## **IRON DYNASTY**

## **Chapter 7: Finally Tasting Meat**

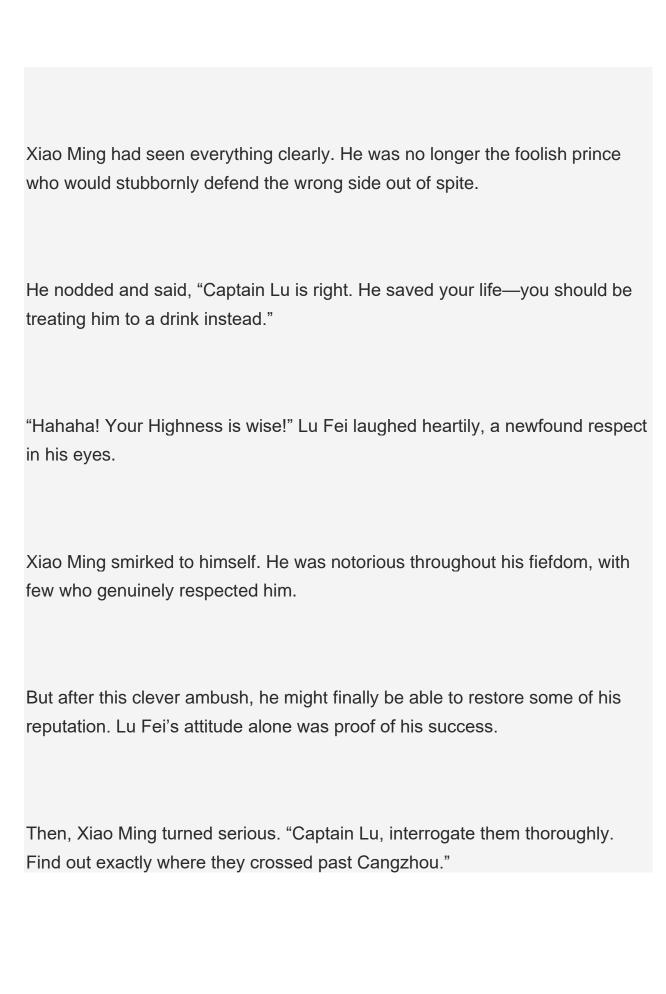
The fallen barbarian cavalrymen had not yet completely lost their ability to fight. They continued to shoot arrows at the shield wall, but the dense shields blocked them effectively.

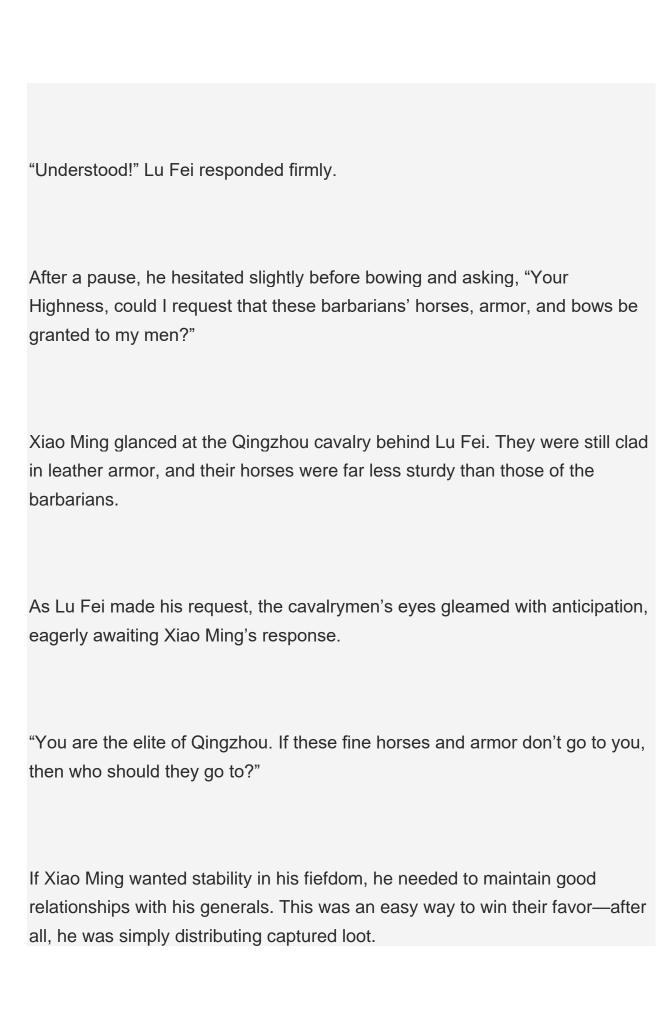
Lu Fei, well-versed in dealing with barbarian cavalry, smirked and called out, "Brothers, don't let our own caltrops trip us up! Pick them up and throw them at the enemy!"

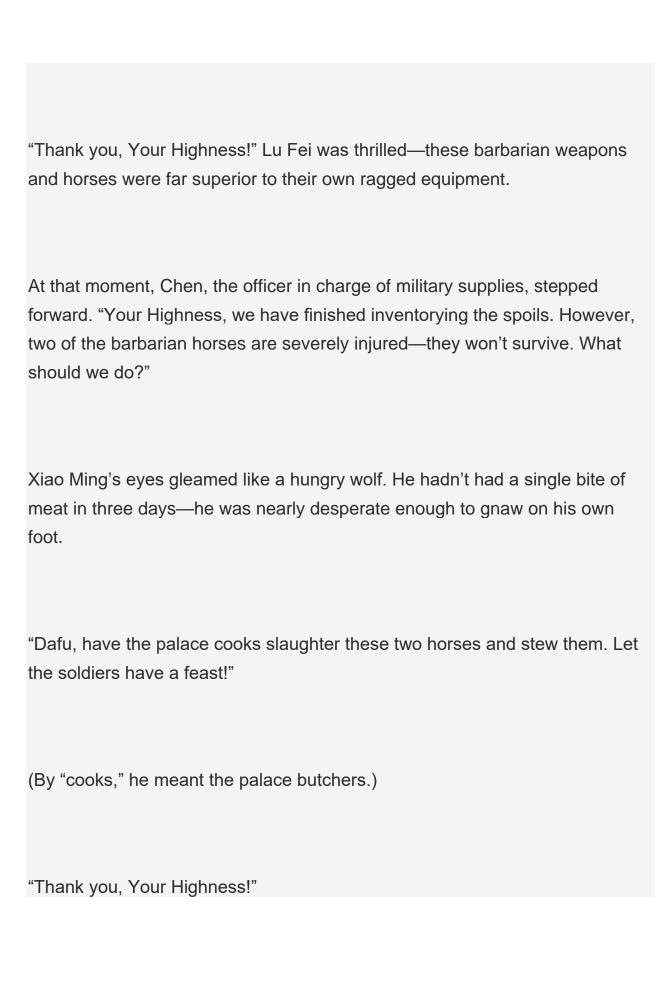
The iron caltrops had hindered not only the barbarians' movements but also those of the defending soldiers.

Following Lu Fei's command, the soldiers picked up the caltrops at their feet and hurled them at the barbarians.

The barbarians cursed while continuing to fire their arrows. The shield formation slowly tightened, curving into a semicircle that completely encircled the barbarian cavalry. Their archery was formidable, and they were skilled in close combat, but with the caltrops trapping them, they had no space to fight properly. Whenever a barbarian tried to leap out of the caltrop-strewn area, they were immediately beaten to the ground. Within ten minutes, all thirty barbarian cavalrymen were captured. Inside the city, as the barbarian captives were escorted in, Li Kaiyuan—his face swollen and bruised—clung to Xiao Ming, sobbing, "Your Highness, you must uphold justice for me! Captain Lu is too much! Just to steal the credit, he completely disregarded our camaraderie. Look at how badly I fell!" Lu Fei, utterly unimpressed, scoffed, "Your Highness, if I hadn't kicked him aside, the fool would be dead by now."







The soldiers cheered in unison, their Adam's apples bobbing hungrily as they swallowed their drool. In these hard times, eating meat was an almost unimaginable luxury.

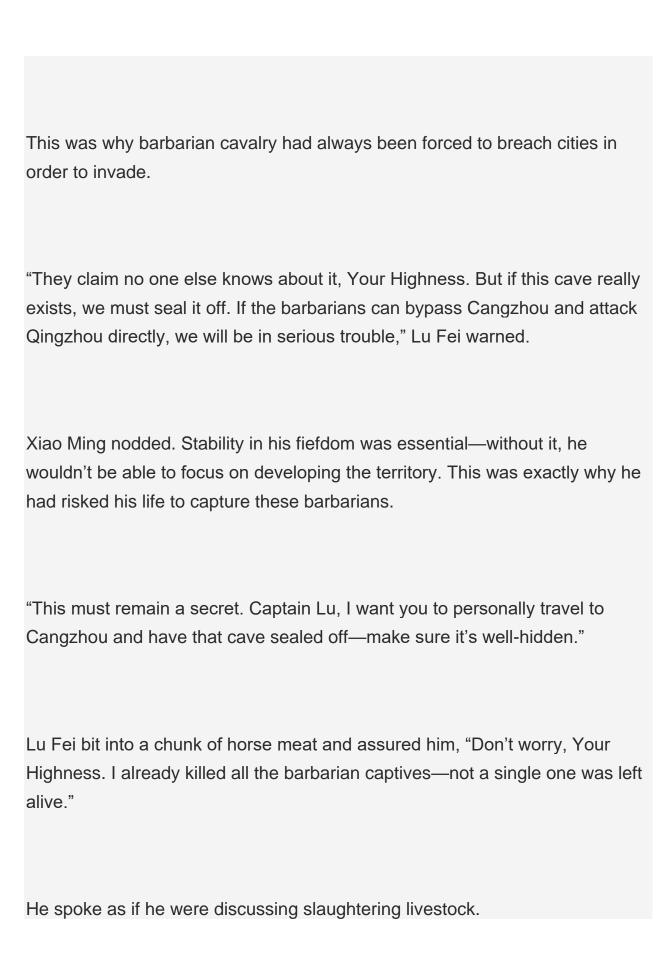
Xiao Ming could practically smell the aroma of horse meat already. He secretly leaned toward Qian Dafu and whispered, "Save a leg for me."

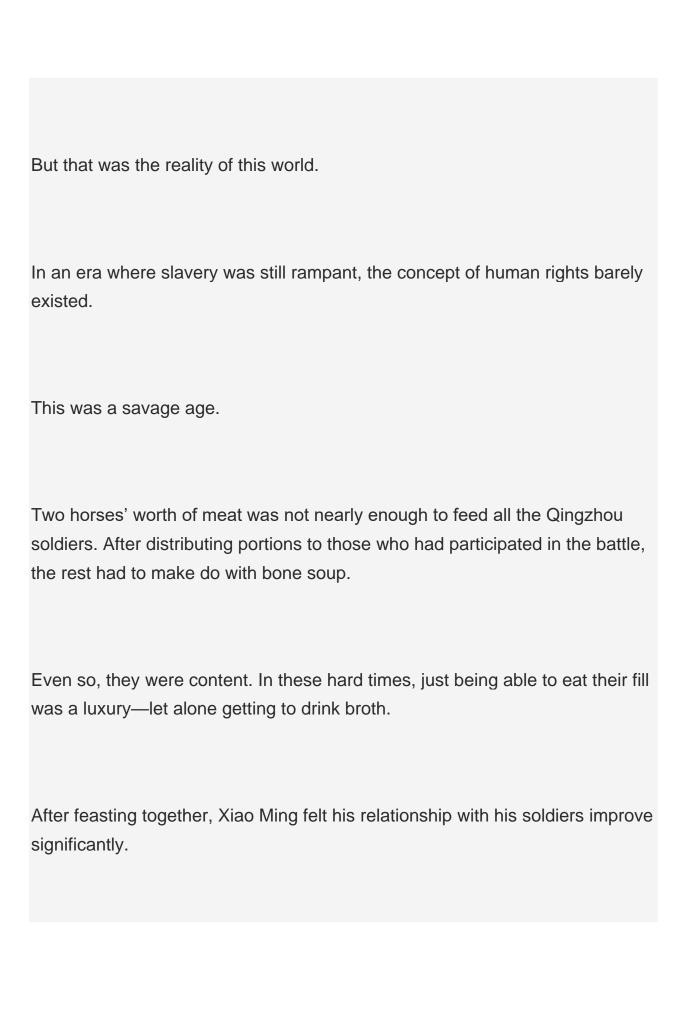
"Understood, Your Highness," Qian Dafu replied with a sly grin.

That evening, as dusk settled over the city, the enticing scent of stewed meat drifted from the King of Qi's residence, accompanied by the shocking news that the prince had personally orchestrated the capture of the barbarian cavalry.

As they savored the tantalizing scent of horse meat, the citizens of Qingzhou also found themselves puzzled—since when had the King of Qi changed so much? Instead of cowering in the palace in fear, had he actually taken the initiative to fight back?

Though many found it hard to believe, a quiet hope began to stir in their hearts.
"Your Highness, I've gotten the information. This squad of barbarian cavalry stumbled upon a hidden cave in the Qinling Mountains and accidentally made their way through," Lu Fei reported.
As he sat around the pot of stewed horse meat, he explained the interrogation results. Given his direct and brutal methods, the captives had confessed quickly.
"A cave? Do any other barbarian troops know about it?" Xiao Ming frowned, flipping through the maps in his technology database.
In modern times, "Qinling" referred to the Huai River region, but in this era, it clearly referred to a small mountain near Cangzhou.
Ancient landscapes were vastly different from modern times. Outside of official roads, most areas were covered in dense forests and swamps, making them impassable for cavalry.





To them, the fact that the King of Qi had willingly shared the precious horse meat with them was remarkable. Food was scarce for everyone, even royalty, so this act of generosity subtly altered their perception of him.
Of course, they had no idea that Qian Dafu had secretly stashed away two horse legs.
"Too bad we don't have any wine," Lu Fei lamented, sneaking a leftover meat bone into his coat. He had a wife and children at home—he wanted to bring them a taste of meat as well.
Li Kaiyuan noticed Lu Fei's sneaky act and was about to tattle, but upon seeing the dangerous look in Lu Fei's eyes, he quickly swallowed his words.
Instead, he muttered sarcastically, "Wishful thinking. Soldiers can barely eat, and you want to use grain to brew wine?"
Watching his men struggle for food, Xiao Ming sighed deeply.

"If my soldiers can't even eat properly, how much worse must the common people be suffering?"

He looked at the raggedly dressed soldiers sitting on the dirt floor of the royal residence, savoring their meat in small bites, and made a solemn vow.

"One day, I will make sure you can drink whenever you want and eat meat

whenever you please."