

Longevity 278

Chapter 278: Slaying Pang Xuan, Breaking into the Zhao Royal Palace! Another Great Achievement!_3

"My king."

"This is not the time to consider such matters. We must evacuate the Royal Palace at once!"

"The Royal Palace only has ten thousand men in the Imperial Guard Army! It's impossible to stop the Qin Army!" a court official said in a panic.

"Right, right, right!"

"Evacuate! Evacuate the Royal Palace!"

"Retreat to the Dai Territory!"

"Quick... tell everyone to evacuate!" Zhao Yan nodded, his face deathly pale. He then rushed out of the bedchamber, his steps faltering in his terror.

The grounds outside the Royal Palace were already strewn with corpses. Bodies of Zhao soldiers were everywhere. Although many Imperial Guards still fired arrows from the palace walls, it was clear from their half-hearted defense that their morale was shattered and they had no will to fight on.

Gazing at the tightly shut palace gates, Zhao Feng took the lead and charged. He raised his Longquan Sword and slashed down. The Sword Qi manifested as a ferocious strike that shot forward.

BOOM!

The palace gate shattered instantly. Even the massive, sturdy gates of Handan City had been split open by a single strike from Zhao Feng; these palace gates stood no chance.

"Brothers!" Zhao Feng turned and roared to the Sharp Warriors behind him. "Once we have conquered the Royal Palace, I will permit you to take whatever you can find, aside from the contents of the Zhao Royal Palace's treasury!

"You may carry away as much as you can!

"This is a glory bestowed upon you in the Great King's name!"

"We swear to follow the General to the death!"

"KILL!"

Hearing Zhao Feng's words, all the Sharp Warriors grew incredibly excited, their morale soaring to new heights.

A man lives but once, and wealth is indispensable. They enlisted as soldiers to earn an annual salary, to strive for high positions, for wealth, and for glory. Now, the chance to seize that fortune was right before them. Which of the Sharp Warriors wouldn't be thrilled? This was the Royal Palace of an entire kingdom! The amount of treasure, gold, and silver within was beyond their wildest imaginations.

Seeing the morale of the Sharp Warriors behind him surge once more, Zhao Feng nodded in satisfaction and charged into the palace. The more enemies he killed, the more Attributes he could collect, and the more Lifespan he could obtain. He could never tire of this.

As for using plunder as a motivator, this was hardly Zhao Feng's invention. It was a common practice in this era and even more so in later ages. The only difference was that many later eras were far more brutal. Once a city was breached, acts of arson, murder, and pillaging were rampant, with some conquerors even sacking the entire city.

"KILL!"

"KILL...!"

Countless Sharp Warriors roared as they frantically assaulted the Zhao Imperial Guards inside the palace. Facing such a ferocious offensive, the Zhao Imperial Guards could not hold their defenses and were forced into a constant retreat. The black-armored Sharp Warriors swarmed through the Royal Palace, bringing slaughter into the capital of Zhao for the first time since the state's founding.

"Lay down your weapons and surrender, and you will be spared!"

"Kneel and surrender, and you will be spared!"

Now that they had breached the palace, the destruction of Zhao was all but certain. Zhao Feng had not completely lost himself to the killing and instead roared out his terms.

"Surrender and live!"

"Those who resist will die!"

The Sharp Warriors bellowed as they continued their attack. Tens of thousands of them swept through the entire Zhao Royal Palace like a tidal wave.

Facing the bloodshot Qin Sharp Soldiers, anyone who did not drop their weapons and kneel was doomed. Whether they were soldiers or palace servants, if they tried to flee, they were cut down the moment they were caught. It was certain death.

True warfare is not merciful. This was a foreign land, and all within it were enemies. There could be no quarter given.

"Split up and advance!" Zhao Feng shouted. "Take control of the Zhao Royal Palace as quickly as possible!"

"As the General commands!" Tu Sui and Zhang Han immediately led their troops to carry out the order.

「Time passed.」

The entire Royal Palace was filled with the sounds of battle and screams of agony. The stench of blood enveloped the grounds.

"Run! Run for your lives!"

"The Qin Army is here!"

"Hurry...!"

"The Great Zhao is finished!"

"We're finished...!"

Throughout the palace, the Zhao Imperial Guards and servants fled in terror. Faced with the bloodthirsty Qin soldiers, everyone was paralyzed with fear.

In the square before Longtai Palace, the Qin Army attacked relentlessly. The once-solemn plaza was now dyed red with blood, littered with corpses. At this moment, Zhao Feng was no longer in a hurry. He walked slowly across the square, surrounded by his Sharp Warriors who continued their charge.

Step by step, Zhao Feng ascended the grand staircase, once the most sacred in the state of Zhao.

Longtai Palace. The great Morning Discussion Hall of Zhao. It shares its origins with Qin's Zhanqin Palace. Zhao Feng looked up at the great hall, a faint smile on his lips. With his knowledge of history, he naturally knew that both Zhao and Qin shared a common ancestor from the Ying lineage and the Zhao clan.

"General," Tu Sui reported, stepping quickly out of the great hall. "There are only a few old men left inside. All the other Zhao officials have already fled."

"Hn." Zhao Feng nodded and walked slowly into the Longtai Palace Hall.

Just as Tu Sui had said, the vast hall that once held hundreds of officials was now occupied by only six elderly Zhao ministers. When they saw Zhao Feng enter, they merely gave him a cold, fearless glare.

"Where is the King of Zhao?" Zhao Feng asked them.

"You villain!"

"You will never find out where the Great King is!"

"The Great Zhao will never perish!"

"Kill me if you must! I will stand with my country to the end and will never fear you!"

"Come, you Qin bandit!"

"Kill me!"

Several Zhao ministers shouted one after another, their eyes filled with hatred for Zhao Feng.

In any era, in any nation, there are both traitors and loyalists. There are those who betray their country, and there are those who swear to defend it to the death. The men before him were the latter—loyal ministers of Zhao, men who would die with their nation.

Observing them, Zhao Feng's expression remained unchanged. With a simple wave of his hand, he turned and walked out of the great hall.

"Kill them," Tu Sui ordered at once. Having followed Zhao Feng for so long, he understood the gesture perfectly. He was granting the Zhao ministers their wish to die with their country.

"Long live the Great Zhao!"

"Zhao will not perish!"

The ministers cried out one last time before the Sharp Warriors cut them down, their blood staining the floors of Longtai Palace.

"General, the King of Zhao has escaped," Tu Sui said, a note of urgency in his voice. "What should we do?"

"They won't get far," Zhao Feng replied calmly. He then turned and shouted, "Zhang Ming!"

"Sir!" Zhang Ming immediately answered.

"Gather six hundred of my personal guards and follow me! We're pursuing the King of Zhao!" Zhao Feng commanded.

"As you command!" Zhang Ming replied instantly.

"Tu Sui, you and Zhang Han are to secure the Royal Palace," Zhao Feng ordered. "Pay special attention to the treasury."

The Royal Treasury... he thought. With the King of Zhao fleeing in such a desperate panic, I can certainly help myself to the spoils. After all, my Storage Space is much larger now.

"I understand," Tu Sui nodded.

"General," he asked, "the main battle in the city is not yet over. Should we dispatch troops to help the other two main divisions annihilate the remnant forces?"

"In this battle, my Fourth Division has already earned the greatest merit and suffered the most casualties. Let Yang Duanhe and Wang Ben handle the rest," Zhao Feng stated.

"Understood," Tu Sui nodded at once.

"Let's go," Zhao Feng said, striding outside. "We're going after the King of Zhao. If he escapes, the merit for this victory will be diminished."

He did not head for the main gate they had stormed, but for the rear gate.

The King of Zhao wouldn't flee through the front, not after bearing the brunt of my assault. He must have used the rear exit to escape from the back of Handan.

Besides, given how panicked they were, they couldn't have gotten far.

「Outside the city.」

Wang Jian was stationed with the main army. In the five days and five nights since the assault on Handan began, he had slept for less than four hours in total.

"Report! Reporting to the Shangjiangjun!" a Personal Guard Commander rushed to Wang Jian's side, his face flush with excitement. "We've just received a victory report from the city! Pang Xuan has been slain by General Zhao Feng, and the Zhao Jun has collapsed!"

"Truly?" A look of joy spread across Wang Jian's face.

"It is absolutely true. General Zhao Feng is now advancing on the Zhao Royal Palace. He may even conquer it before the day is out!" the Personal Guard Commander added with an excited smile.

"Excellent!" Wang Jian laughed aloud, unable to conceal his delight. "This son-in-law of mine is truly a heaven-sent commander! His presence is a great blessing to our Qin!"

"The Shangjiangjun is absolutely right," the Personal Guard Commander said with excitement. "Having General Zhao is indeed a blessing for Qin. To breach a formidable fortress like Handan City in just five days... no one else under heaven could have achieved such a feat!"

This battle was, without a doubt, a testament to his skill.

"Send orders to Wang Ben and Yang Duanhe," Wang Jian said gravely. "Have them lead their troops and swiftly mop up the remaining Zhao forces in the city. The King will be arriving soon."

"Yes, Shangjiangjun!" The Personal Guard Commander immediately hurried off to relay the orders.

Just as he departed, another messenger galloped up. "Report! Reporting to the Shangjiangjun! We've just received word that the Great King is now less than five li from Handan City! He will arrive in Handan in one hour at most!"

Hearing this, Wang Jian's expression turned serious. "Quickly, relay my orders!" he commanded at once. "Prepare to welcome the royal entourage! And have the full battle report ready for submission!"

At this moment, with the King of Qin arriving, Wang Jian knew he could not afford to be anything less than meticulous.