

## I. Dynasty 190

### Chapter 190: The Newspaper Arrives

General Luo Quan was walking toward Fei Ji's residence, a newspaper from Qingzhou in hand.

Unlike before, the price of this issue had actually gone down instead of up. Luo Quan still vividly remembered what the merchant selling it had said:

"Though I am a merchant, I am first a citizen of Great Yu. How can I care only for profit at a time of national celebration?"

As he walked, Luo Quan couldn't help but reflect—Xiao Ming's victory had come at the perfect time. When the people of Great Yu had nearly grown numb to humiliation at the hands of foreign enemies, this sudden triumph was like a thunderclap that woke the entire nation. In the past, no one wanted to talk about politics. Now, even the street vendors selling sesame pancakes were passionately discussing the Cangzhou Victory.

Soon, he arrived at the Fei Residence, where the butler was already waiting at the door.

"The master knew you would come, General," the butler said with a smile. "He told me to wait outside and welcome you in."

"Oh? That sly old fox," Luo Quan chuckled and followed him in.

Inside, Fei Ji was already waiting in the main hall. As soon as he saw Luo Quan, he held up his own copy of the newspaper, grinning.

"You beat me to it this time," Luo Quan laughed as he sat down.

In recent days, the peace faction had fallen completely silent, while the pro-war ministers were full of momentum. As the leading voice of the war faction, Luo Quan was naturally in great spirits.

Fei Ji smiled. "I had to move quickly—this victory at Cangzhou finally helped our people vent their anger. I just finished reading the paper and still feel my blood boiling with excitement."

"No kidding," Luo Quan nodded. "I read it on the way here, and I almost shouted out in joy. The report is incredibly detailed. Winning that battle wasn't easy."

Fei Ji narrowed his eyes. "You're this happy because of Luo Xin, aren't you? The paper specifically praised the commanders who performed best in the battle—and Luo Xin was listed first."

"You can't say that. The real number one should be Niu Ben," Luo Quan replied modestly. "If it weren't for his leadership, Luo Xin wouldn't have had the chance to shine. But Niu Ben's a convicted man, so I guess Prince Qi left his name out on purpose—to avoid giving people like Cui Hao an excuse to stir trouble."

Still, the joy on his face was impossible to hide. After all, the Luo family had contributed to this major victory, and as a father, how could he not be proud? With such a feat under his belt, Luo Xin's future career in the military was as good as guaranteed.

Fei Ji, who knew Luo Quan's character like the back of his hand, understood exactly what this visit was about: he had come to brag about his son.

"I see," Fei Ji said. "Well, if you're too shy to ask for credit, I'll do it for you. I'll speak to His Majesty on Luo Xin's behalf—how's that?"

"You really shouldn't," Luo Quan replied with false humility. "Luo Xin only benefited from following Prince Qi. His Majesty will make the right decision."

Fei Ji smiled knowingly. Compared to Niu Ben's bluntness, Luo Quan was clearly more politically savvy. That's why he was still a top-ranking general despite his strong stance in favor of war. First, he had real battlefield achievements. Second, he knew when to advance and when to hold back. He wasn't rigid.

If Luo Xin were promoted now, the Luo family's influence in the military would rise again, and Luo Quan's voice would carry even more weight against those who pushed for peace.

"That may be so," Fei Ji said, "but credit must be given where it's due."

Luo Quan grinned. "Then I owe you a drink, Fei."

After a bit more chatting, Luo Quan lowered his voice and changed the subject.

"I heard His Majesty is personally arranging a marriage proposal between Prince Qi and your daughter. What are your thoughts?"

Fei Ji's smile faded.

He sighed. "To be honest, His Majesty did bring it up again. His tone was much firmer this time—he seemed determined to see it through. But you know about Yue'er's health. I really don't want to send her far away to Qingzhou."

"This victory put His Majesty in a great mood," Luo Quan said. "Naturally, he wants to reward Prince Qi, and arranging this marriage is the best way to honor such a merit. It's also His Majesty's way of ensuring Prince Qi's long-term security."

Fei Ji nodded. "That's true. But I'm still worried. Prince Qi's recent fame will inevitably attract jealousy from the other princes. And the barbarians will surely see him as a threat now. More importantly, he destroyed the noble clans in his fief. The rest of the aristocracy won't forget that. His future won't be an easy one."

Luo Quan, who had been basking in happiness, now grew serious. "You're right. I hadn't considered all that. Prince Qi's merits are impressive, but his support base is still weak. He has no powerful maternal relatives, and the throne has always followed the order of seniority. It'll be hard for him to claim it."

"Exactly," Fei Ji said with a furrowed brow. "That's what troubles me. Based on this merit alone, he deserves to marry into the Fei family. But I worry he'll meet the same fate as Prince Ning."

At the mention of Prince Ning, Luo Quan's expression changed drastically.

He looked around cautiously before whispering, “Fei, are you out of your mind? How could you even mention that name? His Majesty hates hearing about him. Many ministers who pleaded for Prince Ning were executed. Isn’t that warning enough?”

Fei Ji’s face went pale. If a royal spy overheard this conversation, it would be easy for a court official to accuse him of sympathizing with Prince Ning. Even as head of the Fei family, he could end up stripped of his title and sent home in disgrace.

He bowed slightly. “Thank you, Luo. That was careless of me. I only meant to draw a comparison. Every new emperor is wary of powerful brothers with battlefield glory. I just don’t want my daughter to suffer for it.”

Luo Quan sighed. “That might not be the case. Prince Qi isn’t like others. Think about it—how long has it been since Cangzhou fell? And now he’s taken Qingzhou’s army and avenged that loss. That alone proves he’s incredibly talented. Maybe he was just lazy before. Now that he’s on the right path, perhaps one day he’ll be like Prince Wei, guarding the borders for generations to come.”

Fei Ji didn’t seem convinced. He rubbed his temples and said, “Let’s not talk about this anymore. I’m tired of sitting around. Let’s go for a walk.”

With that, the two men left the hall. As they exited, Fei Ji glanced toward the corner beside the main room.

As soon as they were gone, two shadows slipped out from that corner.

Xiaohuan giggled and said, “Miss, did you hear that? His Majesty is arranging a marriage between you and Prince Qi. Congratulations on your engagement!”

Fei Yue’er’s face turned crimson. She glared and snapped, “You silly girl! Stop saying nonsense!”