Zhou Yu's red cliffs strategy doc

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Let's Begin
(This doc will probably go outdated once that Hal guy (found his name, Saint.Topman) will release his own Zhuge doc)!!!



Notations for reading (it's not really serious, it's for better reading):		
1	***White***	***Out-context***
2	***Blue***	***In-context***

Notations for reading (it's not really serious, it's for better reading):		
3	*Red*	*Tactical categories*
4	*Gray*	*EQ, SQ, AQ, FSIQ categories*
5	*Green*	*Manipulation and deception sort categories*
6	*Yellow*	*Foresight and sort categories*
7	*Purple*	*Reasoning, analysis, intelligence and Thinking*

Main Characters of Red Cliffs
Zhuge Liang
Sima Yi
Guo Jia
Zhou Yu
Jia Xu
Zuo Ci

Not gonna lie, I planned this doc to be some 100 pages long, but I think a shorter doc would be easier to get through. I made this doc, because Red Cliffs is an incredibly well-made arc and since Guandu had been decently analysed by many, Red Cliffs is not by much unfortunately given that Red Cliffs had much better mind-games and basically everything.

Objectives of each characters in this arc

ers	What roles they played in the arc	The motives of the charact
Jia Xu	The Chief-Controller and the main strategist of Cao Cao after Guo Jia unfortunately passed away from his illness.	- The main objective of Jia Xu in this battle was to acquire land for Cao Cao. - His strategic aim was to employ the Easterly Wind that he anticipated Zhou Yu to use, as a bait to lure him into falling for his ambushes and traps. - His contingency aim for failure was to immediately fight for Jiangling so that he could prevent Zhou Yu from acquiring a base for himself in the south.
Zhuge Liang	The main strategist of Liu Bei. The orchestrator of Red Cliffs.	- The main objective of Zhuge Liang was to prevent Zhou Yu from crushing Cao Cao in the battle, because Zhuge knew that once Cao Cao is no more, he would become the target of opposition and Sun Quan's much more influential and larger forces would mean he would be no more soon after as well. - Zhuge isolated Zhou Yu away from crushing Cao Cao by planning and orchestrating extensively for the Huarong flood where he predicted a flood to exploit, so that he could prevent the scenario of Zhou Yu executing the aftermath strategy.
Zhou Yu	The Chief-Controller of Sun Quan's forces. The victor of Red Cliffs.	- Zhou Yu's main objective of the battle was to humiliate and crush Cao Cao down. Because he wanted to prove to the world that Cao Cao's forces were not invincible forces, but rather forces

Objectives of each characters in this arc

			who managed to lose the battle even though they predicted his bait far ahead. - Zhou Yu's strategic aim was to bait Jia Xu into thinking his Easterly Wind bait was to be executed against Wen Ping's forces, and to lure Jia Xu's forces as well as Cao Ren's and Zhang Liao's forces deep inside his territory, then to lure away Cao Cao's forces using Zhuge Liang's forces to infiltrate their main base.
		The former main strategist of Cao Cao. The contingency planner of Red Cliffs.	- Guo Jia's main goal was to unite China under Cao Cao's rule, because he found Cao Cao's rule to be the most potent one out of all. Since he was going to die, he wanted to contribute to Cao Cao even more by planning several contingencies ahead. - Guo Jia's contingency for Red Cliffs was to assign Zhu Ling as a backup reinforcement to aid Xun You and Cao Cao's forces, neutralise Xun Yu from taking any actions or suppressing Sima Yi and then promote Sima Yi to be the successor of the battle.
Sima Yi		The successor of Guo Jia. Converted into the Chief-Controller after Cao Cao was entrapped in Huarong.	- Sima Yi's main goal in general was to usurp Cao Cao's throne by climbing the power ladder so as to avenge his clan's unfortunate execution. But the main objective of this battle was to retrieve the lost leverages that he had in the faction. - Sima Yi's strategic aim was to neutralise Xun Yu and Jia Xu in the battle, collude with Zhuge Liang, collude with Zuo Ci, save Cao Cao in a key moment and establish tripartite with Zhuge Liang so as to create a narrative that he was the one who

Objectives of each characters in this arc

		saved Cao Cao.
Zuo Ci	The immortal of the north, a religious leader. A loyal supporter of Yuan Fang. He was vengeful for Yuan Fang's death and served as an assassin to strangle Cao Cao in the faction.	- Zuo Ci's main goal was to avenge his dead master, Yuan Fang and the entire Yuan clan which was destroyed by Cao Cao's schemes in Guandu. - Zuo Ci's strategy was to enter Cao Cao's faction through Sima Yi, gain the trust of Cao Cao, assassinate all the head doctors of Cao Cao to pose as the only doctor for Cao Cao and then assassinate Cao Cao while pretending to treat him.

Strategies employed in-battle:

I thought of writing more for the doc and even writing a full fledged contextual summary of the linear events of Red Cliffs arc. The reason for context is that the events are disconnected in the strategies sections which would feel confusing and head-scratching, so I thought it would be better to provide a linear flow of events so that the sequence of events wouldn't feel confusing and disconnected, but I was far too lazy to commit to such a thing and instead chose to just summarise the strategies. Now I am going to summarise the strategies employed in this arc. The reason I am mentioning the main strategists' strategies too, is because all the schemes employed in this arc are overlapping and interconnected, like interdependent. So I am going to summarise each strategy employed by the strategists, who are:

1) ***Zhou Yu***
2) ***Zhuge Liang***
3) ***Guo Jia***
4) ***Sima Yi***
5) ***Jia Xu***

Jia Xu's main strategy (Including Cao Cao faction's strategy as a whole, I call it Jia Xu's strategy because he was basically the main strategist in this battle):

- Jia Xu (or Guo Jia probably) foresaw that a massive flood would occur on the banks of the great Han river. Why does this piece of information matter you may ask? The banks of Han river, as stated, was an area which was heavily, heavily guarded by Liu Biao of the south's armies. The armies who are actively attacking the Han river would be easily defeated. Doesn't Cao Cao have a better army and more resources? Yes, but to attack the Han river, it would mean to come and attack through ships on the Han river. The Han river was stated to be usually shallow. So it would be unrealistic to attack the south by arriving through the shallow Han river, it would be suicidal as combined with the fact that Liu Biao already extensively guarded the area with his ship. But as Zhuge Liang explained, there would be a flood that would occur each year. The flood would fill up the water, but it still wouldn't be enough for ships to come through. But as stated, the Han river flood was especially voluminous and big at the year of the battle, which was predicted by the geniuses (Zhuge Liang, Jia Xu, Guo Jia, Zhou Yu, etc...).

- So Jia Xu (and Guo Jia) first launched an attack on Liu Biao's territory by taking advantage of the flood which would have filled the river and successfully used the massive flood to wash away the guarding soldiers as well. Jia Xu's first motion of trap succeeded successfully. This led to the next phase of his strategy. Jia Xu intimidated Liu Cong (the promoted heir of Liu Biao's land) and all of his troops enough by deliberately launching an attack with 200,000 men. 200,000 men would obviously intimidate the forces, as Liu Biao remotely did not have a comparable amount of forces to Cao Cao's 200,000 men forces. This prompted a surrender and Jia Xu successfully subjugated Liu Cong and Jingzhou under his control without much casualties on his forces. Jia Xu then proceeded to his next phase of his strategy.
- There was a problem in Jingzhou. Zhuge (I think it would be revealed later in the story) spread widespread rumors on Liu Bei's greatness and generosity, so most people supported Liu Bei. People supported Liu Bei so much so that even Liu Biao supported Liu Bei as his influence on people was simply too much. The incredible rise of support from the people also negatively damaged Cao Cao's image for people. So people of Jingzhou extensively hated Cao Cao and his forces, so much so that such hate could be affiliated with possible betrayals, uprisings or assassination from people. So Jia Xu opted to solve this situation with his 'usual trick'. His usual trick was to kill the heir of Jingzhou, Liu Cong. Why? Because regardless of his surrender, he is still a man of the Liu family and Liu family were known for royalty and were greatly affiliated with the

Han dynasty, so they could revolt at any time against Cao Cao. So Jia Xu solved both the problems regarding Liu Bei's influence and Liu Cong's affiliation, by eliminating Liu Cong altogether. By eliminating Liu Cong, he had set another trap. He spread rumors that Liu Cong, the heir of Jingzhou, was unjustifiably and brutally killed by Liu Bei. This was to fix an antagonist in the eyes of a confused masses who didn't have a clear antagonist in their eyes at those times of immense conflict and chaos. So by this trap setting, he had effectively neutralised the problems.

- Jia Xu's strategy began with a bang. Jia Xu's next death trap to engulf Sun faction was to use Xiangyang as bait. He deliberately stationed a few hundred thousand men of forces on Xiangyang precisely to create a facade of importance on land. What is the bait here exactly? Jia Xu fabricated a facade that Xiangyang was a place of importance to misdirect Zhou Yu. But Xiangyang had already been subjugated and occupied by Cao Cao's forces. So there would be no need to occupy any troops over there, but Jia Xu did to lure Zhou Yu and his men away into thinking that Cao Cao's forces were trying to capture Liu Bei's men's march to Xinye (or Xiakou??? Fact-check me if I was wrong). But in truth, the forces in Xiangyang would board the navy when the navy would resupply at Xiangyang and would launch an attack on South by travelling towards South with the combined forces. But unfortunately for Jia Xu, Zhou Yu easily saw through the facade and countered the trap as he traveled to battle against the main forces of Cao Cao on the Han river instead of engaging on Xiangyang as he knew Xiangyang was a bait to lure them away.

- Jia Xu's strategy to win in Red Cliffs probably covered Liu Bei's forces' march towards Xiakou. Jia Xu probably ordered to infiltrate the masses of the crowd that Zhuge advised Liu Bei to take to Xiakou. A really simple yet a very effective tactic. What does this do? It allowed minimal casualties or losses for Cao Cao and would allow them to eliminate one key player (Liu Bei of south) from the long game. But Zhuge long predicted this tactic, I mean who wouldn't?

- Jia Xu laid the next trap for Zhou Yu to fall into. The forces of Xiahou Yuan and Dun who were stationed at Xiangyang, had been marching towards Liu Bei's forces. But unfortunately, a 'nameless' advisor (probably Xu Shu) used a large smoke/fire to block the way and blocked the Cao Cao's forces. This was a perfect opportunity for the Sun faction to strike. Cao Cao's forces had been forced to fight on land, they had been widely scattered by the constant march and battle, their troops had been forced out and the morale of the Cao Cao forces were down and crumbled. So Zhou Yu's men then begged Gongjin (or Zhou Yu) to march their troops over to the scattered troops of Cao Cao's faction and finish them all at once as their morale and position was terrible.
- But it was once again unfortunate for Jia Xu, as Zhou Yu once saw through the trap. Zhou Yu knew that Jia Xu instigated and lined the events perfectly to lure a perfect

opportunity for the Sun faction to use and finish Cao Cao. But in truth, there was an ambush set up by Jia Xu, employing Xiahou Dun's forces in the woods who would obliterate Zhou Yu's forces in the woods. Jia Xu's goal was to lure Zhou Yu away, Xiahou Dun had already marched south and had taken several stationing points around Xiakou. Jia Xu's goal was to clear a path to red cliffs. Zhou Yu saw through the trap and countered it by ordering him to fire several arrows towards the woods and lure out the ambushing forces in the woods.

- Xiahou Dun's forces had moved in the battle and were waiting for Cao Cao to arrive. And under Jia Xu's order (or something it sounds cool), Young master Pi had gained control of the long river, securing the supply line. In the year of 209, Cao Cao's army took over Jingzhou of the south and occupied Red Cliffs.
- If you are confused where Red Cliffs is, Red Cliffs is Yangtze river, just southwest of the city of Wuhan in China. Cao Cao prepared to march to regroup/join with Xiahou Dun and sort forces in Red Cliffs for a massive attack on South, as they had cleared all the land routes. Why does clearing the land routes matter? Because that meant that they effectively took control over it, progressively trapping their enemies/antagonists in the South.

- We were spoonfed about Zhou Yu's advantages (that btw Zhou Yu did not just inherit, he engineered those advantages by capturing the ships from Liu Biao) in the Navy. Cao Cao possessed three divisions, totaling forty-two ships including scouting ships for navies. The Sun clan's ships were too fast (it meant that Zhou Yu's adaptive thinking and speed were too overwhelming for them) and the Sun clan already owned a large number of ships in their southern eastern territory. But after their capture from Liu Biao's influence, Zhou Yu secured far more ships in his arsenal, which would mark his number of ships higher than Cao Cao's.
- By securing a large number of ships in his arsenal, Zhou Yu was able to create a sense of threat that he could easily use decoy strategies with their ships, and it would be hard to locate their main fleet. Not only that, by luring them deep into his territory, Zhou Yu was able to complicate their situation further. Geographically, the routes for a land assault would be very tricky, not to mention the remoteness of the land and the rugged passages of it which would complicate the idea of supply line further. Forcing the Cao Cao into caution and thinking that the only way to attack the eastern region was with a frontal assault.
- The supply line had arrived for Cao Cao. And then they would have full control of the upper streams of the Long river. The Cao Pi's fleets arrived and altogether Cao Cao's encampments were spanning at least twenty Li and their combined forces would add at least to 200,000 strong forces combined with the surrendered Cai Mao's troop from Jingzhou, creating a large force against the Sun clan. However Cai Cao's forces were

stated to be lacking in Maritime skills due to lack of training. Cao Cao's forces would badly crush Sun Quan's forces by numbers and resources alone.
- Sun Quan only deployed 30,000 strong forces against some 200,000 forces from Cao Cao alone. The numbers were to produce another result: Surrender. The amount of attacking forces were staggering to the Sun faction, so it naturally created fear factor through the faction. The mutinies were starting to form in the Sun faction and that would result in an opportunity for Cao Cao's strategists to work with. All of this started with Jia Xu giving up control over the Long river and supply line to Cao Pi to regroup and reform against the South.
- A new battle occurred when Cao Cao's forces were searching for scout ships. Cao Cao's men, who were in the river for a battle against the Sun faction, were searching for Sun faction's scout ships to capture and battle. And they found three scout ships, with Gan Ning. Gan Ning used to be a pirate in the Han period who eventually followed the footsteps of Sun Quan. So Gan Ning used to be affiliated with the Cao Cao faction and Cai Mao who deemed him as a traitor of Cai Mao, as Gan Ning joined forces with Sun Quan and refused to surrender with Liu Cong and his men, engaged to attack him through pincer attack from left and right flanks. The right flanks were helping to surround the enemy, while the left flanks were engaging in the attack and Cao Cao's forces started to prepare for an archer attack. Meanwhile Gan Ning engaged in a leather-covered war-ships-frontal assault. Gan Ning succeeded in the attack and got close to the second master of Cao Cao's faction ship, and infiltrated the ships combined with the torrent (a strong and fast moving stream) which was preventing the other aiding ships from getting close.
- Gan Ning infiltrated the enemy warships along with another Sun Quan general, Zhou Tai. Gan Ning infiltrated the right flank and got the head of the right flank and Zhou Tai got the head of the left rank. Then Sun Quan warships proceeded to head for a headbutt move, by moving their ships towards Cao Cao's ships for a collision. Then Cao Cao's men (some guy, don't ask me his name) proceeded to identify Sun Quan's navy's strategy during the battle. The strategy was to use the strong-flowing current or torrent to prevent the other ships from blocking their movement to the other ships of theirs, took advantage of the wind flowing from the narrow path of Gorge to seize control and used the lightness of their ships to quicken the speed of their ships along with the wind to prevent Cao Cao faction from catching up to him. Then as Sima Yi identified, the attack route of Cao Cao's army was impossible. The geography of the southeast was too complex to defend against. So that's why Cao Cao's army was forced to take shelter behind their naval forces in their gradual advance into the southeast territory.
- It was also noted that Cao Pi's rapid improvement gained popularity and reliability from Cao Cao's officers, which was instigated and prepared by both Sima Yi and Jia Xu.

- We haven't seen Jia Xu in action for long, this is the real deal now. Onward marks the most prevalent battle of wits in the Battle Of Red Cliffs.

- Cao Cao's men got an order/notice from Xun Yu, in which he wrote the following: "Beware of an attack by fire". Cao Cao men discussed the information about this order. The order was to warn Cao Cao about an incoming fire-blowing tactic from Zhou Yu. Cao Cao's men identified that only the expected northerly winds blow in the winter, as identified from their years in Jingzhou. But Xun You immediately criticised that if Guo Jia were not to use unexpected tide weather, how could he attack Jingzhou using the warships? As stated, "Burning Of Red Cliffs" could be used as a tactic by both Sun faction and Cao Cao's faction. If the ships of the both factions could approach the enemy shore, a more powerful gust would aid in Cao faction's massacre of Sun faction's forces. But unfortunately for Jia Xu as he himself admitted, he nor Xun Yu were proficient in the art of astronomy or weather-calculate as their proficiency lied in the studies of art of war and governance.
- As stated there were two masters who taught the eight geniuses in the House Of Water Mirror: Zhang Zhao and Kan Ze. Zhang Zhao was stated to be the master of management and finances, who most likely was the teacher of Jia Xu and Xun Yu, who became a world renown after he empowered the Sun clan into leading a powerful campaign on the southern eastern part of china. Kan Ze was however infuriated by Zhang Zhao's actions of aiding the Sun clan to conquer the south-east. Kan Ze himself was invited by the Sun clan to join after the school closed its doors. But due to his differences with Zhang Zhao, he grew stubborn, rejected the offer and went into retirement in a remote area.
- Jia Xu then went on to explain his long term plan to capture Kan Ze to their side. Jia Xu previously sent two long term spies to the Sun clan along with several other spies (that Zhou Yu unfortunately discerned). The first purpose of their mission was to report them information. They were called "Insiders". Insiders are the types of spies who would extract information from the opposing faction by infiltrating the faction's infrastructure and then use a communication line to transport the required information to their faction. So the insiders: Ma En and Cheng Chao had two purposes however. One was to be insiders, extract information and report them. Another purpose was to be in contact with Kan Ze. Kan Ze was a retired scholar who lived in a remote area away from war, as he felt infuriated by Zhang Zhao's actions. But Jia Xu was aware of the problem that Cao Cao's faction was one step behind in the department of weather calculation. So he opted to solve the problem by employing the two spies to capture Kan Ze to their side for weather calculation.
- The cold air had not arrived yet by October, but the symptoms of the plague had begun to appear. The army was weakened. In order to avoid Jingzhou's severe winter, there must be a gain for a loss. Cao Cao, therefore, had cut off all means of retreat.

- Returning to Wulin, Jia Xu identified a problem and immediately turned it into an asset. Jia Xu discerned that Zhou Yu must have planted a number of spies in Cao Cao's faction so as to gain information about the army's movement. Jia Xu suspected a key

general must have been the infiltrator and he narrowed the list down to: General Wang. So Jia Xu decided to confirm his suspicions and use him as a resource. Jia Xu first met General Wang casually and interacted with him about his duty in the early sunrise. He enquired about General Wang's work regarding the docked ships and the men.
- General Wang eventually enquired Jia Xu on why the docked ships hasn't moved in two days since the decision to retreat, but Jia Xu revealed that he knew General Wang was the insider all along and used him as a resource to misinform Sun clan that Cao Cao had already retreated. Jia Xu used General Wang as a "Converted Spy" by fabricating hundred ships which hadn't been docked, when they were empty. And Cao Cao's troops on the offensive over at the other shore haven't returned yet. Those ships were coming to load more men. Jia Xu declared that his main attack had finally begun.
- Jia Xu also most likely was the one who employed the troops that attacked Taishi Ci troops in Haihun. This aspect of the strategy was to attack the Sun clan from multiple fronts and one of them was to use assassination sort of move to attack a valuable general of the Sun clan: Taishi Ci. Taishi Ci was notified that Gan Ning and Zhou Tai troops had returned, and that no Cao Cao's ships had been spotted, which was planned by Jia Xu to manipulate them into thinking Cao Cao retreated probably. Because of the encroaching Cao Cao army, general Huang Gai ordered Taishi Ci to transfer the surplus troops to Red Cliffs for its defense. Five thousand had already left the previous day.
- Taishi Ci's troops encountered Jingzhou's refugees in their camp who were asking for help. Taishi Ci hypothesised that the recent disturbances by the Shanyue Tribe had been instigated by the Cao Cao army. Then Taishi Ci was once again notified that Cao Cao had retreated to Wulin as confirmed by the insider too (who was planned by Jia Xu to be a decoy to lure Sun clan out). With this confirmation, Taishi Ci and his troops completely believed that Cao Cao had retreated to Wulin.
- Taishi Ci then encountered Deng Ai, a small boy, who soon turned out to be an assassin planted by Jia Xu to eliminate one valuable general from the Sun clan: Taishi Ci. It turned out that Jia Xu's tactic to infiltrate the refugee crowd from Jingzhou was not just to assassinate Liu Bei. But it was also to use the refugee crowd who would ask the troops for help to assassinate their generals and one of the assassins included one of the tiger generals of Cao Cao: Zhang Liao, the former general of Lu Bu.
- So what this implied was that the entire tactical sequence between Cai Mao's forces and Gan Ning's forces was orchestrated by Jia Xu to lose and Jia Xu must had anticipated that the Sun faction were expecting Cao Cao's forces to retreat to Wulin due to the loss of a commander and the humiliating defeat to Gan Ning and Zhou Tai. So Jia Xu just completely used it as a smokescreen to blind the Sun faction (not really, because there was a wider scheme of Zhou Yu going down in the background, but this is from Jia Xu's point of view obviously) and sacrificed two generals to further manipulate the faction into expecting their retreat. Masterful manipulation.
- Revolts broke out simultaneously across the southern development zones due to Jia Xu's planning. The Shanyue tribe also joined in the chaos south of Haihun. The rebels

and barbarians were planned to take action once the Sun clan chose to transfer Sun faction's troops over to Red Cliffs. The attack on Red Cliffs was merely a pretense and the Sun faction fell for it. Over two-hundred ships were spotted to be marched towards them, more than what Cao faction initially withdrew. As stated by the Sun faction soldier, Yuzhang could not be lost and Zhou Yu even pressured to redeploy troops carefully. In early November, Cao army made another attempt to invade their land. The Haihun position had been completely surrounded and taken over. Just as Jia Xu planned! A mix of reasoning, thinking, strategy, planning, deception, manipulation and foresight feat.

- Cao faction's navy arrived at the battle. They arrived with over two hundred vessels ahead. Each of the ships with three ships chained together. The Sun faction had lost Haihun, their forces at Yuzhang were digging their heels in (refusing to leave) at Shang Liao and Jiaoqui. Sun faction's forces at Pengze were also staying put as ordered and the only waterborne department to use against Cao Cao's army was the forces with Red Cliffs. All of this occurred effectively due to Jia Xu's Wulin retreat trap that effectively destroyed the Sun faction from within. Now Jia Xu turned the tides over, and now Cao Cao's forces had their initiative over waterways. As observed by General Jiang, the ship groups in the rear connected each other into a line, and the ship bridge was formed and it was sturdy. The seventh cavalry of the Sun faction were then boarding for an attack.
- Cao Cao's main forces were crossing the river. The fifth battalion had assembled and would get across the river after noontime. The sixth battalion was nearly done with a head count. The current of the river was slow, so the ships flowing in the river were also stable. Yanzhou troops were ready to transport supplies and produce supply lines for the attack. Xu Huang's troops would be the first to cross.
- All of this was achieved through Kan Ze, who was recruited through Jia Xu's insider plan regarding the Sun faction in which he used Ma En and Cheng Chao to persuade Kan Ze into joining Cao Cao's faction. Kan Ze's weather-calculation aided Cao Cao's faction to move their ships safely. Jia Xu's Haihun phase of the plan also improved Cao Cao's conditions as the south east regions were mountainous and were incredibly difficult to transport troops over there in land to launch an attack. But since Jia Xu effectively employed a number of stratagems and misdirections to capture Haihun as a harbor, transportation of troops was much easier for Cao Cao to accomplish. Kan Ze also warned Cao Cao that the slow current would end in two days. So the Cao faction planned to transport a hundred thousand men across the shore and five troops would be deployed in the southeast the day after.
- General Zhang Liao began an attack on Shangliao and the deployment map of troops had been enacted. Cao Cao ordered the deployment map to Xu Huang for deployment and ordered his men to inform Zhang Liao to fight without the fear of shortage in men or resources. As Cao Cao stated, northerners were heavily disadvantaged on waterways, so Jia Xu enacted a plan that strategized advantages on both waterways and landways

through Haihun chaos planning and Wulin retreatment misdirection. However Cao Cao was still worried about his forces on the other shore and that the dry weather might allow a fire attack. However Kan Ze relieved Cao Cao that the November northerly winds would keep the troops safe. The imminent month also meant an outbreak of plague, which Cao Cao was worried about as well.
- But then Cao Cao suddenly enquired Kan Ze whether he knew about a certain student named 'Little Ma'. Kan Ze replied that he couldn't remember any student named Little Ma. Then Cao Cao said that this student of his claimed that an easterly wind would blow in a few days and that's why Cao Cao transported his troops over to the other shore quickly. Kan Ze then further contended that there would be no easterly wind and met this student of his to contend his opinion, only to find out it was his student, Sima Yi of Sima clan. Sima Yi's presence meant that Cao Cao discovered Kan Ze's true purpose: Which was to mislead Cao Cao into falling for Zhou Yu's easterly wind bait under Zhou Yu's command.
- Cao Cao's army finally crossed the river. As Kan Ze predicted, the currents became stronger for their ships to pass through. Jia Xu was notified that Cao Cao's forces breached two of Sun clan's staging grounds like he planned: Shangliao and Jiaoqui, and that Huang Gai's army had been routed and that Sun army was refusing to leave Yuzhang. All of their five troops were able to advance inland, except for Zhang Liao whose troops had been hindered by Cheng Pu's reinforcements after assassinating Taishi Ci. Jia Xu anticipated that a lot of Sun troops would surrender after this massive attack on several sides. Why does the Sun troops surrender matter? Jia Xu planned to use the surrendered soldiers as a guide to advance through the complex geographical terrain of the south, as the Cao Cao's army were not knowledgeable regarding the geography of the south. Jia Xu planned this as a leverage to further magnify his advantages, brilliant anticipatory planning.
- But oh no, Jia Xu's planning did not just end there, he probably anticipated the massive internal conflict that would occur in the Sun faction too. Zhang Liao, a general of Cao Cao, infiltrated the Jingzhou refugee crowd and assassinated Taishi Ci, one of the most valuable generals of Sun Quan, along with Deng Ai. This sprouted to further chaos and Wulin retreat misdirection completely blinded Sun army's vision and they transferred all the troops over to Red Cliffs, which Jia Xu foresaw miles ahead. Without much reinforcements, the Sun faction's territories would be taken. As seen with Haihun takeover, as well Shangliao and Jiaoqui territories lost along with pressure on Yuzhang, along with the fact that Cao Cao was coming back with 200 ships and a lot of manpower and advantages to his side. Jia Xu's planning not only dismantled the Sun faction from their attack, but also dismantled them from the inside. With these losses, one person/one general must accept responsibility for all the losses.
- Sun Quan already accepted responsibility and reawakened morale and loyalty to his side, through Zhou Yu's enacted plan to exploit his profile of the army into accepting Sun Quan's mistakes. But still, someone was responsible for losing Taishi Ci and

territories like Haihun, Shangliao and Jiaoqui as well as all the chaos that had sprouted from Jia Xu's schemes. So Jia Xu's scheme forced Sun Quan to frame Huang Gai as the general who should take responsibility for all the chaos that had dismantled the Sun faction from inside and out, primarily with the transfer of troops over to Red Cliffs. A plan so dangerously effective that Sun Quan was forced to frame Huang Gai and beat him until he was crippled.
- Jia Xu completely changed the tides with this scheme.

- I guess the several smoke signals that came from the hills was to hijack the opposing faction's mind with the fear that they had reached far into their rear position, as well as to impose to the enemy that their numbers were quite humongous as well as notify that territories like Shangliao and Jiaoqui were breached as well as inform that they took the land route and they were preparing to support the navy in its attack on Xiapi. Imposing four key pieces of information to the enemy to build up a fear factor in their minds.
- As stated, Jia Xu effectively built Cao Cao army's navy advantage, which was ten times more ships than Zhou Yu has, by employing his previous scheme.
- Cao Cao's faction was planning to initiate their attack on Xiapi once their letter to Huang Gai, which was demanding their troops to surrender to them. Once surrendered, the Cao Cao army would launch their massive attack. Cao Cao's army also changed formation and changed their commanding general to Cai Mao instead.

- But something out of Cao faction's foresight occurred. Cai Mao abandoned his post, apparently because a family member of his was said to have fallen ill. This was Zhuge's plot to prevent Liu Bei from getting trapped in Xiakou, but that's for Zhuge's scheme session. Cao Pi hypothesized that the events surrounding Cai Mao were very strange and out of place, so he concluded that Jia Xu must have been plotting something. And Cao Pi was correct.
- It was all part of Jia Xu's plan. Remember his Kan Ze plan with the two spies, Ma En and Cheng Chao? Jia Xu anticipated that Kan Ze was an insider. Jia Xu knew that Kan Ze was the insider who was notifying the Sun clan regarding the information around the affairs and resources of Cao Cao faction. Jia Xu knew that Kan Ze notified that Cao Cao faction had 200 thousand men and that Cai Mao was dead. Jia Xu planned for Cai Mao's death. I will explain the planning in a minute, but Jia Xu was implied to be the entire orchestrator of this planning. He was the one who formulated the Kan Ze recruitment plan, the one who planned to use Cai Mao's death and the one who instigated Huang Gai's surrender as well. So this was mostly Jia Xu's doing.
- Another plot twist was that it wasn't Sima Yi who predicted the Easterly Wind Bait. But Zuo Ci. Zuo Ci was an expert in astronomy and religious practices from the Yuan clan, who joined the Cao Cao faction after the Yuan clan was defeated in the Battle Of Guandu. He was employed in the army by Cao Cao faction, most likely by Sima Yi and Jia Xu as preparation for weather-calculation in Battles. Kan Ze recruitment plan was

not to employ him for predicting the weather, but to instigate the Sun faction further into employing Easterly Wind Bait. Zuo Ci's presence in Cao Cao faction was entirely concealed by Jia Xu to instigate Zhou Yu into employing Kan Ze as a bait to lure Cao Cao faction into choosing, as he couldn't be aware of the fact that the Cao Cao faction had Zuo Ci as a cover for weather-calculation.

- Now to what Jia Xu was planning. Jia Xu planned to recruit Kan Ze by employing the Ma En and Cheng Chao to contact him, not because Kan Ze's weather calculation would aid them, Jia Xu mostly likely concealed the information that the Cao Cao faction already predicted the Easterly Wind which would occur at the twenty third day of the battle. Jia Xu also concealed his knowledge on the information that he knew Kan Ze was actually an insider planted by Zhou Yu to misdirect Cao Cao's faction into thinking that there was no Easterly Wind in the battle. Jia Xu effectively misdirected Sun faction further by the fact that he didn't study weather-calculation in the School Of Water Mirror, so this further placed Sun faction in a comfort zone, thinking Jia Xu did not cover the Easterly Wind into his plan. Insane planning, but his plan did not stop there.
- He also anticipated that Huang Gai's surrender was never meant to be real, it was merely a pretense to lure Cao Cao's faction. He also knew that Cai Mao's assassination would be informed to the Sun faction through Kan Ze. Kan Ze informed that Cai Mao had died and that a new commander was placed in his position. Since Kan Ze was not aware of the fact that Jia Xu anticipated that he was an insider, he thought that the position wouldn't change with Cai Mao's death and that they wouldn't prepare for a fire attack. But Jia Xu effectively misdirected the Kan Ze and Sun faction with it.
- By employing Zuo Ci's prediction that the Easterly Wind would occur in the twenty third day, he used Cai Mao's death to manipulate the Sun faction into thinking their plan worked and employing their Easterly Wind bait, but in truth, Jia Xu already covered it with Wen Ping. Wen Ping was the new commander who was renowned for his preparation against fire attacks and sort, who was also stated to be way more competent in battles than Cai Mao, except he was not the new commander. He always was the actual commander who was training the troops to prepare against the fire attack. Cai Mao was merely the front, Wen Ping was the real deal all along. Jia Xu's aim was to lure the Sun faction into employing a fire attack.
- Taking in Kan Ze → Employing Kan Ze → Pressuring Huang Gai into surrender → Huang Gai's surrender being a pretense → Knew that Huang Gai would send burning ships to them at Red Cliffs → Knew Kan Ze being the insider → The Easterly Wind in the twenty third day of the battle → Zuo Ci predicting the Easterly Wind Bait prior to the battle itself → Misdirecting Sun faction into employing the Easterly Wind Bait. It was revealed with a massive plot twist that Jia Xu knew Easterly Wind Bait would occur prior to the battle itself with Zuo Ci's prediction, he was instigating the Sun faction into recognising and employing the Easterly Wind Bait ALL ALONG. He also knew Sima Yi wouldn't betray on that period of time as his position in Cao Cao's faction was crippled

and Jia Xu understood that Sima Yi positionally needed to aid the faction to climb up the ranks. So Jia Xu completely trusted Sima Yi on this one.
- Absolutely brilliant planning! This level of planning is above even characters like Yuan Fang imo, I mean just the sheer layers of deception, instigation, coverage and manipulation aligning each other to this plan is insane. I thought Red Cliffs was just a mix of tactical strategies being thrown at each other, but most schemes played in this arc are actually interconnected and long-term.

- Sun faction, who discerned that their Easterly Wind Bait and Huang Gai giving up was all for naught as Jia Xu had completely turned their plans against them, just headed for a straight attack out of pride.
- This was most likely also instigated by the plan. Jia Xu most likely knew that the Sun faction would just recklessly head for their ships out of pride for their men, after they realised their entire scheme for the Battle Of Red Cliffs. So by emotionally manipulating the faction into a reckless action, Wen Ping unleashed the formation that he trained the Cao Cao's army extensively in. The formation was unleashed and the Sun faction's ships were surrounded unfortunately. The emotional manipulation of this was fairly potent. Jia Xu most likely profiled Sun faction as an incredibly prideful faction and exploited it. But unfortunately for Jia Xu, there was more to the picture that he did not see.
- Sun faction's ships were identified. A group of 1000 ships were present downstream of Cao faction's ships. A hundred more ships were identified upstream of the river. Huang Gai's vanguard fleet was burned and Cao Pi was notified that the first line of wall ships' defence wouldn't last much longer against the burning ships of the Sun faction. So Cao Pi ordered another line of wall ships, so as to defend for the warships. Zhang Liao had also initiated the attack on the bronze wall mountain as planned by Jia Xu, after Zhang Liao began his attack with Shangliao and he was aided by his men.
- Cao Ren's forces had bypassed the woods and were heading for the city of Yuzhang, which Zhou Yu warned his officers to guard. Li Dian took the mountain path and waited for Jia Xu's orders. Meanwhile in Cao Pi's position, the scout forces reported that the main forces of the southeast were on their way to their area or position. And as Jia Xu planned, Cao Pi (who does not deserve to take any credit) ordered his troops to immediately burn the camps to lure the Sun faction in. Why would Cao Pi and Jia Xu plan to do something like that? The Sun faction was planning for Huang Gai to send his burning ships to ram the Cao Cao's ships who were connected together. So Cao Pi ordered the empty camps and ships to be burned, so as to deceive the Sun faction into thinking Huang Gai had done his part and the battle had now started with the ships on flame, all of this occurred in the November of year 208. So the forces of Lu Meng under Sun Quan's order attacked the forces of Cao Cao at Red Cliffs.
- The bait has now started. Lu Meng and Lu Xun were the vanguards of Sun faction's forces, while Zhou Yu was leading the main forces of the battle. Lu Meng would land first and head for the main encampment. Lu Xun would go around to Haihun while the

Red Cliffs was in flames due to Huang Gai. Lu Xu would attack Cao Ren's rear flank after he landed in battle. Thousands of warships had been spotted by the Cao Cao faction. Jia Xu effectively lured out the entire faction by employing a single blaze to deceive the faction. The Sun faction would aim to recover Haihun, as they were informed that Cao Cao's troops headed for the city of Yuzhang to capture
- Suddenly while the Sun faction was preparing to attack the camps. A corpse of Kan Ze floated to their ships and Lu Xun was shocked. This was to inform that all of their schemes were seen through and that all of them were now useless schemes. Lu Xun immediately understood that their schemes had been seen through and that all of the forces wouldn't have left for Yuzhang, some might be there for Haihun and Lu Xun was right. Jia Xu anticipated miles ahead that Lu Xun and Lu Meng would try to recover Haihun back to their control after Cao Cao's army were marching off to the city of Yuzhang, thinking that they had fallen for their trap. And Jia Xu laid a massive ambush on the mountains to the passage of Haihun. Jia Xu also predicted that Lu Xun would slow down his ships after he saw the corpse of Kan Ze and immediately called for an ambush to catapult immediately on Lu Xun. Cold-bloodedly.
- The reason Jia Xu did not use the real Kan Ze's corpse was most likely because he recognised the imminent problem of plague. What? How does that affect his choice to eliminate Kan Ze? Jia Xu knew he was in complete control over Kan Ze. But he also knew that Zhuge Liang fabricated an outbreak of plague in the Professor Water Mirror's village and lured Hua Tuo away, to force Cao Cao and his forces to go through a crisis in plague and suffer. So he captured Kan Ze for this reason too, because he knew that Kan Ze was an incredibly important asset to the Southeast that they wouldn't want to lose. He kept Kan Ze alive so that Sima Yi, with his business connections, would trade Kan Ze for Hua Tuo so that he could save Cao Cao from the deadly outbreak of the plague. Incredible how both Jia Xu and Zhou Yu convert each and every move of theirs to have at least two or three effectiveness.
- Meanwhile the Wen Ping forces were effectively guarding against each of the Sun faction's attacks. Wen Ping defended against each wall of attacks from Sun faction's warships and warned his men that they were unpredictable tricksters. Wen Ping saw through the faction's ramming the ships feint. The faction's trap was to ram their ships to the burning ships and feint that all of their forces were gone, when they were planning an ambush from inside the water. Wen Ping saw through the feint and ordered his men to send out all the navy troops and prevent them from reaching the shore and starting a fire over the shore. He ordered them to stab the forces with their staff. And all of Cao Cao's troops were now in position.
- Cao Ren was then besieging the city with his numerical advantages and Jia Xu anticipated the neighbouring cities wouldn't hold out much longer, and as he planned, Nanchang and Manchang already surrendered. Lu Meng also had been lured out and he was too blocked by Yue Ming's forces completely. Jia Xu also exploited the tailwind to prevent Lu Xun from turning back and used the catapults to absolutely crush their

forces. Jia Xu ordered his men to attack the Sun army who had just landed. Lu Xun's forces were stuck and Lu Meng's forces were also cornered. Jia Xu finally met Zhou Yu's forces. Meanwhile Cao Cao's army was following Lu Meng's forces to the woods, to capture them and eventually surrounded his troops as well. Jia Xu also neutered Lu Xun from doing anything by forcing him on the ground, but since he would possess no warhorses to employ and battle or help, he would be completely helpless. Jia Xu with his killer moves. Xun You also blocked the burning ships with his new formation.

- That marked the end of Jia Xu's strategy in Red Cliffs. An absolutely chef kiss of a strategy with a lot of intricacies and complexities flowing in-between. His entire strategy/plan for Red Cliffs started right when Cao Cao launched the campaign, insane. The reason I did not continue mentioning Cao Cao faction's moves now was because it was just traditional war moves from that point forward that were more about in-battle tactics than long-term manipulation or planning. So that marked the end of Jia Xu's scheme. However, Zhou Yu planned a far more layered strategy to Jia Xu's strategy. One that utterly humiliated a faction with larger forces, more resources, way more advantages and way more positional aid.

How can people even say Wei was nerfed in this arc, when they formulated a plan as damn complex as this???


YEAH

Zhou Yu's main strategy for the battle of red cliffs:

- Note: I will mention some strategic aspects that were not directly stated to be Zhou Yu's doing, but as we saw later, Zhou Yu was the one who masterminded most of it, so I am going to mention them as Zhou Yu's feats. Besides, there were implications that all of them were part of his plan, so I guess why not?

- Cao Cao's faction launched a campaign on the south east by employing ships on Han river, by predicting the massive flood that would fill up the shallow Han river and hence can be usable for ships to maneuver. And by using the massive flood, blocking and overcoming the heavy guarded area using the flood. Cao Cao, using intimidation factor and general advantages, besieged Jingzhou and took control over it, by subjugating Liu Cong and his men, which also granted the faction with new generals to employ. The massive launch of attack was foreseen by Zhuge and they were preparing to march towards Xiakou, along with Liu Bei's supporters who were in Jingzhou so as to avoid a confrontation to Cao Cao's massive army that was marching towards the southeast. Now, Zhou Yu's planning/stratagem that he employed to win against Cao Cao's faction started right from this point, crazy stuff I know but Zhou Yu planned far ahead. You may ask what do you mean here? I will explain the planning later.

- Zhou Yu finally entered the scene. Cao Cao's warships from Xiangyang were employing an encirclement strategy to surround the enemy and block the opposition from escaping away from any ways. Taishi Ci ordered the first, third and fifth divisions of the army to get ready, as well as ordered the second, seventh and eight divisions to get ready in their position, so as to split their army in half. Zhou Yu saw through the Cao Cao faction's pretense. Cao Cao used their positions and pursuit of Liu Bei's army as a bait to misdirect the opposition, when it was all for show.
- Zhou Yu reasoned that Xiangyang was already captured and surrendered by Cao Cao's forces, so there would be no reason to station any occupying forces/troops. But the Cao Cao faction's real plan was for the Navy to resupply at Xiangyang and march towards the South together. Zhou Yu praised Cao Cao's deployment as flawless, except for the fact that Cao Cao foolishly engaged in an attack against the Naval genius of south east, Zhou Yu as if it's negotiable (and Zhou Yu was right).
- Zhou Yu reasonably deduced that the stationing points at which Cao Cao deployment were merely a smokescreen, the main army is Jia Xu's forces, and that all the other forces would combine to launch a massive campaign on Cao Cao.

- Zhou Yu engaged in a brief tactical sequence with Jia Xu's forces. Zhou Yu employed a formation that formed a large current which trapped the Cao Cao faction's ships and resulted in their left flank being lost. Zhou Yu ordered his men to surround the middle group as they were pointed out to be in a weak point, and they were ultimately routed by Zhou Yu's forces.
- But that's not the end of the tactical sequence. Jia Xu planned a deadly tactic in this sequence.
- Jia Xu planned an ambush in the woods, but he had to strategize the situation in-depth to lure Zhou Yu through. Xiahou Dun's forces who were marching towards Liu Bei who was marching towards Xiakou, were blocked by Lu Su, an advisor of Liu Bei, by using the geographical area to start a fire that would effectively not let the Cao Cao faction's army pass through. The Cao Cao's army on Han river i.e, Jia Xu's forces were bullied by Zhou Yu's forces in the quick battle. Zhou Yu routed the ships and attacked their weak points, and effectively took down the forces on water. The forces who were attacked by Zhou Yu's ships, were forced to flee on land to the nearby woods.
- The situation was made to manipulate the Sun faction into thinking this was a perfect opportunity to chase down the Cao Cao army on land and defeat them. Cao Cao's forces were forced to flee on land, the rest of Cao Cao's forces were stationed elsewhere in the south and the morale of Cao Cao faction's army was crumbling. But it was all a trap and Zhou Yu saw through it effortlessly. Jia Xu intentionally framed the situation to look as advantageous as possible. Why? Because Jia Xu planned an ambush with Xiahou Dun's forces being in the woods over there. Jia Xu was the bait to lure the Sun faction away, Xiahou Dun had marched south and had already occupied several stationing points around Xiakou. The goal of Jia Xu was to clear the path to Red Cliffs.
- Zhou Yo effortlessly saw through this trap, by observing the moves of Jia Xu's forces in the battle as well as connecting the moves of the other forces of Cao Cao such as Xiahou Dun's to the battle he and Jia Xu had so as to conclude his reasoning that the following events was a set up and that there was an ambush in the woods. Zhou Yu proceeded to counter the trap by ordering his men to shoot a large amount of arrows towards the woods to force the ambushing forces out of the woods. Cao Cao's fleets and forces were then forced to flee from the battle.

- There was an additional aspect to the arc: Liu Bei's march to Xiakou. Cao Cao, prior to their encounter with Zhou Yu's fleets on the Han river, employed the Han river's massive flood to destroy the heavily guarded river and used the flood to fill up the Han river on which they could ride their boats on. Liu Cong and his supporters in Jingzhou, upon the immediate attack of Cao Cao on the southeast, were obviously intimidated by the magnitude of Cao Cao's power and how it compared to Jingzhou's army. So Liu Cong ultimately surrendered to Cao Cao's forces who entered Jingzhou in spite of Liu Biao's supporters rejecting the surrender.

- Zhuge Liang (who had secret plots that I will explain later in the doc) proposed to Liu Bei to march towards Xiakou and occupy the city, as well as bring all the Liu Bei's supporters over with them and when Zhuge was questioned on why he did that, Zhuge replied that reputation was the integral characteristic of Liu Bei, so "he gotta maintain the agenda dawg" Zhuge probably. So Liu Bei took Zhuge's word and took the refugee crowd along with him to Xiakou without hesitation, believing that it would contribute to the larger strategy of Red Cliffs.
- Anyways, Liu Bei's army then proceeded to encounter assassinations and forces from Cao Cao which they eventually overcame in time (don't worry I will provide a more detailed summary on this later in Zhuge's section). However, Zhuge was confident that they and the refugee crowd would pass through the superior Cao Cao's forces, because he anticipated that Zhou Yu's forces i.e, Sun faction would help them get to Jingzhou faster. The surface level plan was to get as much population as possible so as to use them to repopulate in another area. But Zhou Yu's plan to take Zhuge in goes way deeper than that, in fact this action was one part of Zhou Yu's entire strategy to win in Red Cliffs. This move actually goes like 3 layers or so deep. Let that sink in.

- The Cao Cao had occupied Wulin and the Red Cliffs had been captured by the army. Along with the fact that Cao Cao's army had taken over the city of Jingzhou and had recruited all of their top soldiers, commanders and alike. Cao Cao's army boasted a million forces strong. Which could be used as a fear factor to crumble the opposite faction's morale, which meant the opposition could surrender without a fight. Cao Cao's army was at the advantage as up to this point, Cao Cao's forces and resources would easily outnumber and outmaneuver the Sun faction's army and resources along with the fact that Cao Cao already had perfectly deployed internal and military advisors/strategists, while Zhou Yu was literally the controller of everything in Red Cliffs.
- We were spoonfed about Zhou Yu's advantages (that btw Zhou Yu did not just inherit, he engineered those advantages by capturing the ships from Liu Biao) in the Navy. Cao Cao possessed three divisions, totaling forty-two ships including scouting ships for navies. The Sun clan's ships were too fast (it meant that Zhou Yu's adaptive thinking and speed were too overwhelming for them) and the Sun clan already owned a large number of ships in their southern eastern territory. But after their capture from Liu Biao's influence, Zhou Yu secured far more ships in his arsenal, which would mark his number of ships higher than Cao Cao's.
- By securing a large number of ships in his arsenal, Zhou Yu was able to create a sense of threat that he could easily use decoy strategies with their ships, and it would be hard to locate their main fleet. Not only that, by luring them deep into his territory, Zhou Yu was able to complicate their situation further. Geographically, the routes for a land assault would be very tricky, not to mention the remoteness of the land and the rugged passages of it which would complicate the idea of supply line further. Forcing the Cao

Cao into caution and forcing them to think that the only way to attack the eastern region would be with a frontal assault.

- The Sun faction was faced with a growing problem. The Cao Cao army's power was incredible, incredibly strong, which meant that it would result in the crumbling of the morale and surrender of the Sun faction's troops, which would be detrimental to the faction, along with another problem and that being: Insiders. The rival/enemy strategist of Zhou Yu in Red Cliffs was Jia Xu, whose specialty is espionage and deployment of spies. The insider problem could get very big and could result in the destruction of a faction. This was proven when Guo Jia exploited the internal factions to turn against each other and self-destruct themselves to submission. Zhou Yu lured out most of Cao Cao's supporters within the faction and left out two key insiders: Ma En and Cheng Chao for his overall scheme in Red Cliffs.
- So Zhou Yu had to deal with the problem of insiders. Zhou Yu helping Liu Bei's travel to Xiakou served for several uses. On the surface level, he wanted to help, because he is a good and totally selfless guy who would do anything for family. But on the second layer into this rabbit hole, was that Zhou Yu wanted to employ Zhuge to persuade the insiders whom he had lured out by framing Cao Cao as incredibly powerful and advantageous to bring out his supporters.
- He wanted to persuade them instead of suppressing them, as they were either people of key/high positions in the Sun faction or internal managers/ministers of the faction, so suppressing them would not work. So instead he decided to exploit the fact that Zhuge desired to lead the refugee crowds to the south east and employed Zhuge as a vocalist to persuade the insiders to calm down. Zhuge was known for his exceptionally key vocal prowess, similar to the Sixth Genius 'Pang Tong' and the Eight Genius 'Zhao Sheng'. But there are more layers to this scheme.
- The third layer of this trap was to trap Zhuge in his faction. Zhou Yu and pretty much every single character in the era envied or atleast admired the sheer magnitude of Zhuge's genius. Zhuge was proclaimed as 'The Crouching Dragon' by the House Of Water Mirror's teacher, Professor Water Mirror 'Sima Hui'. Zhou Yu was an one-man strategist and chief controller of the faction, so he needed someone to occupy the missing puzzle in the faction even though the factions had genius characters to employ, who had albeit far lesser genius compared to the genius of other geniuses like Zhuge Liang, Sima Yi, Guo Jia, Jia Xu and etc....
- Now you may ask how would Zhou Yu trap Zhuge Liang in the Sun faction? Through force? No, that would result in severe backlash while in a time of battles with Cao Cao, through say gex? No, but that would be a better method for me personally. Anyways Zhou Yu employed two key vocalists/debaters in the debate area so as to convince Zhuge to their side, Bu Zhi and Yu fan. As stated by Sun Quan, Yu Fan and Bu Zhi were known for their impenetrable arguments that cannot be broken down, so by employing them as

the persuaders, they would logically trap Zhuge in the faction as their arguments would be directed for him to stay in the Sun faction.
- So Zhou Yu planned to trap Zhuge within his faction. But Zhuge walked into the debate trap, knowing Zhou Yu's (not three but four layered) trap. Zhuge knew that Zhou Yu's trap was to trap him in his faction, using the refugee crowds as a leverage to help so as to come in contact with Zhuge Liang and then use debate as an excuse to lure him deep within the faction, and trap him in with Zhuge's elder brother, Zhuge Jin. However, unfortunate for Zhou Yu (just like how Zhou Yu is such a nuisance to Jia Xu's schemes, Zhuge is the same to Zhou Yu I guess), Zhuge not only saw through the trap but foresaw it miles ahead.
- Zhuge's intention here was to deduce whether or not Zhou Yu and the Sun faction already took control over the Sixth Genius (or Zhuge's best buddy ig) Pang Tong, but when Zhuge saw that Pang Tong was not present, Zhuge immediately deduced that Pang Tong rejected the offer and planned to recruit him in Liu Bei's faction so as to obviously strengthen in through the master of chain stratagems and the unbeatable debater of the eight geniuses, whose persuasive skills was even stated to be on par if not over the capability of the Eight genius. Zhuge flawlessly evaded the trap. But there was a contingency regarding Zhuge's rebuttal from the debate as well as for his later schemes in Red Cliffs.
- Zhou Yu's contingency plan if Zhuge Liang were to contend the top debaters of the Sun faction in argumentation and emerge victorious was to employ Lu Su so as to unify Sun and Liu faction. Zhou Yu employed Lu Su, because Lu Su was known for his specialty regarding unification of factions and friendly negotiations as stated by the third brother of Liu Bei himself. Zhou Yu most likely anticipated the entirety of the negotiation process and most likely advised Lu Su to start with a marriage proposal between Sun Shu, the elder daughter of the Sun faction and Zhao Yun, one of the fierce tiger generals of Liu Bei.
- Zhou Yu most likely anticipated the foot-in-door or just an opportunity luring to get the third brother to up the proposal to a marriage offer between Liu Bei and Sun Shu, instead of Sun Shu and Zhao Yun. Within this contingency, Zhou Yu successfully formulated an alliance between Liu and Sun faction that neither of them could break away easily without serious consequences, this further solidified the relationship and dependency between the two as official and nearly mandatory. Such an unlikely contingency, considering the fact that Zhuge was up against the top debaters of the Sun faction, but Zhou Yu still anticipated Zhuge's prowess and formulated a contingency for it.
- Incredible trap that almost suppressed Zhuge, but Zhuge evaded the trap. There was a fourth layer to this trap which was to serve for the overall strategy of Red Cliffs that Zhou Yu formulated to win against Cao Cao. I will elucidate further about this aspect too in the summary regarding Zhou Yu's easterly wind bait strategy in the end.

- The next sequence of moves was not performed by Zhou Yu himself, but it was implied to have been planned and orchestrated entirely by Gan Ning, and there was actually another scheme that Zhou Yu orchestrated in this tactical sequence too for his overall red cliffs stratagem, just like how Jia Xu also orchestrated a scheme in this section which was the Wulin misdirection scheme. Cao Cao's men were searching for Sun faction's scout ships over the waterways to attack, but they only found three ships approaching on the waterways. Cai Mao and his troops found Gan Ning's forces approaching them.
- Cai Mao immediately started to verbally attack Gan Ning by calling him a traitor of Jingzhou as Gan Ning was originally an illegal private or sort who belonged to the Jingzhou yet refused to surrender under Cao Cao when Jingzhou surrendered to his forces (because of his policy to never surrender under attack), but Gan Ning deflected the verbal attack and they immediately got into a battle. Cai Mao ordered his forces/flanks to launch a pincer attack.
- Pincer attack is basically a type of military tactic where two flanks of a force actively move in two parallel opposite sides to trap the enemy forces in the middle so as to crush them from both sides. Very simple, but effective technique I guess. The right flank of Cai Mao's troops helped the other flank to surround the enemy and the archers were preparing to shoot at Gan Ning's forces. Gan Ning ordered his men to launch a full-on leather-covered-warship frontal assault. Frontal Assault is another type of military tactic in which the forces of a faction immediately launches a direct attack on the front line of the enemy's forces, instead of attacking through flanks or rear.
- Gan Ning blocked the archers' arrow with the shield, and then immediately ordered his forces/men to ram the warships against the Cao Cao's forces. Gan Ning's forces were targeting the second master's ship, but the incredibly high torrent levels of the waterways prevented the rest of the forces including Cai Mao's to reach the second master's warship, leaving it defenseless. Gan Ning immediately started attacking the ships and boarded the ships along with his other general, Zhou Tai. Gan Ning acquired the head of the left flank's general, while Zhou Tai acquired the head of the right flank general.
- Sun forces' warship was heading right towards the Cao Cao's forces, forcing them to avoid a head-on collision and retreat. The Sun fleets passed right through the Cao Cao's forces, but when they tried to catch them back, it was too late for it. The Sun faction used the current in the fight to fasten their movement as well as messed up the enemy's positioning. The current was formed by the narrow path between the gorge which would pass the wind and create the currents, and the light ships of the Sun forces made it easier for them to escape, evade or move.
- Employing the weather at the right time and right place to win the short battle, brilliant tactical strategy. There were implications that Zhou Yu was the one who instigated and orchestrated the entire battle as he really was the only one who could

predict weather patterns along with the fact that Gan Ning explicitly stated Zhou Yu anticipated all of this with minimal information.

- Then Cao Cao's men (some guy, don't ask me his name) proceeded to identify Sun Quan's navy's strategy during the battle. The strategy was to use the strong-flowing current or torrent to prevent the other ships from blocking their movement to the other ships of theirs, took advantage of the wind flowing from the narrow path of Gorge to seize control and used the lightness of their ships to quicken the speed of their ships along with the wind to prevent Cao Cao faction from catching up to him.
- Then as Sima Yi identified, the attack route of Cao Cao's army was impossible. The geography of the southeast was too complex to defend against. So that's why Cao Cao's army was forced to take shelter behind their naval forces in their gradual advance into the southeast territory. Despite the advantages that Sun Quan and his forces possessed however, they were still massively outnumbered by the Cao Cao's forces combined with the fact that they did not possess good enough land in the south east and resources to employ, Zhou Yu only took advantage of Zhuge's schemes to magnify his ships advantage.

- Then there is a crucial scheme that Zhou Yu implemented in the Red Cliffs. Kan Ze and Zhang Zhao were once great teachers of the eight geniuses of Professor Water Mirror. As stated, Zhang Zhao specialised primarily in the art of finance and logistical management, and as Jia Xu stated, both he and Xun Yu studied extensively in the art of war and finance under him, leaving weather calculations to Guo Jia alone. Kan Ze specialised in the art of astronomy and calculation, whose weather predictions were incredibly accurate as seen from his feats such as predicting the exact strength of the water current later in the arc as well as his knowledge regarding the Easterly Wind Bait.
- There was a narrative that Zhang Zhao eventually fell under Sun Quan's control and went on a conquest, which deeply upsetted Kan Ze. The upsetted Kan Ze retired in the hills and rejected any offer of recruitment from the Sun faction as a result, staying away from the chaotic warzones of China. Zhang Zhao chose a life of military pursuit, and continued to serve under Sun Quan's command, while Kan Ze took up a farming and difficult life on the side instead after his retirement. Jia Xu deployed two insiders, Ma En and Cheng Chao to establish deep contact with Kan Ze and eventually persuaded him to enter Cao Cao's faction.
- Why would Jia Xu need Kan Ze's presence in the Cao Cao faction (he did not, but I have to explain Jia Xu's fabricated surface-level reasons too)? Because Cao Cao's faction lacked a strategy who could calculate weather, so obviously by luring out a specialist in weather calculation to his side, Jia Xu aimed to cover that flaw obviously. Zhou Yu knew that Jia Xu employed Ma En and Cheng Chao to establish contact and lure Kan Ze to their faction. So to instigate Jia Xu into employing this scheme in the first place, Zhou Yu fabricated a narrative that Kan Ze resented the Sun faction due to Zhang Zhao and

rejected their offer to join their faction so as to manipulate Jia Xu into recognising it as an opportunity for him to exploit.
- So Zhou Yu formulated this scheme to instigate Jia Xu into luring Kan Ze to his faction, without knowing that Kan Ze was an insider that he unintentionally invited to his faction. Kan Ze was the one who served as an insider and was planning to leak the crucial information to Zhou Yu on the date of Cao Cao's forces' mobilization. Zhou Yu also planted another insider in Cao Cao's faction, which was General Wang, who was also leaking several data and information regarding Cao Cao's forces to the Sun faction.
- However if you had already read the Jia Xu strategy section, you would know Jia Xu anticipated up to the insider layer of the scheme. But there's a deeper hidden layer which too again serves for Zhou Yu's overall red cliffs stratagem, pretty cool, right? I will summarise all of this back in "Summarising Zhou Yu's entire strategy for the Battle Of Red Cliffs" section.

- I am not going to explain everything about the Haihun scheme orchestrated by Jia Xu. If you want to know more about the scheme, just read Jia Xu's strategy section.
- In Haihun, Taishi Ci, an important general of the Sun faction, was notified by the insider in Cao Cao's faction that Cao Cao was planning to retreat to Wulin after their massive losses against their forces, along with the fact that no ships had been spotted, so it was natural for the Sun faction's men to think that Cao Cao simply withdrew from the battle due to the constant losses against the Sun faction.
- Because of the encroaching Cao Cao's forces, as stated by Taishi Ci, Huang Gai ordered the surplus forces of his troops to be transferred to Red Cliffs for its defense, and five thousand troops of theirs had already left the previous day and Taishi Ci would soon stand for the front line of the forces as stated too. Taishi Ci spotted the refugee crowd from Jingzhou, whom Liu Bei took in so as to travel towards Xiakou, who were begging for some shelter and food.
- Taishi Ci and his men hypothesized that the refugee crowd, who were supposed to be sent south, was disturbed by the recent string of events and due to recent disturbances by the Shanyue tribes which was maybe caused by Cao Cao's forces. Taishi Ci rejected the soldier's concern for the crowd out of military stance and ordered them to leave. Taishi Ci met a young child named Deng Ai from the crowd, who introduced himself as a big fan of his.
- It turned out that Jia Xu found out General Wang's true purpose in the army, which was to serve as an insider for the Sun faction by suspicion and confirming through verbally trapping him. Jia Xu revealed that none of the ships from Cao Cao were actually planned to leave. The entire idea of Cao Cao's forces retreating to Wulin was a misdirection, they are actually laying an ambush over there for the Sun faction who would unknowingly enter the battle without caution. Jia Xu employed General Wang as a converted spy to confirm Sun faction's theories and lured them out to fall for his trap,

along with the fact that Cai Mao's assassination was also a trap to get Sun faction into a comfort zone and lure them into an attack.
- The boy, Deng Ai, turned out to be an assassin planted by Jia Xu back when Liu Bei took the refugee crowd from Jingzhou to assassinate Taishi Ci and Zhang Liao also came out to fight Taishi Ci, and eventually Zhang Liao succeeded assassinating Taishi CI. The loss of Taishi Ci eventually resulted in the loss of Haihun and the troops over there. All the losses of territories and a significant general resulted in several revolts across the southern development zones, it was too instigated by Jia Xu's scheme and Shanyue tribes too joined their massive launch of revolt in Haihun.
- Everything was merely a pretense that Jia Xu orchestrated, the actual attack was from both land and waterways as well as the obliteration of Sun faction's troops which Jia Xu planned out as well. More than two hundred warships from Cao Cao's faction were deployed, far outnumbering the Sun faction's and they would target Yuzhang as foreseen by Zhou Yu. And Zhou Yu notified to safeguard the city of Yuzhang as Yuzhang is a very crucial strategic area for the Sun faction as stated.
- In November, Cao Cao once again made an attempt to invade the south east land. And the military position of Haihun was surrounded by Cao Cao's troops, along with the death of a crucial general of the Sun faction, Taishi Ci. Please don't throw me away into the dumpster, if I later stated in the Zhou Yu red cliffs strategy section that all of this was planned out by Zhou Yu too.

- Zhou Yu and Sun Quan were then faced with a new problem: Morale and responsibility. As a certain wise blonde baseballer said, "To take responsibility is to take the pain onto yourself. It means to bear more pain than what others felt because of your mistake. If you ruined someone's silver tableware, you must repay with gold tableware. The president of a polluting manufacturing plant must live beside the plant's chimney. That's what responsibility means." Sun Quan must admit responsibility for all the chaotic events that was orchestrated by Jia Xu across all of Sun faction's deployed troops, or else the internal affairs of the faction would get bulldozed and ultimately badly exploited, so Zhou Yu and Sun Quan formulated a tactic to counter this problem.
- Note: This tactic is just spamming emotional + mass manipulation, so don't expect it to be supergenius good.
- Zhou Yu predicted the rain that would occur in that period of time. Why does this matter? Because rain is usually associated with a darkened mood or a darker tone along with a damper effect where a person would be in a state of hurt or worry, it was to have a psychological effect on the troops along with allowing Sun Quan to use the rain as an allegory to promote responsibility and loyalty in his troops. A rather simple manipulative tactic, but effective one at that too.

This is how the sequence went (Note: If you have already read the chapter, just skip this section):

Sun Quan: “It’s raining, but is it fair that I only have an umbrella? In the same way, are you all content to share the burden of war when I am the cause?”
- Like I said, Zhou Yu’s prediction of rain was not for simple reasons, but to actually provide Sun Quan a sort of leverage to gain over the army. Sun Quan used the rain as an analogy to share his psychological burden with his men. What Zhou Yu employed here is known as “Ambient Influence”. Ambient Influence is the psychological impact of environmental factors such as temperature, weather, tone, etc… which influences the psychological mind. A very simple yet effective technique. Employing the Narrative Transportation Theory i.e, use of symbolisms or metaphors to influence the masses mind, like how Sun Quan used the rain as an allegory.
Sun Quan: “Even as loyal servants of this clan, the thought must have crossed your mind. A dandy, a good-for-nothing, why does he get to enjoy royalty? Yes, you must have thought of it. Some of you might have even considered Cao Cao’s condition.”
- Sun Quan employed the technique of Guilt-tripping to influence his masses mind. Very simple technique once again, but aligned together with a bunch of similar psychological techniques such as this creates a very impactful tactic to influence the masses. Guilt tripping is the type of manipulative tactic where the manipulator forces a sense of responsibility or guilt in the victim to influence them. Here, Sun Quan forced the burden of responsibility or guilt by calling himself a dandy, good-for-nothing and framed the troops as thinking of him as such, which psychologically would influence the masses to remove this form of image of him that they may have had in their mind to make up for the guilt.
Sun Quan: “Everything will be resolved once I surrender. Glory to the one who eliminates me. I have stood here for so long. Cold and hungry. What the hell am I doing? I have lived for half my lifetime but for what? And why am I suddenly afraid to take out my umbrella? So I have spoken your hearts, now I will speak mine.”
- What Sun Quan employed here is the Self disclosure technique. Self disclosure technique is a psychological technique of giving up valuable information or negative information about themselves to demonstrate their self awareness and foster relationships. Sun Quan disclosed that he was the root cause of the situation and that the elimination of him would result in the conclusion of the struggle. This fostered an intimate relationship between him and the army as well as would create an after-effect of guilt from the guilt tripping technique.
Sun Quan: “The condition Cao Cao gave me was even richer than yours. “A son should be like Sun Zhong Mou” That’s his praise for me. Once I surrender to his call, I may be allowed to contribute to court politics - Fulfilling the dream of my late father that he couldn’t achieve. Yet why am I still holding on to Southeast and continue my role as a rebel? And fabricate different excuses to survive? Despite the thousands we have killed, we must call ourselves the righteous army. With no regard for the emperor, but instead claim we are loyal to the people, view all living things with contempt - Only tools for power struggle.” —> “It was all just for one thing in the end. That thing is more

important than anything else in this day and age. It's power - My namesake Sun clan's power. The name my father planted. Why do you still cover for me? Let me be more frank. From the Han's licentious emperor Ling to today's powerless son of heaven, are you still looking forward to something? From the rebelling yellow turbans to the territorial warlords, is our country still in one piece? From Cao Cao taking the emperor hostage to the lords paying him no heed, could the country still be in peace? From the sagely odes to virtues, to the corruption of humanity, is there still a truth? From the sages sacrificing themselves for the righteous way to differing opinions, does heaven still maintain its principle? I will tell you this! History merely repeats itself. Whatever discontent you feel or your wish to change the world - All futile! Because without a change to the root, it will grow the same fruit. The rest of the world can do it, but I cannot!"
- The speech ended with all of his troops embracing him in tears. Sun Quan explained all the geopolitical issues and problems to appeal to the masses and fixed a target to motivate his troops to the greatest, a classic showcase of "Social Proof Theory".
- It's worth noting that Zhou Yu also psychoanalysed the entire thoughts of Sun Quan, the troops and even Taishi Ci in the same chapter, implying he was probably the base of Sun Quan's speech.

- The Cao Cao navy was arriving at the battle. Over two hundred vessels ahead. And the group behind them, each with three chained ships together. The Sun faction lost Haihun due to Zhang Liao's attack on Taishi Ci's weak camp after the troops were transferred to Red Cliffs. Their forces at the city of Yuzhang were digging their heels in at Shangliao and Jiaoqui. The Sun faction's forces at Pengze were also staying put without any form of movements. The only forces at the water were the troops deployed at Red Cliffs. Cao Cao's forces had a massively overpowering advantage over water.
- Cao Cao's new formation over water with their cavalry forces was incoming, they made it seem like they were walking on water with incredible control. His main forces were crossing the river. The fifth battalion had assembled and would get across the river by noontime. The sixth battalion was also done with a head count. As mister Kan Ze predicted, the warships were able to cross the river without much difficulty due to the slow current of the river. Xu Huang's troops would be the first to cross the river. The deployment of Cao Cao's troops was done and it was ordered by Cao Cao to be given to Xu Huang. Cao Cao was at a massive advantage at this point, Cao Cao was basically winning with Jia Xu's schemes.
- The plague was also an incoming threat, but it was not accounted for. Cao Cao's troops had eventually breached two of Sun faction's staging grounds, Shangliao and Jiaoqui. Huang Gai's troops had been routed and most of Cao Cao's troops had infiltrated the areas. Jia Xu further covered the flaw of lack of knowledge regarding the geography of southeast by instigating surrender from people. Jia Xu even forced Sun Quan to punish Huang Gai for all the chaos that had happened in Haihun and the following events.

- Sun Quan already accepted responsibility and reawakened morale and loyalty to his side, through Zhou Yu's enacted plan to exploit his profile of the army into accepting Sun Quan's mistakes. But still, someone was responsible for losing Taishi Ci and territories like Haihun, Shangliao and Jiaoqui as well as all the chaos that had sprouted from Jia Xu's schemes. So Jia Xu's scheme forced Sun Quan to frame Huang Gai as the general who should take responsibility for all the chaos that had dismantled the Sun faction from inside and out, primarily with the transfer of troops over to Red Cliffs. Then Huang Gai received a letter, demanding him to surrender.
- A plan so dangerously effective that Sun Quan was forced to frame Huang Gai and beat him until he was crippled. But Zhou Yu planned all of this out, meaning Zhou Yu foresaw all of this before Jia Xu even thought of it.

- Zhou Yu met Liu Bei while preparing for his attack against Cao Cao. Liu Bei tried to pry about the strategy that Zhou Yu had enacted, but Zhou Yu skillfully avoided any prying, because he didn't want to talk about Jingzhou which he was preparing to take over. Zhou Yu must have foreseen such an encounter as well.
- The Sun faction established a friendly relationship with Jingzhou's Liu faction, but their motives for the friendly establishment were not pure. Their aim was to conquer Jingzhou for themselves. Zhou Yu wasn't after the other shore yet. Liu Bei would not be able to even dream of conquering Jingzhou if they were rendered incapable of crossing the river. Once the Sun faction takes while Liu Bei was tied down behind, the Liu faction would appear inhumane and dishonest to return the land to them when the Sun faction fought for it with casualties. Zhou Yu let Cao Cao down the river partly to tie Liu Bei down in a place and prevent him from crossing the river, as Cai Mao's troops were blocking their way.
- Incredible side long term scheme after the battle that Zhou Yu underhandedly planned for.

- Cao Cao's forces started arching several arrows at the Sun faction's forces and they pulled back. They spreaded out the main force to form a shield formation. Then Han Dang's fleet returned back safely. Though the Sun faction was able to defeat a few warships of Cao Cao faction, they kept on adding more ships to counter the losses. Zhou Yu ordered his men to not go too near as their forces are too much for them to handle, so Zhou Yu decided to stay at a distance and not go past the initial range. Zhou Yu chose to observe Cao Cao's fleet's fluctuations in their formations, and remained passive.
- Zhou Yu immediately deduced that the fleets came from the Jingzhou navy. Zhou Yu then went on to deduce that Cao Cao's army's movements were in better shape due to their training under Cai Mao (not actually, but Zhou Yu most likely saw through Jia Xu's Cai Mao trap too), but the sudden change of formations would mean that they reassigned the commander. Zhou Yu deduced that Cai Mao was assassinated and that

Cai Mao's assassination was orchestrated by Zhuge Liang, Liu Bei sent military supplies to Zhou Yu along with Cai Mao's head.
- The assassination plot of Cai Mao eliminated Jiangxia's main opponent, the change of enemy commander would benefit the Liu clan greatly. I will explain why this assassination plot was actually formulated by Zhuge, but here what matters is that Zhou Yu deduced it.

- Kan Ze had successfully infiltrated Cao Cao's faction. He informed the Sun faction that about two hundred thousand forces were stationed at Red Cliffs. Part of the forces went to Haihun, so their forces had been broken up. He also informed that Cao Cao received Huang Gai's reply and was preparing to collaborate. If it were to go smoothly, he informed that Cao Cao's forces would initiate their attack on the day Huang Gai surrendered, which meant that they were in control of the date. Once easterly wind would be employed and the destruction of Red Cliffs would come, the supply line of Cao Cao's forces would be cut off as well as the destruction of Cao Cao's forces all together. But it was all a smokescreen. Jia Xu planned all of this.
- If you want me to repost it, here you go. Skip Jia Xu's scheme if you have already read it.
something out of Cao faction's foresight occurred. Cai Mao abandoned his post, apparently because a family member of his was said to have fallen ill. This was Zhuge's plot to prevent Liu Bei from getting trapped in Xiakou, but that's for Zhuge's scheme session. Cao Pi hypothesized that the events surrounding Cai Mao were very strange and out of place, so he concluded that Jia Xu must have been plotting something. And Cao Pi was correct.
- It was all part of Jia Xu's plan. Remember his Kan Ze plan with the two spies, Ma En and Cheng Chao? Jia Xu anticipated that Kan Ze was an insider. Jia Xu knew that Kan Ze was the insider who was notifying the Sun clan regarding the information around the affairs and resources of Cao Cao faction. Jia Xu knew that Kan Ze notified that Cao Cao faction had 200 thousand men and that Cai Mao was dead. Jia Xu planned for Cai Mao's death. I will explain the planning in a minute, but Jia Xu was implied to be the entire orchestrator of this planning. He was the one who formulated the Kan Ze recruitment plan, the one who planned to use Cai Mao's death and the one who instigated Huang Gai's surrender as well. So this was mostly Jia Xu's doing.
- Another plot twist was that it wasn't Sima Yi who predicted the Easterly Wind Bait. But Zuo Ci. Zuo Ci was an expert in astronomy and religious practices from the Yuan clan, who joined the Cao Cao faction after the Yuan clan was defeated in the Battle Of Guandu. He was employed in the army by Cao Cao faction, most likely by Sima Yi and Jia Xu as preparation for weather-calculation in Battles. Kan Ze recruitment plan was not to employ him for predicting the weather, but to instigate the Sun faction further into employing Easterly Wind Bait. Zuo Ci's presence in Cao Cao faction was entirely concealed by Jia Xu to instigate Zhou Yu into employing Kan Ze as a bait to lure Cao Cao

faction into choosing, as he couldn't be aware of the fact that the Cao Cao faction had Zuo Ci as a cover for weather-calculation.
- Now to what Jia Xu was planning. Jia Xu planned to recruit Kan Ze by employing the Ma En and Cheng Chao to contact him, not because Kan Ze's weather calculation would aid them, Jia Xu mostly likely concealed the information that the Cao Cao faction already predicted the Easterly Wind which would occur at the twenty third day of the battle. Jia Xu also concealed his knowledge on the information that he knew Kan Ze was actually an insider planted by Zhou Yu to misdirect Cao Cao's faction into thinking that there was no Easterly Wind in the battle. Jia Xu effectively misdirected Sun faction further by the fact that he didn't study weather-calculation in the School Of Water Mirror, so this further placed Sun faction in a comfort zone, thinking Jia Xu did not cover the Easterly Wind into his plan. Insane planning, but his plan did not stop there.
- He also anticipated that Huang Gai's surrender was never meant to be real, it was merely a pretense to lure Cao Cao's faction. He also knew that Cai Mao's assassination would be informed to the Sun faction through Kan Ze. Kan Ze informed that Cai Mao had died and that a new commander was placed in his position. Since Kan Ze was not aware of the fact that Jia Xu anticipated that he was an insider, he thought that the position wouldn't change with Cai Mao's death and that they wouldn't prepare for a fire attack. But Jia Xu effectively misdirected the Kan Ze and Sun faction with it.
- By employing Zuo Ci's prediction that the Easterly Wind would occur in the twenty third day, he used Cai Mao's death to manipulate the Sun faction into thinking their plan worked and employing their Easterly Wind bait, but in truth, Jia Xu already covered it with Wen Ping. Wen Ping was the new commander who was renowned for his preparation against fire attacks and sort, who was also stated to be way more competent in battles than Cai Mao, except he was not the new commander. He always was the actual commander who was training the troops to prepare against the fire attack. Cai Mao was merely the front, Wen Ping was the real deal all along. Jia Xu's aim was to lure the Sun faction into employing a fire attack.
- Taking in Kan Ze → Employing Kan Ze → Pressuring Huang Gai into surrender → Huang Gai's surrender being a pretense → Knew that Huang Gai would send burning ships to them at Red Cliffs → Knew Kan Ze being the insider → The Easterly Wind in the twenty third day of the battle → Zuo Ci predicting the Easterly Wind Bait prior to the battle itself → Misdirecting Sun faction into employing the Easterly Wind Bait. It was revealed with a massive plot twist that Jia Xu knew Easterly Wind Bait would occur prior to the battle itself with Zuo Ci's prediction, he was instigating the Sun faction into recognising and employing the Easterly Wind Bait ALL ALONG. He also knew Sima Yi wouldn't betray on that period of time as his position in Cao Cao's faction was crippled and Jia Xu understood that Sima Yi positionally needed to aid the faction to climb up the ranks. So Jia Xu completely trusted Sima Yi on this one.

- Sun faction, who discerned that their Easterly Wind Bait and Huang Gai giving up was all for naught as Jia Xu had completely turned their plans against them, just headed for a straight attack out of pride.
- This was most likely also instigated by the plan. Jia Xu most likely knew that the Sun faction would just recklessly head for their ships out of pride for their men, after they realised their entire scheme for the Battle Of Red Cliffs. So by emotionally manipulating the faction into a reckless action, Wen Ping unleashed the formation that he trained the Cao Cao's army extensively in. The formation was unleashed and the Sun faction's ships were surrounded unfortunately. The emotional manipulation of this was fairly potent. Jia Xu most likely profiled Sun faction as an incredibly prideful faction and exploited it. But unfortunately for Jia Xu, there was more to the picture that he did not see.
- Sun faction's ships were identified. A group of 1000 ships were present downstream of Cao faction's ships. A hundred more ships were identified upstream of the river. Huang Gai's vanguard fleet was burned and Cao Pi was notified that the first line of wall ships' defence wouldn't last much longer against the burning ships of the Sun faction. So Cao Pi ordered another line of wall ships, so as to defend for the warships. Zhang Liao had also initiated the attack on the bronze wall mountain as planned by Jia Xu, after Zhang Liao began his attack with Shangliao and he was aided by his men.
- Cao Ren's forces had bypassed the woods and were heading for the city of Yuzhang, which Zhou Yu warned his officers to guard. Li Dian took the mountain path and waited for Jia Xu's orders. Meanwhile in Cao Pi's position, the scout forces reported that the main forces of the southeast were on their way to their area or position. And as Jia Xu planned, Cao Pi (who does not deserve to take any credit) ordered his troops to immediately burn the camps to lure the Sun faction in. Why would Cao Pi and Jia Xu plan to do something like that? The Sun faction was planning for Huang Gai to send his burning ships to ram the Cao Cao's ships who were connected together. So Cao Pi ordered the empty camps and ships to be burned, so as to deceive the Sun faction into thinking Huang Gai had done his part and the battle had now started with the ships on flame, all of this occurred in the November of year 208. So the forces of Lu Meng under Sun Quan's order attacked the forces of Cao Cao at Red Cliffs.
- The bait has now started. Lu Meng and Lu Xun were the vanguards of Sun faction's forces, while Zhou Yu was leading the main forces of the battle. Lu Meng would land first and head for the main encampment. Lu Xun would go around to Haihun while the Red Cliffs was in flames due to Huang Gai. Lu Xu would attack Cao Ren's rear flank after he landed in battle. Thousands of warships had been spotted by the Cao Cao faction. Jia Xu effectively lured out the entire faction by employing a single blaze to deceive the faction. The Sun faction would aim to recover Haihun, as they were informed that Cao Cao's troops headed for the city of Yuzhang to capture
- Suddenly while the Sun faction was preparing to attack the camps. A corpse of Kan Ze floated to their ships and Lu Xun was shocked. This was to inform that all of their schemes were seen through and that all of them were now useless schemes. Lu Xun

immediately understood that their schemes had been seen through and that all of the forces wouldn't have left for Yuzhang, some might be there for Haihun and Lu Xun was right. Jia Xu anticipated miles ahead that Lu Xun and Lu Meng would try to recover Haihun back to their control after Cao Cao's army were marching off to the city of Yuzhang, thinking that they had fallen for their trap. And Jia Xu laid a massive ambush on the mountains to the passage of Haihun. Jia Xu also predicted that Lu Xun would slow down his ships after he saw the corpse of Kan Ze and immediately called for an ambush to catapult immediately on Lu Xun. Cold-bloodedly.
- Meanwhile the Wen Ping forces were effectively guarding against each of the Sun faction's attacks. Wen Ping defended against each wall of attacks from Sun faction's warships and warned his men that they were unpredictable tricksters. Wen Ping saw through the faction's ramming the ships feint. The faction's trap was to ram their ships to the burning ships and feint that all of their forces were gone, when they were planning an ambush from inside the water. Wen Ping saw through the feint and ordered his men to send out all the navy troops and prevent them from reaching the shore and starting a fire over the shore. He ordered them to stab the forces with their staff. And all of Cao Cao's troops were now in position.
- Cao Ren was then besieging the city with his numerical advantages and Jia Xu anticipated the neighbouring cities wouldn't hold out much longer, and as he planned, Nanchang and Manchang already surrendered. Lu Meng also had been lured out and he was too blocked by Yue Ming's forces completely. Jia Xu also exploited the tailwind to prevent Lu Xun from turning back and used the catapults to absolutely crush their forces. Jia Xu ordered his men to attack the Sun army who had just landed. Lu Xun's forces were stuck and Lu Meng's forces were also cornered. Jia Xu finally met Zhou Yu's forces. Meanwhile Cao Cao's army was following Lu Meng's forces to the woods, to capture them and eventually surrounded his troops as well. Jia Xu also neutered Lu Xun from doing anything by forcing him on the ground, but since he would possess no warhorses to employ and battle or help, he would be completely helpless. Jia Xu with his killer moves. Xun You also blocked the burning ships with his new formation.
- But all of this was merely a smokescreen, planned by Zhou Yu prior to the battle itself. So everything Jia Xu planned in Red Cliffs was indirectly instigated by Zhou Yu for the plan (And everything Zhou Yu did in Red Cliffs was instigated by Zhuge Liang to happen.).
- The red cliffs was burning, so large that it could be considered like the sun. Lu Meng's forces had been routed, Lu Xun's forces were stuck, Huang Gai was captured, the attack of Jiang was stopped by Wen Ping and pretty much everything about the Sun faction was falling apart.

- The strategy of the Sun faction, the strategy that was formulated by Zhou Yu that was discerned by Jia Xu goes as follows:

- Use Kan Ze as an insider: Zhou Yu planted Kan Ze as an insider prior to the battle itself. By exploiting Cao Cao's fabricated flaw that they were lacking in the department of weather, the call for help would be solved by Kan Ze. Zhou Yu instigated this by intentionally leaving out the two insiders, Ma En and Cheng Chao who were planned by Jia Xu to establish contact with Kan Ze. As per planned, Kan Ze would agree to help Cao Cao faction as Zhou Yu established a preconceived notion that Kan Ze hated Zhang Zhao with all of his heart. Kan Ze was also planned to distort Cao Cao from recognising the Easterly Wind, as Kan Ze would be the only weather guy of the faction.
- Employ Huang Gai as a red herring: Zhou Yu intentionally planned to beat Huang Gai down to a cripple, so as to instigate Jia Xu to send a collaboration letter to Huang Gai. Huang Gai, who had a reason which was fabricated by Zhou Yu to accept the letter, agreed to the letter and agreed to surrender. But Huang Gai's surrender was a feint. Huang Gai's surrender's true purpose was to lower the guard of Cao Cao and burn the warships, which would then signal the Sun faction's forces to attack and employ Easterly wind.
- Misdirect the main forces to march towards Haihun and not Yuzhang.
- Employing Lu Xun for attacking the burnt ship, employing Lu Meng for defence on land, employ Jiaqing and himself for attack on waterways as well as employing Easterly Wind to burn their ships and men,
- This is what Cao Cao's faction deduced, this deduction in itself is extremely hard to pull off because of the amount of intricacies and variabilities in this strategy alone. But trust me, if Zhou Yu's strategy was this simple, I would have never made this doc at all.

- Jia Xu saw all of that through prior to the battle itself and set up the counter strategy as we already saw above. Pretty cool. Zhou Yu is doomed, right? No. The above strategy is merely a fabricated strategy that was formulated to misdirect Cao Cao into falling for Zhou Yu's trap, a trap that they already knew: Easterly Wind Fire. Crazy how Zhou Yu pulled it off.

- Lu Meng and Lu Xun's forces were the vanguards of the Sun faction's forces, while ZHou Yu was leading the main forces of the battle. Lu Xun, as planned, saw the signal from burning of Red Cliffs as a sign to attack. Lu Meng was deployed first on land and then headed for the main encampment. Lu Xun would go around Haihun while the Red Cliffs were in flames due to Huang Gai. Lu Xun would attack Cao Ren's rear flank once he landed in the battle. Thousands of warships from the Sun faction had been spotted by the Cao Cao army. Jia Xu, henceforth, lured Lu Xun and Lu Meng exactly where he wanted them to be.
- Jia Xu set up ambushes for both of them. He sent a fake corpse of Kan Ze to temporarily dismantle Lu Xun's thought process, and make him comprehend that their strategies were discovered, and then ambush him by catapulting from afar. The purpose of the fake corpse was to temporarily stun Lu Xun and make them slow down their

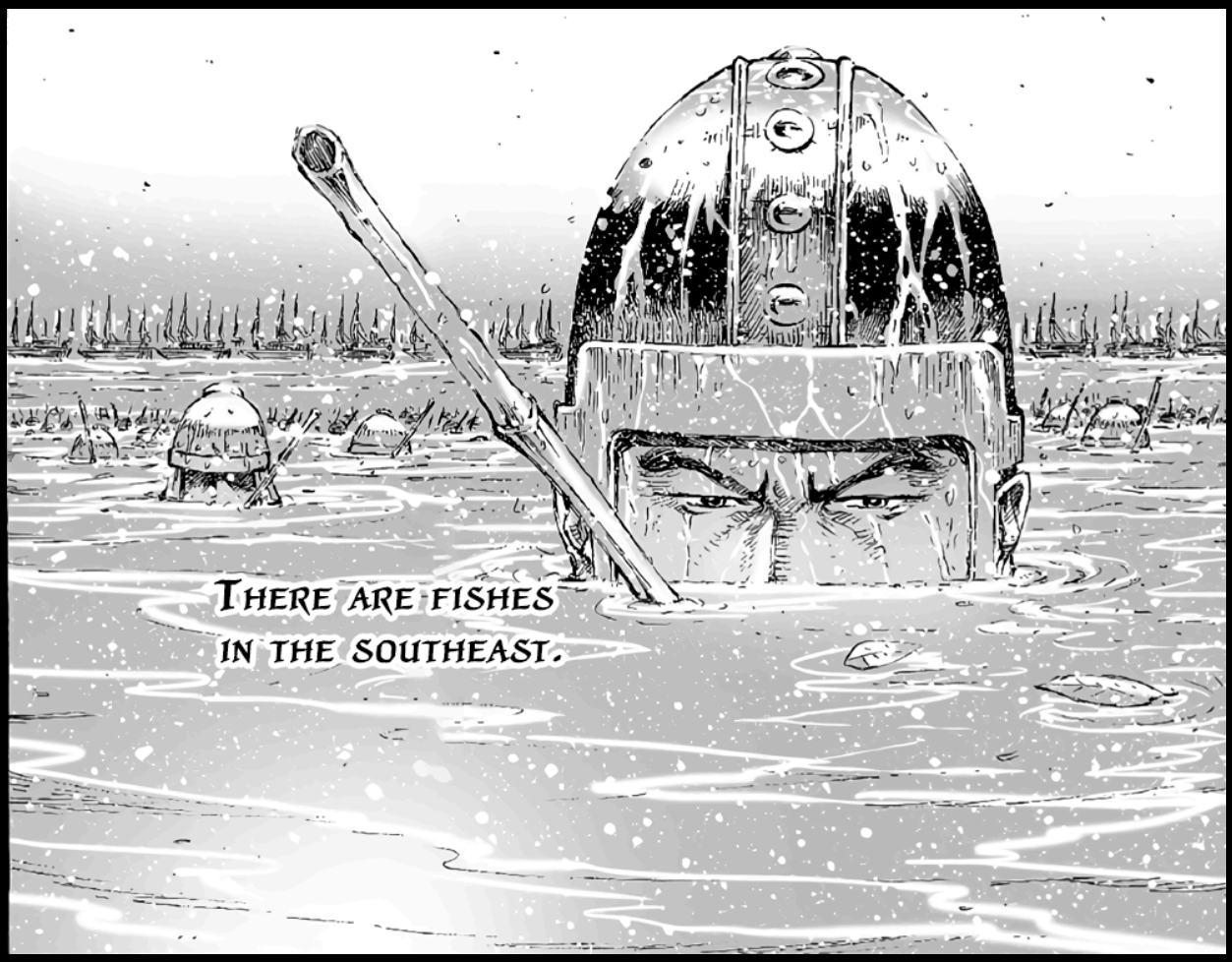
ships, to catapult them brutally. The ambush worked out and the constant catapulting dismantled their ships. And Lu Xun's forces were eventually forced onto the ground and were stuck. They did not have any horses to ride through. So they were completely stuck.
- Gan Ning's troops and Gan Ning himself too were attacked by Zhang Liao's forces. He was planned to be assassinated by the little boy, Deng Ai. However, Gan Ning saw through the assassination attempt and took down Zhang Liao. From there Zhang Liao and Gan Ning fought for multiple rounds. Zhang Liao's troops were besieging Gan Ning's territory. Gan Ning blocked Zhang Liao's troops long enough to stall the besiege.
- Zhou Yu observed from faraway that Lu Xun's troops were stuck. And saw that the troops of Cao Cao from the shore were coming to attack him defenceless. Zhou Yu ordered that the forward flank would be the shield, while the main forces landed. Zhou Yu ordered them to rescue Lu Xun and that bald guy cried out loud from Zhou Yu's aura.
- Meanwhile Lu Meng's forces in the woods were too routed by Cao Cao's forces. Lu Meng ordered his men not to fear for defenders, and acted upon the retreat route that Zhou Yu had ordered them to take - Turn left. They attacked the left camps, but it was all an ambush and the archers from the woods revealed themselves. All the archers arched and shot down Lu Meng's forces brutally. Lu Meng still ordered his men to move forward and not fear for secondary defenders. But then Cao Cao himself with his own main forces came to the scene and ordered Lu Meng and his forces to surrender. Yue Jin's men were tasked to run downhill and attack Lu Meng and his troops below.
- The Sun forces at land were eventually informed that Cao Cao's forces planned an ambush down the valley. They immediately changed from offensive to defensive formation. Sun forces employed the tailwind to boost their archery skills and blocked Cao Zhi from reaching them. But Cao Zhi ordered his men to guard the position and isolate the forces on land, as their forces would crumble once Lu Meng's forces were finished. Wen Ping had stopped the Sun Navy's fire attack, Jia Xu ambushed Lu Xun's fleet, Lu Meng's fleets were also routed.
- Meanwhile Zhou Yu was moving towards Lu Xun to rescue him, Xun You's fleets eventually arrived to block Zhou Yu's fleets. Xun You's fleets had trapped Zhou Yu's forces from reaching Lu Xun and his forces. Zhou Yu tried to rescue them, but Xun You's formation and ships blocked them with defence, and Zhou Yu was forced to retrieve back his ships. All hopes looked lost, but of course, all of this was part of his plan. He motivated his men to attack and proclaimed that the fishes of the southeast would prevail in this battle.
- The forces in Yuzhang, Xu Huang's forces started besieging the city and the Sun forces defended against it for long. Xu Huang's forces started breaching the walls, and the front walls had collapsed and he immediately ordered his men to storm the city. Cao Ren, who was expecting Xu Huang's troops, finally met him and joined the combined besiege of the city. Half of the forces from Xu Huang already infiltrated the city and Cao Ren ordered Xu Huang to watch over from the highest point with a unit. Why exactly? It was to spot any suspicious activities that occurred in the area since the Sun faction's

morale didn't crumble yet, and Cao Ren suspected that they might had a backup plan to fall back into.
- Back with Zhang Liao and Gan Ning's battle. Zhang Liao's troops took over the right wall of defence, and eventually took over the left as well, continuing their besiege. Gan Ning's troops were finished, so Zhang Liao demanded Gan Ning to surrender, but Gan Ning refused to surrender as his beliefs prevented him from surrendering. Since Gan Ning's constant refusal of surrender too was part of Zhou Yu's overall strategy, we can reasonably infer that Zhou Yu completely understood the thought processes of both Gan Ning's stubbornness and Zhang Liao's relentlessness. Gan Ning kept provoking that Zhang Liao was scared to fight him, and continued their fight.

- The Sun faction forces, in the river on the waterways, were ramming their ships towards Cao Cao's forces. The wind was strong, but the third block of Cao Cao's fleet blocked the Sun faction forces' advance. Cao Cao's men were starting to drop their guard, but Wen Ping immediately reawakened their guard by stating Sun faction's skills on waterways, he also ordered his men not to focus only on the burning ships and to focus on other areas as well. Cao Cao's men, under Wen Ping's order, checked the waters and found the remaining debris of their fleet covering the water surface, making them think that the men had drowned.
- But Wen Ping immediately saw through the tactical deception and threw a spear at the debris, to force the Sun faction army who were hiding under the debris to launch an attack on their fleets. Wen Ping ordered his men to not allow the men to reach the shore. Why? Because if the forces were to reach the shores, they would start a fire and would block Jia Xu's forces in the woods, as well as use the easterly wind to start a fire.
- On the surface, it is a two layered tactic. But it goes way deeper than that.
- There was a significant disadvantage that Cao Cao and his entire forces had to face in the battle: The Endemic. The Endemic is a disease that would regularly affect an area or a community in a particular or varied period of time, in Jingzhou, it was the plague. Cao Cao's forces heavily suffered from the Endemic, and it caused a lot and lot of their forces to catch a massive ambush of Plague. Why would this affect the northerners alone? Because Southerners were already accustomed to the weather, while Northerners were not accustomed to the area, causing them to fall ill. Lot of the physicians themselves went for the forces who were attacking, so as to prevent any disease from spreading in the forces. Why did I mention this here? Because this is one of the alignments of Zhou Yu AND Zhuge Liang, Zhou Yu and Zhuge Liang planned the massive endemic that would plague the Cao Cao's army, not for just surface level tactics like ambushing them while sick. But deeper.
- Remember when I said Zhou Yu's trap to suppress Zhuge in one place during the debate? Zhuge Liang eventually exploited his brotherhood with Zhuge Jin to arrange for a ship and escaped with his knowledge of the Sun faction's deployment to aid in the deployment of their troops. Sun Quan eventually discovered this and punished all the

traitors cruelly, by beating them while they were tied. Huang Gai was surrendered to create this after-effect as well, Huang Gai's surrender was to indirectly lure out all the insiders in the Sun faction as planned by Zhou Yu. Sun Quan then went on to state that it was understandable for Zhuge Jin, as an elder brother, to let Zhuge away. However, he went on to state that it was accounted for by Zhou Yu long before Zhuge Liang was even trapped in the faction.
- Zhou Yu long anticipated Zhuge's plan to escape the trap through his elder brother. Zhou Yu's scheme was to instigate Zhuge's departure from the faction and instigate Liu Bei's troops to enter Wulin, and lure away the ambush. What does this mean exactly? Zhou Yu's plan to depart Zhuge away from the Cao Cao's faction was to allow them to know their military intelligence and then instigate them to employ their forces to infiltrate Cao Cao's troops and then enter Wulin. Zhou Yu was aware that Zhuge knew most of Cao Cao's deployment through Sima Yi, so he used that knowledge to manipulate Zhuge into doing his biddings. Since Zhuge knew Cao Cao's deployment and through him so does Zhou Yu, Zhuge would try to infiltrate the troops while they were suffering in Plague to distort one of their generals and infiltrate Wulin, luring Cao Cao away to Liu Bei's troops. Insane logical manipulation and misdirection tactic, layers over layers of manipulation.
- Huang Gai was eventually saved by one of the men of the Sun faction through the waterways, not through boats but through swimming. Zhou Yu distorted Cao Cao's forces from considering that Huang Gai too could swim away to the shore, by concealing the information that Huang Gai's punishment to cripple him didn't actually cripple him at all, another misdirection tactic, Zhou Yu layered each of the tactic over and over again. Remember Jiang's troops who rammed against Wen Ping's forces and failed? Wen Ping suddenly started connecting the dots and realised the truth of the situation. Jiang's troops never planned to ambush them from the seas.
- Wen Ping realised why Zhou Yu and his troops delayed the fire attack until nightfall. Typically, fire attacks at night would be exponentially harder to see through as the darkness would conceal the fire and would catch them off guard. Wen Ping started to suspect why the dead bodies that they stabbed previously to prevent them from reaching the shore didn't float to the surface, and eventually realised that the men of southeast really were fishes (Not that great of a joke). Jiang's troops launched a fake attack to misdirect Wen Ping into thinking Jiang's troops' attack had stopped and that they had eliminated the attack.
- But what he didn't realise was that the men who were stabbed to death were merely a smokescreen to misdirect him. Jiang's troops then moved swiftly in water through the night, they made it to the shore in the cover of the night and they moved far inland. Jiang's troops never intended to ambush Wen Ping's fleet. The goal of Jiang's troops was to reach the shore and Jiang immediately ordered his men to change to Cao Cao's soldiers uniform that they had collected and took petroleum with them for obvious reasons. The Jiang phase of the strategy was to lure Liu Bei's troops to attack east of

Wulin by releasing Zhuge Liang and exploit all the chaos to blind Cao Cao's forces, and infiltrate their rations depot.



- Zhou Yu observed that his schemes were working and ordered his men for the next phase.
- The Sun faction were changing their formation, which Xun You took notice of. They turned around and prepared to retreat. Seeing their withdrawal, Cao Cao's forces were finally relieved that their months of attack had finally worked and that Zhou Yu was retreating. The right flank of Cao Cao's forces scrutinised a gap between the left flank and the general, to take advantage of the attack and capture Zhou Yu, ordered his men to follow Zhou Yu's left flank in the river and attack them as their widened gap would disallow defence to prevent any casualties. There were tens of Cao Cao's ships who couldn't catch up and Cao Cao's right flank was heading for their attack on the left flank. Zhou Yu explained that there were more turning rooms downstream, where they would change the formation of their forces. Zhou Yu then ordered his men to ready the supply ships at the rear.
- Zhou Yu's main fleet was fleeing at full speed. Observing that the left flank was pursuing, Xun You ordered the main fleet to follow on the river as well. Xun You was

reassured that the stream was wider up ahead and their division of the fleet meant that the Zhou Yu's forces were on a run. Xun You ordered his men to divide their fleet into three and attack the middle. However, suddenly Xun You was notified of something from Wen Ping. Wen Ping notified Xun You that Huang Gai's fleet was a feint and the Sun Navy had reached the shore from under the water. Xun You was, at first, confused by Wen Ping's words, but as he observed the changes in Sun Navy's formation, Xun You realised the direness of the situation. Sun Navy split their fleets into right flank and left flank, which was even more confusing as that would just slow their forces even more down. But Xun You realised that they were not running, but attacking.

- The position they were in and their rear were traps. Xun You started to connect the dots. Zhou Yu's fleet were in a divided position where their rear were going front, there was a tailwind running around the area and Xun You's forces were also divided, which meant that Zhou Yu was setting up a fire attack! The Sun Navy was lighting their rear on fire. Why would they light their rear on fire? Are they idiots? No, it was Zhou Yu's scheme all along. The supply ships that Zhou Yu ordered his men to be ready, were lit up. The Sun Navy were also fast with the tailwind, meaning their ships were agile and quick which was even more detrimental to Xun You's forces. Xun You ordered his men to not let the burning ships pass and even ordered his fleets to block the ships. However, Zhou Yu knew that Xun You would try to block the burning ships with his own ships.

- That's why he purposefully led his own ships to treat down the river, employ that retreat to manipulate the right flank to pursue the disconnected left flank of his and manipulated Xun You to pursue the retreating Sun Navy into the wider part of the river. So since Xun You's fleets and Zhou Yu's fleets were on the wider part of the river, it was no use for Xun You to try and block the ships with his own fleets as the other flanks were too wide apart and the burning ships would pass through them before they even try to reunite. The bypassed burning ships were heading for their rear and unfortunately for Xun You (which was planned by Zhou Yu too), Jia Xu's troops were in the woods/forest which was behind to them, meaning the burning ships were heading for Jia Xu's troops and it's gonna end pretty bad for them. Jia Xu's troops sensed smoke, but they realised that nothing in the woods was burning as they were in complete control over it. They realised that the smoke was coming from the river, Zhou Yu's burnt ships, heading straight for them to eliminate them altogether. Jia Xu's troops realised that it was still the easterly wind bait, but it was not to burn Red Cliffs, but to burn them together in the woods instead. They had fallen for the same trick that they already foreseen to had come.



- Pure Aura (Half of this doc is glazing Zhou Yu fr)

- Meanwhile in Cao Cao's main encampment at Wulin, Yue Jin was informed that Liu Bei's raider troops had been defeated, that the remaining enemy troops had retreated and three of their units had been advanced to intercept the retreat, that they were also preparing to block the enemy's retreat route. Yue Jing, understanding the impregnability (not to be taken for a wrong meaning, it means "strong enough to resist or withstand attack; not to be taken by force, unconquerable") of the back terrain, ordered his men to prepare an ambush over there. He ordered two units to surround the

enemy in the woods. Liu Bei's troops' vanguard had arrived, which meant that their scouting troops would soon arrive there too. He then ordered the rest of the forces to head and annihilate Liu Bei. After Liu Bei's troops encountered Cao Cao's troops in the woods, Zhao Yun took up as the rear guard and defended against Xu Chu and other Cao Cao's generals.

- Meanwhile in Yuzhang, Cao Ren was still not notified that Sun troops retreated but instead was notified by Xu Huang that Sun troops were still on the fight. Observing that they did not fall back, Cao Ren deduced that the Sun troops were expecting reinforcements to aid them in the fight. Cao Ren was then notified by Xu Huang that the amount of reinforcements for the battling Sun troops were over twenty thousand! Sun troops purposefully lit their torch up to show themselves in the city, possibly a fear tactic. Xu Huang prepared himself to be the defence. Cao Ren slowly understood the direness of the situation, just like how Wen Pin and Xun You did. Since the Sun troops had more manpower with their newfound reinforcements, their already strong forces would then stretch the battle long regardless of the fact that Cao Cao had much more troops than them.

- Cao Ren realised that they were not the only ones in the dire situation, but Xun You's troops, Wen Ping's troops and Jia Xu's troops too unfortunately. Cao Ren connected the dots that unless Zhou Yu misdirected everyone into thinking he had forces in his fleets and that his fleets were really empty, there would be no way that the Sun troops' reinforcements would be over twenty thousand strong. This is one of the reasons why Zhou Yu wanted to deceive Jia Xu into thinking he misdirected Zhou Yu into attacking at Red Cliffs, because Jia Xu and the Cao Cao's men would obviously reason that Zhou Yu would bring all of his forces to launch his fire attack, but Zhou Yu, in fact, did not bring all of his forces, he planned them as reinforcements once he lured them deep in their territories, cut off their supplies and reinforcements, burnt their main encampment (Wulin) and the other forces were blocked from rescuing each other. Realising this information, Cao Ren understood that somehow Xun You, Wen Ping and Jia Xu were also in a dire situation. Meanwhile Zhang Liao was just still fighting Gan Ning alone.

- Lu Meng was then notified that Cao Cao's troops had cut off the hills from the outside completely and that they had no more retreats routes to escape with, but instead of panicking, Lu Meng revealed that the cat and mouse chase between his forces and Cao Cao's forces was merely to escape, but to lure the Cao Cao's troops to quite a distance. This meant that Zhou Yu instigated Jia Xu to plan an ambush for Lu Meng in the woods and manipulated those forces to chase Lu Meng's forces. Cao Cao was then notified from several outposts on a retreat signal and Cao Cao was informed that Yue Jin retreated too, Cao Cao realised that something was wrong in the main encampment in Wulin. Multiple fires broke out in the east and all camps of Wulin, Cao Cao's men at north were also forced to fetch water to block the fire. Cao Cao's forces' deployment had gone to ruins. The fire also spread through the camps by employing the tailwind, which was too

strong for the Cao Cao's men to battle against. Cao Cao's ration depot was burned. Jiang Qin and his infiltration troops were the one who masqueraded as the deployed Cao Cao's forces and burned the camps in Wulin, they even misdirected other Cao Cao troops by informing them to guard the North Gate. Jiang Qin's unit two too infiltrated Cao Cao's camps and they executed the next assignment.

- The Sun army at Yuzhang started their besiege from all sides, Xu Huang ordered his men to not allow them inside and infiltrate. Cao Ren's troops' reinforcements were blocked by Sun army in the valley, and Cao Ren's exhausted men were no match for the new and fresh soldiers of Sun army who were besieging with full force. Cao Ren's reinforcements were from Jia Xu. Do you recall what happened to Jia Xu's troops? Zhou Yu blocked Jia Xu's troops in the woods by employing a number of burning ships which stopped Jia Xu's troops entirely. The corners of the hillside, the twisting paths of the direction, the flammability of the vegetation, which were all covered by Zhou Yu's ship-made wall of fire completely, meaning Zhou Yu planned this ahead. Jia Xu also realised that Lu Xun's humiliation to Jia Xu's catapults were staged and that Lu Xun's troops were subdued to lure Jia Xu deep inside the woods, which would enable Zhou Yu to use the burning ships to block and suffocate Jia Xu's troops as well as block any reinforcements for Cao Ren's troops in Yuzhang combined with the burning of Wulin by Jiang Qin's units which cut off Cao Cao's supply line.
- The suffocation of the fire from Zhou Yu's burning fleets drove Jia Xu's troops' men to run off to the shore and beg for Xun You's troops to help them. Xun You organised the same formation that he employed when he blocked Zhou Yu's forces from reaching Lu Xun's forces. But Zhou Yu assured his men that the outcome of this formation wouldn't be as favourable to Xun You as last time. Xun You observed the helpless men at the shore, he knew that there were a large number of troops over there in the burning woods combined with the fact that Cao Ren's forces would lose to the Sun army too if Jia Xu's troops were to be trapped, so Xun You was forced to split his forces into two and ordered one of the two forces to rescue Jia Xu's forces at the shore, while the other head for the attack against Zhou Yu over the river. Zhou Yu anticipated this long before Xun You even thought of it.
- Meanwhile Zhao Yun was fighting against Xu Chu and then Yue Jing alone as his troops were endangered by their forces. Xiahou Yuan, due to the burning of Wulin and other problems that had plagued the Cao Cao's faction, was forced to withdraw from the battle first, which then allowed the Sun army reinforcements to reach land again. All of this is again Zhou Yu's doing, there's no other strategists in the Sun faction other than him, even Lu Su merely accomplished what Zhou Yu ordered him to do. This is known as a deflection tactic. This is analogous to chess, when you attack a piece on a particular square, the piece must move to avoid capture, but when that piece moves away from that position, it becomes open for the opponents to use as a position to land their piece in. This is the tactic that Zhou Yu employed in the battle.

- The Sun army's presence in Yuzhang has strengthened exponentially. Cao Cao's forces couldn't hold off much anymore due to their tiredness and the growing strength of Sun army's forces. So the main forces of Cao Cao faction at Yuzhang pulled out, but Zhang Liao, out of pride, didn't stop his fight against Gan Ning. When Zhang Liao was going to kill Gan Ning finally after their drawn-out battle, he was stopped by Ling Tong. Ling Tong was the son of Ling Cao, who was assassinated by Gan Ning, and as he stated, he still possessed his deep-seated hatred for Gan Ning, but he still kept up the principle that the men of Southeast never give up their brotherhood with their fellow men, and stopped Zhang Liao with his forces from eliminating Gan Ning. On the surface level, this felt like Gan Ning's forces at Yuzhang were saved by plot armor. But even if it was plot armor, it revealed a deeper intricacy of Zhou Yu's plan.

- Let's see some of the preparation moves.
- Remember when Gan Ning assassinated two generals of the right and left flank in a battle against Cai Mao? It was all part of Zhou Yu's plan. Zhou Yu planned the strong torrent that blocked the other ships to defend the right and left flank. The bait was to lure Jia Xu to employ this loss against Gan Ning and Zhou Tai's forces as an opportunity for Jia Xu to masquerade and 'think' that he had misdirected the Sun forces into thinking Cao Cao's forces retreated, which was the Wulin misdirection plan from Jia Xu, and manipulated Jia Xu into employing multiple forces from Cao Cao to attack Southeast regions. Do you see the masterful manipulation and baits? Zhou Yu prepared all of this bait to lure Jia Xu to formulate his strategy before he even thought of it.
- To explain the process of this manipulation tactic. Gan Ning and Zhou Tai's forces at Yangtze river (???) defeated Cai Mao's troops and assassinated two of Cao Cao's right and left flank generals in the battle. Jia Xu anticipated that Gan Ning and Zhou Tai would employ Zhou Yu's torrent prediction to prevent the other ships of Cai Mao from disturbing their assassination of the two generals. Why didn't Jia Xu do anything to prevent it? Because he foresaw an opportunity with it. The opportunity was to misdirect the Sun army into thinking Cao Cao's forces retreated to Wulin through the insiders and the fact that Gan Ning badly humiliated Cai Mao's forces (who Jia Xu masqueraded to be the main general for their Navy). But Zhou Yu took advantage of the opportunity that Jia Xu recognised. Zhou Yu took advantage by luring Cao Cao's forces deep in their territory to force them retreat later, by tiring them out and using the twenty-thousand reinforcement tactic.
- The next preparation move that Zhou Yu formulated was the Haihun chaos, which was planned by Zhou Yu since the capture of Jingzhou and Liu Cong's surrender at the start of the arc. Remember when Zhuge Liang advised Liu Bei to march towards Xiakou along with the supporters of Liu Bei in Jingzhou, the Jingzhou refugee crowds? Zhou Yu recruited Zhuge Liang for the fourth layer which I already explained. The fourth layer was to purposefully let Zhuge out using Zhuge Jin (which was actually the reason why Zhou Yu invited Zhuge Jin to come, to let Zhuge out) and since Zhuge is out, he knew

that Zhuge would employ Zhao Yun as a bait and use the plague to infiltrate and get out key information from the Cao Cao faction, and then infiltrate Wulin, which would then misdirect the Cao Cao's forces to focus on stopping Liu Bei's troops from infiltrating their main base. Zhou Yu aligned the incoming plague in Cao Cao's army to further advance his strategy, he anticipated the exact month at which the plague would start to affect the ins and outs of the Cao Cao faction. Why did he align the plague with his strategy? Because he knew that Zhuge Liang would take advantage of it by employing Zhao Yun to infiltrate the plagued generals as their condition would not allow them to question and infiltrate Wulin. So he trapped and released Zhuge Liang exactly to manipulate him into doing what he wanted. Before you say that it was convenient that the time of the Plague and the Easterly Wind were in similar, it was because the Plague typically occurs in cold or windy climates as the bacterium or the pathogens that caused the Plague would spread quicker, and Easterly Wind occurs in cold/windy climates obviously too. So it's not "convenient", even if it was, we can't disregard it, as it would mean we are disregarding the context of the situation.
- However there is still another layer to this trap that Zhou Yu employed to further annihilate Cao Cao's forces, which was to lure their troops deep inside their territory. How did Zhou Yu accomplish this feat? Zhou Yu accomplished this, by sacrificing Haihun, Shangliao and similar territories. What? Is Zhou Yu an idiot? Maybe he is. Remember when Cao Cao's men including Zhang Liao and Deng Ai infiltrated the Jingzhou refugee crowds? YES, Zhou Yu then agreed to help Zhuge regardless of the fact that Cao Cao's men infiltrated the crowd. He agreed because he wanted Jia Xu to use it as an opportunity to attack Haihun. But it was really to break Cao Cao's deployment and lure Zhang Liao deep inside the territories with blocked reinforcements. But didn't it cause a massive internal strife in the Sun faction? Yes it did, but Zhou Yu covered it with Sun Quan's rain speech tactic. But it caused Sun Quan to break Huang Gai's legs as a punishment for the hurdles, right? That's the other effectiveness of this tactic. As we saw in the manhua, Huang Gai's legs were not broken at all, he swam all the way to the shore with some aid. Zhou Yu knew that Jia Xu would try to surrender Huang Gai and use him as bait to burn Red Cliffs, which was the deeper bait to lower Cao Cao's guard and cut them off as well. What do you mean by Huang Gai's surrender bait? Jia Xu knew that Huang Gai's surrender was not genuine but to burn the Red Cliffs, Jia Xu used that as an opportunity to lure Sun faction, Zhou Yu surrendered Huang Gai as a bait to lure Jia Xu into a comfort zone, thinking that all of his schemes are going as he planned. Not only that, Zhou Yu managed to use Haihun's commotions as a reason to punish Huang Gai, meaning that would provide a pretty reasonable motive for why Huang Gai might want to surrender, but Jia Xu saw through it and that's what Zhou Yu wanted too. Because by allowing him to uncover a single layer of his entire deception, he was able to deceive Jia Xu into thinking he had uncovered Zhou Yu's entire scheme. Do you realise the sheer depth of Zhou Yu's manipulation?

- The next preparation move was Lu Xun's troops and Lu Meng's troops bait. Lu Xun's troops and Lu Meng's troops, who Jia Xu believed to have come for the burning of Red Cliffs, were acting as the vanguards of Sun faction's forces, while Zhou Yu led the main forces over the river. Lu Meng would head for the main encampment through land, in the woods. Lu Xun would go around to Haihun while the Red Cliffs was in flames which Jia Xu staged to have occurred due to Huang Gai's doing. Lu Xun met the fake Kan Ze corpse, where he realised that Jia Xu discerned all of their schemes and encountered Jia Xu's cold-blooded catapult ambush, in which Jia Xu forced Lu Xun to land on ground and ordered his own men to attack the woods. Lu Meng was also routed by Yue Jing, Han and other generals' army in the woods, but Lu Meng took the retreat route that Zhou Yu planned to keep them chasing for a while. But all of this was a bait. The reason Zhou Yu thought of saving Lu Xun at first was most likely to further manipulate Jia Xu into discounting a backup from the Sun faction and to learn Xun You's formation probably. Zhou Yu lured Jia Xu's troops deep inside the woods, so that he could execute his burnt rear fleet tactic which would then float over to the woods and block Jia Xu's troops. Blocking Jia Xu's troops was to prevent Jia Xu from providing reinforcements to Cao Ren's forces and others, which would isolate Cao Ren's forces, forcing him to retreat. The other generals, who were chasing, were then too far away to provide anything. The burning of Wulin was also shielded by this bait, as there were no generals to block this tactic as well at the time of execution. Masterful baiting strategy.
- Each step that Jia Xu took to formulate his entire strategy for the Battle Of Red Cliffs was manipulated by Zhou Yu (which absolutely doesn't disregard Jia Xu's schemes). Masterful strategy, invincible strategy.

- I want to add another aspect of the strategy that Zhou Yu covertly planned. Zhou Yu planned to use Easterly Wind, even when he was aware of the fact that Jia Xu and the entire Cao Cao faction foresaw it miles ahead. Why did Zhou Yu still plan to employ the Easterly Wind? Because his goal was not just to defeat Cao Cao's faction and chase them to the north, it was also to humiliate them. Zhou Yu was aware of how influential Cao Cao and his forces were all around China. Due to Guo Jia's strategic planning and schemes from Battle Of Xiapi and Battle Of Guandu where Guo Jia managed to outsmart Yuan Fang and the massively advantageous Yuan faction, Cao Cao and his forces/troops were proclaimed "undefeatable" and "the strongest". Zhou Yu knew that Cao Cao used these rumors or titles as opportunities to employ fear factors to subdue the enemy without a fight. Zhou Yu had to reduce Cao Cao's influence in such a way by manipulating the entire Cao Cao faction to go through a humiliation ritual. So Zhou Yu extensively planned each and every detail of the Battle Of Red Cliffs so as to overturn the tides. Notice how the format of the battle went. Cao Cao's forces had massive advantages, they were exponentially superior in number of troops, resources, land, competence, number of strategists/advisors, retreat routes, internal management and basically everything. The Sun faction was massively disadvantaged with loss of

significant territories to settle in, lesser numbers, threats of surrender all over, internal faction filled with insiders and chaos, and Zhou Yu was the singular strategist of the battle. Zhou Yu had the disadvantages of both Cao Cao's faction and Yuan faction in the Battle Of Guandu. Yet Zhou Yu emerged victorious in the Battle. The format of the Battle made Cao Cao look like an utter clown, a fool. Cao Cao even had the advantage of knowing what trick Zhou Yu was going to use in the Battle, the Easterly Wind and yet he still lost. On the surface, it just made Cao Cao, Jia Xu and the entire faction look like a faction full of fools and clowns who couldn't win the battle even with their advantage in everything. But that's not the case, Cao Cao's Chief Controller, Jia Xu, planned extensively for the battle too, his entire baiting strategy was incredibly complex and well shielded. Zhou Yu planned every detail extensively to win the battle. But since Zhou Yu fabricated the narrative that Cao Cao was just incompetent enough to not be able to emerge victorious. The fabrication was so good that it nearly convinced Cao Cao and the faction itself. The humiliation ritual gave Cao Cao and his forces a powerful arse beating. Therefore, we can conclude that one of the goals of Zhou Yu's strategy is to humiliate Cao Cao's faction, prove that their significant titles were meaningless and reduce Cao Cao's influence. Which was the reason why Zhou Yu planned for the same Easterly Wind bait, which was discerned by the faction and even discerned their exact steps way prior to the Battle, to defeat Cao Cao and his forces. Each and every move, every action that Zhou Yu took in this entire arc was an aspect of his entire scheme for winning the Battle Of Red Cliffs. This strategy in Red Cliffs was so intimidating and soul-crushing that the whole Cao Cao faction including top tier strategists like Jia Xu, Xun You, Cao Cao and others dread stepping into the Southeast territory ever again, as we saw in the Nan Departure Arc. So not only did it reduce Cao Cao's influence, this strategy also had the other long-term effect of increasing Zhou Yu's own influence. Can you imagine an entire faction which has the largest land, largest army, most competent generals and large number of competent advisors dread walking into a singular strategist of a faction that was far lesser in influence, land and competence? That was the aftermath of Zhou Yu's strategy. It's these little details that makes Zhou Yu's strategy so much better, it was invincible, but the aftermath of the strategy was also planned by Zhou Yu, which makes him even better of a strategist. Basically, Zhou Yu simultaneously humiliated, crushed and reduced Cao Cao's massive influence as unbeatable all over China that Guo Jia extensively built prior, and at the same, made the entire faction scared to even step into his territory out of their fear for him.

- We can understand from this strategy that Zhou Yu instigated Jia Xu into formulating that plan (though I repeat that does not degrade Jia Xu's insane planning). Zhou Yu's burning ships and the burning of Wulin cut off all of Cao Cao's retreat routes to Huarong. So Zhou Yu just needed to chase Cao Cao down Huarong path and take on Cao Cao's tired out and fatigued army, under the immense plague endemic as well. Notice

how everything falls together now. Zhou Yu planned each variable for both the battle and the aftermath of the battle.

Hidden Plots of Red Cliffs (just a summary):

Zhuge Liang's Huarong scheme in red cliffs:

Three Visitations Strategy:

- The first visit to Zhuge Liang took place. Liu Bei was supposedly in a pursuit to recruit Zhuge Liang as his main strategic advisor. However all of this was a pretense fabricated by Zhuge Liang to conceal the true intentions behind each of the visits. Zhuge fabricated the narrative that Liu Bei lacked potent strategists to lead his faction when he already gained the support of Zhuge Liang, Pang Tong and some other strategists, and that Liu Bei was in a pursuit to recruit Zhuge Liang. So by fabricating such a narrative, he was able to misdirect everyone of Liu Bei's intentions because he understood reputation was a vital tool that guarded Liu Bei for years. The intention of the first visit was to instigate a conflict in Liu Biao's mind regarding his choice to select the next heir of the throne by isolating him of choices. It was also a preparation tactic for the second visitation, where he planned to persuade Gan Ning into betraying, which Zhuge planted the reason for by isolating Liu Biao into indecisiveness in choosing the heir.
- The context of the situation was that Zhou Yu and Sun Quan's forces were besieging Jingzhou, and Gan Ning's forces together with Huang Zu were stationed together in Jiangxia to defend against Sun Quan's forces. Gan Ning's forces eventually came back to stay at Jangxia, but instead of planning for an attack, Gan Ning was advised to not attack and instead invest on military repairments by the commander Huang Zu. Gan Ning understood that it was due to the fact that Sun Quan's forces were substantially stronger in several aspects such as forces advantage combined with the internal affairs of Jingzhou. Zhuge was aware of the fact that Gan Ning was increasingly doubtful of Liu Biao's rule, due to the rising influence of Cai clan combined with his severe indecisiveness in internal matters such as choosing the next heir for the rule. So Zhuge ordered Pang Tong to masquerade as a man of Sun Quan's forces and exploit Gan Ning's doubts with the rule of Liu Bia to persuade him into joining Zhou Yu's forces at Jangxia instead.
- Huang Zu, who was stationed at Jangxia, was attacked by Lu Meng's forces. Zhuge was most likely also aware of Ling Cao's son, Ling Tong whose face resembled that of Sun

Ce, and mostly likely foresaw that Zhou Yu/Sun Quan would use him as a bait to lure Huang Zu's forces into attacking them as Sun Ce was a very prominent antagonist of Jingzhou for a while due to his massive reputation as the 'Little Conqueror'. It doesn't really matter if Zhuge was aware of Ling Tong's role, but what Zhuge instigated was the betrayal of Gan Ning. The betrayal of Gan Ning was so that the west gates, which guarded the main encampment of their faces, would be opened which would allow Lu Meng to come in through, and they did.

- The next phase of strategy was to lure Cai Mao into attacking. Liu Bei came across Xiangyang and met a few of his men over there, so as to inform them that he was heading to Xinye for some affairs. The aim of Liu Bei here was not really to reach Xinye for some affairs, but just to inform Cai Mao indirectly that he was leaving to Xinye so that he could lure Cai Mao into planning an ambush to assassinate Cai Mao. Now do you remember the intention of the first visitation? Well, Zhuge Liang never planned for the fabrication to work out for everyone, just for the masses. Zhuge Liang knew that Cai Mao would eventually deduce that Liu Bei was planning to take over a part of Jingzhou's forces by indirectly giving him a clue of Liu Bei conveying to Liu Biao that he preferred Liu Biao's decision to give the heir to Liu Cong instead of Liu Qi. So Zhuge Liang instigated Cai Mao into planning for an assassination attempt on Liu Bei, by allowing him to know that Liu Bei was planning to seize a part of Jingzhou's forces. So Liu Bei purposefully led his way to Xinye exactly where Cai Mao planned an ambush so as to lure him into assassinating Liu Bei. Zhuge knew that there would be a ship filled with reputable men of Jingzhou passing by the river mouth in the area where Liu Bei would be passing. So by ordering a powerful steed for Liu Bei to use as an escape weapon, Zhuge calculated the exact play out of the sequence between Liu Bei and Cai Mao's forces. And by aligning the events together with the reputable men of the ship including Xu Shu, Liu Bei was able to acquire irrefutable evidence of Cai Mao's dishonesty through this scheme. This scheme was planned by Zhuge so that he could provide irrefutable evidence to accuse Cai Mao of his dishonesty. It's worth mentioning that Zhuge also planned Xu Shu as his confidant in the faction, which is not that good of a tactic, but it is worth mentioning.

- Cai Mao was then forced to the court for the crime he was seen committing before the reputable men of Jingzhou. Cai Mao tried to cut through the tension by framing Liu Bei as a man of dishonesty and as an usurper of Jingzhou. Cai Mao was nearly beaten to death, but Zhuge did a subtle trick here, a trick that would go on to prevent Liu Bei from getting surrounded later in the Battle Of Red Cliffs. Liu Biao met up with an attendant of Liu Bei, who informed him that Liu Bei advised not to execute Cai Mao as the incident between him and Cai Mao could be framed, and such. This, at the surface level, would seem blatant to get Liu Biao to support him. But the choice to prevent Cai Mao from getting executed was actually connected to Zhuge's later scheme in Red Cliffs. Zhou Yu's troops had occupied Jangxia and they also did not withdraw from the area with more of their troops moving steadily to increase their military strength. Xiakou was a place of

keen significance, so Liu Biao was forced to defend Xiakou and dispatched his main army as reinforcement, with Wen Ping as the commander for Hanshui but Wen Ping was also the subordinate of Cai Mao, increasing the stakes. Cai Mao knew that Liu Biao would spare him but instead lowered his rank and reputation, hence he prepared Wen Ping and Zhang Yun as backups if he were to get demoted as they were his loyal subordinates. After Huang Zu died, all of his subordinates were concentrated in Xiakou, isolated. With this sort of news, Liu Qi's forces obviously would not want to participate in the battle. With all of this pressure on top of him, Liu Qi was on the verge of losing everything. But Xuan De (Liu Bei) arrived at the scene and took control of him in his moment of weakness. Not only did he gain control over Liu Qi, he had also successfully gained support of most of the forces of Jingzhou and with this scheme, he then possessed the minds and souls of all the soldiers in Xiakou. Liu Bei intentionally leaking information that he supported Liu Qi was a mere facade, a distraction for Cai Mao and his men to fall into. Because his intention was always to support Liu Qi for the throne. Zhuge's next phase of the strategy completed.

- Liu Qi had taken the Xiakou, through Zhuge's intricate scheme and Liu Bei also had Jingzhou's main force at hand then. With Huang Zu's death, their strained history and relationship with the eastern regions of China had eased. I have seen some people distort this information that Huang Zu was the mediator of the conflict between the Eastern and the Southern territories? No, what this information was meant to convey was that since Zhuge schemed to allow Zhou Yu go through Huang Zu and the western gates, the viewpoints of the two factions regarding each other had eased as they were coming to a common ground, not that Huang Zu was a significant problem-producer in the context. With this scheme, Sun Quan was poised to ally with the Liu faction as their relationship had eased and were a lot more dependent than before. Liu Bei's pursuit of Xiang was a charade, another misdirection tactic as well to distract others from targeting what Liu Bei actually needed at that time, and that was Xiakou. Due to the misdirection, Xiakou had successfully landed in Liu Qi's hands, who was puppet of Liu Bei as of then and Liu Bei took complete control over Jingzhou's main forces.

- To summarise the motives/goals of each phase of the strategy, I will just mention Zhuge's own words:

- The first visit led to the infighting between Liu Biao's two sons: Liu Qi and Liu Cong by instigating confusion in Liu Biao's psyche as well as instigating tension and alarm in Liu Cong's devote supporters such as Cai Mao, so as to approach to the next stages of the strategy. Incredible information control in this phase of the strategy as he also fabricated the narrative that Liu Bei was in need of potent strategic officers such as Zhuge Liang, when Zhuge Liang was already collaborating with him. Liu Bei purposefully leaked false information that he was supporting Liu Cong for the throne as a clue for Cai Mao to falsely conclude that he was scheming against Liu Biao, so as to alarm him into action.

- The second visit led to Jiaxia's defense deployment for Zhou Yu, which he instigated by employing Pang Tong as the persuader of Gan Ning, remember Zhuge did not happen to spot sudden reasons to convince Gan Ning to surrender. In the first visit, he essentially created the conflict especially to flood Gan Ning's mind with doubts regarding Liu Biao and his decisions which Zhuge exploited using the most proficient vocalist of all time, Pang Tong to convince him. The convincing of Gan Ning to surrender led to the death of Huang Zu and the capture of west gates by Zhou Yu, which again led to the next stage of the strategy.
- The third visit led to Liu Qi's command over Xiakou and Liu Bei's control over Jingzhou's main forces. The most incredible aspects of Zhuge's strategy and schemes are the preparations and the final result. In this case, Zhuge eventually manipulated or deceived Cai Mao into thinking Liu Bei was pursuing Xiangye as an opportunity to ambush him in the river mouth, not knowing that Zhuge aligned his confidant Xu Shu to bring the reputable men of Jingzhou to view the commotion that would happen between Liu Bei and Cai Mao. The death of Huang Zu was also strategized by Zhuge as he knew that Huang Zu would be killed, which would strain the forces of Jingzhou and the crumbling morale of the forces, which Liu Bei would console and take control of both Liu Qi and the minds and hearts of the men of Jingzhou.
- This was a relatively small summary of the strategy, primarily because I felt the doc was too long, so expect smaller elaborations from this point onwards the doc.

Regarding Zhao Yun:

- Zhuge Liang previously ordered Liu Bei to march towards Xiakou after recruiting all the supporters of his from Jingzhou. When he was questioned why Liu Bei would need to go through such a hassle of carrying large numbers of refugees crowd to Xiakou, Zhuge answered by stating that the greatest asset of Liu Bei's arsenal was reputation, so if Liu Bei were to slither away from Jingzhou after troubled by the Cao Cao's forces, his reputation would take quite a hit. So Zhuge advised Liu Bei to take the supporters with him to maintain the reputation. However, there were larger goals for this move, in fact, this move started two grand schemes of Red Cliffs that indirectly affected the outcome of the battle. However the scheme that I am going to explain here is a rather short, but effective scheme of Zhuge's grand scheme for Red Cliffs, which was to neutralise a looming threat in the faction as well as vitalise a reliable general for Liu Bei as well as connect this scheme to gain an upper hand in the Battle Of Red Cliffs.
- You see, Zhuge had been planning to recruit Zhao Yun and employ this scheme as far back as in Xuzhou Incursion. If you remember closely to Xuzhou incursion, Zhuge Liang came to visit Xuzhou not only because he was heart-broken by Guo Jia's ruthless massacre of Xuzhou, but also because he knew that Xuzhou was an area of great importance to the Sima clan, so a ruthless incursion from the Cao Cao faction would obviously lure out Sima Yi (which was actually one of Guo Jia's hidden plots in Xuzhou

incursion strategy). But seeing this incursion, Zhuge foresaw an opportunity. Zhuge was also aware of the fact that Zhao Yun and Liu Bei were brothers-in-arms or at least friends as he was aware of Liu Bei's background. So Zhuge Liang, who planned to serve the influence-deprived Liu Bei, leveraged on the fact that Zhao Yun and Liu Bei to create another great general for Liu Bei by purifying him of his other connections, which was of course Sima Yi. So Zhuge Liang, who foresaw from Xuzhou that Guo Jia was planning to forcefully recruit Sima Yi (implication), knew that Sima Yi would attempt to gain leverage in the faction by employing some assassin/insider in the faction, which he predicted to be Zhao Yun, as Sima Yi didn't have any other men to employ that he could trust upon this work. So by foreseeing all of this, Zhuge Liang planned to purify Zhao Yun of his connections and eliminate the looming threat of Sima Yi in the faction.
- First of all, the very action of advising Liu Bei to Jingzhou had multiple reasons for Zhuge Liang to do so. But primarily for the Zhao Yun purification scheme, it was to use his profile of the state of minds that possessed the Jingzhou crowd to create a form of enlightenment in Zhao Yun's mind (might be over analyzing not gonna lie, but what's the beauty of a SCD scaler if not over analyzing). Zhuge Liang actually had another long-term plot for the rise of Liu Bei to the top, which was to employ a number of men in the Southern region to spread a 'myth' so powerful that it even convinced Liu Biao, the ruler of Jingzhou, that Liu Bei was the saviour. Since Zhuge Liang was aware of the fact that the masses of Jingzhou had believed that Liu Bei was the saviour of the world/China, he integrated Zhao Yun with those masses so as to convince him to choose the bright path.
- Zhao Yun, who was touched (not to be taken literally) by the NPCs of the Jingzhou crowds' belief in Liu Bei's bright path, himself chose the bright path of following Liu Bei with all of his heart even though it had men (for instance, Pang Tong) that he resented and rejected his role as the assassin for Zhuge Liang and Liu Bei that Sima Yi assigned for him. You see, Zhuge Liang simply did not ignore this aspect, and just left it leniently, because he knew that it was needed to awaken and purify Zhao Yun's conviction to follow Liu Bei so that he may not assassinate Liu Bei out of his duty for Sima Yi some day.
- With this simple scheme, he had driven Zhao Yun to battle his own master, and then go on to fight against the entire Cao Cao's army on Changban, without hesitation. Incredible emotional manipulation, utilisation of mass manipulation and social awareness feat of Zhuge Liang.

Regarding Cao Cao and Zhou Yu's factions:

- Now comes the big guns. I will now break down each of Zhuge Liang's long-term plots that I understood. So far, the things I explained might portray Zhuge as a reactive strategist, but in truth, he was the orchestrator of the entire Red Cliffs doc. I am mostly explaining his planning, not really his actual strategy. That being said, his planning in

itself is incredibly complex, the reason I find this very impressive is because you rarely find a plan that is more complex than a strategy of high calibers.

Eliminating Guo Jia

- A key tactic that Zhuge planned for in the beginning of the arc was the indirect assassination of Guo Jia. This is merely a setup, but it's a coverage feat. Zhuge identified that Cao Cao's true asset in his faction was his incredibly competent men, primarily his main strategist and planner, Guo Jia or Feng Xiao. Guo Jia was the one who planned the outlaws strategy to transfer Xuzhou and Xiapi regions to Lu Bu so as to execute his Xiapi strategy as well as the strategy to completely exploit the internal affairs of Yuan clan into destruction in the Battle Of Guandu. So Zhuge's primary aim was to eliminate Guo Jia from the game. Guo Jia was also proficient in the art of weather calculation, which meant that Guo Jia could threaten discovering his scheme. So Zhuge laid the setups for his Chibi planning by first assassinating Guo Jia. Zhuge knew that Guo Jia was a terribly sick person whose entire life support depended on Hua Tuo, who was a very proficient medical doctor of that period, he was in a tier of his own.
- So Zhuge understood that he didn't need to assassinate Guo Jia directly, but rather isolate Guo Jia and Hua Tuo away so that Guo Jia would die helpless. Zhuge fabricated that the incoming endemic became a cause of Sima Hui's (Professor Water Mirror) sickness, so that he could lure Hua Tuo away to the southern territories. Not only did it isolated Guo Jia and eventually killed him, but it also cured most of the southern territories to possess a remedy (Hua Tuo) for the endemic period, when Cao Cao was isolated and possessed no doctor to cure themselves with, which was actually side-scheme to employ Zhao Yun as an infiltrator of Cao Cao's forces when they would get afflicted with the endemic.
- Well this setup was employed later to infiltrate the diseased teams of Cao Cao in the Battle Of Red Cliffs, as Zhuge knew that at times of sickness and campaigning, it would be near impossible to actually fact-check each member of the faction. This eventually led to their infiltration of Wulin, misdirected Cao Cao's faction into focusing on Liu Bei's infiltration and ignoring Jiaoqui's infiltration team, which was part of Zhou Yu's strategy for Red Cliffs. Zhuge managed to get complete control over Hua Tuo by assigning a separate bodyguard or sort to him. Zhuge also managed to cover the tactic without suspicion as he knew that Cao Cao and Sima Hui were men of close relations, which would mean that Cao Cao wouldn't suspect much about Hua Tuo's decision to meet up with Sima Hui. So many layers with just a single aspect of the scheme.

Luring Cao Cao

- First of all, the battle of Red Cliffs was started with Cao Cao's army campaigning against the southern territories in 207. But Cao Cao's strategists, Guo Jia and Jia Xu planned the attack in a way that no one hoped for: On the Han river. Everybody knew of

occasional flooding in the Han river every year, but Guo Jia precisely predicted a larger and more powerful flooding of the river in that particular year, which he exploited to flood away all the stationed guards of the river, formulated two forms of attacking (one on land and the other on water) and force Jingzhou to be defenseless, and force a surrender. Zhuge also predicted that Liu Cong would be promoted to the heir due to his substantial number of supporters, and that Liu Biao would be a dead man when Cao Cao would start an attack. How did he know that Liu Biao would die?

- Zhuge knew that Liu Biao would die, because he knew that Liu Biao was a loyalist who would never surrender under the traitorous Cao Cao who kidnapped the emperor, and he also knew that Cai Mao and Liu Cong were planning to surrender under Cao Cao, hence he concluded a decade prior that Liu Biao would be murdered on the day that Cao Cao would attack. Is this just a prediction feat? No, it's actually a trap setting feat. Let me explain. Think from the beginning on how all of the subsequent events that led to Cai Mao and Liu Cong's plan to surrender work. It was Zhuge's Three Visitations Strategy . Zhuge purposefully weakened Liu Qi's position by allowing Zhou Yu to pressure more and more around Jingzhou and the subsequent loss of influence for Liu Qi so as to increase the chances of Liu Cong ascending to the throne. But that's not the end of the story. Zhuge most likely intended Liu Cong to ascend as the heir of Jingzhou, so that he could materialise Cai Mao and Liu Cong's intentions into reality, so that he could lure Cao Cao into attacking, while also manipulating them into an even greater comfort by aligning these events together with the massive flood.

- This was even implied when Zhuge Liang stated that Cao Cao was slowly falling into his primary tactic: Underestimating the enemy. So by allowing Cao Cao's schemes for Jingzhou and aligning them together with the Han river, he successfully manipulated Cao Cao to take upon the water (which was the primary asset of Zhou Yu) as well as manipulated them to start their campaign on the southern territories. Not only that, Zhuge anticipated that Jia Xu would try to assassinate Liu Cong and frame Liu Bei as the murderer to tarnish his reputation, as an after-effect of Liu Cong surrendering to Cao Cao's forces. However the assassination of Liu Cong was also orchestrated by Zhuge, as then that meant it would be easier to control Jingzhou once Cao Cao would get obliterated back to the Northern territories like he planned, as there would be no one to take up the control of Jingzhou other than Liu Qi who was already under the control of Liu Bei as from Zhuge's Three Visitations Strategy.


Jingzhou crumbles like a sand castle, almost too easy to take over


Yes, and it's heading straight for my tactic of expertise...


This move would certainly boost the Cao army morale

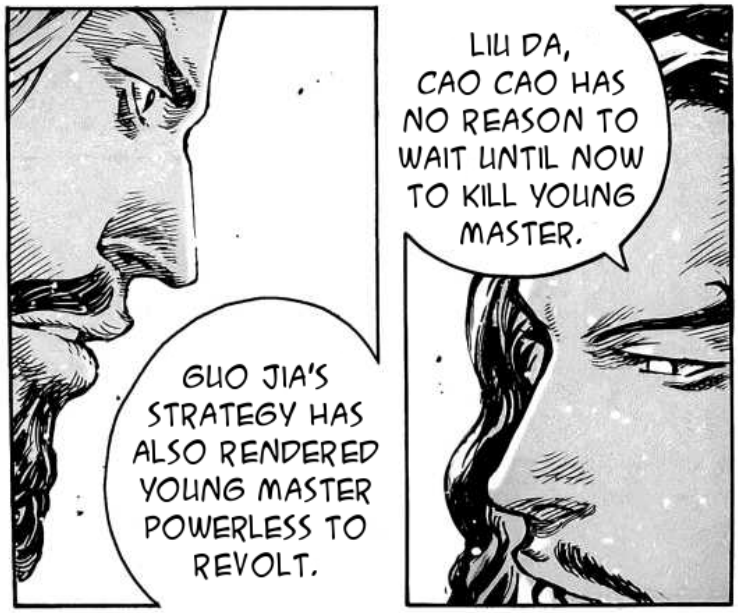
Entrapping Sima Yi

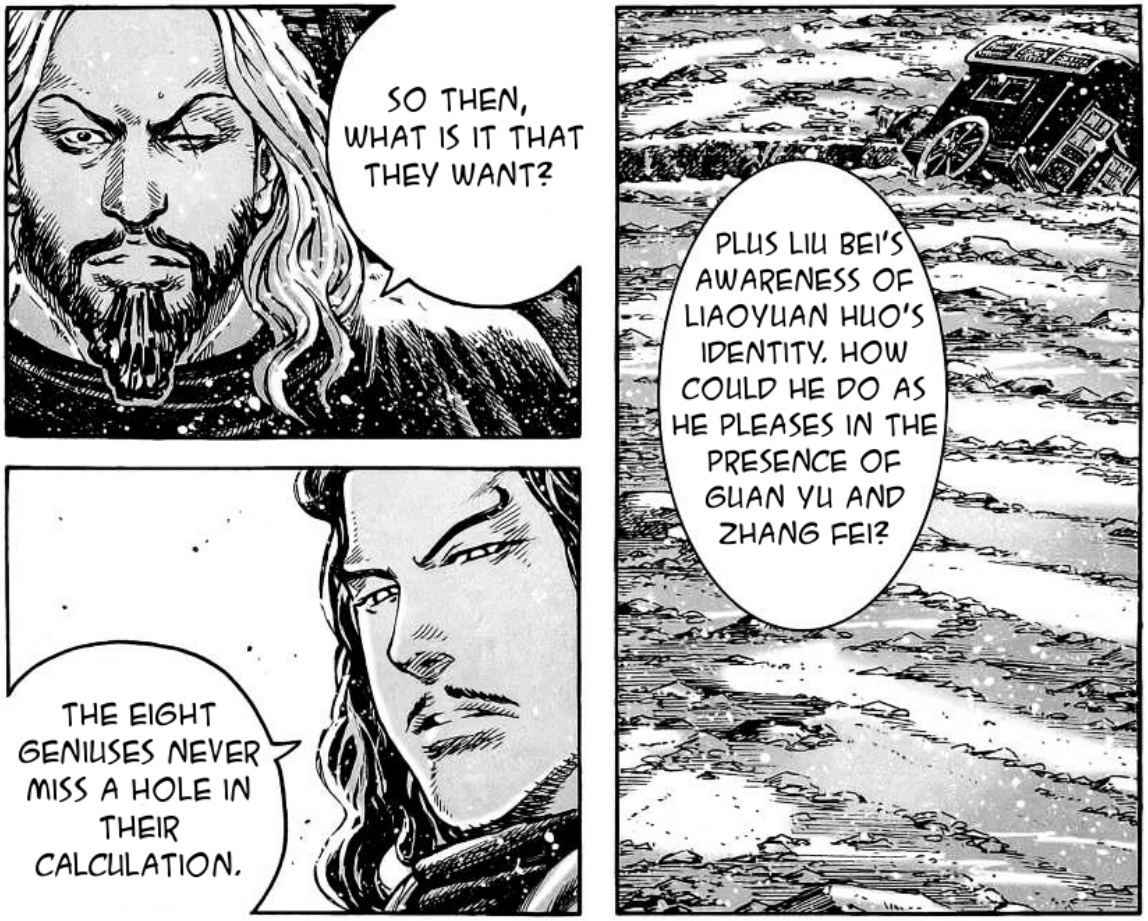
- Changban scheme actually had another effectiveness for Zhuge's overall long-term scheme. Well I already explained how Zhuge predicted that Guo Jia would force Sima Yi to surrender under Cao Cao and that Zhao Yun would be employed as an assassin for Liu Bei and Zhuge Liang within their faction, so as to prevent them from entering the scene. Zhuge did not predict that Sima Yi would be entrapped in the faction just so that he could formulate his plan to purify Zhao Yun.
- Zhuge Liang planned to completely isolate the relationship between Zhao Yun and Sima Yi not only to gain a loyal officer/general for Liu Bei to trust upon, but also to entrap Sima Yi into complying to his demands. What does this imply exactly? Well Sima Yi employed the fact that he possessed Zhao Yun as an insider and an assassin within the faction as a leverage to remain relevant in the faction. If Zhao Yun was not sent to serve as an insider or an assassin in the faction, Sima Yi's position and himself would be neglected and eventually executed for incompetence. Zhuge already anticipated that Guo Jia wouldn't go easy on Sima Yi and would severely pressure him, hence Zhuge knew that Sima Yi extensively leveraged on Zhao Yun to stay relevant in the faction.
- With his scheme to leverage upon Zhao Yun going down in drains, Zhuge forced Sima Yi to comply with his demands. What demands? Zhuge forced Sima Yi to give up deployment maps of the faction to him, so that he could employ the deployment maps confidently with Zhou Yu to sabotage Cao Cao's campaign. Why did Sima Yi comply with these demands? Because Sima Yi understood that his only leverage over the Cao Cao's faction was eliminated and if he was incapable to actually protect Cao Cao from some problem, he would be soon executed. So Sima Yi sabotaged Cao Cao with Zhuge by providing deployment maps, which allowed the Wulin infiltration as well as the other incidents in the other areas. It's very impressive that Zhuge managed to get complete control over two very unpredictable individuals through a single aspect of his entire scheme.


YOUNG MASTER STANDS TO LOSE ANY CREDIT FOR THIS BATTLE IF WE CAN'T KILL LIU BEI.

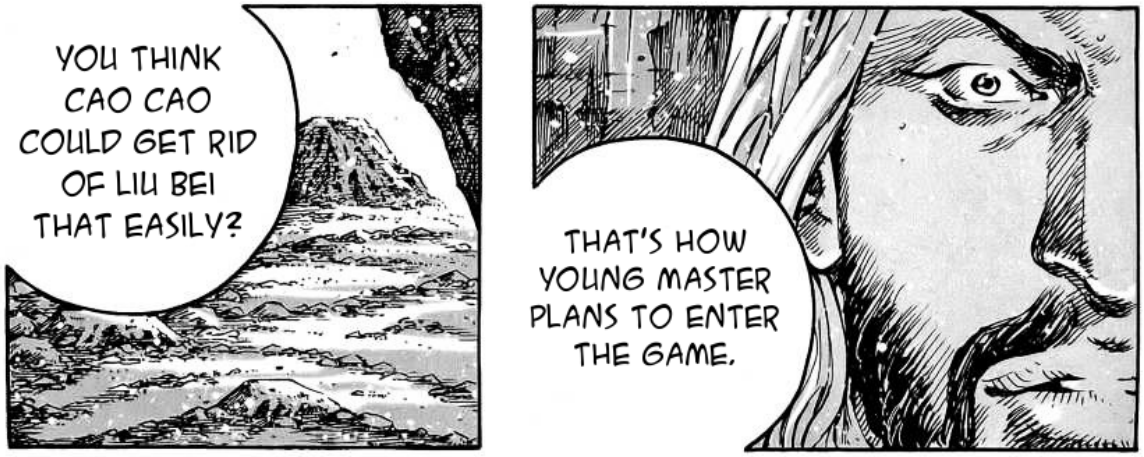

AND IF JIA XU CANNOT THREATEN THE SIMA CLAN, HE'LL TRY TO ELIMINATE IT.


YOUNG MASTER WON'T BE ABLE TO RANSOM BACK HIS FAMILY FROM JIA XU.


LIU DA, CAO CAO HAS NO REASON TO WAIT UNTIL NOW TO KILL YOUNG MASTER.
GUO JIA'S STRATEGY HAS ALSO RENDERED YOUNG MASTER POWERLESS TO REVOLT.


SO THEN, WHAT IS IT THAT THEY WANT?
PLUS LIU BEI'S AWARENESS OF LIAOYUAN HUO'S IDENTITY. HOW COULD HE DO AS HE PLEASES IN THE PRESENCE OF GUAN YU AND ZHANG FEI?
THE EIGHT GENIUSES NEVER MISS A HOLE IN THEIR CALCULATION.


IF YOU WANT TO HOOK THE ENEMY, LET THEM KNOW YOUR NEXT MOVE.


YOU THINK CAO CAO COULD GET RID OF LIU BEI THAT EASILY?
THAT'S HOW YOUNG MASTER PLANS TO ENTER THE GAME.

Assassination of Cai Mao

- One of the long-term contingencies that Zhuge Liang planned for Red Cliffs was the Cai Mao assassination plot, which he planned for literally a decade. Cai Mao was the loyal general of Jingzhou, who was very well-known for his military prowess. But he did not conduct this assassination plot, because he found Cai Mao's military prowess threatening (He would demolish Cai Mao to the shadow realm if they were to engage in any sort of mind game).
- He planned this contingency to prevent Liu Bei from getting trapped in Xiakou. What does that mean? Well Liu Bei was pursuing Xiakou during the start of the Battle Of Red Cliffs, but Zhuge knew that Zhou Yu planned to trap Liu Bei within Xiakou, by allowing him to pass to Xiakou, and then if you remember from the Zhou Yu's section, Zhou Yu planned to intentionally get lured by Jia Xu's Wulin retreat misdirection, Zhou Yu planned it not only to manipulate Jia Xu to launch all the risky ambushes that he laid. But also so as to surround Liu Bei with Xiakou, and then allow Cao Cao to eliminate Liu Bei from the game. Because that would mean Zhou Yu would have one less faction to take care of. And since Zhou Yu's scheme was also indestructible by then, the entrapment would mean he could take care of Liu Bei's faction after he would finish Cao Cao in the Battle. It was a long-term trap of Zhou Yu to take down Liu Bei, so many layers in this single trap. But Zhuge anticipated this trap a decade prior, literally.
- Zhuge secretly planted an insider/assassin in the Cai clan a decade prior to the actual battle as a contingency to prevent a trap like this. Because without this contingency, Zhou Yu's trap was basically invincible to evade. Zhuge evaded the trap by luring Cai Mao away and then secretly employing the assassin to take him out, leaving the Xiakou's forces without a general to abide by. Zhuge anticipated that Cai Mao and Liu Cong would surrender, but he also anticipated that Cai Mao would be selected as one of the generals in the battle, due to his familiarity of the terrain and particularly Xiakou.
- As he anticipated that Cai Mao would be the general of Xiakou's stationed troops, he eliminated him and bypassed the forces at Xiakou. This was the reason he did not let Liu Biao to execute Cai Mao back when Cai Mao was seen trying to ambush Liu Bei, because Zhuge knew that if Cai Mao was already gone, then that would mean that when Cao Cao does attack the southern territories, another general of Jingzhou would be selected, and that would solidify Zhou Yu as invincible. Not only that, it was also so that Zhou Yu could launch his sabotage easier, but it is deeper. Zhuge anticipated that Jia Xu would want to sacrifice Cai Mao as a trap to lure Zhou Yu in for the Easterly Wind bait, but Zhuge also anticipated that Zhou Yu would see through the trap and would use Jiaoqui to distort them. So this was also just to initiate Jia Xu's trap earlier, so that Zhou Yu would execute his strategy faster.


WHO WOULD BENEFIT IF THE CAO NAVY CHANGES ITS COMMANDER?


LIU BEI COULD **NO LONGER** BE TRAPPED IN XIAKOU.
THIS IS A HINT, EVERYONE.

The Easterly Wind Bait

- The next trap that Zhuge laid prior to the battle itself was the Easterly Wind. Before I go over to explain this trap, I noticed some arguments against this scheme, which is that it feels too supernatural and convenient. Basically the main argument that this scheme doesn't scale too high is due to the fact that it's too convenient for Zhuge? That the Huarong flood was simply a convenient event to occur for Zhuge? First of all, this argument does not work at all. Even if the event was convenient, Zhuge still orchestrated a number of events accordingly to force Cao Cao into the route. So the event being convenient does not degrade the impressiveness of the plan at all, as Zhuge had to orchestrate a lot for it. Second of all, Huarong flood is pretty climatically aligned with the Easterly Wind. Because Easterly Wind was explicitly stated to have occurred in the month of November, which meant that Huarong flood occurred in the late November or early December, and December are months of high floods frequency with heavy emphasis on the coldness of the weather during that month too.
- So it's pretty reasonable for Huarong flood to occur after Easterly Wind, which in itself occurred at a time of cold climate. Anyways, let's now hop onto the Easterly Wind trap. Basically this is the reason why he aligned the Han river flood together with the Jingzhou commotions and manipulated Guo Jia into selecting waterways as the mode for the campaign against the southern territories. Zhuge managed to align the Easterly Wind together with these lines of events, and he planned to align them as far back as Battle Of Xiapi or maybe even further back.
- Zhuge knew that Zhou Yu was excellent at the art of weather calculation, so he foresaw that Zhou Yu would predict the Easterly Wind and manipulated him into choosing Easterly Wind as the main trick to pound Cao Cao's faction, because he knew Easterly Wind provided opportunities that only Zhou Yu could see, he manipulated Zhou Yu even further to choose Easterly Wind because he knew that naval warfare is the primary specialty of Zhou Yu and a campaign from the waterways would further solidify Zhou Yu's decision to humiliate Cao Cao and his entire faction.
- The reason he wanted Zhou Yu to use Easterly Wind, was because he knew that Zhou Yu would obviously employ the wind for a fire attack, and he foresaw that it would involve burning the entirety of Red Cliffs. Why does the burning of Red Cliffs matter so much? Because one of the effectiveness of aligning Easterly Wind with the Battle other than obviously humiliating and crushing Cao Cao and his faction, was to manipulate Zhou Yu into unintentionally blinding himself from countering Zhuge's Huarong flood. How did Zhuge achieve this exactly?
- You see, a major part about the Easterly Wind bait was Red Cliffs. It was employed as a deception tactic by Zhou Yu who planned to bring Cao Cao into a false sense of security, by doing the exact action they wanted: Burning Of Red Cliffs. Jia Xu reasoned out from Zuo Ci that there was an incoming Easterly Wind in November, so Jia Xu anticipated that Zhou Yu would send Kan Ze as an insider to check all activities as well as conceal

the bait and then would falsify a surrender from Huang Gai apparently from his mistreatment that Zhou Yu expected Jia Xu to see through as well.
- So Jia Xu anticipated that Huang Gai's purpose was to burn the ships in Red Cliffs so that he could signal Sun faction's troops to attack and bypass the defenses, so Jia Xu used the fact that Zhou Yu was trying to deceive as a lure to deceive him instead to attack, because he planned further forces to ambush them. However Zhou Yu anticipated that Jia Xu anticipated his entire strategy and that Jia Xu was trying to use his deception tactic to deceive him into attacking and get ambushed miles ahead, all of that were the deception tactic that Zhou Yu planned to lure Cao Cao's forces deep in their territories, lure Xun You's ships away from his actual target of attack, use the same Easterly Wind to launch a different fire attack on Jia Xu's forces and block them, then cut off their supplies and reinforcements, then use the plague to further ambush Cao Cao's forces, then use Zhuge's generals as a distraction tactic to burn their main encampment and then bring his hidden reinforcements to further ambush Cao Cao's forces back. Insanely complex strategy, deceptions over deceptions.
- If you want to learn how complex his deception is, Zhou Yu deceived Jia Xu using the fact that Jia Xu was trying to deceive him using the fact that he wanted to deceive Jia Xu using the fact that Jia Xu was planning a massive campaign against the southern territory. However, Zhuge Liang anticipated Zhou Yu's as well as Jia Xu's entire strategy miles ahead. Zhuge obviously had way more intentions for aligning Easterly Wind, like indirectly manipulating Zhou Yu to intend humiliating and proving Cao Cao was an utter loser in Red Cliffs with all of his advantages combined with the fact that Cao Cao even expected the Easterly Wind Bait. One of the reasons he aligned with Easterly Wind was to manipulate Zhou Yu into burning Red Cliffs.
- Zhuge anticipated that Zhou Yu would try to burn Red Cliffs, because Red Cliffs was obviously a place of significance in the Battle and the forces would want to station large number of forces over there, Zhou Yu knew that Jia Xu would try to lure him to burn it, so Zhou Yu expected it and used that to lure him. But Zhuge expected both of their thought processes and lured them both to commit to this deception tactic. Because by luring them to burn Red Cliffs, a sun-shaped immense smoke would appear from the burning Red Cliffs, which would burn for very long and immensely due to the amount of ships being burnt and it would conceal the entire sky for Zhou Yu.
- Why does blinding Zhou Yu matter then? Because the Easterly Wind was incoming, and once the time for Easterly Wind was near, the weather patterns for predicting the flood would start to come and if Zhou Yu were to predict that Zhuge was planning the flood, then he would immediately counter it. So by orchestrating them in the palm of his hands, he was able to maintain a guise for his actual scheme.



Diminution of Cao Cao's army

- Zhuge also indirectly orchestrated the isolation of Cao Cao's troops in different areas such as Yuzhang as early as the start of the Red Cliffs arc. Let's again jump back to the start of the arc to understand this aspect of his scheme, after he observed that Cao Cao attacked on waterways just like he anticipated, Zhuge then advised Liu Bei to abandon Jingzhou and Xinye, recruit masses of Jingzhou's refugee crowds and march towards Xiakou. On the surface level, the motive behind this decision was to repopulate Xiakou and create a new Xiangyang through Xiakou. However, the decision is way deeper than what it seems on the surface.
- Another motive of the decision would be to request help from Zhou Yu, use the refugee crowds to convince Zhou Yu to help and search for Pang Tong so that he could recruit him in his faction. However, the decision is still deeper than that. The scheme was not only to recruit Pang Tong or plan for a long-term idea to vitalise a new Xiangyang in

Xiakou, but also to manipulate Jia Xu into devising his desired tactic. There is a very common tactic in Ravages Of Time, which is spreading insider-men or assassins in a crowd so that they could be used for assassinating key members of the opposing factions.
- That was what Zhuge lured Jia Xu to devise, spreading Cao Cao's men in the refugee crowds so as to employ them against Zhou Yu at the right time and at the right place. Jia Xu anticipated that the refugee crowds would reach various places through the helps and walking, so he selected Zhang Liao to infiltrate those crowds along with his team and follow the refugee crowd that would reach Haihun, because he wanted to misdirect Sun faction into thinking Cao Cao retreated so that he could launch a surprise attack and immobilise them.
- So Zhang Liao immediately started attacking the defenseless Taishi Ci whose reinforcements had moved to Red Cliffs for the battle, and killed him while allowing various other armies of Cao Cao to infiltrate the lands and water too. However both Zhou Yu and Zhuge anticipated that Jia Xu would use the Jingzhou refugee crowds to launch a surprise attack. That's why Zhou Yu even agreed to help Zhuge Liang transfer the Jingzhou's refugee crowds in the first place, as he foresaw Jia Xu's strategy. Zhou Yu wanted Jia Xu to launch the surprise attack, because he wanted Zhang Liao to continue his siege while the others were preparing for the battle as well. He allowed all of the multi-pronged attacks and land conquerings to happen, because he wanted to isolate each of Cao Cao's troops from each other.
- Zhou Yu planned to use Lu Xun as bait to lure Jia Xu on land and into the woods, and prepare reinforcements for Cao Ren at Yuzhang. Because he wanted to use a coordinated tactic using the wide river to split Xun You's forces and burn his masqueraded ships, which would float over to the woods and suffocate Jia Xu's troops, and using the leather stitched ships, Zhou Yu managed to block any routes for Jia Xu to escape as well as manipulated Xun You to split his forces as well. He also wanted to isolate the armies, because he planned to use Jiaoqui's team to infiltrate Wulin and set their main significant area, where they possessed all the ration depots and resources, to fire as well as align the sequence of events with the severe endemic to further dampen Cao Cao's troops' strength.
- Then Zhou Yu planned to reveal the concealed reinforcements who stack up to more than 20,000 strong, to chase each of Cao Cao's isolated armies and crush them one by one. Both Zhuge and Zhou Yu planned this. Zhuge wanted Zhou Yu to plan this abomination of a strategy, so that's why he even advised Liu Bei to take the civilians in the first place, it's not for reputation or Xiangyang reconstruction alone.
- Not only did this split Cao Cao's troops and lead to the humiliating loss of Cao Cao to Zhou Yu in the battle of Red Cliffs, but also manipulated Zhou Yu into cutting off all routes for Cao Cao to escape with other than the Huarong path, which was the place that Zhuge designed for a decade prior. The main motive behind this scheme was to lure Jia

Xu into foreseeing an opportunity with it and for Zhou Yu to foresee an opportunity in Jia Xu finding an opportunity in it.
- Zhou Yu's sacrifice of Taishi Ci was also probably foreseen by Zhuge Liang. Incredibly complex scheme. The foresight of this scheme is basically Zhuge Liang foreseeing an opportunity in Zhou Yu foreseeing an opportunity in Jia Xu foreseeing an opportunity in the Jingzhou refugee crowd. This scheme ultimately led Cao Cao to Huarong, which was where Zhuge planned his flood and motive.
- Also the reason he planned Pang Tong to persuade Gan Ning into giving up himself and his forces to Zhou Yu's forces, was so that Zhou Yu would get the leather-made ships, which flawlessly scorched the woods. I won't elaborate on this much. Cool tactic.




THE CORNERS OF HILLSIDE, THE TWISTING PATHS, THE DIRECTION OF THE FIRE, THE FLAMMABILITY OF VEGETATION, ACCURATE TO THE HILT...


AND WE WERE LURED IN FAR TOO DEEP BY LU XUN!
OUR TROOPS ARE IN DISARRAY, ADVISOR. MANY OF THE MEN ARE FLEEING TO THE SHORE!
OH NO! THAT... THAT WOULD...
ZHOU YU'S "SHIP-MADE" WALL OF FIRE FLAWLESSLY C OVERED THE ENTIRE AREA...

Establishment of the tripartite system

- The final trap was of course Huarong flood. However he did lay another trap to misdirect Zhou Yu away from Huarong. I will just rush the section, because this doc already took 2 weeks of my time. Zhuge finally was able to lure Cao Cao into Huarong, and his planned flood had started to come, and Cao Cao's forces were heavily restricted as Liu Bei's troops surrounded the area. His planning even had after-effects as he aligned the flood together with Cao Cao's faction's struggles, which he engineered by luring Hua Tuo away from the faction as well as using Sima Yi to indirectly manipulate Zuo Ci to assassinate the head doctors (Speculation), he was able to force them to surrender as they were too exhausted by the battles.
- Zhuge also prepared Liu Bei's water boots in advance so that Guan Yu's troops' advance towards Cao Cao would not be difficult, which would be a major disadvantage as Cao Cao's forces would need to pass through the rain and battle. With all of these events occurring, Zhou Yu was unable to intervene and defeat Cao Cao's forces for himself, as the flood was preventing him from interrupting the battle between Guan Yu's troops and Sima Yi's troops. But Zhou Yu laid a bigger, subtler trap.
- Instead of just launching an attack through the dense terrain, he immediately moved to capture Jiangling and intended to use it as a base. But this move made no sense to anyone, except Zhuge Liang and Sima Yi. Zhou Yu's trap was that he would use the fact that Zhuge captured Cao Cao and his entire faction to turn against him. He knew that Cao Cao's troops were heavily, I mean heavily weakened, their troops were already heavily affected by the plague and combined with the battles, they were exhausted. So Guan Yu's fewer troops would be able to mobilise against them, but Zhou Yu also knew that Sima Yi would be the commander of the battle, and Zhou Yu anticipated that Sima Yi would be a good one at that.
- So he knew that Sima Yi's and Liu Bei's troops would wear each other down, and the worn down troops of Zhuge Liang would eventually prevail. Zhou Yu also planned a trap if Zhuge Liang were to capture Cao Cao, the trap was to utilise the fact that Zhuge Liang possessed the emperor Liu Xie and the traitor Cao Cao as an ill reputation to turn all oppositions against him, which would be hugely detrimental to him as Liu Bei's influence was not much to support himself. But not only that, even if Zhuge was able to survive through it, Zhou Yu would have conquered the Shu territories by then through Jiangling as his base.
- He would then conquer the three southern commanderies and would have a showdown with Zhuge Liang. Supported by the Long river and defended by Yizhou's geography combined with the fact that Zhou Yu would then possess far superior forces and land, he would crush Zhuge Liang easily no matter how smart or skilled Zhuge could be. But all of this was anticipated by Zhuge Liang a decade prior, and Zhuge used this trap as a trap to misdirect Zhou Yu instead. By positioning himself in Huarong, he

manipulated Zhou Yu into this thought process so that he could misdirect Zhou Yu into leaving without hesitation.
- So Zhuge decided not to kill Cao Cao a decade prior so as to evade Zhou Yu's deadly trap. His intention was actually to isolate Zhou Yu from eliminating Cao Cao and turning everyone against him, abandon Liu Xie and Han dynasty as a whole, and divide the world in three - By entering a Tripartite Pact. This was Zhuge Liang's tripartite strategy. He planned Liu Bei to be in one of the Three Kingdoms, named 'Shu' so that he could increase Liu Bei's influence in the later arcs, namely the Four Commanderies Arc in which he executed his remaining long-term plans to increase Liu Bei's power and influence.
- Zhuge Liang also needed to fabricate an excuse to why he let the entrapped Cao Cao through Huarong, when he had him dancing in his palms. Zhuge Liang managed to deceive everyone why he let Cao Cao pass through, by leaving Liu Bei exposed as well as allowing Sima Yi to counteract his strategy. What does that mean? Sima Yi managed to order Zhu Ling's forces and the other forces to sail their ships on hills not to prepare a rescue for Cao Cao. But to surround Huarong route, and block all roads and paths in it so that he could lure Guan Yu away to deal with him, which would reduce Zhuge Liang's strength and would further allow Sima Yi to counter his attack.
- Sima Yi was also able to order forces to sail to Jiangxia and surround Liu Bei, who wouldn't have any forces for himself to fend off the forces from Sima Yi himself, as all of his forces would be concentrated with Guan Yu and Zhuge Liang, which would mean Liu Bei would get captured. This completely equalised the position of both Liu Bei and Cao Cao. If Zhuge were to execute Cao Cao, Liu Bei would get captured and executed too. Guan Yu's troops were also forced to fend off the blocking forces too.
- Sima Yi managed to use the floods and water to restrict the movement of Zhuge Liang and his forces as well, while Sima Yi and his forces were also restricted from any kind of movement due to the flood and blockades from Zhuge Liang's forces. But both Sima Yi and Zhuge Liang knew that this was merely a deceptive tactic that Zhuge intended from the beginning. Zhuge wanted to engineer an excuse to let Sima Yi pass through Huarong from the beginning, as his intention never was to eliminate Cao Cao from the story, but instead isolate Zhou Yu away from Cao Cao, solidify Liu Bei's position, abandon Han dynasty and establish the Tripartite system.
- So with this deceptive scheme, Zhuge Liang eventually allowed Sima Yi to pass through Huarong. Really impressive and incredibly layered deceptive tactic. Zhuge Liang managed to account for basically every single aspect of the battle with nearly perfect accuracy. Zhuge Liang managed to correctly align everything for this deceptive tactic to go. He also had reasoning for each of the fabricated mistakes that he allowed Sima Yi to exploit.
- Like for leaving Liu Bei exposed without any forces for him to fend off with, it could reasonably be covered by the fact that Zhuge intended to go full-on Cao Cao for Huarong. And for the ships on the hills tactic that Sima Yi employed, Zhuge Liang could

simply reason that he was not able to expect a tactic as innovative as sailing ships on hills. And for letting Huarong rear exposed and allowing Cao Cao's forces to create their own blockade, Zhuge Liang could simply reason that he needed to concentrate most of the forces in his battle at Huarong. So the mistakes that Zhuge fabricated were near idiotic to reason against or get seen through.



- Before ending this section, I want to give a personal theory that I thought about Zhuge Liang's schemes, that I already mentioned in my Xun Yu's shattered strategy doc as well. So I will just copy and paste it over here.
- **Theory**: *Zhuge Liang might have planned Xun Yu's revolt from the start, because Xun Yu's turn against Cao Cao was instigated by Zhuge's scheme to establish the Tripartite which would cause the downfall of the Han dynasty, so Zhuge might have foresaw the line of events as far into the future as the Battle Of Tong Pass. How would instigating Xun Yu's turn against Cao Cao help Zhuge Liang and his faction you may ask? Well obvious, for starters, Wu and Shu would have an upperhand against Wei for once, and two, Wu would have been worn down by their attack against Cao Cao, and maybe Zhuge foresaw these opportunities. You might ask, well Zhuge didn't want Wei*

to perish, no? Yes he did not want Wei to perish, but he already solidified Liu Bei's influence pretty well by that time, don't you think? Zhuge was reluctant to continue with killing Cao Cao himself because firstly, he would get a bad reputation for kidnapping the emperor and secondly, he had little influence to manage the ill reputation too at that period of time. But in this case, he was not the only one who was going to eliminate Cao Cao from the game anyways, it was a combined attack from Liang province and Wu faction, and by the time when Xun Yu executed his strategy in the Battle Of Tong Pass, Han dynasty essentially had no influence to back themselves up, and Liu Bei also had sizeable influence at that period of time. But this theory is not confirmed and is just based on assumptions, so just skip this if you don't want to deal with my theories.

Guo Jia's contingency for Red cliffs and Cao Cao faction's counter to the schemes:

- This Guo Jia guy lowk pmo icl.

A. **Framing Xun Yu to prevent him from doing anything:**
   - Guo Jia knew that Xun Yu and Jia Xu were no match for the combined force of both Zhou Yu and Zhuge Liang, as Guo Jia knew that Zhuge Liang absolutely would not enter the scene if he wasn't confident in his victory. It's also near impossible to defeat Zhou Yu on the waterways due to his immense talent in it, which would absolutely allow Zhou Yu to prevail in the battle without a single ounce of doubt. But Guo Jia knew a very well-known individual who matched the strategic prowess as well as shared a common ground with the terrifying Crouching Dragon; The treacherous businessman, Sima Yi. So Guo Jia ordered Yang Xiu to frame Xun Yu in the aftermath of the battle if Cao Cao were to lose the battle, so that Xun Yu would lose his clout in the capital, which would mean he would
   - How did Xun Yu lose his clout actually? Well simple, Xun Yu was assigned by Cao Zhi, who was under the influence of Yang Xiu, to check and investigate the list of suspects that he published to him. The first half of the list did contain suspicious individuals, but the second half contained a number of Cao Pi's supporters, which immediately brought concern. You might have already questioned why Xun Yu would ever agree to investigate these groups of individuals anyways, as it's pretty easy to see that Cao Zhi was scheming against Cao Pi? Well because he had no choice, the internal faction was pressured with discerning the true insiders and eliminating them out, combined with the fact that he could not refuse Cao Zhi's orders as well as that could raise the rumor that Xun Yu was supporting Cao Pi. So out of force, Xun Yu investigated the

individuals and Yang Xiu immediately announced to everyone that all the people that Xun Yu blocked and investigated were the forces that were planned to be sent for the suffering troops in the battle, thus framing Xun Yu and demoting his influence.

- You might have a question on why Guo Jia did not take care of Jia Xu, as he was the one, after Guo Jia, who had a strong leash on Sima Yi. Well it's because Guo Jia anticipated that after him, Jia Xu would be the main strategist of the faction who would take care of the battle of Red Cliffs. Since this contingency would be executed when Cao Cao would lose the battle, that automatically would mean that in this scenario, Jia Xu would lose his own influence due to his massive loss in Red Cliffs to Zhou Yu. So assuming this scenario, Guo Jia could be rest assured that Jia Xu's leash on Sima Yi would be weakened immediately.

B. <u>Zhu Ling's assignment:</u>

- Zhu Ling's first assignment from Guo Jia, if Cao troops were lost to the battle, was to engage their hidden fleets to the upstream and reach where Xun You would be and aid them after their heavy casualties in the battle.
- The next assignment for Zhu Ling to follow was to sail to the rear of Huarong so that they could save Cao Cao's forces who were trapped within Huarong, by surrounding their forces.

C. <u>The successor:</u>

- As I already explained, Guo Jia was deeply afraid of Zhuge Liang, Zhuge Liang was an all-rounder who only entered the fray when he was absolutely confident in his win. But this is the reason why he planned to recruit Sima Yi back in the Xuzhou arc in the first place: Xuzhou was to test Sima Yi's and Zhuge Liang's prowess as well as to lure them out. But once he saw their compatibility, Guo Jia was convinced to employ Sima Yi as the rival strategist of Cao Cao's faction. Hence, once his plan with Yang Xiu to neutralise Jia Xu and Xun Yu worked, he planned to give up all the deployment as well as commander control over to Sima Yi, essentially letting him take the option to control everything at that moment. But isn't that stupid? Wouldn't Sima Yi just assassinate Cao Cao at that moment? No, that's a big mischaracterization. Sima Yi planned to usurp Cao faction's throne, not kill Cao Cao. So Guo Jia knew that Sima Yi would only use that opportunity to substantially increase his influence and climb the power ladder instead of killing Cao Cao at that spot, so he let Sima Yi take control.

- It's worth noting that Zhuge anticipated Guo Jia's contingency miles ahead. In fact, it was a part of his plan, the same way Xun Yu too anticipated Guo Jia's contingency and planned it to be a part of his plan as well.

- Also Guo Jia did not anticipate that Zhuge Liang was planning for the flood in the Huarong. If he did, he would have countered it miles ahead. He only anticipated that Zhou Yu would cut off Cao Cao's retreat route to Huarong and would chase Cao Cao down. He just planned Zhu Ling as the rescuing reinforcement if that were to happen. The ships on hills tactic was entirely devised by Sima Yi, because logically Guo Jia had no way for it and it was heavily implied that Sima Yi was the one who did it, not Guo Jia. Zhuge Liang anticipated it and used it as a deceptive excuse to let Sima Yi pass through Huarong.
- Obviously this contingency is incredibly impressive. But it is unnecessarily wanked. Guo Jia planned Zhu Ling as a reinforcement to defend against Zhou Yu, not Zhuge. But I might be wrong, so feel free to correct me if you feel I am wrong on this part.

Sima Yi's main strategy for red cliffs:

- If you are confused on why this section is not 30-40 pages like the other strategies mentioned here are, it's because the strategy itself is not too terribly complex combined with the fact that I do not intend to make this doc any longer.

A. Double sabotage:

- Sima Yi's strategy began when Zhuge stripped Sima Yi of his only leverage on Liu Bei's faction, Zhao Yun. Zhao Yun was planned to be the assassin for Liu Bei and Zhuge Liang, more so he was planted there to prevent Zhuge Liang from actually entering the scene as Zhuge Liang would be a terrible force to deal with. But Zhuge Liang isolated Sima Yi from Zhao Yun and converted him into a general for Liu Bei. Sima Yi, who lost all of his leverages, was then under the threat of getting executed by Cao Cao for incompetence. So Sima Yi immediately devised a strategy to deal with the newfound problem.
- Sima Yi's first move after encountering the problem was to replace the lost partner with another competent individual. Hence the person Sima Yi targeted was Xu Shu. Sima Yi scrutinised Xu Shu's competence in strategy when he saw Xu Shu utilise a fire to create a large smoke so as to block Cao Cao's troops from pursuing Liu Bei while he was pursuing Xiakou. Sima Yi, sensing his competence, chose him as the replacement. Sima Yi forced him to surrender to Cao Cao by kidnapping his mother and since he was a deeply filial son, he was unable to make a choice and instead chose to serve Cao Cao instead. Sima Yi also covered the problem of Xu Shu's reluctance to serve for Sima Yi, by feeding him the information that Sima Yi planned to usurp Cao Cao to utilise Xu Shu's distaste towards Cao Cao to manipulate him into doing his biddings.
- The next action that Sima Yi did to retrieve his influence back was to materialise a problem into existence. This was a preparation move for his schemes with Zuo Ci by the way. Sima Yi intentionally colluded with Zhuge Liang as an insider who

would provide information for him, so as to launch a double sabotage on Cao Cao. Sima Yi provided Zhuge Liang the deployment maps of Cao Cao's troops and expected him to employ it to his advantage, and launch an ambush. With this scheme, Sima Yi would be able to engineer Cao Cao's defeat by the hands of Zhou Yu and Zhuge Liang, and then he would hop in as the main strategist to increase his lost influence.

B. <u>Jia Xu and Xun Yu neutralisation scheme:</u>

- Sima Yi's next course of action was to neutralise Jia Xu and Xun Yu, who had complete control over him, by taking his family as hostage in the Capital Xun. So Sima Yi had to find a way to neutralise Jia Xu and Xun Yu.
- His scheme to collude with Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu in itself was the scheme to neutralise Jia Xu. He acted as if he was working against Zhou Yu by calling Kan Ze out and revealing the information about Easterly Wind. But that was not it, Sima Yi knew that Zhou Yu was planning on humiliating Cao Cao as well as his main strategist, Jia Xu and in turn using that narrative to decrease their influence in the northern regions as well as within their faction (Sima Yi most probably knew this from colluding scheme with Zhuge Liang, as there was no other way that Sima Yi could know about Zhou Yu's scheme otherwise). Even if Sima Yi did not knowing about his scheme, he most likely anticipated Zhuge and Zhou Yu's prowess and bet against Cao Cao winning (Guo Jia too predicted the defeat, by understanding the fact that Zhuge would never enter the battle without a foolproof plan and that Zhou Yu was practically undefeatable on water).
- The next scheme was to use Zuo Ci's list of insiders. Sima Yi knew a list of insiders within the faction, as Zuo Ci was one of the many insiders, Sima Yi too knew many of them. But Sima Yi did not want this list of insiders to go to waste. Sima Yi instead used it to frame Xun Yu as well as block reinforcements for Cao Cao. How did he do it? Simple, Sima Yi gave the fake list of insiders to Xun Yu and gave the real list of insiders to Yang Xiu. Yang Xiu and Sima Yi collaborated on this scheme, because the former was working for Guo Jia's contingency while the latter was concerned about his own deals. Xun Yu was pressured to block the individuals and investigate them, as he was ordered to do so combined with the constant tension within the internal faction. When Xun Yu did block the reinforcements for Cao Cao in Huarong and investigated them, Yang Xiu, with Cao Zhi backing him up, immediately announced that the people Xun Yu blocked and investigated were reinforcements for Cao Cao in Huarong. Not only did this scheme substantially decrease Xun Yu's influence within Cao Cao's faction, it also blocked the unnecessary reinforcements to Huarong. Because Sima Yi wanted to take care of the problem himself to increase his own relevance within the faction.

C. <u>Collaboration with Zuo Ci:</u>

- Sima Yi's scheme with Zuo Ci was the main one. Sima Yi recruited Zuo Ci in his strategy because he knew that Zuo Ci possessed hatred towards Cao Cao. Because Zuo Ci was an immortal who came from the Yuan faction, and he was planning to avenge Yuan Fang's unfortunate death by killing Cao Cao.
- Zuo Ci joined Cao Cao's faction through Sima Yi and was actually the one who predicted the Easterly Wind Bait. The reason Sima Yi allowed Jia Xu and Cao Cao to know Easterly Wind was so that Zhou Yu's baiting strategy would work out. But you may ask, why didn't Zuo Ci conceal the Easterly Wind and let Zhou Yu just employ the initial strategy (the surface-level strategy. Fake a surrender from Huang Gai → Lu Xun and Lu Meng would arrive at Red Cliffs as vanguards → Huang Gai would signal the forces and would burn Red Cliffs to let them pass → Zhou Yu would attack from the water → Lu Meng would attack from the land → Everything goes awry for Cao Cao once Zhou Yu would employ the fire attack to block the forces and suffocate them while simultaneously dealing with Lu Xun and Lu Meng)? Well that's because Jia Xu would most likely just bring another weather reader for the faction to cover for their lack of expertise in weather reading and Zuo Ci would also lose profit as in this scenario, he did not get the trust of Cao Cao, combined with the fact that HE won't get the pleasure of killing Cao Cao himself.
- He was also the one who made the false corpse of Kan Ze as a trap to hide the real Kan Ze and let Sima Yi use the real Kan Ze for his own reasons. It was most likely also due to the fact that he had no personal vendetta against Kan Ze combined with the fact that Kan Ze was also known as a very respectable man and Kan Ze also sided against Cao Cao. So it's pretty understandable why Zuo Ci let Kan Ze go. Kan Ze also assassinated all the head doctors of Cao Cao so as to further isolate him while he was suffering from the plague endemic. Then Zuo Ci planned to use the fact that there were no head doctors as a reason to enter the scene and offer service, when his intention was to assassinate Cao Cao at that spot.
- But Sima Yi knew Zuo Ci's strategy all along. So he planned to use Zuo Ci to his maximum extent and then get rid of him while retrieving a profit from it. Sima Yi did it by allowing him to almost come near assassinating him. But then Sima Yi entered the scene at the perfect time when Zuo Ci was going to assassinate Cao Cao and then use his men to kill Zuo Ci at that time. Not only does this move allowed him to materialise a narrative that Sima Yi was the one who saved Cao Cao and all of his men as well as lead them against Guan Yu's troops as a commander, it also earned him the trust and loyalty of multiple members of the faction such as Xiahou Dun, Cao Hong, etc...
- Sima Yi also further used Zuo Ci to fabricate a replica of Kan Ze as a corpse so that he could trade the real Kan Ze with Hua Tuo. Because he knew that southerners valued Kan Ze really high and losing Kan Ze wouldn't be very favourable for them as they would lose a master of astrology and weather

calculation. So Sima Yi traded Kan Ze for Hua Tuo. But why? He wanted to retrieve Hua Tuo back so as to rescue Cao Cao from the plague, as he knew that the only one who could save Cao Cao from his suffering must be Hua Tuo. So he used Hua Tuo to save Cao Cao, so that he could increase his own validity and influence even higher as he would gain the trust of all the loyal followers of Cao Cao for saving him.

D. <u>The Common Ground:</u>

- Sima Yi knew that Guo Jia used Zhu Ling as a backup to save Cao Cao from Huarong. So instead of just using him to save Cao Cao which he knew would be useless (I will explain why it would be useless), he instead improvised the contingency and used Jingzhou's flood, which was deep enough to carry ships, to sail to the rear of Huarong and surround their forces, and then used it to block all the roads and routes outside of Huarong, so that Guan Yu's troops then would have to deal with them too. Sima Yi also ordered Zhu Ling's (??? I forgot) forces to sail to Liu Bei's force and surrounded him, thus trapping him. With this, Zhuge Liang and Sima Yi were in an equalised position.
- But Sima Yi understood that Zhuge Liang did not miscalculate anything there. It was all a pretense, to let Cao Cao pass Huarong. He understood that Zhuge Liang's intention was to isolate Zhou Yu from Cao Cao so that he could prevent him from crushing and incinerating Cao Cao's faction as that would mean Zhuge Liang would become a target of the warlords as well as the Sun faction, which would be a bad thing. Sima Yi also knew that Zhuge Liang's intention was also not to capture Cao Cao and Liu Xie, because he knew that Zhuge would not like to possess the ill reputation of capturing the Han emperor while having little influence. So Sima Yi figured out that Zhuge Liang's actual intention for the battle as well as the motive behind why he let Sima Yi equalise their positions was to; Isolate Zhou Yu from Cao Cao, abandon Liu Xie and the Han dynasty behind, and divide the world in three.
- Sima Yi understood Zhuge Liang's intention and Zhuge Liang understood Sima Yi's intention. Zhuge Liang's intention was to support his downtrodden yet righteous leader, Liu Bei and not let Zhou Yu isolate him, and not let the Han dynasty hold everything back. Sima Yi's intention was to gain the trust of Cao Cao and his entire faction, climb the power ladder of the faction, avenge his clan's extermination and usurp Cao Cao's power to establish a new kingdom. Their common ground allowed them to understand each of their intentions, so as a finality, Zhuge Liang and Sima Yi came to the decision, Sima Yi allowed Liu Bei to escape the surrounding troops and Zhuge Liang let Sima Yi pass through Huarong so that he could establish Liu Bei's influence in the next arc.
- With this, the Battle Of Red Cliffs came to a conclusion. A conclusion of two rivals finally saving each of their arses.

Zhou Yu's contingency strategy:

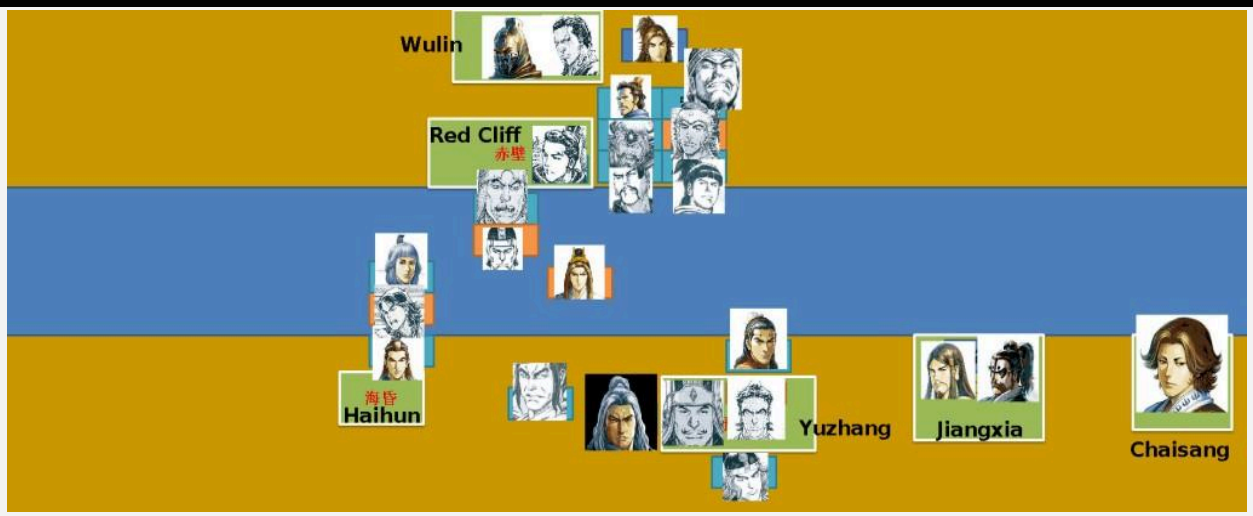
- Zhou Yu, after he saw that Zhuge Liang's Huarong flood had blocked their path, understood that pursuing Cao Cao's troops would be of no use to him combined with the fact that it could even lead to wider consequences for him. So he ordered his men to turn around and immediately pursue Jiangling so as to conquer them. On the surface level, this was a setup to conquer Jingzhou back to their hands through Jiangling as their base. But Kan Ze questioned this decision of Zhou Yu, stating that it would just lead to a battle between Zhou Yu and Jia Xu, and that even if Zhou Yu were to conquer Jiangling, Zhou Yu would still be diminished by Zhuge's diminution tactic. However Sima Hui reassured Kan Ze that he underestimated Gongjin's (Zhou Yu) immense strategic prowess. The reason Zhou Yu ordered his forces to secure Jiangling was for a deadly trap that he set for Zhuge Liang.
- I don't really know whether this is an improvisation feat or contingencies feat. Zhou Yu's trap was to turn all opposition against him as well as cripple his reputation badly so as to reduce his influence and eliminate him from the game. This was under the contingency that Zhuge Liang did isolate him from Huarong path and took on Cao Cao for himself. Zhou Yu planned to use Zhuge Liang to wear Cao Cao's forces down. How? He recognised an opportunity when Zhuge Liang positioned his troops in the Huarong path. He knew that his burning leather-made Jingzhou ships would flawlessly cover the woods in Red Cliffs combined with the burning of Wulin through Jiaoqui's team, which would cut all of Cao Cao's retreat routes to just Huarong path. He knew that Cao Cao's forces were worn down and taking them down wouldn't be hard. But assuming a contingency situation where Zhuge Liang managed to isolate Zhou Yu away which did happen through Zhuge's Huarong flood. So Zhou Yu planned to immediately conquer Jiangling, send forces to apply pressure and eventually take over Yizhou through Yiling, conquer the long river and then establish the southern territories as his. All of this was under the scenario that Zhuge Liang managed to capture Cao Cao for himself, which would mean Zhuge Liang would conquer northern territories in Cao Cao's place. But taking Cao Cao's place would mean he would be the possessor of the Han emperor, Liu Xie, which would mean Zhuge Liang would be deemed the Emperor Kidnapper. Not only that, Zhuge Liang would have to unite the northern territories together as well, which would minimalistically take years. Zhou Yu, by that time, would invade the Shu territories through Jiangling and then the three southern commanderies, and would possess Yizhou (Yi province) by that time as well. Which would mean Zhuge Liang and Zhou Yu split the world into two: North (Shu/Zhuge Liang) and South (Wu/Zhou Yu). By that time, Zhou Yu and Zhuge Liang would clash for a showdown between the territories. Supported by the Long river and defended by Yizhou's defenses, it would be easy for Zhou Yu to defeat someone as territorially and diplomatically troubled in the north. However this trap was under the contingency that Zhuge Liang would try to

conquer the north for himself, but Zhuge Liang prevented the trap from sprouting into reality.
- I am not too sure about this trap, if it does exist, then this trap would be a follow up to the former trap. Zhou Yu possibly planned the threat of conflict between Cao Cao's sons??? It was mentioned that if Cao Cao were to die in the Huarong path, the next immediate problem for Wei would be for them to choose their next ruler. It was directly stated that this exact situation would then lead to the conflict between Cao Cao's sons: Cao Pi and Cao Zhi who were supported by different groups within the faction. This would force Jia Xu to take action and abandon Cao Cao in the Huarong as well as convince Cao Ren to defend Yiling for future purposes, as well as give complete support over to Cao Pi to promote him into the next ruler of Wei. Possibly this was a two-layered trap. So if Jia Xu did abandon Cao Cao and solved the sons conflict matter, then Cao Cao, who would be isolated in the mountains, would die. Zhou Yu already planned to force Jia Xu back due to his inferior military power as well as defend Yiling from Cao Ren who had not much backing him up as well as his fewer forces who were already shaken by Zhou Yu's earlier strategy in Red Cliffs. So abandonment of Cao Cao would lead to wider consequences. Real big-brain trap. If Jia Xu abandoned the sons and internal conflict to save Cao Cao instead, the conflict of the sons would ensue wider resulting in wider consequences and the self-destruction of Wei. But if Jia Xu abandoned Cao Cao and solved the internal conflict instead, then Zhou Yu's contingencies from Red Cliffs would result in several consequences as well (If we think logically, the best scenario for Jia Xu to choose here would be the latter one). Zhou Yu possibly planned for both of these scenarios, however we all know that even if Zhou Yu did plan this trap to happen, it wouldn't sprout into reality anyways as this trap would only happen if Cao Cao was captured and executed by Zhuge Liang's forces in Huarong, which didn't happen. However his secondary contingency of conquering Jiangling and Yiling as a base would still pose an incredible threat as that would mean Zhou Yu could conquer from strategically advantageous positions in the future. If we delve even deeper and think logically about the situation, Zhou Yu could still make the trap work, because information from Huarong route was still blocked due to Zhuge Liang's doings, which Zhou Yu was explicitly aware of. So that would mean Jia Xu would still be unsure whether or not to save Cao Cao or solve the internal conflicts and prevent Zhou Yu from acquiring strategically advantageous positions. Of course, Zhou Yu could easily anticipate that Jia Xu would choose the most logical choice of the situation which is the latter one, but Zhou Yu would still have his contingency backing him up anyways.
- Zhou Yu also ordered forces to pursue Yiling and conquer them. The reason was to set up a base for themselves as well as be used as an intimidation tactic to outmaneuver the warlords of Yizhou. The tactic worked and Gong Su of Yizhou also agreed to surrender under Zhou Yu's forces through a letter. Cao Ren's forces who Jia Xu planned to take on Yiling, would also be blocked by Zhou Yu's forces whom he sent to conquer Yiling as they were much faster than Cao Cao's forces who were still troubled from Zhou Yu's

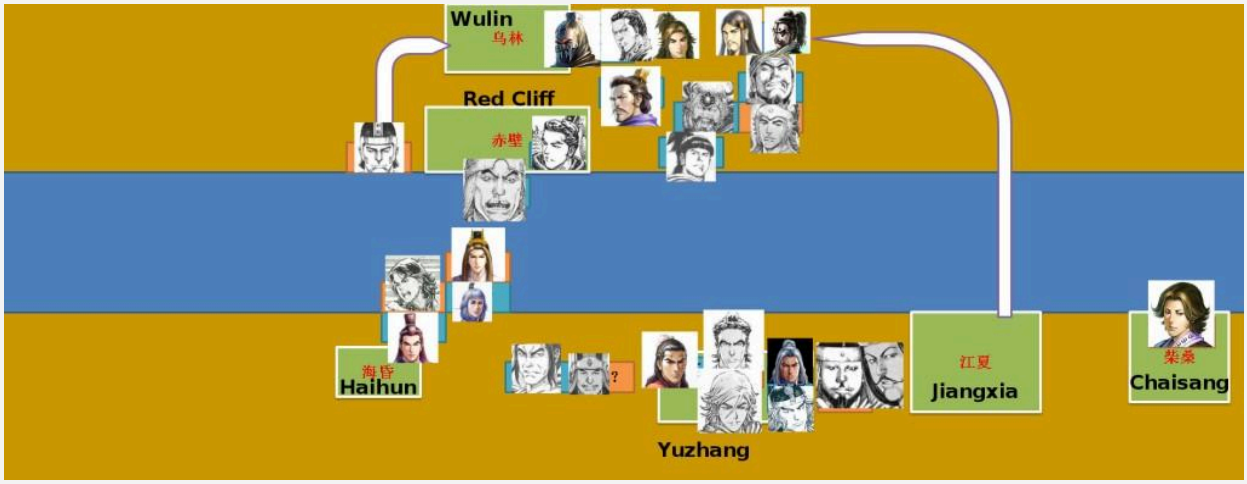
easterly wind bait and other shenanigans. The reason Zhou Yu's campaign felt intimidating was because Zhou Yu single handedly defeated Cao Cao and his entire forces who had much better forces and much better resources, and since news of Cao Cao withdrawing was spreading, it would intimidate them even more as that would mean Zhou Yu would shift his target to Yizhou. So through intimidation, Zhou Yu successfully submitted multiple surrenders.
- Zhou Yu misdirected everyone into thinking he conquered Jiangling to conquer Jingzhou back. But nobody (except Sima Yi, Zhuge Liang and Jia Xu) anticipated that Zhou Yu's main goal was Yizhou all along. Zhou Yu could simply take Yiling by blocking off Jiangling. Cao Ren was also not able to see Jiangling's forces since the latter had to dig in its heels. Zhou Yu anticipated that Jia Xu would anticipate Zhou Yu using Jiangling as a strategic base for his future conquerings and operations. So Zhou Yu's main strategy already crippled Cao Cao's forces enough. So Zhou Yu had a contingency to block Jia Xu if he anticipated Zhou Yu's contingency strategy, which was to use Jia Xu's numerical inferiority and inferior military power to block any of his strategies. So unfortunately Jia Xu was unable to execute his foresight due to Zhou Yu's contingency. Zhou Yu's Cao Cao forces crippling strategy is the real problem, which meant that Zhou Yu planned this secondary strategist way prior.
- Zhou Yu had another contingency for the next scenario: Zhuge Liang would let Cao Cao pass Huarong path through the south of the route so as to prevent his trap from working. This wasn't as favourable to Zhou Yu as Zhuge Liang conquering north due to the fact that he would possess all of the south and its geography while Zhuge Liang would be riddled with a lot of internal and external problems in the scenario. But this contingency was to prevent Liu Bei from being in the tripartite at all. Zhou Yu executed this contingency by overturning many warlords against Zhuge Liang, through some shenanigans in the 4 commanderies arc. Zhou Yu also planned to conquer Yizhou through Jiangling and Yizhou as his strategic base, then conquer the Shu territories through Jiangling and the 3 southern commanderies as well. In this scenario, Liu Bei might be able to conquer a few territories, however Zhuge Liang would still need to maintain the tripartite as well as the warlords as well as Zhou Yu's campaigns. Zhou Yu would still have the support of the Long river as well as the defence of Yizhou's geography. This contingency would also eliminate Liu Bei from the game. However, unfortunately for Zhou Yu, he did not see Zhuge Liang's barrage of long-term schemes coming in the 4 commanderies arc. To further understand this part of Zhou Yu's strategy, just read the 4 commanderies arc, the reason I did not elaborate further on this is because this crosses over to the next arc which I did not plan to analyse.

The locations during the Battle Of Red Cliffs:

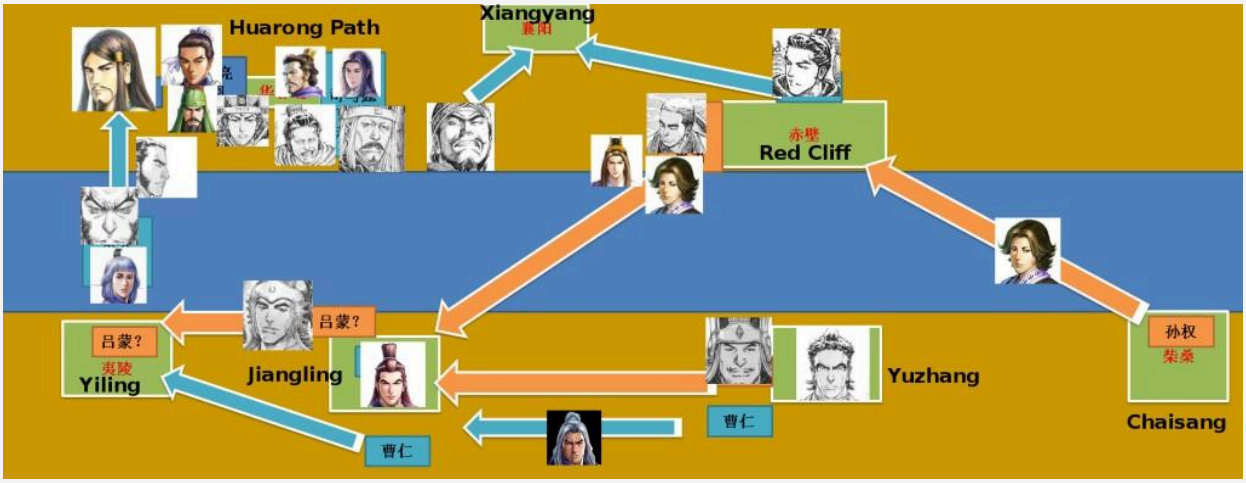
I found this on google. So I might as well share this for reference. These were also the positions that Zhuge actually orchestrated for the battle as well.



battle's initial deployment



fighting starts



battle deployment near the end

A small note:

Zhou Yu is sooo hot 😍 On a lesser important note, I most probably shouldn't have taken this project as a solo project, because this took me 2-3 weeks to complete, which is a lot of time. And some parts are also not reviewed yet, so the doc maybe would feel distasteful or repulsive. However my intention was to provide a concise elaboration on the genius of Zhou Yu, Zhuge Liang and characters alike in this arc. Also for your convenience, just skip certain sections of it if you don't want to read it.

Thanks For Reading ;)

"After the laughter, both armies found their own number two man. Funny enough it was a corrupt vassal who finally ended the war."

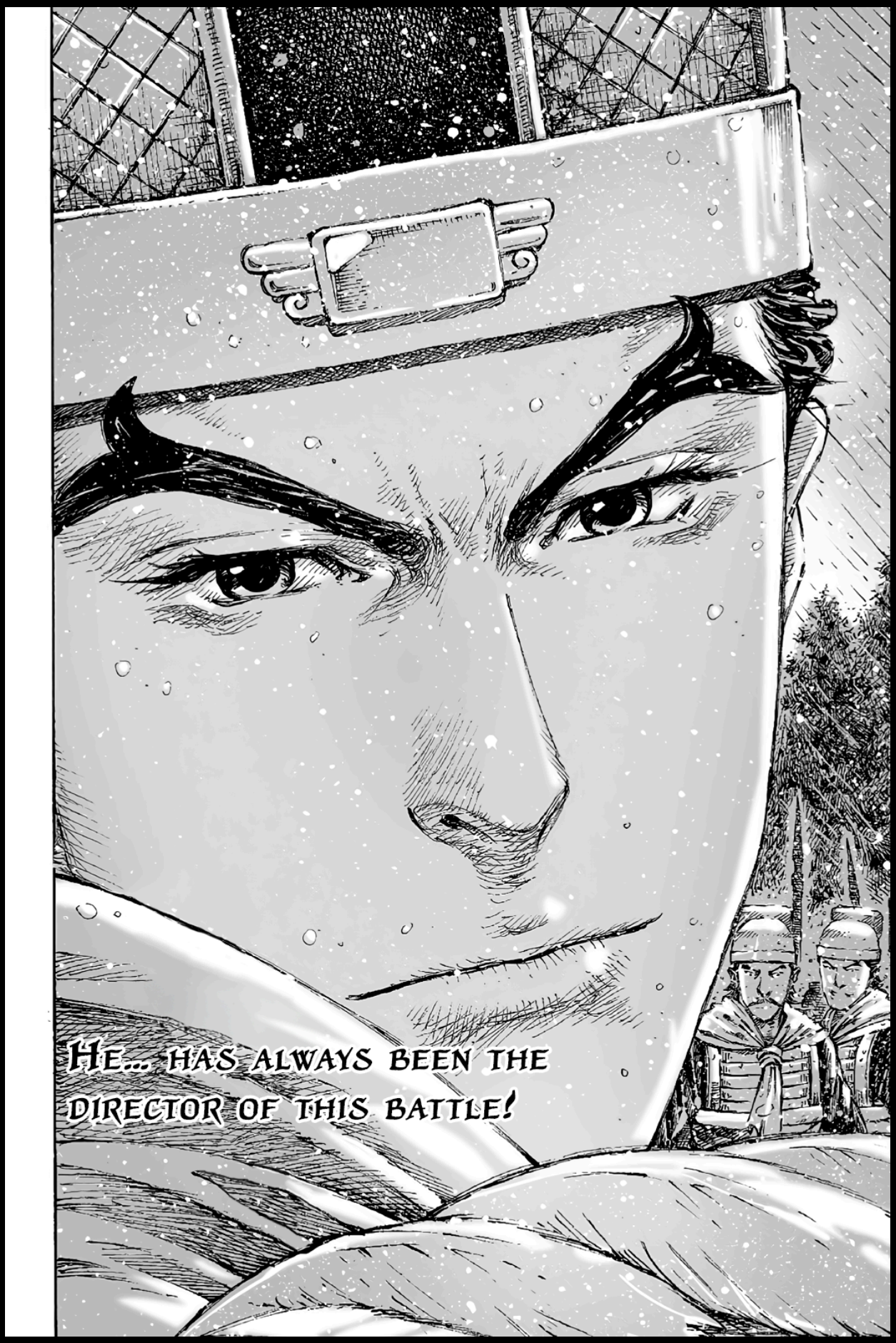
- Cool panels, don't you think? -


A COMMON GROUND THAT
ONLY THE TWO OF US SHARE...


THE FISH OF THE SOUTHEAST SHALL SPLASH LIKE A DRAGON!


THE BATTLE OF RED CLIFF IS WON AT LAST!
ARE YOU EXCITED, EVERYONE?


ONLY SIMA YI... MANAGED TO SAVE HIS LORD'S LIFE IN THE END!


He... has always been the director of this battle!