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Opening extract from

Samurai

Written by

Ian Beck

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The Samurai

By

Ian Beck

Barrington Stoke Reloaded series

Chapter 1
After The Battle

It was the bravery of my fierce hound Cho that saved me. He leapt up and growled and bared his big teeth. The enemy warrior was just distracted enough by the sudden wild appearance of my big dog. I was able to slide my sword, my silvery Katana, between his fish scale armour plates. He fell to the ground. Blood pumped from his side and turned the earth to red mud. My horse was nearly wild with fear. He was panicked by the unearthly howls of the dying, and the smoke and flames, and the terrible smells of battle.

I held on to his reins and tried to calm him. An arrow flew out of the rolling smoke and struck Cho a glancing blow. The dog fell to the ground, his leg twitching. I knelt beside him and picked up the arrow. It was sharpened bamboo, not steel-tipped. I rubbed the very tip of the arrow with my finger, and quickly tasted it. It was not poisoned. Luckily the wound was just a graze and not deep. I lifted my poor brave dog up and laid him across my saddle. I left my lance and banner planted in the red earth. I mounted and spurred my horse. His white mane flew back as we rode off. He flicked his head from side to side in terror as we raced away from the field of battle. There was nothing more I could have done. But even as I fled I knew I should have stayed. I was after all a Samurai, a warrior. It was not right for me to flee the battle field and I feared that somehow the gods would punish me.