Finally, after two long years, our campaign is coming to an end – the reign of the false “King” shall soon be over.   
Two whole years, just to reach this place.  
Schemes and battles and victories and defeats, all to reach this place.

Now, the only thing that stands between me and him is this gaudy door – far greater than the man tarnishing its lustre and brilliance.

I kick it down.

“AAAHHHHHH,” a shrieking, scared voice screams out in pure fear. “How can he have arrived here?? The deepest chambers of the palace, that are only mine??”

I feel a pure disgust well up in me at the mere sight of the man, as he clings helplessly to his last support.

“Inertia, my lord,” that support responds in a calm voice – a shrill contrast to the so-called king. “A ball that is rolling, cannot be stopped so easily.”

“You--” the ‘king’ shouts in outrage, “is that not what you’re here to do? Is that not what you have always done for my father?”

Like a child lashing out, the ‘king’ goes on.

“Why is it different for me? Why could my father reign in peace, while I must face this constant threat? This sword hanging over my head? What have I done to deserve this?”

I can no longer hold my voice at the spectacle.

*“What have you done?”* I say, delighting in the shivers of the ‘king’ at the mere sound of my voice.

“AAAHHHHHH,” he screams again. “Do something, tactician! Surely, your brilliant mind has something in store to protect me? Keep me safe!”

The tactician laughs wryly, and deeply.

“Of course, my lord. I will step in to defend our king,” he says, as he indeed steps up. “I will face our visitor myself.”

Deep wrinkles cover the tactician’s face – a telltale sign of the depth of experience that let him remain composed even now, I thought.

“Tactician.” I simply say.

“Revolutionary.” He responds. “I see you have prevailed once more, through all my worthless plotting.”

“Ha,” I laugh. “If your plotting is worthless, then my prized sword is surely a piece of junk! That I am standing here now, is tantamount to the favour of the gods, nothing else.”

“I am flattered by your praise. And yet, we stand here all the same – so, I wonder, is a plan that does not succeed worth anything at all?”

“I’m not here to discuss sophistry with you,” I say, as I draw my sword – pointing it directly at my adversary.

In response, the ‘king’ gives another hollow shriek, before running to cower in a corner.

The tactician puts himself between us two.

“You may have come here, revolutionary, but that does not mean you have found victory.”

“It does not? What more do you have to offer, tactician?”

With a slight grin, showing more emotion than I have ever seen from the man, the tactician takes a battle stance.

Frankly, I can only see it as clumsy. Showing openings as if he were the net my father used to hunt with, he stands between us two.

“You think you can win? Where the ogre, the battle master, the butterfly could not?”

“Who do you think taught them, revolutionary? Do you think they got their strength from the gods’ gift like you?”

I contemplate.

I always did wonder how all these talented fighters joined the side of a worthless pretender. Could this man before me really be the one who raised them? I wonder.

I look to the ‘king’, too scared to even look towards our face-off. It would certainly not be strange for the coward to keep his strongest close at all times – like the tactician always by his side.

Even this clumsy stance, I think as my eyes wander back to the tactician, could simply be a way of baiting me into a poor plan of attack – a hook like the fisherman loved to throw out.

Regardless, I ready my sword for battle.

Were this tactician to be the culmination of all the techniques I have had to face until now, I would still overcome it. To hesitate here would be a disservice to all that stood beside, and even against me during our righteous movement.

“Are you ready, tactician?”

“As I have always been, revolutionary.”

In one slice, the battle ends. The tactician falls unceremoniously to the ground – without even the opportunity to speak his final words.

“A bluff?” I wonder out loud, looming over his corpse. Would the tactician that has foiled me until now resort to such a cheap strategy?

I don’t believe it.

As I look at lifeless body of the man who has pushed the revolution to this point, I think, that simply cannot be true.

A last chance, that’s what it was. After all the pieces on his board had ran out, and there was no longer a move he could make – the tactician chose not to surrender, not to run, not to beg for mercy.

He put his body on the line, just as he had asked of his soldiers, his compatriots – when push came to shove, he gave his life to protect even this ‘king’. To protect as he had always done.

I lay the tactician on his back. His eyes stare lifelessly into mine.

“You may have been my greatest enemy, tactician, but you have always had my respect. Now, as you rest forever, you shall have it forever.”

I turn to the ‘king’, who continued to cower in the corner all throughout the tactician’s last stand.

I walk slowly to the man he gave his life to try to protect.

You put your all on the line to protect this man, tactician. Surely, your greatest wish was to keep his life intact – I think, as I stand towering above his curled up figure.

I am overcome with a desire to fulfil that wish – to grant the one I respect so greatly his greatest desire. It truly does cross my mind, whether there is a need to cut the neck of the ‘king’, whether it would not suffice just to reserve a prison cell in his name.

But, I’m sorry, tactician – I cannot fulfil that wish.

The idea that you would die, yet this piece of shit gets to live – it disgusts me to the very core of my being.

Seconds later, the head of the ‘king’ rolls across the floor.