficult opponent. Every time they fought it seemed that he would only get stronger, so he had to wait quietly for the opportunity.

Just when You Xiao was about to appear in front of Shang Jun, a hand from the shadows with a long sword came out and ferociously aimed it at You Xiao's throat. Unfortunately, You Xiao was already prepared and escaped the long sword by moving sideways before he took the advantage by quickly advancing to strike the black clothed person's shoulder. The black clothed person fell awkwardly to the side and smashed a bluish green jade screen.

Sian's notes:

So who was this Gentleman Qi?? I think there was a character in book one, another big merchant behind Murong family, I think it was the Qi family??? I'm hazy with the details & have to go back to read book 1 again. The handsome but devilish oldest brother from the Qi family... I can't remember his name. I think this was a plot that MSQ concocted to sell things to Cang Yue with high price hoping that they could punish Cang Yue both sides. The war needed money but if the Imperial Court didn't have any money to pay for the war, then it would be a quick war. I'm only guessing as it has been a while since I translated book 1 so I didn't remember the details.

Update - You Xiao used Qi Gongzi to call the mysterious white clothed man. This word Qi can be translated as the number seven or the last name (although it's probably rare to use this character as a last name). I translated Qi as the last name when I originally translated it because I wasn't sure how to make out the appellation. After I sent out my translation to my editor BFF, I went back to see the characters list that I made for book 1 to see who this mysterious man could be. Then I found out that this mysterious person should be called Seventh Gentleman instead of calling him Gentleman Qi. I'm not going to divulge any more about this as I don't want to give away the reason why for those readers who haven't read book

1 because I don't want to give away a secret plot that this You Xiao and the Seventh Gentleman were trying to accomplish. But for those of you who have finished reading book 1, you'll probably know why I made this change for the mysterious white clothed man. 😏 Btw, this white clothed man was a scumbag! That's the only thing that I can say about him. 🙄

On another note, the Qi character question that I have on the above paragraph was actually not Qi. In book 1, there were An family (which I thought to be Qi family), Huo family & Liu family (I think), who were big merchant families in Dong Yu, along with our own Murong family. The only Qi family in book 1 was of course our own Qi family that was also MSQ's maternal family, the famous former Prime Minister of Dong Yu.

Btw, 30 cm opening is big so I'm not sure if the measurement is correct. Lol... Even I can see this big opening with my bad eyes, not to mention You Xiao who was highly skilled in martial arts!