

## Longevity 56

Chapter 56: The King of Han Has Fled!

It had come to such a point. There was no other choice: either fight or surrender.

But Han Fei still needed a Chinese Hour to consider?

What is he trying to do? Does he have some ace up his sleeve?

"Han Fei," Li Teng stared at him with a sarcastic tone. "Do you take me for a fool?"

"I will only give you the time it takes for one stick of incense to burn. After that, my army will breach the Royal Palace, leaving no survivors," Li Teng declared coldly, his tone leaving no room for doubt.

Hearing this, Han Fei clasped his fists and bowed. He said nothing more, simply turning and walking toward the Royal Palace.

Li Teng did not order an attack, just quietly watched Han Fei return to the Han Royal Palace. The situation had become completely clear, so there was no need to rush. The ones who should be anxious now were the people inside the Han Royal Palace.

"General," a Deputy General spoke up. "Why give them time? We should just dispatch the troops and flatten the Han Royal Palace."

"I said one stick of incense, and it will be one stick of incense," Li Teng waved his hand, unconcerned.

「Inside the Han Royal Palace, within the main hall.」

The high throne was completely empty. King Han An was not present.

The main hall was not full, either. Of the former civil and military officials, less than half remained.

Where did the absentees go? The answer was obvious. They had fled long ago.

As a country nears its end, not everyone is willing to perish with it, especially the powerful and wealthy. They find ways to transfer their fortunes and escape to other states, where they can continue to live prosperous lives.

And now, it wasn't just that most of the officials had fled. Even the King of Han himself had vanished without a trace. While tens of thousands of Han soldiers fought to the death against the Qin Army, King Han An had already slipped away in secret, without even his own officials knowing.

"Mr. Fei," one of the remaining Han officials called out as Han Fei entered the Royal Palace. "What is the situation?"

"The Qin Army will attack after one stick of incense has burned," Han Fei sighed.

"The king has already fled."

"What are we to do?"

"We have barely twenty thousand troops left in the palace, and their morale is completely shattered. It's impossible to hold back the Qin Army."

"Are we truly left with no choice but to surrender?"

The Han court officials began to murmur amongst themselves, their reluctance mixed with a greater fear of the Qin Army.

"Our own king has fled."

"If we don't surrender, what else can we do?"

"I, Han Fei, am willing to die with our state, as are all of you esteemed lords," Han Fei said with a bitter smile. "But what reason do we have to let tens of thousands of soldiers die a pointless death? Did we

not forge a Royal Edict to mobilize the soldiers for the very purpose of saving them from a senseless sacrifice?"

"If we surrender, how will the Qin Army treat us?" a Minister asked worriedly.

"How else?" Han Fei replied with a bitter smile, though without hesitation. "We will only become their captives."

Instead of dwelling on it, he raised his head and looked toward the throne high up in the main hall. He slowly walked up to it and opened the box that held the Imperial Seal of Han.

He held up the Imperial Seal with a sense of shame and a heart ready for death. "To the departed kings above. To the ancestors of our Han above. Han Fei is powerless. I was unable to save the National Fortune."

"Esteemed lords," Han Fei said, his voice filled with profound sorrow. "The time for one stick of incense to burn is almost up. Let us leave the Royal Palace!"

Afterward, holding the Imperial Seal in both hands, he walked with heavy steps toward the palace exit. Watching his retreating figure, the Han officials in the hall followed him out.

「Outside the Royal Palace.」

Li Teng gazed at the Royal Palace gate.

Just then, a Deputy General announced loudly, "Reporting to the General, the time for one incense stick to burn is almost up!"

Li Teng nodded, the killing intent in his eyes steadily growing. The next moment, his hand slowly began to rise. The surrounding Qin officers watched with fiery, murderous eyes, waiting only for the command. In an instant, a volley of countless arrows would blanket the entire palace. The elite soldiers of the Qin Army would break down the palace gates and slaughter their way inside.

But at that very moment, the tightly shut gates suddenly stirred and swung open.

They've finally made a decision.

Seeing this, a hint of a smile flashed in Li Teng's eyes. In the chaos of battle, anything could happen. It would not be good if King Han An died amidst the fighting. Surrendering without a fight was the best option.

With that, Li Teng lowered his raised hand.

His eyes watched intently as the palace gates opened. Carrying the Imperial Seal of Han, Han Fei walked out slowly, followed by many of Han's civil and military officials.

But upon seeing this scene, Li Teng frowned.

"I, Han Fei of the Han Royal Family, surrender to Qin with the officials of the Royal Palace," Han Fei declared, holding the Imperial Seal and bowing deeply with a tragic expression. "I pray the General will heed Heaven's virtue of cherishing life and refrain from bloodshed, sparing the lives of the soldiers and their officers in the Royal Palace."

But Li Teng, standing upon his war chariot, asked coldly, "If Han is surrendering, where is the King of Han?"

"Our king has already fled. His whereabouts are unknown," Han Fei said with a bitter smile on his face.

"What did you say?" Li Teng's brow furrowed, anger rising in his expression. "Where did he flee?"

"When our king fled, we were completely unaware. As for where he is now, we know even less," Han Fei replied, shaking his head with a bitter smile.

This was not a lie; it was the truth. The King of Han had told no one of his escape, not even Han Fei, his own nominal uncle.

Li Teng said nothing, but stared into Han Fei's eyes, as if searching for a lie. Han Fei's gaze was placid, holding only the bitter sorrow of a fallen nation. Behind him, many of the Han officials looked terrified.

Mr. Fei is a gentleman renowned throughout the world; he would not lie.

"I believe you," Li Teng said slowly.

"Then, can the General accept the surrender of the soldiers and officers within the Royal Palace?" Han Fei raised his head and asked loudly.

"Lay down your weapons, and you may live," Li Teng declared.

"In that case," a relieved smile appeared on Han Fei's face. "I, Han Fei, thank General Li."

Stepping forward, he held up the Imperial Seal and presented it to Li Teng. "From now on, Han is no more!"

Li Teng accepted the Imperial Seal with both hands.

"I hope the General will keep his promise and cause no more slaughter among the people of Han. For this, I thank you," Han Fei said slowly.

Afterwards, Han Fei took a step back. He suddenly drew the sword from his waist.

"How dare you!"

The surrounding Sharp Warriors immediately raised their crossbows, aiming them at Han Fei.

"Do not act!" Li Teng shouted immediately.

Only then did the Sharp Warriors lower their crossbows.

But Han Fei, holding the sword, swung it toward his own neck with a tragic cry, "The National Fortune of Han has ended! As a prince of the royal family, I must perish with the state!"

As he spoke, Han Fei moved to slit his own throat.

Seeing this, Li Teng's expression changed, and he yelled urgently, "Han Fei, if you dare to die, I will massacre the Han Royal Palace!"