

I. Dynasty 106

Chapter 106: Turning the Tide

An eerie atmosphere spread across the battlefield. Lu Fei and Ouyang Mu stared in horror at Wang Chengheng on the fortress walls.

The agonized screams and the faint wisps of smoke rising from Wang Chengheng's body were what truly terrified them.

"Sorcery!"

A soldier in the Qingzhou army whispered, his voice deliberately low.

"Your Highness, this..."

Lu Fei hesitated, wanting to ask but not daring to.

In ancient times, anything that couldn't be explained was often attributed to sorcery or dark magic. What was happening now was beyond their comprehension.

"Hahaha, are you wondering if I know some kind of sorcery?" Xiao Ming laughed. He looked at the chaos on the fortress walls and said, "Wait until I take Wang Chengheng's head, and then I'll explain."

Ouyang Mu was equally shocked and confused, but he didn't dare say another word.

After throwing the first glass bottle, Xiao Ming ordered his soldiers to launch a second and third into the fortress. Those who came into contact with the liquid inside the bottles screamed in agony.

If even the Qingzhou army outside the walls suspected this was sorcery and felt fear, the Wang family's private soldiers inside the fortress were even more terrified.

On the fortress walls, Wang Chengheng clutched his left hand, which burned as if on fire. The area where the liquid had touched his skin was already blackened.

He looked down at Xiao Ming, who stood calmly outside the walls, and a deep sense of dread began to spread within him. As more of these strange projectiles flew into the fortress, everyone who was hit by the liquid suffered the same fate.

"What is this thing?" Wang Chengheng shouted.

No one answered him. In the eyes of those around him, he saw only fear.

At that moment, one of the Wang family's private soldiers pointed at the fortress walls and shouted, "Look at the walls!"

Everyone turned to see that the earthen walls, soaked by the liquid, were beginning to crumble layer by layer. This sight only deepened their terror.

Seeing the reactions of those inside the fortress, Xiao Ming deliberately shouted to Lu Fei, “Captain Lu, once the walls are breached, spare no one—men, women, or children!”

“Yes, Your Highness!” Lu Fei responded.

He then turned to his soldiers and shouted, “Kill! Kill! Kill!”

“Kill! Kill! Kill!” Thousands of Qingzhou soldiers roared in unison, their voices like rolling thunder that echoed into the fortress and reached the ears of every Wang family member hiding inside.

Wang Chengheng’s face grew paler. He gripped his steel sword, but his body trembled slightly. There was no turning back now.

Just then, a man about Wang Chengheng’s age climbed onto the fortress walls and approached him. “Second Brother, surrender. There’s no hope. Even if the Prince of Qi just besieges us for half a year, we won’t be able to hold out.”

“Traitor! Coward! Is this how our eldest brother taught us to behave? Our Wang family has been in Qingzhou for hundreds of years, long before the Great Yu Empire existed. Today, Xiao Ming wants to destroy us. Even if we die, we must resist to the end!” Wang Chengheng roared. “Don’t forget, the Sun family will come to our aid. When they do, we’ll attack from both sides, kill this tyrant, and join forces with Ke Cha’er Khan.”

“The Sun family? Second Brother, if the Sun family were coming, they would have been here by now. Why wait a whole day?” Wang Chengping pleaded. His entire family was inside the fortress, and he had to think of their safety.

Moreover, the private soldiers in the fortress had already been whispering among themselves after learning about Wang Chengchou and his son’s assassination attempt on the princess. Combined with Xiao Ming’s persuasion, many had lost the will to fight.

From their eyes, Wang Chengping could see that the Wang family’s fortunes had turned. If the walls were breached, these soldiers wouldn’t put up much resistance.

Now, with these strange projectiles being launched into the fortress, many of the private soldiers were already showing signs of fear.

“I believe the Sun family will come. The Wang and Sun families have been allied for generations. If the Wang family falls, how long will the Sun family last?” Wang Chengheng glared at Wang Chengping. “Have you been swayed by the tyrant’s words? Are you planning to surrender?”

As he spoke, Wang Chengheng pointed his steel sword at Wang Chengping. If Wang Chengping said one wrong word, he would cut him down on the spot.

“Second Brother...” Wang Chengping didn’t dare say more and slowly backed away.

Wang Chengchou had always favored Wang Chengheng because they shared the same parents. Wang Chengping, on the other hand, was a true illegitimate child, and his feelings for Wang Chengchou weren’t as strong.

The Wang family was large, with many brothers of the same generation. Besides Wang Chengping, there were five other half-brothers of Wang Chengchou in the fortress.

As Wang Chengping retreated from the walls, the five men surrounded him and asked, "Third Brother, what's the situation?"

"He's gone mad. He says we're waiting for reinforcements from the Sun family. In my opinion, he won't surrender," Wang Chengping said with a frown.

One of the men angrily replied, "If Wang Chengheng wants to die, we can't follow him to our graves. There aren't just three or five hundred Qingzhou soldiers outside—there are over five thousand! And those golden-armored guards are said to be elite troops brought by the princess. This is suicide!"

"Exactly. Those things the Prince of Qi is throwing into the fortress are too strange. Many soldiers have already been burned, and if this stuff can burn through the walls, we won't last long."

"..."

The men spoke one after another. In a life-or-death situation, their own lives were what mattered most. As for Wang Chengheng, they had little affection for him.

When the Wang family was at its peak, Wang Chengchou and his brothers had often looked down on them.

Wang Chengping remained silent for a moment, then said, "Eldest Brother has been captured. Now, Second Brother's word is law. What can I do?"

The others exchanged uneasy glances, each seemingly thinking of a solution but hesitant to speak first.

Outside the walls, the Qingzhou army's chants of "Kill!" echoed once more, and the men's faces grew even more grim. If the Qingzhou army breached the walls, there would be no turning back.

Finally, Wang Chengping said, "Gentlemen, there's only one way out. We must capture Wang Chengheng and surrender to His Highness. He might reward us for our service."

The other five men nodded in agreement, their thoughts aligning with Wang Chengping's.

Having decided, the six men, each accompanied by their most trusted servants, climbed onto the fortress walls.

Wang Chengheng, who was still directing the defense, turned pale when he saw them. "Wang Chengping, what are you doing?"

"Second Brother, forgive us. You may want to die, but our wives, children, and elders do not. We have no choice but to hand you over," Wang Chengping declared.

Wang Chengheng's chest heaved with rage. He shouted at the soldiers on the walls, "Attack! Kill these six traitors!"

But as his voice rang out, not a single soldier moved.

They had been terrified by the strange projectiles Xiao Ming kept launching into the fortress. Each of them had already considered surrendering, but no one had dared to take the first step.

Now, with Wang Chengping leading the way, they immediately sided with him.