

Longevity 190

Chapter 190: Defeating Wei Wuji! The Prelude to Zhao Feng's Fame Across the Land! Bringing Justice!

Looking at Zhang Ming's cold demeanor and the authority he carried with Zhao Feng's orders, Chen Tao and Zhao Tuo felt panic rise in their hearts. "Considering the state of Wei City, how can I believe you?" Zhao Tuo blurted out, trying to keep a brave face. By now, it was apparent he had no idea what else to say.

"Chen Tao. Zhao Tuo," Zhang Ming said with a cold sneer. "Delaying is pointless. If you refuse to go, I will report it to General Zhao, and another crime will be added to your names. Of course, you could also kill me right here, in front of all these witnesses."

Hearing Zhang Ming's words, Chen Tao and Zhao Tuo were thoroughly panicked. They had only thought of abandoning Zhao Feng to earn merit for themselves; they never imagined that he could actually defeat the Wei Army, let alone that it would lead to this situation. With Zhao Feng having routed the enemy, it was no longer a case of him abandoning his post. Instead, they were the ones who had disobeyed a direct command and deserted the city. At this thought, their expressions turned ghastly.

Zhang Ming, however, was not the least bit afraid of them. Instead, he spurred his horse forward and addressed the twenty-thousand-strong army, shouting, "Warriors of Qin! I am a Hundred-man Commander from General Zhao Feng's personal guard! I have come to bring you all good news! Wei City has been secured! The Wei Army has been crushed by General Zhao and is now in full retreat! All soldiers may return to Wei City to continue serving the nation and earning glory!

"Those with noble ranks can kill the enemy to earn promotions! The Penal Battalion can kill the enemy to earn their freedom from servitude!"

Zhang Ming's voice was thunderous, and all the soldiers on the front lines could hear him. As his words spread from man to man, the defending soldiers were all stunned.

"General Zhao crushed the Wei Army? They're retreating?"

"Is this real?"

"The commanding general of the Wei Army is Wei Wuji, a figure of legendary renown. He was really defeated?"

"Impossible."

"Wei Wuji was defeated at the hands of General Zhao Feng?"

"General Zhao Feng is so young! How could he defeat Wei Wuji?"

"Incredible!"

The soldiers erupted in discussion. The name Wei Wuji might have been only vaguely familiar to the elite soldiers of the Qin army, but his name resonated far more strongly among the Han Surrendered Soldiers and the current Penal Battalion. After all, they were well acquainted with the top war generals from the era when the Three Jins were united.

"Generals," Zhang Ming said to Chen Tao and Zhao Tuo once more. "What are you still hesitating for? What's done is done. Nothing you say now will make a difference. Follow me to see the general."

The point had been made, and it couldn't have been clearer. Under the watchful eyes of the entire army, Chen Tao and Zhao Tuo could do nothing to Zhang Ming. Furthermore, Zhao Feng had just achieved a great victory and would certainly report everything that had transpired in Wei City.

"Sigh... let's go," Chen Tao sighed, speaking to Zhao Tuo. The latter's eyes burned with unwillingness, but in the end, he said nothing, resigning himself to silent obedience.

「Inside Wei City!」

Zhao Feng rode his horse through the streets. The countless corpses had turned the entire city into a veritable Purgatory. This was especially true near the city gates, where bodies were piled high like mountains. Many were burned to cinders, and many more were crushed into a pulp. The scene was so brutal that phrases like "ruined walls and fields strewn with corpses" were not enough to describe its cruelty. From the state of the city gate's defense alone, one could tell just how vicious the battle had been.

"Bury the Wei soldiers in the Mass Burial Mound. Our fallen warriors, however, must be given a proper and separate burial," Zhao Feng said slowly.

"Yes, General," the commanders responded in unison.

He sighed, gazing at the sea of bodies, at the corpses literally under his feet. Though he had commanded this battle and its military achievements would be credited to him—fulfilling the old adage, "a single

general's success is built on ten thousand bleached bones"—Zhao Feng was not a heartless man. The sight of so many strapping young men, their lives cut short, still stirred something within him.

If I were merely a man of the Qin state, without memories from a future era, I wouldn't be thinking of the glory of a unified Huaxia. I would simply be fighting for Qin. But as it stands, all these dead men belong to the same people; they are my kinsmen. Yet, because of the divisions between states, they slaughtered one another. It is utterly cruel. But, it is also the inevitable path of history, a necessary step toward the unification of Huaxia. To unite a people, endless sacrifice is required.

Zhao Feng was keenly aware of the cruelty inherent in every great dynastic unification throughout history.

「Military Council Hall!」

Zhao Feng took the main seat, and the other generals took their places in turn.

"In this battle," Zhao Feng began, addressing the assembled generals again, "you have all worked hard."

"Compared to you, General, our hardships were nothing," the generals replied in unison.

"It's a pity we couldn't capture Wei Wuji in this battle," Zhao Feng said, unable to hide his disappointment. "If we had captured him, Wei would have completely lost the ability to contend with Qin."

"Even though the Wei Army was defeated, Wei Wuji was still protected by tens of thousands of his troops. Killing him was an impossibility," Tu Sui said with reverence. "Just routing the Wei Army is already a massive victory. After this battle, your fame will spread across the realm, General. Everyone will know that you crushed Wei Wuji in a head-on confrontation."

Following this battle, Tu Sui's loyalty to Zhao Feng deepened, and he became even more certain that his decision to join the main combat camp was the right one. If I hadn't come here, how could I have participated in such a monumental battle? How could I have been part of the force that defeated Wei Wuji? This time, every soldier in Wei City had played a part.

"Indeed," Qi Sheng added emotionally. "The general's achievement was truly beyond anyone's expectations."

"After this battle, our Yingchuan County will no longer need to fear an invasion from Wei," Wu Yue said with a relieved smile.

"And after this battle, you will surely be promoted to Main General," Wei Quan added, genuinely happy for Zhao Feng.

As Zhao Feng's trusted aides, they knew that after this battle, the 'acting' status would be removed from their titles, and they would become true Wanjiangs.

To all their praise, Zhao Feng merely smiled. Defeating the Wei Army was only his first step. What Zhao Feng truly yearned for was to participate in the conquest of the state of Zhao. Now *that* would be a truly great accomplishment!

Just then, Zhang Ming strode into the hall. "Report!" he announced, bowing to Zhao Feng. "Generals Chen Tao and Zhao Tuo have arrived."

As his words fell, the smiles vanished from the faces of all the generals in the hall.

Following Zhang Ming, Chen Tao and Zhao Tuo entered, their faces etched with trepidation. When they saw Zhao Feng seated in the main seat, their hearts plummeted.

"We pay our respects to General Zhao," the two said, bowing respectfully after entering the hall.

Zhao Feng simply stared at them, his face devoid of expression. With a wave of his hand, several of his trusted aides stepped forward and kicked their legs out from under them.

THUD! THUD!

The two men were forced to their knees.

"General Zhao, what is the meaning of this?" Zhao Tuo asked, looking up in bewilderment, while a tremor of fear ran through Chen Tao's heart.

"Strip them of their battle armor and take their swords," Zhao Feng commanded coldly.

"Yes, General!"

His trusted aides didn't hesitate for a moment, immediately stripping both men of their swords and battle armor. Only then did Chen Tao and Zhao Tuo finally realize the true gravity of their situation.