

Legendary Armament Canon

Chapter 6: Name of the Saber

“Don’t talk too much later, and follow my instructions. Do you understand?” Xiao Zongshui said in a deep voice when they were in a carriage.

Sitting across from him, Zhou Shu nodded. “Understood.”

...

The carriage moved forward. Although Zhou Shu was sitting in the carriage, his heart was already outside.

He would have popped his head out long ago if it wasn’t for Xiao Zongshui.

Zhou Shu had been in this world for some time, yet he had never left the Forging Division’s workshop. The spectacular scenery of the Great Xia piqued his curiosity.

While Zhou Shu was imagining Great Xia’s beauty, the carriage proceeded for over two hours before coming to a halt.

Xiao Zongshui got out of the carriage first, followed by Zhou Shu.

Zhou Shu saw the wilderness instead of the bustling capital he had anticipated.

The valley was surrounded by lush green mountains, and there was a military camp not far away.

Barracks? Zhou Shu’s heart stirred.

The Forging Division’s relationship with the military should be that the Forging Division supplied all the weapons it forged to the three military forces of Great Xia. Why was he brought here?

Despite his confusion, Zhou Shu didn’t ask any questions since Xiao Zongshui had already told him to mind his words.

He silently trailed after Xiao Zongshui while observing his surroundings.

When Xiao Zongshui arrived at the camp's entrance, he presented his token, and they were admitted.

Groups of soldiers were training in a frenzy within the military camp. Zhou Shu didn't think there was anything exceptional about the way they trained. They did nothing but chop and chop.

Xiao Zongshui seemed to know the camp quite well. He brought Zhou Shu through the training grounds and into a large tent.

Xiao Zongshui yelled, "General Cheng, Xiao Zongshui requests an audience!"

"Come in." A gruff voice sounded.

Before entering the large tent, Xiao Zongshui cast a glance at Zhou Shu.

Zhou Shu followed closely behind. As soon as he walked into the tent, he spotted Xiao Zongshui bowing to a towering and imposing general.

"General Cheng." Xiao Zongshui was bending over, and his body was practically at a 90-degree angle.

His superior was already acting this way, so Zhou Shu couldn't be too different. He cupped his hands and greeted, just as Xiao Zhongshui was doing.

"At ease." General Cheng waved and turned his focus from the sand table to Xiao Zongshui. "Why did you return?" he asked in puzzlement.

"General Cheng, this time I'm still here for the weapon issue," Xiao Zongshui said.

"Of course I know it's for armaments," General Cheng replied. "How else am I related to your Forging Division?"

"My requirements were not met by the weapons you provided. Your 97th Workshop will not be supplying weapons to my army," General Cheng continued with a shake of his head.

Zhou Shu was perplexed. *Why does it sound like Xiao Zongshui is here to promote weapons? Surely the Forging Division doesn't have to forge the weapons and sell them themselves?*

Although Zhou Shu was a Forging Apprentice of the Forging Division, Forging Apprentices were the division's lowest existences and had no idea how it operated.

In the Forging Division, all he needed to know was how many weapons he needed to forge each month. Apprentices had no idea where the weapons they forged ended up.

"Have you decided on a weapon, General?" Xiao Zongshui was undeterred.

"Not yet." With a shake of his head, General Cheng expressed his dissatisfaction with the situation. "A few weapons have been delivered from 73rd, 86th, and 89th workshops, but they're all barely satisfactory. I've been given orders to establish the Imperial Guards to ensure the Blessed Palace's safety. Naturally, I must use extraordinary caution when selecting weapons."

Zhou Shu listened in a daze, but he had no right to open his mouth and ask questions. He could only conjecture in his heart.

Zhou Shu had some understanding of the workshops that General Cheng mentioned. Great Xia's Forging Division had a total of 108 workshops, and among them, official Forging Masters populated the first 36 workshops. There were also more than enough Grand Craftsmen among them, and they were in charge of making ranked weapons.

The remaining 72 workshops, including the 97th Workshop where Zhou Shu worked, were in charge of forging standard weapons.

Different workshops were skilled at forging different types of armaments. Some were skilled at forging swords, while others at creating firearms. There were others proficient at forging spears, and still more were good at forging bows and arrows.

Zhou Shu served at the 97th Workshop, which specialized in saber forging.

Zhou Shu sensed something from General Cheng's statements.

General Cheng was putting together a troop, and the Forging Division's workshops were battling it out to be the weapon supplier.

Based on his work experience in his past life, it was easy to figure out that being the weapon supplier was a lucrative job.

Xiao Zongshui and the others wouldn't have come to seize this job if this wasn't the case.

"General, the saber is the monarch of all weapons. In my opinion, it is the most appropriate weapon for the Imperial Guards—" Xiao Zongshui expressed his thoughts.

Before he could finish, General Cheng interjected. "I've made my point. The 97th Workshop's sabers do not match my criteria, Superintendent Xiao. You can equip an ordinary army with the standard long sabers you've forged, but my Imperial Guards are elites among elites!"

"You have misunderstood, General Cheng." Xiao Zongshui shook his head. "I know the standard long sabers I brought before weren't worthy of your elites, so I brought the new saber that the 97th Workshop has been working on for years!"

"Oh?" General Cheng remained uninterested. What kind of weapon could a group of Forging Apprentices be capable of forging?

"General, please have a look!" With both hands, Xiao Zongshui held a saber in front of General Cheng.

Zhou Shu could see that the saber was the sharp standard long saber that Xiao Zongshui had taken away from him. He couldn't stop himself from rolling his eyes internally. *How did the saber I forge become the new weapon that the 97th Workshop has been developing for years?*

"What makes this saber unique?" General Cheng took the long saber and gave it a cursory glance.

The sharp standard long saber appeared to be no different from an ordinary standard long saber. It was a straight saber with a single edge, akin to a Tang saber.

“Superintendent Xiao, I’m very busy. If it’s merely an old weapon, you should leave.” General Cheng looked impatient.

He had tried all of the standard long sabers that Xiao Zongshui had brought over before, but they couldn’t meet his demands.

If not for the fact that he couldn’t avoid contact with the Forging Division in the future, and he didn’t want to make things too unpleasant with the Forging Division, he would have chased Xiao Zongshui out already.

“General, this isn’t the same long saber I brought over before!” Xiao Zongshui explained quickly. “This blade has an extremely sharp edge!”

“Haha...” General Cheng burst out laughing. “Superintendent Xiao, are you laughing at my expense? How can a saber be called a saber if it isn’t sharp?”

General Cheng wanted to see them off.

“Words alone are no proof. Please try the saber, General!” Xiao Zongshui rushed to speak.

General Cheng frowned and looked at Xiao Zongshui.

“Fine, I’ll give you another chance,” he finally said. “Bring in the armor, men!”

A few soldiers promptly dragged in a wooden stake that had two layers of leather armor on it.

“Superintendent Xiao, if your saber can penetrate two layers of armor, what harm is there in me using it,” General Cheng said.

Standard weapons that could break through the first layer of armor were already considered exemplary.

Even with General Cheng’s expansive horizons, he had yet to encounter many standard weapons capable of breaking two layers of armor.

Standard long sabers that broke two layers of armor were definitely qualified to equip the Imperial Guards.

“General, let’s add another layer of armor,” Xiao Zongshui said, his voice deep.

“Three layers of armor?” For a brief moment, General Cheng was astonished. Then he exclaimed angrily, “Superintendent Xiao, enough is enough!”

Standard weapons were forged using the most ordinary metals. Breaking through two layers of armor was extremely difficult. How was it possible to break through three layers?

“General, what’s the harm in giving it a shot?” Xiao Zongshui said seriously.

“Very good!” For a long time, General Cheng narrowed his eyes and stared at Xiao Zongshui. Then he waved his hand, and a soldier put another layer of leather armor on the wooden stake.

“You do it.” General Cheng handed the saber to a soldier.

He was a strong man, and he wouldn’t be able to test the weapon’s sharpness if he tested it himself.

After gauging its weight, the soldier slashed out with the long saber.

He didn’t use all of his power. Instead, he kept his strength under control to the level of a normal adult.

This was also a rule for determining a weapon’s sharpness. Only in this manner would the weapon’s strength, not the user’s, be assessed.

Pfft! The long saber traced a dazzling line in the air before striking the leather armor with its blade.

The saber cut the thick leather armor like tofu. The blade slid into the leather armor almost instantaneously, then into the wooden stake.

Bang! Something dropped to the ground with a muted sound.

General Cheng’s expression changed. He took a step forward, crossing a few meters, shoved the soldier aside, and reached for the sharp standard long saber. He yanked the long saber embedded in the wooden stake with some force on his wrist.

Crack! The three layers of leather armor split open at the chest and dropped to the ground, and the wooden stake had a deep cut in it.

The sharp standard long saber cleaved through the wooden stake with a swoosh as General Cheng flipped his wrist. The heavy wooden stake slid down diagonally, appearing to move in slow motion, to reveal a smooth, almost mirror-like surface.

“Wonderful saber!” General Cheng couldn’t help exclaiming. “What a sharp saber!”

“Superintendent Xiao, is this the new saber your workshop developed? What is it called?”

“It...” Xiao Zongshui hesitated for a moment. This saber didn’t have a name.

“General, the name of this saber is Huben!”

Xiao Zongshui was racking his wits when he heard a voice.

“‘Huben’ means ‘fighter’.. General’s Imperial Guards guard the palace, so they are Huben warriors,” the voice added. “Huben Sabers and Huben Troops go together like a dream! General, who else besides your Huben Troops is deserving of the Huben Saber?”

“Huben?” General Cheng contemplated. Slowly, his eyes lit up.

“Huben Saber, what a great saber. What a greater name!” General Cheng burst into laughter.

...

Xiao Zongshui looked at Zhou Shu in astonishment. Zhou Shu tended to surprise him. This name, ‘Huben Saber’, had a lot of appeal.

“Superintendent Xiao, this is?” General Cheng inquired while pointing at Zhou Shu.

He had, of course, seen Zhou Shu earlier. But he had thought that Zhou Shu was Xiao Zongshui’s assistant. With his status, he naturally wouldn’t be too concerned about assistants.

It wasn’t until Zhou Shu spoke that he became conscious of his presence.

“He’s an apprentice at the 97th Workshop. His name is Zhou Shu,” Xiao Zongshui introduced. “Zhou Shu contributed significantly to the development of this Huben Saber.”

4

Zhou Shu was taken aback. He never expected Xiao Zongshui to say something like this.

He was already prepared for Xiao Zongshui to take full credit for the sharp standard long saber. After all, he was the superintendent of the workshop.

He never imagined that Xiao Zongshui would give him credit.

Although he didn’t mention that the sharp standard long saber was forged by Zhou Shu himself, his mention of the contribution was vital and already great. For the time being, Zhou Shu wouldn’t ask for more.

“Oh? Is that so?” General Cheng didn’t suspect anything. He nodded. “He’s a promising talent.”

This was merely a polite remark. He had simply inquired about Zhou Shu’s identity in response to his comments.

General Cheng had no intention of becoming acquainted with Zhou Shu. After asking for Zhou Shu’s name, he turned to Xiao Zongshui.

“Superintendent Xiao, how much does this Huben Saber cost?” General Cheng asked. He adored the Huben Saber so much that he couldn’t put it down.

“Huben Sabers are slightly more expensive to produce than standard long sabers,” Xiao Zongshui said. “One costs three taels of silver!”

3

“Three taels?” General Cheng raised his eyebrows.

Zhou Shu was stunned. *Charging three taels is robbery!*

Zhou Shu had personally forged the Huben Saber, which was actually a sharp standard long blade. He knew how much it cost.

It simply cost a few catties of iron. The rest of the expenses were practically negligible!

5

Despite the high cost of iron, forging a Huben Saber cost less than half a tael of silver. The cost of a Huben Saber, including the cost of coal and the wages of apprentices, was less than one tael.

What else could he be doing other than robbing money by asking for a high price of three taels of silver?

Zhou Shu's good impression of Xiao Zongshui dissipated almost instantly. Exploiter Xiao demanded that he forge thirty Huben Sabers monthly. Three taels of silver for every saber equaled ninety taels!

1

How much was his monthly salary?

Half a tael of silver!

Xiao Zongshui was ruthless!

"Three taels isn't too much for this Huben Saber," General Cheng said. "How many can you supply each month?"

General Cheng was an expert in his own right. He didn't just pay attention to the cost of production but also the speed of production.

He wanted the Huben Sabers, and he intended to equip his soldiers with them, but it would be meaningless if there were too few of them.

"Forging a Huben Saber is a difficult task. In the 97th Workshop, Zhou Shu is already the most skilled Forging Apprentice, yet this Huben Saber took him more than four hours to forge." Xiao Zongshui pointed at Zhou Shu and commended him again.

Zhou Shu rolled his eyes internally. *It's pointless to place me on a pedestal. Simply increase my pay!*

"Huben Sabers are far more intricate and difficult to forge than standard long sabers. Only a handful of apprentices in the 97th Workshop are capable of

forging them.” Xiao Zongshui was lying through his teeth. Zhou Shu possessed the secret formula for the sharp standard long saber. No one else in the workshop could forge it except him.

General Cheng was oblivious of this and unconcerned about it. “Just tell me how long it will take you to hand over three thousand Huben Sabers?”

Zhou Shu could only make one Huben Saber per day, supposedly. It would take 10 years to make 3,000!

General Cheng clearly couldn’t wait 10 years.

“Three thousand?” Xiao Zongshui’s face lit up. “Half a year, no, three months! I can deliver three thousand Huben Sabers in three months!”

Zhou Shu wanted to curse. *What does Exploiter Xiao mean?*

To turn in 3,000 Huben Sabers in three months, he had to forge 1,000 per month, which meant 30 per day!

He wouldn’t be able to forge this amount even if he died trying!

“Very good.” General Cheng nodded. “If you can hand over three thousand Huben Sabers in three months, this Huben Saber will be the Huben Troops’ standard issue weapon in the future!”

General Cheng flicked the blade. The blade made a clear sound as it buzzed.

He was also a shameless person. He utilized the name Huben brazenly as his own.

These people didn’t even pay copyright fees! Zhou Shu cursed.

3

Zhou Shu had deduced from their talk that General Cheng was in charge of assembling an Imperial Guards unit. He hadn’t decided on the designation yet, but he had taken up the Huben Troops’ brand.

“In that case, thank you, General.” Xiao Zongshui was ecstatic.

3,000 Huben Sabers was 9,000 taels of silver. This was a huge business. He could not only make a great profit after deducting the cost of production, but

he could also obtain results. It wasn't out of the question for his rank to climb again.

"Don't thank me quite yet." General Cheng shook his head. "I've seen the Huben Saber. You must now prove that this Huben Saber was indeed forged by your workshop. Don't tell me you obtained a saber from a Forging Master and ended up handing over an ordinary standard long saber to fool me!"

General Cheng appeared to have a lot of experience. He was concerned that the sample would differ from the finished product.

Xiao Zongshui appeared to have anticipated this. He answered with a smile, "Of course! I brought Zhou Shu over this time to forge a Huben Saber in front of you, General!"

1

Only then did Zhou Shu realize Xiao Zongshui had brought him to the camp to use him as a tool.

1

Fuel and iron were plentiful in the military camp, and even a smelting furnace was ready to go.

Normally, military camps also had to repair damaged weapons since new weapons couldn't be produced frequently.

Zhou Shu was well aware of his status. He was simply a worker and would carry out the orders of his supervisor.

In front of everyone, he forged a sharp standard long saber.

While forging, he purposefully restrained his strength, and he took much longer than when he forged the last saber. This time, the forging took six hours.

General Cheng ordered the saber be brought over. He tested the saber this time and confirmed that it could still pierce three layers of armor. Only after this did he smile again.

“Great! With this Huben Saber, my Huben Troops’ strength will grow by thirty percent!” General Cheng laughed. “We have finally not failed His Majesty! Superintendent Xiao, you did a fantastic job this time!”

“It is my responsibility to serve the Imperial Court.” A smile bloomed on Xiao Zongshui’s face.

“Superintendent Xiao, I want this Huben Saber.” General Cheng’s expression became serious. “But I have a condition.”

“General, please share!” Xiao Zongshui withdrew his smile and spoke solemnly.

“In the future, you will only supply this Huben Saber to my Huben Troops. It will not be utilized for anything else!” General Cheng said deliberately. “I’ll give you four taels of silver for each Huben Saber if you can do it. If you can’t, pretend you never came today.”

Xiao Zongshui’s eyes narrowed slightly. The Forging Division’s workshop had a lot of freedom. Every saber cost four taels of silver, and he could claim the expense anyway he pleased.

Even if he handed in two taels of silver, he would still have two taels in his pocket. It wasn’t a small sum.

However...

“General, isn’t this against the rules?” Xiao Zongshui said hesitantly.

“Rules?” General Cheng sneered. “This Huben Saber secret forging formula was devised by your workshop, Superintendent Xiao. You have the right to deal with it under the Forging Division’s rules, right? It will remain your private property as long as you don’t give it to the Forging Division. It’ll be up to you how you handle it. Then I’ll purchase Huben Saber’s secret forging formula and entrust the forging to the 97th Workshop. Is this in violation of the rules?”

“Zhou Shu, wait for me outside. General Cheng and I have something to discuss.”

Xiao Zongshui didn’t reply to General Cheng but instead drove Zhou Shu, who had been stunned by what he heard, out.

Zhou Shu didn't come back to his senses until he walked out of the tent. *These men sure know how to live it up. Aren't they attempting to fleece the country?*

That's not accurate. They're even fleecing me!

Zhou Shu was indignant. The secret forging formula for the Huben Saber was his, not the 97th Workshop's and certainly not Xiao Zongshui's.

According to the rules of the Forging Division, if he handed over the secret formula, he would be rewarded. But then the formula would belong to the Forging Division.

Of course, he could choose to hand over weapons rather than the secret forging formula.

Both choices had their own benefits and drawbacks, so it was impossible to decide which was better.

Isn't it daylight robbery for Xiao Zongshui to take the Huben Saber's forging formula for himself?

What right does he have to sell the Huben Saber formula to General Cheng?

Zhou Shu turned his gaze to the large tent. *Alright, it appears that I have no means of resisting.*

Either of them could easily crush him, a Forging Apprentice, to death.

1

For example, the tall thin man who had attacked Zhou Shu had died without anyone asking.

However, Xiao Zongshui and General Cheng were probably unaware that, while they believed they were fleecing Zhou Shui, he had the means to fleece them in return.

How many benefits would he receive if all 3,000 Huben Sabers he forged were equipped to the military?

2

How much could it enhance his strength?

2

Zhou Shu would have had no idea how to disseminate his forged weapons to so many people if they didn't do this.

It's just a sharp standard long saber. I'll give it to you if you want it. It's not anything I'm interested in. Zhou Shu thought.. *But I'll remember this. I'll let you know sooner or later that taking advantage of me isn't easy!*