

I. Dynasty 115

Chapter 115: Battle Formation

"I hope Commandant Lu is safe!"

Thinking of the past grievances with Lu Fei, which were all matters from Xiao Ming's previous life, but in recent days, Lu Fei has indeed been the only reliable person in the army.

"Your Highness, there's no need to worry. Back in the day, Commandant Lu could move freely even amidst the thousands of barbarian troops. These ragtag militias are no match for him," Pang Yukun said without a hint of concern.

As they spoke, the Qingzhou Army had already engaged in close combat with the Sun family's militia.

The initially disorganized Qingzhou Army quickly formed into a neat square formation amidst the chaos.

The front row consisted of swordsmen and shield bearers, followed by spearmen, and the last row was again swordsmen and shield bearers.

"Kill!" With a loud shout from the Qingzhou Army, a row of spears thrust out from behind the shield wall, immediately felling a row of the Sun family's militia charging forward.

“Kill!” The spears retracted, the shield bearers advanced a step, and then the spears thrust out fiercely again, followed by another round of agonizing screams.

The Sun family’s militia was in complete disarray, clumped together chaotically. They had never undergone strict battle formation training, usually only practicing with swords, spears, and staffs.

In terms of individual skill, they were not inferior to the Qingzhou soldiers, but facing such a tight formation, they had no strategy to counter.

As the spears thrust out, the Qingzhou Army steadily advanced. When the front row of shield bearers fell injured, those behind immediately filled the gaps, maintaining the formation without a hint of disorder.

Soon, the Qingzhou Army pushed forward to where Lu Fei was.

At that moment, Lu Fei was locked in a fierce battle with a burly man wielding twin hammers. Lu Fei’s chest plate was deeply dented by a hammer blow.

The burly man was even more severely injured, with long gashes on his exposed arms and legs, bleeding profusely.

As the Qingzhou Army approached, Lu Fei glanced approvingly at the formation he had trained and shouted to one of the commandants, “Advance!”

“Kill!”

Another roar erupted, and the Qingzhou Army continued to advance like a harvesting machine.

Sun Yuanzhi, hiding in the distance, was filled with anxiety. He looked across at Xiao Ming, knowing there was no longer any chance to capture him.

A wave of despair washed over Sun Yuanzhi, and a hint of madness flashed in his eyes. He shouted, "Kill, kill, kill! Whoever brings me Xiao Ming's head will receive five hundred thousand taels of silver!"

Under normal circumstances, the Sun family's militia would have erupted in frenzy.

But now, they were only filled with fear.

The Qingzhou Army's sharp spears were like the scythe of death, each thrust reaping lives.

Sun Yuanzhi repeatedly ordered his men to break through the shield wall, but they were all speared to death.

Fear among the Sun family's militia grew, exacerbated by the increasing pile of corpses at the front.

"Run! We can't win!"

“I don’t want to die!”

“...”

Amidst the continuous losses, the Sun family’s militia finally collapsed. Signs of rout began to appear, with those who had fought bravely now retreating, some even fleeing outright.

Seeing this, Sun Yuanzhi roared, “No one is allowed to retreat! Those who retreat will be executed!”

With that, he killed a fleeing servant.

But more and more deserters appeared, scattering like a receding tide. For every one Sun Yuanzhi killed, two more took their place.

Watching the growing number of deserters, Sun Yuanzhi’s face turned pale. He had failed. Once the militia scattered, the ambush would be a complete failure.

After a moment’s hesitation, he fled with a few close followers amidst the deserters.

Some in the front lines of the Sun family’s militia saw Sun Yuanzhi fleeing and immediately shouted, “Master Sun has run away!”

Instantly, the Sun family's militia lost all will to fight. They had only been following orders, not even knowing whom they were supposed to kill. Now, with the Qingzhou Army's appearance, they understood.

With Sun Yuanzhi gone, there was no reason to continue risking their lives. Most dropped their weapons and surrendered, while others scattered like birds and beasts.

The battlefield was littered with over five hundred corpses.

The beautiful lotus pond was stained red with blood, the intense metallic smell of blood filling the air, nauseating.

Looking at the devastation, Xiao Ming said to Lu Fei, "No matter what, we must capture Sun Yuanzhi."

"They won't escape," Lu Fei replied.

As soon as he spoke, the sound of hoofbeats approached from a distance. Three hundred cavalry appeared, blocking the path of the fleeing Sun family's militia.

The deserters were driven back, dropping their weapons and surrendering.

Five hundred had died, and the remaining seven to eight hundred surrendered. Sun Yuanzhi's plan had been completely thwarted.

Soon, the captives were herded together, but Sun Yuanzhi and the other nobles were nowhere to be seen.

"Where is Sun Yuanzhi? Whoever speaks up will be rewarded."

The eight hundred Sun family's militia squatted on the ground as Lu Fei questioned them.

Xiao Ming and Pang Yukun also approached, scanning the crowd but not seeing Sun Yuanzhi.

"Strange, everyone should be here," Lu Fei said, gritting his teeth.

Xiao Ming glanced at the dent in Lu Fei's chest plate and said, "You should return to the city and see a physician. Looks like you might have broken a few ribs."

"Who could have injured Commandant Lu like this?" Pang Yukun asked.

Lu Fei pointed to a large man squatting in the crowd, "That guy. He's got some serious strength. If it were anyone else, they'd be dead. He's quite something, Your Highness. Can I have him?"

“We’ll discuss that later. Let’s find Sun Yuanzhi and the others first,” Xiao Ming said. The three of them scanned the surrendered militia again, and Xiao Ming said, “Have them walk past one by one.”

Lu Fei nodded and had the captives walk past Xiao Ming one by one.

Soon, all eight hundred had passed, and several nobles hiding among them were captured, but Sun Yuanzhi was still missing.

“Damn it,” Lu Fei frowned. “Could he have been killed?”

Xiao Ming and Pang Yukun looked at the piles of corpses, and Xiao Ming asked, “What should we do with the bodies?”

“Usually, we hire some laborers to bury them,” Pang Yukun said.

After saying this, Pang Yukun understood and said to Lu Fei, “Check each body.”

The Qingzhou Army immediately began inspecting the corpses. Soon, they brought someone over—it was indeed Sun Yuanzhi. In the chaos, seeing no way to escape, he had disguised himself as a corpse among the dead, planning to escape when laborers came to collect the bodies. But he was discovered.

“Master Sun went through so much trouble to kill me, how thoughtful. But five hundred thousand taels of silver for my head seems a bit low. They say Master Sun is stingy, and it seems true.”

Sun Yuanzhi snorted, “Do as you will. I want all of the Great Yu Empire to see how you, Xiao Ming, treat the nobility. Your efforts to strengthen the empire are all for the throne, aren’t they? Let’s see which noble family will support you then.”