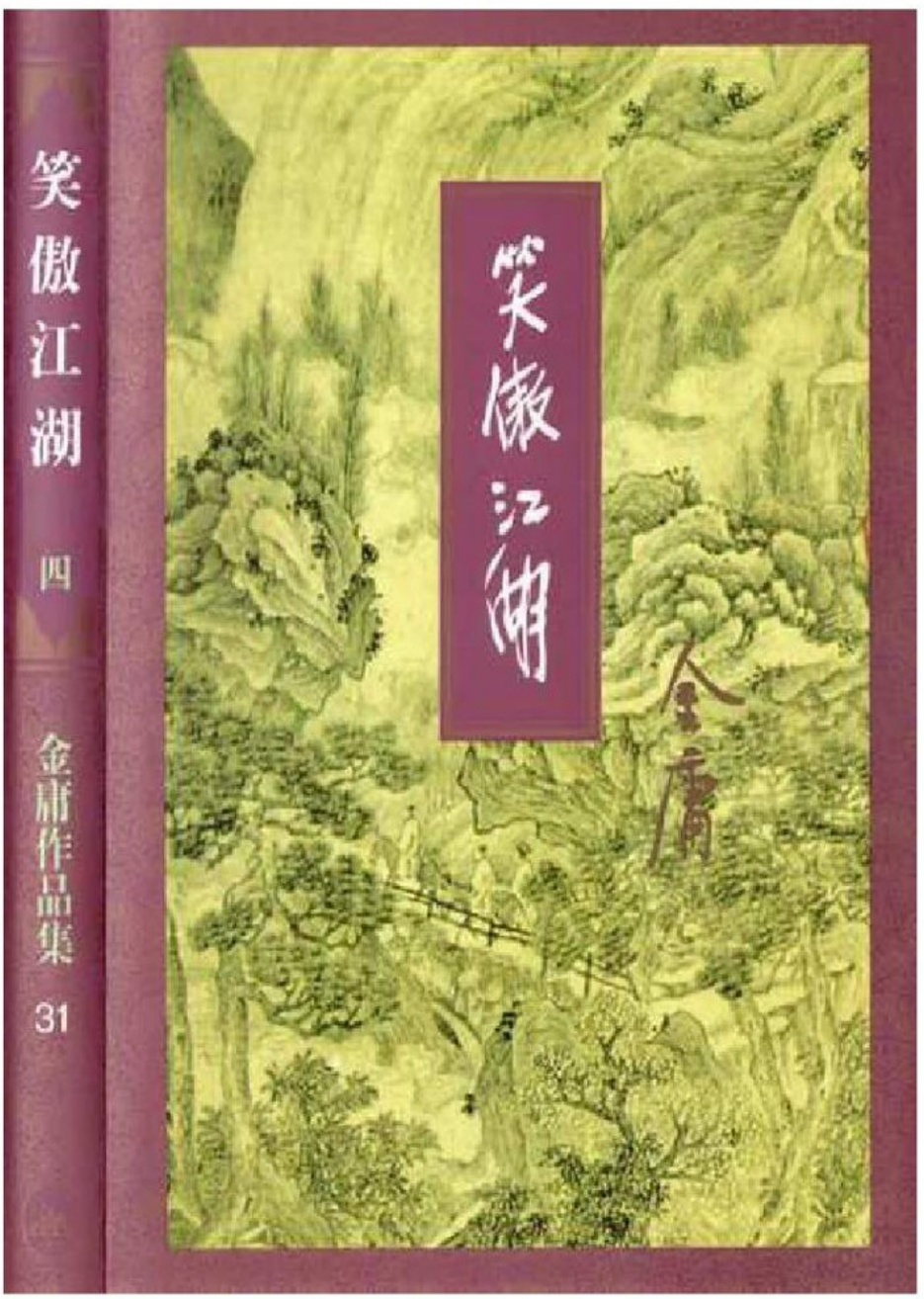
Xiào Ào Jiāng Hú
Smiling Proud Wanderer Vol 04

by

Jin Yong



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Editor:

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Ebook Compiler's note

This was originally translated by and posted online by

- Lanny Lin (http://www.lannyland.com, http://blog.lannyland.com) (Chapters 1 to 21)
- Pokit (http://www.spcnet.tv/forums/showthread.php/17771-Smiling-Proud-Wanderer-Unabridged) (Chapters 22 to 40)
- Bliss (Chapters 30,31)
- Editor: HHaung

I compiled it as part of an ongoing effort to create a repository of the online fan translations of wuxia fiction in a more convenient format for offline reading.

Unfortunately there does not appear to a large commercial market for English wuxia translations, so we are beholden to by Lanny, Pokit and others for their efforts to bring the work of Jin Yong, Gu Long et al to an English speaking audience.

Additionally, I would note that the work involved goes far beyond just translation.

Chinese cannot simply be directly translated to English, so am grateful for the notes explaining idioms in addition to notes on geography, culture and historical context.

I have left the translations as I found them with the following caveats.

- I added the pictures and chapter descriptions from Lanny's website
- I received chapters 1 to 21 in a MS Word document from Lanny which included footnotes, whereas I assembled Chapters 22 onwards from the online version. The online version used inline notation, but I changed the inline explanations to footnotes for consistency's sake.

Other Translations

We have a repository of some of the existing online translations, including links and many wuxia eBooks.

http://wuxiatranslations.wikispaces.com

There is also a sister site, also with downloads but additional emphasis on original translations and forum discussions.

http://wuxiasociety.com

Other good sources for translations are

http://www.lannyland.com

http://www.spcnet.tv/forums/forumdisplay.php/29-Wuxia-Translations

http://xiaoshuo.genreverse.com

http://haddjo.freehostia.com/joomla_1.5.3/index.php

http://tu-shu-guan.blogspot.tw/

http://mywuxia.com

Helping out with Wuxia Translations At Wuxia Translations, we are always looking volunteers, both for translation and eBook compilation/formatting For Translators we need.

- Native level Mandarin
  - Excellent written English
  - Understanding of, and enthusiasm for, wuxia, martial arts, Chinese literature and history.
  - Ability to take the initiative to do further research regarding the terms and idioms used in Chinese to avoid making literal translations.
  - Ability to collaborate/ share work.

For help with complilation and formatting we just need

- Web access.
- Moderate profiency with MS Word
- Ability to follow standardized formats
- Ability to collaborate/ share work.

Our ultimate goal is to get all the major wuxia works translated and available to English readers in one location If you or a friend would like to help, please get in touch at N1ghtT1iger71@gmail.com

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Chapter 31 Embroidering

Translated by: Pokit and Bliss

Edited by: Hhaung.



Dongfang Unbeatable threw himself by the side of Yang Lianting. He picked him up and put him on the bed gently. Taking off his shoes and socks, then pulling the blanket over him, he behaved like a wife taking care of her husband.

Yang Lianting coldly said, "Tong Baixiong, how can you shout like that at the

Hall of Refined Kindness? Why aren't you kneeling down when your Chief is right in front of you? How do you dare not to sing praises to Chief?"

Tong Baixiong looked up to the sky and laughed loudly. "When Brother Dongfang and I became friends, where were you, little kid? At the time when Brother Dongfang and I escaped death and went through all those hardships, you weren't even born yet! You dare to talk to me?"

Linghu Chong turned his head and finally was able to see the face of Tong Baixiong clearly. He has white hair which was wildly out of place and a bushy silver beard. His face was twitching with anger, his eyes were wide opened, and the blood on his face was already darkened and hard. All these created a very scary facial expression. Both of his arms and legs were shackled with long chains that dragged behind him and rattled loudly as he spoke. He was speaking passionately, waving his arms around and the iron chain accompanied his angry speech with a loud 'zheng, zheng' noise.

Ren Woxing was still kneeling down and staying still, but hearing the noise the chain made, he remembered the time when he was locked up at the bottom of the West Lake. He couldn't control his anger anymore and his body was now shaking with anger, and he really wanted to start destroying things. But he then heard Yang Lianting said, "You're very arrogant to be so rude in front of our Chief. You secretly colluded with that traitor Ren Woxing. Do you know your sin now?"

"Chief Ren is the former chief of our sect," Tong Baixiong said. "When he had an incurable illness, he retreated into seclusion and gave the leadership of the sect to Brother Dongfang. How can you say that he's a traitor to our sect? Brother Dongfang, tell us clearly: how did Chief Ren rebel, how did he betray our sect?"

"After Ren Woxing cured his illness, he should've immediately returned to our sect. But he instead went to Shaolin Temple, and bonded together with the headmasters of Shaolin, Wu Dang, Songshan and many other schools. Wouldn't you say that's betraying our sect? Why didn't he come to pay his respect to Chief and listen respectfully to Chief's order?" Yang Lianting replied instead.

Tong Baixiong laughed. "Chief Ren used to be the superior of Brother Dongfang, and his experience in martial art is vast, so he's not necessarily under Brother Dongfang. Brother Dongfang, isn't this right?"

Yang Lianting shouted loudly, "Don't rely on your seniority here. Our Chief is very generous to his subordinate, and he would never stoop down to your level. If you deeply regretted your fault, then tomorrow in front of the assembly altar, you can tell all our brothers about your fault, your assurance to rectify your misdeed, and swear

your loyalty to Chief. Then maybe Chief would spare your life this time. Otherwise, you know what is going to happen to you."

Tong Baixiong laughed. "I'm close to eighty years old already. I'm already tired of living, what consequence am I afraid of?"

Yang Lianting shouted, "Bring in those people!"

The servants in purple clothes answered, "Yes!" and then they heard the sound of chains clunking as more than ten people were brought into the hall. There were men, women, and a few children in the group. When Tong Baixiong saw this, his face changed colour and he used his qi to shout, "Yang Lianting, a gentleman is responsible for what he has done. Why are you bringing my grandson here?" His shout shook the eardrums of everyone in the hall.

Linghu Chong, looking in the direction towards the dais where Dongfang Bubai was sitting, saw that Dongfang Bubai shook when he heard this shout. So he thought to himself, "This person still has some conscience left. His heart was still moved when seeing how worried Tong Baixiong is."

Yang Lianting laughed and said, "What's the third teaching of our Chief? Say it out loud for us to hear!"

Tong Baixiong just uttered a few 'Pei' vehemently and didn't reply back. Yang Lianting said, "Among the Tong family, anyone who knows of Chief's third teaching, say it out loud."

One boy who is around ten years old said, "Refined scholar, kind-hearted

warrior, the just and wise Chief's third teaching: 'You must be fierce towards your enemy and behead the source of trouble. Men, women, old, and young, leave no one behind.'"

Yang Lianting praised, "Very good, very good! Little baby, you remember all ten of Chief's teaching?"

The boy answered, "I remember them all. If I don't study the teachings for one day, I wouldn't be able to eat or sleep. Once I've read Chief's teachings, my martial art greatly advances and I have a lot of strength to fight."

Yang Lianting laughed. "That is right. And who taught you these words?"

"My father taught me."

Yang Lianting pointed at Tong Baixiong and asked, "Who is he?"

"He is my grandfather."

"Your grandfather doesn't read the teaching of our Chief, doesn't listen to Chief's words, and has betrayed our Chief. What do you think we should do?"

"Grandfather's wrong. Everyone must study Chief's teaching and listen to what Chief says."

Yang Lianting said to Tong Baixiong, "Your grandson is only a ten years old baby, yet he knows what to do. While you're already so old, how come you're so foolish?"

Tong Baixiong said, "I only exchanged a few words with those two people, Ren and Xiang. They wanted me to betray Chief, but I didn't agree to their proposal. When Tong Baixiong says one then it'll be one, two then it'll be two. I would never wrong other people." He saw that all of his family was being held hostage so his speech was

getting softer as he spoke.

Yang Lianting sighed and in a regretful tone said, "If you had said this earlier, then this wouldn't have become so troublesome. So do you know your fault now?"

"I wasn't wrong. I've never abandoned our sect and I have never betrayed our Chief."

Yang Lianting sighed. "Since you don't want to admit your fault, then I can't help you anymore. Bring his family down and don't give them a grain of rice or even a mouthful of water from today."

A few servants in purple gowns responded, "Yes!" as they took the family away. Tong Baixiong shouted, "Wait!" Then he said to Yang Lianting, "Alright, I admit my fault. It was I who was wrong. Chief, I beg for your forgiveness."

Even though he had admitted his fault, his eyes were still burning as if they were about to spout fire. Yang Lianting smiled coldly, "What did you say a moment ago? You said that when Chief and you experienced hardships, I wasn't even born, isn't this right?"

Tong Baixiong held back his anger and said, "I was wrong."

“You were wrong? That came out from you too easily. How come you aren't kneeling down in front of Chief?"

"Chief and I have become sworn brothers sometime in the past. For tens of years, we have been standing and sitting down as equal." He suddenly raised his voice, "Brother Dongfang, you see that your older brother is being tortured, how come you're not saying anything? If you want your brother to kneel down to you, that's very easy to do. You only have to say a word, and your brother will die for you without blinking an eye." Dongfang Bubai just sat still. All of sudden, the big hall was quiet. Everyone was staring at Dongfang Bubai, waiting for him to speak. But even after some time had passed, he still didn't say a word. "Brother Dongfang, for the past few years, it's been very difficult for me to see you. You locked yourself up and practiced the Sunflower Manual assiduously. Did you know that there were so many changes in our sect and that danger is just around the corner?" Dongfang Bubai just sat silently without uttering a single sound. "If Brother wants to kill me or torture me, I couldn't care less. But if you ruin the hundreds of years' power and prestige of our sect, then you will become a great sinner. Why aren't you talking? You fire deviated while

practicing martial art so that you can't talk, is this right?"

Yang Lianting shouted, "Nonsense! Kneel down!" Two servants in purple also shouted as they flew towards Tong Baixiong and kicked towards the back of his knees to force him to kneel. But their legs were broken instead with loud cracking sounds. They fell down on the ground and fresh blood spouted out from their mouths. Tong Baixiong said, "Brother Dongfang, I want to hear you say something so that dying would be sweet. You haven't spoken for 3 years, and all the brothers in the sect are getting suspicious."

Yang Lianting indignantly interjected, "What suspicion?"

"The suspicion that Chief has fallen into someone's plot and been given a muting drug. How come he doesn't speak? How come he doesn't speak?" Tong Baixiong spoke loudly.

Yang Lianting laughed coldly. "Chief's every word is precious. Why would he waste his breath and speak to a traitor like you? Guards, take him down the cliff!"

Eight servants in purple answered his call and came out. Tong Baixiong loudly said, "Brother Dongfang, I want to take a look at you. Have you been hurt so badly that you can't speak?" He waved his arms about and the iron chains on them scattered around. With his two legs dragging the iron chains, he charged towards Dongfang Bubai. When the eight servants saw how powerful he was, they were afraid to get near him.

Yang Lianting shouted, "Capture him, capture him!"

The warriors outside the hall shouted their battle cries but stayed just outside the door because they didn't dare to enter the hall. There was a strict rule in the sect which stated that for anyone to step a foot inside the Hall of Refined Kindness while carrying a weapon was an unpardonable offence that deserved execution. Dongfang Bubai stood up and turned around to go out through the back of the hall.

Tong Baixiong called out, "Brother Dongfang, don't go!" as he quickened his steps. However, with the iron chains on his legs preventing him from walking

fast and his heart anxious with worry, he stumbled and fell forward. But he took advantage of the situation by somersaulting forward and then charged towards Dongfang Bubai. He was around a hundred feet away from Dongfang Bubai when Yang Lianting shouted, "Daring traitor is going to stab our Chief! Warriors, quickly come up the hall and capture this traitor!"

Ren Woxing noticed that even though Dongfang Bubai was dawdling in his escape, Tong Baixiong was still quite far away from him. He also wouldn't be able to catch up to him so he pulled out three copper coins, moved his qi to his arm, and threw them at Dongfang Bubai. Yingying shouted, "Let's Move!"

Linghu Chong leapt up and pulled his long sword out from inside the bandage. Xiang Wentian pulled out the weapons from inside the wooden poles of the stretcher and gave them to Ren Woxing and Yingying. He then gave a mighty pull on the rope underneath the stretcher which turned out to be a soft whip.

The four of them immediately used their qinggong and charged up the hall. All of sudden, Dongfang Bubai screamed as blood poured out of the top of his head where he was hit by a copper coin. When Ren Woxing threw those three coins, his distance from Dongfang Bubai was quite far away, so the power of the coin was already exhausted when it hit Dongfang Bubai's head and thus only caused a light external injury. But Dongfang Bubai was praised to be the number one martial artist in the whole world, and unexpectedly he wasn't even able to avoid this little coin. This didn't make sense to anyone there.

Ren Woxing started laughing and he called out, "This Dongfang Bubai is a fake!"

Xiang Wentian slashed out with his whip and coiled it around both of Yang Lianting's legs. He then pulled his whip taut and dragged Yang Lianting to the ground. Dongfang Bubai covered his face up as he ran away. Linghu Chong moved to one side to rush forward and cut off his escape path. "Stop!" he shouted as he pointed his long sword towards Dongfang Bubai. But who would've thought that Dongfang Bubai would be unable to stop and would keep on running towards the point of the sword? Linghu Chong hastily withdrew his

sword and sent his left palm out to strike him lightly. Dongfang Bubai immediately fell down on the ground with his face up.

By that time, Ren Woxing had also arrived. He quickly grabbed the back of Dongfang Bubai's neck and dragged him towards the hall entrance. In a clear and loud voice, he announced, "Everyone, listen! This chap is a fake Dongfang Bubai who's trying to bring disaster on my Divine Sun Moon Sect. Everyone look at his face clearly."

From the appearance of this person, everyone could see that he actually resembled Dongfang Bubai very closely. But his frightened face was very different from the usual calm and confident attitude of Dongfang Bubai. Seeing this, all the warriors were greatly surprised and shocked that they were unable to utter anything.

Ren Woxing shouted, "What's your name? If you don't speak clearly, I'll crush your head."

That person was quaking from fear, and he tremblingly stuttered, "Ser… ser… servant…is called… called… called…"

Xiang Wentian had already sealed many acupoints on Yang Lianting's body and had also dragged him to the entrance of the hall. He barked, "What's his name?"

Yang Lianting replied without any fear, "Who are you to dare question me? I know you are the traitor Xiang Wentian. The Divine Sun Moon Sect has already expelled you from the sect, why did you come back to Dark Wood Cliff for?"

Xiang Wentian smiled coldly. "I came back to Dark Wood Cliff to take care of your treachery!" After he said this, his right palm hacked down and broke Yang Lianting's left shin bone. Yang Lianting's martial art was just average but showing no pain, he scolded back, "Why don't you just kill me instead of torturing me? Is this what heroes do?"

Xiang Wentian laughed and said, "Do you think things would be that easy?" His palm descended again and with a 'ka' sound, Yang Lianting's right shin bone was now broken. Then, with his left hand, Xiang Wentian shoved Yang Lianting

to the ground.

Both of Yang Lianting's legs had been broken so when they hit the ground, the broken bones on his legs broke the skin and pierced upwards. The severity of the pain caused by this would be unimaginable. But Yang Lianting unexpectedly didn't utter a single word.

Xiang Wentian gave a thumbs up to him and praised, "Good man! I won't torture you any more." He then lightly punched the fake Dongfang Bubai's stomach and asked, "What is your real name?" The fake Dongfang Bubai screamed loudly and answered, "Ser… servant... is called… called… Bao… Bao…"

"Your surname is Bao, is that right?" Xiang Wentian said.

"Yes… Yes… Yes… Bao… Bao… Bao…" He kept on mumbling for some time but never actually uttered what his given name was.

Suddenly, everyone could smell a stinky odour and saw that there was water flowing from underneath this fake Dongfang Bubai's pants. This fake Dongfang Bubai was so scared that he had actually urinated in his pants.

"We can't be delayed; finding Dongfang Bubai is our most important thing to do!" Ren Woxing decided. He then lifted Bao and bellowed, "You've all seen clearly now. Our sect is infested by the like of this guy who is pretending to be Dongfang Bubai. We must find out the truth. I am your true Chief, Ren Woxing. Do you recognise me?"

All of the sect warriors were youths who were only in their twenties and had never seen his face before, so none of them recognised him. After Dongfang Bubai became the sect's Chief, all of his trusted aides wanted to be in his good book so they never mentioned the past matter of Chief Ren. That was why these warriors had never even heard of Ren Woxing's name. On the other hand, they thought that even though the Divine Sun Moon Sect had been in existence for hundreds of years, Dongfang Bubai had always been the Chief. They just looked at each other not daring to utter a word.

Shangguan Yun said loudly, "Dongfang Bubai was probably killed by Yang

Lianting and his cohorts. Chief Ren is our sect's chief. From now on, everyone must be loyal to Chief Ren." After he said this, he knelt down in front of Ren Woxing and said, "Subordinate pays his respect to Chief Ren. Long live the Chief, unifies the Jianghu!"

Those warriors knew that Shangguan Yun was a high-ranking officer in the sect. When they now saw him paying his respect to Ren Woxing -- after witnessing for themselves how Chief Dongfang was replaced by a fake, how their powerful and awe-inspiring Yang Lianting got his legs broken, thrown to the ground, and couldn't fight back at all -- tens of those warriors immediately knelt towards Ren Woxing and said, "Long live the Chief, unifies the Jianghu!"

The rest of the warriors immediately followed suit. Having said 'Long live the Chief, unifies the Jianghu' hundreds of times, they unwittingly used the same words to address Ren Woxing.

Ren Woxing laughed loudly taking pride in himself. He then said, "You must strictly guard the entrances to Dark Wood Cliff and don't let anyone go up or down from the Cliff." The warriors acknowledged the order together.

By then, Xiang Wentian had already ordered the servants in purple to release Tong Baixiong. Tong Baixiong was really worried about the safety of Dongfang Bubai so he grabbed Yang Lianting by his neck and shouted, "You… You… You must've killed my Brother Dongfang. You... You..." He was feeling very agitated, his voice was choking, and teardrops started to fall on his cheeks.

Yang Lianting just closed his eyes and ignored him. Tong Baixiong gave him a whack on his ear and yelled, "What happened to my Brother Dongfang?"

Xiang Wentian hastily said, "Lighten your hits!" But it was too late. Even though Tong Baixiong had only used around thirty percent of his power, Yang Lianting was already unconscious from the slapping. Tong Baixiong shook Yang Lianting's body. But Yang Lianting's eyes were all white and looked as if he had died.

Ren Woxing said to the purple gown servants, "Who knows of Dongfang Bubai's whereabouts? Quickly report then I'll heap you with gifts." He asked

three times, but nobody answered. Suddenly, Ren Woxing's heart turned cold. While he was being imprisoned underneath the West Lake, besides practising his martial art, he was also imagining how to torture Dongfang Bubai once he had escaped from that prison. But today on top of Dark Wood Cliff, all he found was the fake one. It seemed as if Dongfang Bubai had died sometime ago. Otherwise, judging on Dongfang Bubai's subtlety and martial art, how could this Yang Lianting manage to commit these evil acts and order someone to pretend to be Dongfang Bubai? What was the use of torturing Yang Lianting and this idiot Bao?

He looked at the servants in purple gown scattered throughout the hall. Some of them looked completely terrified, some looked frightened and confused, and there were some who appeared cunning and deceitful. Ren Woxing was extremely disappointed and was feeling impatient. He shouted, "You chaps, you must know this was a fake Dongfang Bubai, and cooperated with Yang Lianting in deceiving the brothers in the sect. These are unpardonable sins that deserved deaths!"

His body swayed as he rushed towards them. 'Pa, Pa, Pa, Pa'. These four soft sounds were heard as four servants in purple gowns were killed without being able to utter a single word. The rest of the servants were startled and they started to scream in fear and ran for their lives. Ren Woxing laughed fiercely and bellowed, "Escaping! Escaping where?" He picked up the iron shackles on the ground which were originally used to shackle Tong Baixiong, and tossed them at a cluster of people. Blood and flesh flew all over the place as seven or eight people were killed. Ren Woxing laughed loudly and said, "I will not let anyone who followed Dongfang Bubai live!"

Yingying saw her father was acting rather strangely, like he was mad, so she shouted at him, "Daddy!" She ran to him and pulled on his hand. Suddenly, one of the servants came out and knelt down. "Reporting to Chief. Dongfang Bubai... Dongfang Bubai didn't die!"

Jubilant, Ren Woxing ran up to that servant, grabbed his shoulders and asked, "Dongfang Bubai didn't die?"

"Yes! AH!" the servant fainted after screaming in pain. In his excitement, Ren Woxing had actually used too much strength and broke both of that servant's shoulders. Ren Woxing shook the servant's body a few times but he didn't wake up.

Ren Woxing then turned his head to the other servants and shouted, "Where is Dongfang Bubai? Quickly lead the way! If you're delaying me, I'll kill you all!" One servant knelt down and said, "Reporting to Chief. The location of Dongfang Bubai is a secret and only Yang Lianting knows how to open the secret pathway. If we wake this Yang traitor up, he will lead Chief to where Dongfang Bubai is."

Ren Woxing shouted, "Quickly bring cold water!"

These servants in purple gown were pretty clever. Five of them immediately flew out of the hall, but only three people came back carrying bowls of cold water, as the other two had run away. They poured all three bowls of cold water over Yang Lianting's head. He slowly woke up and opened his eyes. Xiang Wentian said, "I admire your braveness so I won't torture you any more. Now, all the paths going up and down from Dark Wood Cliff have been blocked so there's no way for Dongfang Bubai to escape unless he has a couple of wings to fly out. Quickly lead us to find him, why would a gentleman hide his face and only reveal his tail? Let's quickly decide this matter, so everyone can be happy!"

Yang Lianting smiled derisively. "Chief Dongfang is matchless in this world. It's very good that you all want to go to your death. Alright, I'll lead you to him."

Xiang Wentian said to Shangguan Yun, "Brother Shangguan, let's carry Yang Lianting to see Dongfang Bubai." He lifted Yang Lianting and dumped him on top of the stretcher. Shangguan Yun answered, "Yes!" and lifted the stretcher together with Xiang Wentian. Yang Lianting instructed, "Go inside!" Xiang Wentian and Shangguan Yun carried him in front to lead the way while Ren Woxing, Linghu Chong, Yingying, and Tong Baixiong followed behind them.

They went to the back of the Hall of Refined Kindness and passed through a

long corridor before arriving at a flower garden. They then entered a small stone house west of the garden. Yang Lianting said, "Push the left wall."

When Tong Baixiong pushed the wall, it actually turned around and revealed a secret doorway. Inside there was another metal door facing them. Yang Lianting pulled out a key and handed it over to Tong Baixiong. Tong Baixiong opened the door and discovered an underground tunnel beyond that door. They all headed underground. On both sides of the tunnel were oil lamps flickering dimly. Ren Woxing thought, "That bastard Dongfang Bubai locked me up under the West Lake. Who would've thought that he gets the same retribution and got himself locked up as well. This tunnel isn't any better than the one in Plum Manor on Mount Gu."

But after they had made a few turns, suddenly there was an open space in front of them and they could see the bright sky. Instantly, the fragrance of flowers assaulted their noses and they felt invigorated. As they came out of the tunnel, they discovered that they were in the middle of a small delicate flower garden. Red cheery blossoms, green bamboo, green pines, and green jade cypress were planted artfully in the garden. Two yuan-yang mandarin ducks were swimming leisurely through the small pond. There were also four white cranes standing besides the pool. Seeing such an unexpected lovely tableau, they all secretly admired the scenery. They went around a fake mountain and came into a large flower garden full of red and pink roses. The roses smelled wonderfully fragrant and were delicately beautiful.

Yingying turned her head slightly to look at Linghu Chong. He had a smile in his face and looked very happy. She whispered, "Do you think this is a lovely place?"

Linghu Chong smiled. "After we kick Dongfang Bubai out, let's stay here for a few months. You can teach me how to play the Qin and we would be very happy."

Yingying asked, "Are you deceiving me?"

"I'm only afraid that if I don't learn it well then Granny would blame me for

that."

Yingying sneered and broke into a smile. The two of them were enjoying the beautiful scenery, and lagged behind the group. They saw Xiang Wentian and Shangguan Yun enter a small elegant house ahead. Linghu Chong and Yingying quickly followed them and entered the house. As soon as they had entered, they could smell the strong fragrance of flowers. There was a painting of three beautiful ladies on the wall while the chairs inside had flowery embroidered cushions. Linghu Chong thought, "This is a lady's room. How could Dongfang Bubai be living in here? That's right. This must be his concubine's house. He's living in a gentle and soft village, that's why he doesn't care about the sect's matters."

A voice came from the inner room, "Brother Lian, who did you bring in with you?" The pitch of that voice was sharp and high, but at the same time still sounded coarse and rough. Whether it was from a man or a woman, that chilling voice would cause the hair on anyone's skin to stand straight up. Yang Lianting said, "Its one of your old friends. He said he just couldn't NOT see you."

The voice from the inner room spoke, "Why did you bring him in for? Only you alone are allowed to come in here. Aside from you, there is no one else that I want to see." The last two sentences were spoken quite flirtatiously, clearly sounding like the words that would come from a woman, yet the voice undoubtedly came from a man.

Ren Woxing, Xiang Wentian, Yingying, Tong Baixiong, and Shangguan Yun were all well acquainted with Dongfang Bubai, this voice they heard was definitely his, but sounded more like someone who was purposely squeezing his throat to raise the pitch as if learning to sing, pretending to be charming and seductive. The whole scene just appeared as if it were a joke. The look on everyone's face was of shock and bewilderment.

"I can't! If I didn't bring him in, he would've taken my life," Yang Lianting replied. "How could I not see you once more before I die?"

The person in the room said in a sharp voice, "Who would dare to insult you

like that? Is it Ren Woxing? Tell him to come out!" Ren Woxing, hearing that Dongfang Bubai was able to deduce that it was him based on a single sentence, dared not underestimate his intelligence. He signalled for the rest of them to slowly enter the room. Shangguan Yun lifted one of the silk embroidered curtains, carrying in Yang Lianting with him, while the rest of the group followed in from behind.

The inner room was layered with floral tapestries and brocade embroideries. A strong scent of perfume and powder filled the room. In the eastern corner on top of a make-up table a person was seated, clothed in exquisite pink robes. In his left hand was an embroidering apparatus and in his right hand was an embroidery needle. The person lifted his head and had an astonished look on his face. But the look of confusion on this person's face could never match the look on the faces of Ren Woxing and the others.

With the exception of Linghu Chong, everyone recognized this person as the person who had usurped the position of Chief of the Sun Moon Sect, who for the past ten or more years held the distinction of being the unrivalled number one fighter in all the world, Dongfang Bubai. But now, he had shaved off all his facial hair, entirely covered his face in beauty powder, and was dressed in clothing that neither resembled a man or a woman. His eyes were eerie looking, and appeared way too glamorously exaggerated, and were just a pain to look at. What was this heaven-shaking earth-shattering figure of the martial arts world doing in a woman's quarters sewing!

Ren Woxing who was originally filled with anger and rage, now couldn't help holding in his laughter. "Dongfang Bubai, have you fallen insane?"

Dongfang Bubai in his sharp voice answered, "So it really is Chief Ren! You've finally come! Brother Lian, you ... you ... how are you? Is he the one who hurt you?" He walked over to Yang Lianting 's side and carried him over to a bed. Dongfang Bubai had an extremely caring and worried look on his face, and asked, "Does it hurt very badly? They’re only broken shin bones, not very serious. You need not worry, I'll immediately help you start reconnecting the bones." He slowly undressed Yang's shoes and socks, pulled him across the

fragrant bed covers, and into his arms, exactly like a loving wife would do for her husband.

Everyone present couldn't help but feel shocked and slightly disgusted at what they saw. They all wanted to laugh, but the show of affection they witnessed were just too strange, any laughter wouldn't even come out. Behind those elaborately decorative curtains, in that magnificent embroidery room, the air was filled with a quaint and unnatural aura.

Dongfang Bubai pulled out a green silk handkerchief from his side and gently wiped off the sweat and dirt from Yang Lianting's forehead. Yang Lianting became slightly enraged and berated, "A grave enemy is right in front of us, why are you still wasting time with these useless pleasantries? Beat them away first and we'll still have time for intimacy later."

Dongfang Bubai giggled. "Yes! Yes! Please don't get upset. Your legs must be in great pain. Oh it pains my heart to see you suffer."

Ren Woxing, Linghu Chong and the others had never witnessed such a strange sight in their lives, they had never even heard of such a thing. Homosexuality or paedophilia was not out of the ordinary. But to see Dongfang Bubai, the exalted Chief of the Sun Moon Sect, actually dressed up like a woman, and living in a woman's quarters? He must have gone insane. When Yang Lianting spoke to him, his tone of voice was harsh and threatening. Even so, Dongfang Bubai responded quite gently and refined like an elegant lady. They all found this perplexing and figured something had to be amiss.

Tong Baixiong couldn't help it anymore and took a step forward. "Brother Dongfang, you ... you ... what the hell are you doing?"

Dongfang Bubai lifted his head as his expression sunk. "Were you one of the people who injured my Brother Lian as well?"

"Why are you letting that nobody boss you around? He ordered some idiot to impersonate you and pretend to be you, issuing orders in your name, and foolishly messing around with everything. Did you even know about this?"

"Of course I knew. Brother Lian always has my best interests in his heart, he

knew that administrating the entire sect was too tiring for me, so he took over in my stead. There's nothing wrong with that."

Tong Baixiong pointed to Yang Lianting. "This person wanted me dead. Did you know about that?"

Dongfang Bubai leisurely shook his head. "I didn't know about this. But if Brother Lian wanted you dead, then you must've done something wrong. Why didn't you let him kill you?"

Tong Baixiong looked startled. After he regained his composure, he started to laugh. In his laughter there was a certain hint of sadness. "So if he wanted to kill me, you'd just let him do so?"

"Whatever Brother Lian wishes, I will oblige," Dongfang Bubai replied. "He is the only one in this world who is truly good to me, and he is the only one in this world who I will be good to. Brother Tong, you and I have had quite a friendship, but you shouldn't have offended my Brother Lian."

Tong Baixiong's entire face flushed red. "And I had thought that you had completely lost your mind. You still know exactly what you're talking about. You still remember that we were the best of friends, friends who braved life and death together."

"Of course," Dongfang Bubai said. "If you offended me, I could care less. But you offended my Brother Lian, and that is unforgivable."

"Well, I've already offended him, so what are you going to do? That bastard wants to take my life but I don't think he has the ability."

Dongfang Bubai extended his hand and gently combed his fingers through Yang Lianting's hair and asked gently, "Brother Lian, do you want to kill him?"

"Hurry up already! Stop dawdling around, you're starting to get on my nerves."

Dongfang Bubai softly said, "Yes!" He turned to face Tong Baixiong and said, "Brother Tong, today we are friends no longer. Please do not blame me for it."

Before Tong Baixiong had entered this place, he had grabbed a blade from one

of the dead servants outside. As soon as he stepped in, his blade was at ready. He knew that Dongfang Bubai's martial prowess was exceptional. Although Dongfang Bubai appeared quite mad and out of his mind, Tong Baixiong still dared not let his guard down. He brandished his blade and took a defensive position.

Dongfang Bubai smiled coldly and said, "Oh, must this be so difficult? Brother Tong, during that time on Mount Taiheng, the Seven Tigers of Ludong had me surrounded. I hadn't yet finished my training then and was caught in an ambush by them. My right arm was severely injured, and I was certain that I was finished. If it weren't for you who came to my rescue, how could I have lived up to this day?"

Tong Baixiong asked, "You really still remember those times from the distant past?"

"How could I forget? And during the time when I took control of the Sun Moon Sect, Elder Luo of Sparrow Hall wouldn't submit to my rule, constantly nagging and complaining. It was you who dispatched Elder Luo with a single blow. It was from that day forth that not another person dared to speak up and question my authority. You definitely deserve much credit for that."

Tong Baixiong replied resentfully, "I was quite foolish back then!"

Dongfang Bubai shook his head and said, "You weren't foolish. You were just being a loyal friend. I met you when I was only 11 years old. At that time, my family was poor and impoverished. Luckily you came and gave us aid for many years. When my parents passed away and we had no way to provide a proper burial for them, it was you who stepped in and took care of it for us."

Tong Baixiong waved away with his left hand and said: "Why bring up the past for?"

"I just had to," Dongfang Bubai said. "Brother Tong, it's not that I don't value our friendship and have forgotten all that you have done for me. It's just that you have offended my Brother Lian. He wants me to take your life, I just can't do otherwise."

Tong Baixiong shouted, "Enough! Enough!"

Suddenly, a pink blur streaked across their eyes, it appeared to be Dongfang Bubai. They heard a clang as the blade in Tong Baixiong's hand fell to the floor as he swayed back and forth in a daze on his feet. Then they saw Tong Baixiong's mouth open widely as his body fell forward straight onto the floor where it remained motionless. Although everything happened in only an instant, Ren Woxing and the others saw it clearly. The left and right Taiyang points above Tong Baixiong's eyebrows and the four Renzhong points below his nose all had a small red dot on them, as tiny drops of blood leaked out. It appeared that those points had been punctured by the sewing needle in Dongfang Bubai's hands. Ren Woxing and the others were shocked and took several steps backwards instinctively. Linghu Chong pulled Yingying behind him and shielded her with his own body. The room was filled with an eerie silence, no one even dared to take a single breath.

Ren Woxing slowly unsheathed his sword and said, "Dongfang Bubai, congratulations on completing your training of the 'Sunflower Manual'!"

"Chief Ren, it was you who gave me this 'Sunflower Manual'. I've never forgotten your kindness," Dongfang Bubai said.

"Really? Is that why you imprisoned me under the West Lake, never letting me see the light of day?"

"But I didn't kill you, did I?" Dongfang Bubai said. "If I had only instructed the Four Playfellows of Jiangnan not to give you water for about half a month, do you think you could've survived until now?"

Ren Woxing sarcastically said, "Well in that case, you treated me very well then?"

"Why of course! I arranged for you to enjoy paradise in the West Lake of Hangzhou. West Lake is world-renowned for having some of the best scenery under heaven. And Plum Manor on Mount Gu is considered one of the best spots in all of West Lake."

"So in fact you were letting me retire in the lap of luxury in that dungeon

under the West Lake. I should be thanking you instead then."

Dongfang Bubai sighed and said, "Chief Ren, I'll never forget all that you've done for me. I was just a minor assistant under the Elder of the Wind and Thunder Hall. You were the one who went against convention and promoted me every year. You even presented me with our sect's most prized possession, the 'Sunflower Manual', and decreed that I would succeed you in the future as Chief of the Sun Moon Sect. I will always be grateful for the charity you have shown me."

Linghu Chong looked down at Tong Baixiong's corpse and thought, "Before you were constantly praising all the good things that Elder Tong had done for you, then you suddenly struck out and killed him. And now you're bringing up all the things that Chief Ren has done for you. But I doubt he'll fall for that same trick."

But Dongfang Bubai's movements were just fast beyond belief, like a flash of lightning, a clap of thunder, there was no way to tell when he was going to strike, such speed was definitely frightening.

Linghu Chong lifted his sword and pointed it straight towards Dongfang Bubai's chest. As soon as any of his four limbs moved, he could easily stab forward. Only by taking the initiative could he hope to defeat this opponent. If he let Dongfang Bubai strike first, he would definitely end up dead. Ren Woxing, Xiang Wentian, Shangguan Yun, and Yingying were all focused intently on Dongfang Bubai, not even daring to blink an eye, because they knew that his attack could come at any time.

Dongfang Bubai continued, "At that time, I wanted only to become the Chief of the Sun Moon Sect, to reign for a thousand autumns, and ten thousand epochs, to unite the entire world. So I plotted arduously and fervently to usurp your position, but first I had to cut off your wings. Brother Xiang, it appeared that this plan of mine couldn't escape your attentive eyes. In the Sun Moon Sect, besides Chief Ren and I, I'd have to say that you are also quite a talent."

Xiang Wentian's hands were clenched tightly as he focused hard, he didn't dare

to break his concentration with a reply. Dongfang Bubai let out a sigh and continued, "When I first ascended to the position of Chief of the Sun Moon Sect, it was definitely glorious. I was showered with chants and praises of 'Talented in the academics, gifted in the martial arts. For the prosperity of our divine sect.' What undignified rubbish they were all spewing. It was only after I started to practice the 'Sunflower Manual' did I realize what was truly important in this life. After that I started to diligently train my internal energy. Several years later, I finally understood the beauty of life, the myriad of all things."

As all of them listened to his high shrill voice speaking, their hands began to sweat. His words were definitely logical and coherent, extremely clear and to the point. But his strange androgynous, neither male nor female appearance made them all shiver and cringe the more they looked at him. Dongfang Bubai's eyes slowly shifted towards Yingying. Dongfang Bubai asked, "Young lady Ren, how have I been to you these past few years?"

"You've been very good to me," Yingying answered.

Dongfang Bubai let out a sigh and said softly, "I never say it but I've always envied you greatly. Being born a woman is definitely a hundred times better than being born as a rotten man. In addition, you're attractive and beautiful beyond compare, young and lively. If only I had the chance to switch places with you, forget about the Leadership of the Sun Moon Sect, I wouldn't even want the Emperor's throne."

Linghu Chong laughed and said, "If you were to switch places with Miss Ren, then that means that I'd have to marry an old twisted monster, I don't think that would be very easy to do!"

When Ren Woxing and the others heard those words escaped his mouth, they were quite shocked. Dongfang Bubai's eyes glared at Linghu Chong, his eyebrows flared up as his face turned green. "Who are you? How dare you talk to me like that. You've certainly got some guts." His tone of voice has sharp, he was definitely annoyed beyond repair.

Although Linghu Chong was aware of the precarious situation that he was in,

he couldn't help but laughed and uttered, "Well, does it really matter whether I'm a handsome young lad, or a beautiful young maiden? What I resent the most are those shameless old men who dress up like women."

Dongfang Bubai screeched back angrily, "I'm asking you, just who exactly are you?"

"My name is Linghu Chong!"

Dongfang Bubai's anger gradually subsided and a smile broke on his face as he said, "Ah! So you are Linghu Chong. I've wanted to meet you for some time, I've heard that Miss Ren is totally enamoured by you, to the point where she would even be willing to cut off her own head for you. I had the impression that you must be a handsome, charming, and talented young gentleman. But the more I look at you, you seem quite ordinary and plain. Compared with my Brother Lian, I'd have to say that you're off by a lot."

Linghu Chong laughed and replied, "There really is nothing much good about me, only that I am true to my own feelings. Although that Yang buddy of yours is quite handsome, it's a pity and quite disturbing that he likes withered old weeds, coming here to ..."

Dongfang Bubai stammered, "You ... you idiot ... what are you babbling about?" His entire face blushed red. Suddenly, a pink blur of a figure flashed across the room, a needle flew directly towards Linghu Chong. Linghu Chong had intended on angering him by saying those words, but as he saw Dongfang Bubai's sleeves swayed, he raised his sword and stabbed towards Dongfang Bubai's throat. That one sword stab was incredibly fast, if Dongfang Bubai didn't withdraw, that blade would have pierced through his throat. But at that same moment, Linghu Chong suddenly felt a slight pain on his left cheek, he swung towards his left in defence.

Dongfang Bubai's speed was simply unimaginable. In that flash of an instant, he managed to prick Linghu Chong's face, and then contracted his arm to block Linghu Chong's sword strike with his needle right afterwards. Luckily that strike from Linghu Chong was incredibly swift as well, it forced his opponent to draw

up a defence, coupled with the fact that Dongfang Bubai was quite riled up and angry, the needle just slightly missed its mark -- the Renzhong acupoint on Linghu Chong's face. The needle in Dongfang Bubai's hand was no longer than an inch, light enough to be blown away by the wind, light enough to float on water, yet he was able to parry Linghu Chong's sword head-on with it. Dongfang Bubai's martial arts level was definitely beyond comprehension. Linghu Chong was startled immensely, he knew that today he had run into a foe of unimaginable power. He knew that if he gave his opponent the leisure of the initiative, his life would be in grave danger. So instead, he unleashed four quick stabs at Dongfang Bubai, all aimed at vital spots.

Dongfang Bubai cried out in surprise and remarked, "Excellent swordsmanship!" He parried to the left, to the right, above and below, and knocked away all four of Linghu Chong's attacks. Linghu Chong stared intently at Dongfang Bubai's movements. That tiny sewing needle blocked four of his strikes yet showed not a single sign of wear or flaw. He didn't dare let Dongfang Bubai counterattack so with a shout, he hacked straight at Dongfang Bubai's head. Dongfang Bubai held the needle in his right hand between his thumb and index fingers, and simply lifted it upwards, stopping Linghu Chong's sword dead in its path, impeding it from striking downwards entirely.

Linghu Chong's arm felt numb, but he saw a pink blur flashed by and a figure dashed towards him from his left. It was already too late to block and too late to avoid it, in the spur of the moment, his sword rose and flashed towards Dongfang Bubai's left eye as well, it was a move that would result in injuries for both sides. Stabbing towards an opponent's eyes was a very underhanded move, a move that experts never used. But the 'Dugu Nine Swords' that Linghu Chong had mastered was formless to begin with, he was also quite a carefree person, and never really thought of himself as a master, also in the midst of such danger he had no time to care about rules and etiquette. But he suddenly felt another small sharp pain near his left brow, as Dongfang Bubai leapt away and avoided his sword stab. Linghu Chong realized that he had been pricked again by that needle in Dongfang Bubai's hands. But because Dongfang Bubai had to avoid Linghu Chong's sword, his accuracy was a little off again and missed his target,

else Linghu Chong's one eye would have been instantly blinded. In a fright, Linghu Chong's sword lashed out like a violent storm, wildly stabbing and slashing in every which way, making it extremely difficult for the opponent to have time to counter with a single move. Dongfang Bubai parried to the left and blocked to the right, yet still had time to leisurely praise, "Excellent swordsmanship, excellent swordsmanship!"

Ren Woxing and Xiang Wentian both saw that the situation was starting to get out of control, one brandished his sword, the other his whip, and both attacked Dongfang Bubai at the same time. The combined force of these three masters of the martial-realm was certainly devastatingly powerful. But Dongfang Bubai, with a handful of needles in each hand, unleashed a flurry of pricks and pokes at the three of them. His movements were as quick as lightning and he showed no signs whatsoever of weakness. Shangguan Yun took up his blade as well and joined in the flurry of attacks, making the battle a four-against-one. After a brief moment in the confusion of battle, Shangguan Yun cried out as his blade hit the floor with a clang, with a flip he landed on the ground, writhing in pain over his left eye which had just been blinded by Dongfang Bubai. Linghu Chong noticed that Ren Woxing and Xiang Wentian were attacking Dongfang Bubai all out, and that Dongfang Bubai showed no intentions of attacking him, so his sword sprung into action, unleashing stab after stab at Dongfang Bubai. But Dongfang Bubai's body was like a ghost, whirling in and out of sight, drifting about like formless smoke. The tip of Linghu Chong's sword was always several inches off its mark.

Suddenly, Xiang Wentian cried out with an 'AH', followed by Linghu Chong who gasped with an 'HEY', as the two of them had been struck by needles. Although the power of Ren Woxing's 'Art of Essence Absorbing' was powerful and deep, Dongfang Bubai's movements were fast to the extreme, he was nearly impossible to catch. Secondly, his weapon was an embroidery needle, he had no way of absorbing his internal energy through it. After several more exchanges, Ren Woxing cried out with an 'AH' as well, his chest and throat both having been pricked. Fortunately, Linghu Chong was unleashing an extremely fast attack at that time, forcing Dongfang Bubai to fend for his own safety, one of the

needles missed its mark, while the other one did not penetrate very deep at all, both attacks were unable to injure the opponent.

The four of them had Dongfang Bubai surrounded and were attacking him all at once, and yet they hadn't even touched him yet, while all of them had already been pierced by his needles. Yingying, who was watching on the side, became increasingly worried, she thought, "I wonder if those needles are coated in poison, if they are then we'd be in deep trouble!"

Dongfang Bubai's movements became faster and faster, his body spun around in a pink blur all over the room. Ren Woxing, Xiang Wentian, and Linghu Chong were all panting and shouting in frustration and anger. All three of their weapons were infused with their internal energy, winds of force rocked through the room. Yet not even a peep escaped from Dongfang Bubai.

Yingying thought to herself, "If I throw myself into the battle, I'd only hinder their efforts and get in the way, what good would that bring? It appears that Dongfang Bubai still has the upper hand even though it's a three-on-one." From the corner of her eye, she caught a glimpse of Yang Lianting sitting on top of the bed, focused intently on the battle, his face full of concern. An idea crossed Yingying's mind, as she crept towards the bed. Suddenly the dagger in her left hand rose, and stabbed into Yang Lianting's right shoulder. Yang Lianting was caught by surprise and could only cry out in pain. Yingying then drew her sword and stabbed it into his thigh.

Yang Lianting realized what she was trying to do, she wanted him to cry out in pain to disrupt Dongfang Bubai's concentration. So he tried his hardest to endure the pain and held it in, not another sound escaped his mouth. Yingying became enraged and shouted, "Are you going to cry out or not? I'll cut off your fingers one by one!" Her sword rose and sliced off one of the fingers on his right hand. Yang Lianting was indeed resilient, although the pain was unbearable, he managed to keep his mouth shut. But the first cry that Yang Lianting gave out before had already reached Dongfang Bubai's ears. From the corner of his eyes, he saw Yingying beside the bed, slowly torturing Yang Lianting with her sword. With the shout "Little witch!", a pink cloud of a figure

darted towards the bed at Yingying. She withdrew at the very last second to avoid the incoming attack, but it wasn't clear if Dongfang Bubai's needles had struck their mark. Linghu Chong and Ren Woxing saw the opportunity as both slashed their swords across Dongfang Bubai's back and Xiang Wentian snapped his whip violently towards Yang Lianting's head. Dongfang Bubai disregarded his own safety, and stabbed his needle backwards into Xiang Wentian's chest.

Xiang Wentian felt his entire body go numb, as his whip fell to the floor. Right at that time, Linghu Chong and Ren Woxing both plunged their swords through the back of Dongfang Bubai. Dongfang Bubai's entire body shook, and then collapsed on top of Yang Lianting . Ren Woxing was overjoyed as he pulled his sword out from Dongfang Bubai's back and pointed the tip at the back of his neck and said, "Dongfang Bubai, finally ... finally you've fallen by my hand!" In the rush of heated combat, he hadn't yet caught his breath. Yingying was too shaken up by the fight, her two legs became weak, as she wavered back and forth and then fainted to the floor. Linghu Chong rushed to her side and caught her just as she fell, he saw a tiny gash of blood on her left cheek.

Yingying said, "You've sustained quite a number of injuries too." She extended her sleeve and wiped across Linghu Chong's face, her sleeve became stained with dots and streaks of red blood.

Linghu Chong turned to Xiang Wentian and asked, "Are your injuries serious?"

Xiang Wentian forced a laugh and said, "I won't die that easily!"

Blood gushed forth from the two fatal wounds on Dongfang Bubai's back. He cried painfully, "Brother Lian, Brother Lian, how cruel of these villains to torture you like this!"

Yang Lianting replied angrily, "You've always claimed that your martial arts was invincible, how come you can't even take care of these bastards?"

Dongfang Bubai replied, "I ... I already ..."

"You what?"

"I've already tried my best, their ... their martial arts are quite strong as well." His body suddenly trembled as he rolled to the floor. Ren Woxing was afraid that he would get up again so he stabbed his sword into Dongfang Bubai's left thigh.

Dongfang Bubai laughed feebly and said, "Chief Ren, you've finally won, I've lost."

Ren Woxing let out a hearty laugh and said, "You little sneak, do you think you can change what has transpired?"

Dongfang Bubai shook his head and said, "I'm not trying to change anything. Since I've been defeated here today, I know that my life is over." His voice had been extremely high and sharp, but now it had sunk to a lower tone as he continued, "But if we had fought one-on-one, there is no way that you would have defeated me."

Ren Woxing hesitated for a second, and then replied, "You're right, your martial arts is definitely at a higher level than mine, that I truly admire."

Dongfang Bubai went on, "Linghu Chong, your swordsmanship is incredible, but if we fought one-on-one, you wouldn't be my match either."

Linghu Chong acknowledged, "That is true, in fact the four of us combined wouldn't be able to overcome you. It was only because of your attachment to that person surnamed Yang, that we were able to break your concentration and injure you. Your martial arts are at an unimaginable level, there is no one worthy of the title, 'Number One Fighter under the Heavens' other than you. In that sense, I truly have the utmost respect for you."

Dongfang Bubai slightly snickered and said, "That the two of you are able to admit that, at least I know that you two are true men, with sincerity and integrity. Aye, what a pity, what a pity, ever since I mastered the 'Sunflower Manual', I followed exactly what was written on that script. First, I had to castrate myself to train my qi, then I had to refine pellets and intake herbs. Gradually, I lost all my facial hair, and my voice started to change, my temper started to change as well. After that, I was no longer attracted to women, I killed all seven concubines that

I had with me, and ... and I put all my affection and care towards Yang Lianting. If only I were born a woman, then that would've been perfect."

"Chief Ren, I ... I'm going to die soon, I beg only one thing of you, ... please ... if you could take into consideration how well I've treated your daughter all these years ..."

Ren Woxing asked, "What is it?"

Dongfang Bubai requested, "Please spare Yang Lianting 's life, please just let him off the Dark Wood Cliff."

Ren Woxing answered, "I plan to cut him into a thousand pieces, and torture him to death over the course of a hundred days, cutting off a finger today, slicing off a toe tomorrow."

Dongfang Bubai cried out, "You ... how can you be so cruel!" Dongfang Bubai lunged up fiercely and suddenly at Ren Woxing. Because of his severe injuries, his speed was nowhere near as fast as it was before, but his attack was still astonishingly quick. Ren Woxing stabbed outwards with his sword, it penetrated the front of his chest and exited through his back. Just at that time, Dongfang Bubai flicked his finger, the needle in his hand shot out and pierced Ren Woxing's right eye. Ren Woxing withdrew his sword and leapt back, he took a deep breath and leaned his back against a wall. The impact caused nearly half the wall to collapse under his immense force. Yingying looked at her father's right eye and saw a needle embedded into one of his pupils. Fortunately, Dongfang Bubai had not much strength left in his hands, or else that needle could've punctured straight into Ren Woxing's brain. Although his life was not in danger, his right eye was permanently blinded.

Yingying tried to get the needle out but it was too short and only a fraction of it was actually still sticking out of his eye, so there was no place for her fingers to hold on to. She turned around to pick up the embroidery frame that Dongfang Bubai threw away and pulled out a piece of thread from it. She then threaded it through the needle's hole and pulled the needle out. Ren Woxing screamed in pain. The needle was hanging by the thread as blood dripped from

it. Ren Woxing was furious and gave Dongfang Bubai's corpse a fierce kick. The corpse flew up and hit Yang Lianting's head. Ren Woxing used all of his power in that one kick and as they clashed heads, both Dongfang Bubai and Yang Lianting's heads burst open spilling their brain matters everywhere. Ren Woxing had been holding this big animosity for a long time, his leadership of the Sun Moon Sect was usurped and he had now been blinded in one eye, so he was feeling happy and angry at the same time. He laughed loudly towards the sky shaking all the tiles in the house. But this laughter was full of anger.

Shangguan Yun said, "Congratulations Chief for executing this big traitor. From now on, our sect would be sheltered under Chief's protection and its power would spread throughout the four oceans. Long live the Chief, unifies the Jianghu."

Ren Woxing laughingly scolded him, "Nonsense! What long live?" Suddenly he felt that if he could really live long and unify the Jianghu, then that would be the happiest thing in the world. He could not help laughing loudly at this. He laughed because he really felt happy and was feeling proud of himself. Xiang Wentian used Dongfang Bubai's needle to pierce the acupoint on his left chest. In a moment, his whole body felt better and his four limbs were able to move freely. He also said, "Congratulations Chief, congratulations Chief!"

Ren Woxing laughingly said, "You've done a really big service by punishing this traitor." He then turned his head around and said to Linghu Chong, "Chong'er's contribution is also not small."

Linghu Chong saw the trace of blood on Yingying's white jade cheek and fear still lingered in his heart as he remembered how fierce the fight was. He said, "If it weren't for Yingying attacking Yang Lianting, it wouldn't have been easy to kill Dongfang Bubai." He stopped for a moment, and continued, "Luckily his needle wasn't coated with poison."

Yingying trembled when she heard this and softly said, "Please don't say anymore. That person wasn't a man, he was a monster. Ai, when I was small, he used to carry me up the mountain to pick up vegetables and fruits. How greatly he has changed today!"

Ren Woxing put his hand inside Dongfang Bubai's pocket and felt an old thin page in there. He took it out and saw many tiny letters written on it. He waved that paper around and said, "This paper is the 'Sunflower Manual'. It's written clearly in the beginning, 'To learn this Divine Art, castrate yourself first.' I'd never be so foolish to do such a thing, Haha, haha, …" He then moaned deeply and said, "But this Manual actually conveys a lot of profound martial arts in it, and anyone who manages to see it would definitely be tempted into learning it. Fortunately I've learned the Art of Essence Absorbing at that time. Otherwise, I'd probably have learnt the martial arts written in this Manual."[1]

He again gave Dongfang Bubai's corpse another kick. He laughed and said, "You were definitely crafty and sly, but you still couldn't have guessed my real intention in giving you the 'Sunflower Manual'. You have such a wild ambition and bossy attitude, do you think I wouldn't notice it? Haha, haha!"

Linghu Chong's heart turned cold and he thought, "So Chief Ren actually had a bad intention in giving him the 'Sunflower Manual'. The two of them were being crafty and were plotting against each other." He saw blood was still flowing out of Ren Woxing's right eye and his mouth was opened in a mad smile, he looked completely mean and ferocious. Linghu Chong felt terrified seeing him.

Ren Woxing extended his hand and found out that Dongfang Bubai had indeed cut off his testicles. He laughed madly and said, "This 'Sunflower Manual' would be good for eunuchs to practise." He then rolled that old paper in both of his hands and ripped it into a thousand pieces. He then hurled both of his hands open and the pieces of paper were blown all over the place by the wind. Yingying let out a sigh and said, "It's best to destroy such a harmful thing!"

Linghu Chong laughingly said, "You're afraid that I'm going to learn it?"

Yingying's whole face blushed a deep red and she pursed her lips. She then said, "You're speaking improperly." Yingying then took out a medicine and applied it to her father's and Shangguan Yun's eye injuries.

Everyone's face was also full of uncountable needle holes. Yingying looked into the mirror and saw a trace of blood on her left cheek. Even though it was really thin, it would still leave a scar when it heals and she didn't feel happy about it.

Linghu Chong said, "You already have all the luck in this world so the ghosts and gods would envy you. So this little scar on your face would definitely bring untold amount of good fortune."

"What lucky thing do I have?"

"You're beautiful and smart, your martial art is high, your father is the divine sect's Chief, and you yourself is admired by many heroes in this world. Furthermore, you're a woman that even Dongfang Bubai was jealous of." Yingying gave him a smile and forgot all about the injury to her face.

Ren Woxing and the four of them went out of Dongfang Bubai's little house, went through the garden, tunnel, and went back to the hall. Ren Woxing passed down a command ordering all the Halls' elders and the Fragrant Masters to come see him. He sat at the Chief's seat and laughingly said, "That servant Dongfang Bubai had many wicked schemes. He sat highly on the cliff and put a big distance between his subordinates and himself so all of them were awed by him. What's this hall called?"

Shangguan Yun replied, "Reporting to Chief. This hall is called 'Hall of Refined Kindness'. This name came from the praise to Chief which says 'Refined scholar, kind-hearted warrior'."

Ren Woxing laughed. "Refined scholar, kind-hearted warrior! Skilled with both pen and sword; that's not easy to do!" He then beckoned to Linghu Chong. "Chong'er, come here." Linghu Chong went in front of him.

"Chong'er, that day in Hangzhou, I invited you to join our sect. At that time, I had just escaped from my imprisonment and was all by myself, so you probably didn't believe all my promises to you. This time, I've already regained the leadership of the sect. The first matter I'd like to bring up is that old matter again…" Ren Woxing said till here when his right hand patted the chair next to

him. “Sooner or later, this position will be yours. Haha, haha!”

Linghu Chong said, “Chief, Yingying’s kindness towards me is high like the mountain. If you wanted me to do anything, I would never decline it. But I’ve already given my promise to other people to do another matter. So this matter of joining the divine sect, please forgive junior for not being able to promise you this.”

Both of Ren Woxing’s eyebrows were gradually raised, and he gloomily said, “You know what’s going to happen for not listening to my order!”

Yingying went up and pulled Linghu Chong’s arm. “Daddy, today is your big day. Why must you be worried about this kind of small matter? We can slowly talk about him joining the sect later.”

Ren Woxing turned his head slightly to the right and glanced sideways with his left eye towards the two of them. “Hng, Yingying, you only want your husband and don’t want your father anymore, don’t you?”

Xiang Wentian laughed at the side. “Chief, Brother Linghu is only a young hero so he’s still very stubborn. Let subordinate speak about it slowly with him…” As he said till here, there were tens of people outside the hall calling out, “Martial Hall elders, Hall Masters and Vice Hall Masters, five branches of Fragrant Masters and Vice Fragrant Masters have come to see the refined scholar, kind-hearted warrior, the just and wise Chief. Chief flourishes the sacred sect and benefits the common people. Long live the Chief, unifies the Jianghu.”

Ren Woxing shouted, “Enter!”

More than ten men entered the hall and knelt in front of Ren Woxing. When he was the chief of the Divine Sun Moon Sect, he only cupped his fists in saluting the brothers in the sect. So when he saw them kneeling down, he immediately stood up and waved his arm. “There’s no need…” Suddenly he thought, “It’s not sufficient to receive these people without power. In the past, my leadership of the sect was usurped by traitors because I treated them too leniently. Since Dongfang Bubai already introduced this kneeling as propriety

then I don't need to change it." He immediately cupped his fist back at them and didn't say anything as he sat back down.

Not long after that, another group of people entered the hall. When they knelt before him, Ren Woxing did not stand up anymore and just nodded his head. At this time, Linghu Chong had already retreated to the entrance of the hall and was far away from the Chief's seat. Under the dim light of the hall, Ren Woxing's face looked blur from where he was. He thought, "There's no difference whether Ren Woxing or Dongfang Bubai is sitting in that seat." He then heard the praises of all the hall leaders and Fragrant Masters getting louder and louder as they went, and they all sounded like they were afraid of Ren Woxing. For the past ten years, they had been working their best for Dongfang Bubai so it was unavoidable that they were feeling guilty towards Chief Ren. They didn't know how Chief Ren would punish them if he brought up the past events. Furthermore, some of them had never known of Ren Woxing before. Some of these people only knew how to work hard for Dongfang Bubai and Yang Lianting to avoid being punished. So when there was this sudden change of leadership in the sect, all they could do was to sing their praises to the new Chief.

Linghu Chong stood at the entrance of the hall with the sun shining down on his back. Outside the hall was clear and bright while there were close to a hundred people prostrating themselves on the floor inside the hall singing their disgusting praises. He couldn't say his loathing out loud so he thought, "Yingying treats me very well, so if she really wants me to join the Divine Sun Moon Sect, I can't reject her idea. But it has to wait till I go to Songshan and stop Zuo Lengchan from becoming the Headmaster of the Five Mountains School since this was my agreement with Great Master Fangzheng and Priest Chongxu. Also, I have to find a female disciple from Heng-Shan and pass down to her the leadership of the school. After all these are done, then I'll be free to join the divine sect. But if you want me to be like these people, isn't that just too disgusting? Later when Yingying becomes my wife, then Chief Ren would be my father in law, and it would only be proper if I kowtow to him. But all these 'flourishes the sacred sect and benefits the common people', 'refined scholar,

kind-hearted warrior, the just and wise', they're just too shameful for a real man to utter. They really tarnish the pureness of a real man! I originally thought that this nonsense was done by Dongfang Bubai and Yang Lianting to punish someone. But looking at the situation now, Chief Ren is actually flattered to hear these words and he's not disgusted at all by these." He again thought, "That day in the Cliff of Contemplation on Huashan, I saw the martial arts of the ten elders from Devil Sect and they actually had many heroes among their seniors. If not so, how could Sun Moon Sect fight against the orthodox parties for the last hundred years and still be their equal? From the warriors they have like Brother Xiang, Shangguan Yun, Jia Bu, Tong Baixiong, the Four Playfellows of Jiangnan, which one isn't an outstanding gentleman? These groups of heroes are all forced to kneel to other people every day and read aloud those dictions while they're actually cursing in their hearts. Saying disgusting things and receiving such rudeness. Actually, accepting to say those shameless things is even more disgusting. All these wronged heroes, how could they still be called heroes?"

He then heard Ren Woxing, being pleased with himself, said loudly, "You were all under Dongfang Bubai before and has done many things for him. I've secretly found out what every single one of you has done. But I'm a very open-minded person, so I won't blame anyone. From today, everyone must be loyal to me then I would treat you well and share all the glory and honour." In a blink of an eye, the hall was drowned in praises. Everyone was saying chief was just and wise, his heart was open like the ocean, and that a big man doesn't do what a small man does. They also said they would obey chief's order completely, be loyal to him, go through fire and water, would not balk at a thousand deaths, and be resolved to do chief's biddings.

Ren Woxing waited for them to say their praises until they gradually became quiet. Ren Woxing continued, "But if anyone dared to revolt and not listen to my order then I will punish him severely. Whoever commits this sin, then his entire family would be executed." All of them answered together, "Subordinate would never dare."

Linghu Chong quivered when he heard these words and was really afraid. He

inwardly thought, “Chief Ren is just the same as Dongfang Bubai. He’s using fear to control the sect. Everyone is very deferential towards him even though they’re actually angry and full of rejection in their hearts. How can they be said to be ‘loyal’ to him?”

Some people then started to reveal Dongfang Bubai’s faults to Ren Woxing. They told him that Dongfang Bubai was offended by honesty, how he only listened to Yang Lianting, how he killed many innocent people, how he was selfish in giving gifts and punishments, how he loved to hear praises, and how he ruined the sect. There were also some people who said that he ruined the sect’s customs by giving out the Dark Command Wood to anyone and that he forced people to take the divine three corpse brain pill. Another people said that he drank and ate extravagantly, that every time he ate, he slaughtered three cows, five pigs, and ten sheep.

Linghu Chong thought, "How can one person eat that much? How can he eat three cows, five pigs, and ten sheep? He must've eaten together with his friends and subordinates. How can slaughtering cows and sheep be considered a big sin when Dongfang Bubai was chief?"

But he then heard everyone kept on bringing up Dongfang Bubai's other faults more and more, and each fault was getting even more trivial. Some people scolded him for being very moody; some people scolded him for loving to wear flowery gown and not coming out to meet them. There were also people who said that he was very thin skinned and silly; Another person said that his martial art was lowly, always frightened during battles, and he in fact had no real abilities at all.

Linghu Chong pondered, "You're all scolding Dongfang Bubai for all sorts of things. Even though I don't know whether what you're saying is true or not, I know that when the five of us fought him, we barely escaped alive with our lives and almost lost our lives under his needle. If Dongfang Bubai's martial art were low, then there's no one in this world who has a high martial art. You're really just spouting nonsense." He again heard another person said that Dongfang Bubai was very lewd and just forcefully grabbed any girls he wanted.

He had also offended many married women in the sect and had also had many babies from these affairs.

Linghu Chong thought, "Dongfang Bubai had already learned this really strange 'Sunflower Manual' and castrated himself a long time ago. What nonsense of lewd affairs and making lots of babies are you talking about, haha, haha!" He thought till here when he actually laughed really loudly unable to restrain himself any further. This loud laughter was heard from afar. Everyone in the long hall turned their heads around to have a look and glared angrily at him. Yingying knew that he was causing trouble so she quickly rushed over and pulled on his arm. "Brother Chong, there's nothing to hear here, they're only talking about Dongfang Bubai's stuff. Let's go down the cliff and have a look around." Linghu Chong poked his tongue out and laughingly said, "We don't want to make your daddy angry." The two of them walked out of the hall shoulder to shoulder, passed through that white jade decorated archway, and went down using the bamboo baskets.

The two of them leaned close to each other inside the bamboo basket as they went down. They saw the light mist around them and felt as if they were floating. It was as if they had gone to another world compared to the situation inside the hall. Linghu Chong looked up to the top of the Dark Wood Cliff and saw the golden reflection of sunlight from the writing on the white jade archway. He felt pleased. "I've finally left that place. The things happening last night were like a nightmare. From now on, I'd never set foot on Dark Wood Cliff ever again."

"Brother Chong, what are you thinking?"

"Can you be together with me?"

Yingying's face blushed red and she said, "We... We..."

"What?"

Yingying lowered her head and said, "We're not married yet. How... how can I follow you?"

"Didn't you go around Jianghu with me before?"

"That was because I had to. Also, that's why a lot of rumours are flying around. Just then Daddy said I... said I want to be with you and don't want him anymore. If I go with you then Daddy would definitely be unhappy. Daddy was also imprisoned for more than ten years so his temper isn't good, so I want to accompany him. As long as your heart is faithful then in the future we can accompany each other." The last few words that she said were really soft that they couldn't be heard.

By coincidence, a white cloud floated by them wrapping around the bamboo basket and the two of them. Linghu Chong could only blurrily look at Yingying. Even though Yingying was leaning close besides him, he couldn't see her appearance clearly and it was as if she had been carried out by the cloud and he couldn't touch her. When the bamboo basket reached the bottom of the cliff, they stepped out of the basket. Yingying whispered, "You're going to go now?"

"Zuo Lengchan has invited the five mountains sword schools to come to a meeting on the fifteenth of the third month to elect the headmaster of the Five Mountains School. He's very ambitious and would bring disaster to all the heroes in this realm. I must go to this gathering on Songshan."

Yingying nodded her head and said, "Brother Chong, Zuo Lengchan's sword art isn't your match but you must guard against his plotting."

Linghu Chong replied, "Yes."

"I should go with you but I'm only a witch from the Devil Sect. So if I were to go with you to Songshan then I'd just hinder you there." She stopped for a moment, before she dispiritedly said, "When you become the headmaster of the Five Mountains School, your reputation would be well known in this world. Our two paths of orthodox and demonical are irreconcilable so... it's... it's... it's going to be even more difficult for us."

Linghu Chong held her hand in his and softly said, "You still don't believe me?"

Yingying mournfully laughed. "I believe you." After some time, she quietly said, "When someone practises his martial art, it would get higher and higher,

and his reputation would also get bigger and bigger. I felt that often, that person would also start to change. He himself might not know it but his treatment of matters would be totally different than before. Uncle Dongfang was like that, and I'm worried that Daddy might be like that."

Linghu Chong smiled. "Your father wouldn't go and learn the martial art in that 'Sunflower Manual'. That Manual had already been destroyed by him so even if he wanted to practise it now, he wouldn't be able to."

"I'm not talking about martial art, I'm talking about someone's temperament. Even if Uncle Dongfang didn't learn the 'Sunflower Manual', he would still kill and rob once he usurped the leadership of the Divine Sun Moon Sect. He would've naturally become conceited."

"Yingying, there's no harm in worrying about other people but there's no need to worry about me. I'm born with this carefree attitude and would never be like that. Even if I were to become conceited, I would always always always be like this in front of you."

Yingying let out a long sigh and said, "That's good then."

Suddenly Linghu Chong thought of something and said, "Everyone in the world already knows about the two of us. Those friends that you sent to the island in South Sea, can you let them come back now?"

Yingying smiled and replied, "I've already sent people to bring them back to the central plains."

Linghu Chong pulled her close to him and lightly hugged her. "It's goodbye for now. Once that matter in Songshan is settled then I'll come here to look for you. Then we'll never be apart again."

Yingying's eyes flashed happily and she lightly said, "If only all your matters go smoothly then we can meet earlier. I'll... I'll wait here and look out for you every night and day."

"Alright!" Linghu Chong then gave her a kiss on her cheek. Yingying's face turned red with bashfulness and pushed him away.

Linghu Chong laughed loudly and led his horse away as he went away from the Sun Moon Sect.

Chapter 32 School Merger

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The peak of Mount Songshan stood alone in the middle, thrusting towards the sky and looking down upon thousands of other peaks. With few clouds in the sky, sunshine shined through the pure and fresh air. Cheng-Gao and Yumen stood to the north; the Yellow River looked like a thin line; the city wall of Luo Yang could be vaguely seen to the west; range upon range of mountains were to the east and south.

Within a day, Linghu Chong reached Mount Heng-Shan. When the disciples guarding at the bottom of the mountain saw him returning, they quickly sent a

couple of disciples up the mountain to inform their martial sisters, who immediately came down the mountain to welcome him back. The disciples residing at Heng-Shan Other Courtyard followed shortly after down the mountain to meet him. Linghu Chong inquired about how everything fared at the Other Courtyard. Zu Qianqiu answered, "Reporting to Headmaster. All the male disciples live at the Other Courtyard and no one has dared to go up the peak. Everyone's been well-behaved."

Linghu Chong happily said, "That's very good."

Yihe laughingly said, "None of them came up the peak. But it’s not true that they've been well-behaved."

Linghu Chong was startled and he quickly asked, "What?"

"All day and all night long, I always hear their clamour at Tong Yuan valley all the way up from the convent."

Linghu Chong laughed loudly when he heard this. "It's impossible to ask these friends to be quiet."

Linghu Chong then briefly told them that Ren Woxing had managed to snatch back the chief position of the sect. The group of heroes were really happy to hear this and their cheering was heard throughout the valley. Everyone thought, "Chief Ren has snatched back his seat then Sacred Lady has naturally gained a lot of power in the sect. From now on, the situation will definitely be much better for everyone."

When Linghu Chong reached the Xianxing Peak, he first went to the Wuse Convent to kowtow to the three Shi Tai's tablets. Then as there weren't many days left to the meeting at Mount Songshan on the fifteenth of the third month, he consulted with Yihe, Yiqing and the rest of the senior disciples on that matter. They decided that Heng-Shan School should go to Henan first before going to Mount Songshan. Yihe and the other disciples all said that in order to go against Songshan School, they shouldn't take the group of heroes at Tong Yuan valley with them to Mount Songshan. Even though taking them admittedly would make Heng-Shan School look grand, the other schools of Taishan, Hengshan,

and Huashan would criticise them for doing so, and it would even give Zuo Lengchan excuses that might disadvantage the Heng-Shan School.

Yihe said, "Martial Brother Headmaster's sword art is above Zuo Lengchan, so taking up the headmaster position of the Five Mountains School is guaranteed. But if the heroes from Tong Yuan valley were with us at that time, then they'll surely give out excuses."

Linghu Chong smiled. "Our aim is to prevent Zuo Lengchan from annexing the other four schools. I'm not even remotely presentable being the headmaster of Heng-Shan School, so there's no need to talk about me becoming the headmaster of the Five Mountains School. And since everyone already said not to take the Tong Yuan valley's brothers to Mount Songshan then we won't take them."

He then went to Tong Yuan valley to talk to Ji Wushi, Zu Qianqiu, and Old Man. They also agreed that not taking the Tong Yuan valley heroes to Mount Songshan was a good plan. They wanted Linghu Chong to take the female disciples and go first while the three of them would explain to the group of heroes to make them understand.

That night, Linghu Chong drank with the group of heroes to their hearts' contents. The original plan was to make their way to Songshan on the next day. But when he woke up, it was already past midday and he had not put everything in order so they had to delay their journey by a day. Early the next morning, Linghu Chong led the female disciples to go to Mount Songshan.

They had been on the road for a few days when they arrived at a city, and rested inside a large ruined temple. Zheng E and six disciples went out to patrol outside to protect the group from any Songshan School's plot. But not long after, Zheng E and Qin Juan flew back and shouted, "Martial Brother Headmaster, quickly come and take a look!"

The two of them were grinning widely and it seemed that they had seen something funny. Yihe hastily asked, "What's the matter?"

Qin Juan giggled. "Martial Sister, you come and have a look yourself."

Linghu Chong quickly followed the two of them into an inn and went to an outside guesthouse on the west side of the inn. They immediately saw a few people stacked into a big pile on a brick bed. They were the Peach Valley Six Fairies. All six of them had their acupoints sealed and were unable to move. Linghu Chong was greatly astonished. He quickly went into the house and pulled up Peachtree Root Fairy who was at the top of the pile. He saw that there was a piece of peach seed squeezed into his mouth so he helped him take it out. Peachtree Root Fairy was angry and he scolded, "Your granny, your eighteen generations won't die a good death, your eighteen grandsons will all have no bums, no eyes,... "

Linghu Chong laughed and he interrupted, "Wei, Brother Peachtree Root Fairy, I didn't do that to you."

"I wasn't scolding you! Don't interfere! This dog, when I see him, I'll tear him into eight pieces, sixteen pieces, thirty four pieces..."

"Who're you scolding?" Linghu Chong asked.

"His granny, if I'm not scolding him then who else am I scolding?"

Linghu Chong then pulled up Peachtree Flower Fairy who was now on top of the pile and took out the peach seed. The peach seed was only taken out halfway when Peachtree Flower Fairy started to grumble and mumble. When the seed was taken out, he immediately said, "Big Brother, you said it wrong. Eight pieces multiplied once becomes sixteen pieces, sixteen pieces multiplied once becomes thirty two. How can you say thirty four pieces just then?"

"I like saying thirty four pieces, what's wrong with that? Did I say that I was multiplying it by two? My heart was multiplying it by two then added two to it," Peachtree Root Fairy retorted.

Peachtree Flower Fairy argued, "Why do you multiply it then add it by two? There's no reason for that."

The acupoints on their bodies had not been unsealed yet but as soon as their mouths were free, they immediately argued with each other.

Linghu Chong laughed. "Stop quarrelling. What happened here?"

Peachtree Flower Fairy scolded, "Those two stinky monks, No Commandment and Cannot Have No Commandment, all eighteen of their ancestors are stinky monks."

Linghu Chong laughingly said, "Why did you scold Monk No Commandment?"

Peachtree Root Fairy said, "If I don't scold him then who do I scold? You just went without saying goodbye and Zu Qianqiu had to tell us that you have gone. How could the six of us just stayed and not join the festivity in Songshan? Of course we're going to come. We were just about to get in front of you when we got here and met that stinky Monk Cannot Have No Commandment. He pretended to drink wine with us and he also said that he saw six dogs biting an insect to death to trick us into going outside. Who could've guessed that his Grand Martial Master No Commandment was hiding around the corner and managed to seal our acupoints. Then he stacked us up into a pile and said that if we were going up to Songshan then we would've spoiled Headmaster Linghu's plan. His granny, how could we have spoiled your plan?"

Linghu Chong understood what was going on and he laughingly said, "This time the Peach Valley Six Fairies have won, and Great Master No Commandment has lost. When you see Monk No Commandment and his disciple the next time, you may not mention this matter ever again, and you also can't fight them. Otherwise, when the world's heroes ask about this, they would find out that Great Master No Commandment lost to the Peach Valley Six Fairies and would lose face."

Peachtree Root Fairy and Peachtree Flower Fairy nodded their heads. "The next time we meet these two stinky monks, we'll all pretend that nothing happened so that he and his disciple won't lose face."

Linghu Chong laughed. "The most important thing to do right now is to unseal your brothers' acupoints, you must be suffering by now." He then unsealed Peachtree Flower Fairy's acupoints and closed the door as he went out so that he

wouldn't be able to hear the debate that would soon happen between the six brothers.

Zheng E giggled and asked, "Big Martial Brother, what were they doing?"

Qin Juan giggled. "They were making a pyramid."

Peachtree Flower Fairy immediately scolded, "Little nun, nonsense! Who said we were making a pyramid?"

Qin Juan laughed. "I'm not a little nun."

Peachtree Root Fairy said, "You're together with a little nun, so you're also little nun."

Qin Juan replied, "Headmaster Linghu is also together with us. Is he also a little nun?"

Zheng E giggled. "You're also together with us, then the six of you are little nuns then."

Peachtree Root Fairy and Peachtree Flower Fairy didn't know how to argue back so they started to blame each other for turning them into little nuns.

Linghu Chong, Yihe, and the rest of the disciples waited outside the house for a long time, but the Peach Valley Six Fairies still hadn’t come out yet. Linghu Chong pushed the door to go back inside and saw Peachtree Flower Fairy pacing back and forth with a smile on his face while his five brothers’ acupoints were still sealed. Linghu Chong laughed loudly and quickly unsealed the five brothers’ acupoints, and hastily went out of the house again. He then heard a huge clamouring noise from inside the house. Linghu Chong giggled happily as he walked out of there. After walking for tens of feet and around a few corners, he arrived at a small road besides a farm field. He saw a peach tree with its top full of flower buds waiting for spring time to arrive. He thought, “The flower of a peach tree is so beautiful and delicate, but the Peach Valley Six Fairies are so disorderly and chaotic. They’re really different when compared to the real peach flower.”

He walked leisurely for a while thinking that the six brothers must have

finished fighting by now, and he might as well drink some wine with them. Suddenly, he heard footsteps from behind him and there was a female voice calling out, "Big Brother Linghu!" Linghu Chong turned around and saw that it was Yilin who was coming over. She came over and softly said, "Can I ask you something?"

Linghu Chong smiled. "Of course you can. What's the matter?"

"Who do you like better? Is it Young Lady Ren or your little martial sister?"

Linghu Chong was startled and felt slightly embarrassed. "Why do you suddenly want to ask about this?"

"Martial Sister Yihe and Yiqing told me to ask you about this."

Linghu Chong felt that this was strange. But he just smiled and said, "Why did they want to ask me about this?"

Yilin lowered her head and said, "Big Brother Linghu, I've never talked to anyone about your little martial sister. That day, Martial Sister Yihe injured Miss Yue and both of them had a dislike for each other. When you asked Martial Sister Yizhen and Yiling to deliver the medicine for her injuries, Huashan School didn't want to accept it and actually chased them out. Everyone was afraid that you would get angry so they didn't talk to you about this. Later on, Martial Sister Yu Sao and Yiwen went up to Huashan to deliver the epistle for your Headmaster Inauguration ceremony but they were actually detained by the Huashan School."

Linghu Chong was startled. "How did you find out?"

Yilin shyly said, "That Tian… Cannot Have No Commandment told me."

"Tian Boguang?"

"That's right. After you went to Dark Wood Cliff, martial sisters asked him to go up Mount Huashan to find out what's going on."

Linghu Chong nodded. "Tian Boguang's qinggong is very good so he wouldn't be easily discovered when spying around. He saw the two martial sisters?"

“He did. But Huashan School guarded them very tightly so he couldn’t save them, and they’re also not suffering. Also, I wrote to him not to offend the Huashan School or to injure anyone, so that you won’t get angry.”

Linghu Chong smiled. “You gave him instructions on a paper? That’s just like what masters do!”

Yilin’s face turned red and she said, “I’m on Xianxing Peak, while he’s on Tong Yuan valley. So if there was any matter to tell him then writing to him is the best way. Afterwards, I asked the Buddhist grandma to deliver the letter.”

Linghu Chong smiled. “I was just joking. What did Tian Boguang say?”

“He said that he saw a festivity up there. Your former master was getting a son-in-law…” Suddenly, she saw Linghu Chong’s expression changed greatly. She panicked and quickly stopped talking. Linghu Chong felt that he was choking, finding it very difficult to draw his breath. He gasped a few times before saying, “Just say it, it… it doesn’t matter.” He heard his own voice was grating and it was like it wasn’t his own voice talking.

Yilin softly said, “Big Brother Linghu, don’t be sad. Martial Sister Yihe and Yiqing all said that even though Young Lady Ren is from the Devil Sect, her personality is nice and her martial art is high. She’s ten times better than Miss Yue in everything.”

Linghu Chong smiled bitterly. "What do I have to be sad about? Little martial sister has a nice marriage, so I should be happy for her. He... He... Tian Boguang saw my little martial sister..."

Yilin said, "Tian Boguang said the Jade Maiden Peak on Huashan was decorated with lanterns and coloured banners, and it was very lively up there. There was also a lot of people from every sect and every school up there to congratulate them. But Mr. Yue didn't inform our Heng-Shan School and actually treated us like an enemy." Linghu Chong nodded his head. Yilin went on, "Martial Sister Yu Sao and Yiwen went with good intention to Huashan to give them the epistle. It doesn’t matter to us that they're not sending gifts or coming to congratulate you for taking up the school's leadership. But what are

they doing detaining the messengers we sent to them?" Linghu Chong just stood there expressionless and didn't answer back.

Yilin continued, "Martial Sister Yihe and Yiqing said that Huashan School is acting without reason so we don't have to be polite to them. When we see them at Mount Songshan, we'll ask them about this and tell them to release our people." Linghu Chong again nodded his head. Yilin saw Linghu Chong looking as if he had lost his spirit. She let out a long sigh and softly said, "Big Brother Linghu, take care of yourself." She then slowly walked away.

Linghu Chong saw her gradually getting farther away. He shouted, "Martial Sister!"

Yilin halted and turned her head around.

Linghu Chong asked, "The person my martial sister married is... is..."

Yilin nodded. "Yes! It's that person surnamed Lin." She then quickly walked towards Linghu Chong and pulled on his right sleeve. "Big Brother Linghu, that Lin person isn't better than you. Miss Yue is a muddled person so she agreed to marry him. All the martial sisters are afraid that you'll get angry so they don't dare to tell you about this. But Peach Valley Six Fairies said that my father and Tian Boguang are close to here. When Tian Boguang sees you, he'll probably tell you about this. Even if Tian Boguang doesn't say it, after a few days, we'll arrive at Mount Songshan and you'll then see Miss Yue and her husband there. At that time, you'll see her wearing a set of new clothes and dressed up as a new bride, maybe... maybe... it'll hinder the big matter we're facing. Everyone all said if Miss Ren were beside you, then it'll be good. So all the martial sisters asked me to come and talk to you, and don't let that muddled Miss Yue cloud your judgement." Linghu Chong smiled bitterly and he thought, "They're all so worried about me and afraid that I might be heartbroken. That's why they really looked after me during the journey." Suddenly he felt the back of his hand wet. He lifted his head and saw Yilin was crying. Awkwardly, he asked, "Why... why are you crying?"

Yilin sorrowfully replied, "I see you so heartbroken... Big Brother Linghu, if

you want to cry, then... then cry it all out."

Linghu Chong laughed loudly. "Why would I cry? Linghu Chong is an incompetent loafer, and even my master and master-wife despise me and they even expelled me from their school. Little martial sister, how could... how could... Haha, haha!" After he laughed, he ran away on the road towards the mountain. With his running speed, he ran twenty li quickly and arrived at a wild place. When he felt that there was no one nearby, he couldn't suppress his emotion anymore, so he threw himself to the ground and cried loudly. After crying for some time, he felt his heart getting a bit better. He thought, "If I go back now, both of my eyes would be red. If Yihe and the others see this, they'll laugh at me. It's better if I just go back at night then." But he again thought, "If I don't return for a long time, then they would definitely get worried. When a gentleman wants to cry then he cries, when he wants to laugh then he laughs. The whole world knows that Linghu Chong loves Yue Lingshan. She already abandoned me like she was throwing out worn shoes. If I don't grieve over this, then my feeling was fake."

He immediately ran back to the ruined temple in that city. Yihe, Yiqing, and the other disciples were scattered around the temple searching for him. When they saw him coming back, they were all happy. They had already prepared food and wine on top of the table. Linghu Chong drank himself drunk and slept on the table.

A few days later, they arrived at the foot of Mount Songshan with two days to spare for the meeting. On the morning of the fifteenth of the third month, Linghu Chong led the disciples to make their way up the mountain. Halfway up the mountain, four Songshan disciples met them and very respectfully saluted them. They said, "Songshan's lowly disciples respectfully welcome Heng-Shan School honourable Headmaster Linghu. My humble school's Headmaster Zuo is respectfully waiting on top of the mountain." They also said, "Taishan, Hengshan, and Huashan Schools' martial uncles and martial brothers have all arrived yesterday. Songshan School feels very honoured that Headmaster Linghu and martial sisters have come here."

As Linghu Chong kept on going up the mountain, he noticed that the mountain road had been swept clean, and every few li along the way, a few disciples of Songshan had prepared tea and light refreshments to welcome the guests. Songshan School had really prepared everything meticulously, but from this, it could be seen that Zuo Lengchan really must have the headmaster position of the Five Mountains School and would not allow anyone to hinder him.

As they continued on their journey up the mountain, some more Songshan School's disciples met them to lead their way up the mountain. They said, "Kunlun, Emei, Kongtong, and Qingcheng Schools' headmasters and seniors are coming to Songshan today to participate in the election of the headmaster of the Five Mountains School. Everybody from Kunlun and Qingcheng Schools has all arrived. Headmaster Linghu came just in time, everyone's waiting for your honourable self on top of the mountain." There was a hint of arrogance on their faces, and from the way they spoke, it was obvious that they believed that this headmaster position of the Five Mountains School was secured in the hand of their Songshan School's headmaster.

When they went further up, they suddenly heard a thunderous sound of water. They saw from the top of the cliff two jade dragons hanging down as the two waterfalls poured out and flew out leisurely off the cliff. Everyone was on the side of the waterfall looking up towards the peak. The Songshan School's disciple leading them said, "This is called the View Victory Peak. Headmaster Linghu, what do you think of it compared to the places in Mount Heng-Shan?"

Linghu Chong replied, "Mount Heng-Shan is elegant where as Mount Songshan is grand. Both sceneries are very good."

That person said, "Songshan is placed in the middle of the world during the Tang Dynasty, and they're originally the leader of all the mountains in the realm. Headmaster Linghu, please have a look, with this atmosphere, no wonder that all the emperors from the previous dynasties founded their capitals on the foothill of Mount Songshan." The actual meaning of these words seemed to be that since Mount Songshan was the leader of all the mountains, then Songshan School

ought to be the leader of all the other schools.

Linghu Chong smilingly said, "I didn't know that any of the heroes in Jianghu are connected to the government and the emperor. Does Headmaster Zuo often make friends with the government officials?" That person's face turned red and stopped saying anything.

As they kept going up the mountain, the road was becoming more and more dangerous. The Songshan School disciples leading them pointed to a few places and said, "This is the Green Ridge Peak and Green Ridge Plain. This is the Big Iron Bridge Gorge and that's the Little Iron Bridge Gorge." On the right of the Iron Bridge Gorge was a strange stone and on its left was the Ten Thousand Deep Gully, which bottom you couldn't see. A Songshan disciple picked up a piece of big rock and threw it down the gully. The sound of the big rock hitting the side of the gully was like a thunder in the beginning, but as it dropped down the gully, the sound gradually got lighter and lighter until it disappeared.

Yihe said, "May I ask martial brother something? Today, how many people are coming to Songshan?"

That man said, "There are at least two thousand people."

Yihe said, "If you throw down a big rock for every person who comes up the mountain, then after some time, this mountain valley would be filled by your Songshan School." That person just snorted and didn't answer her back.

After they rounded a corner, they saw a thick fog in front of them and there were more than ten people blocking the mountain road. They were all armed. One person gloomily said, "When is Linghu Chong coming up? If you see him then tell us."

Linghu Chong saw the person talking had a face full of beard and his face looked hideous, but both of his eyes were blind. When he looked at the other men with him, each of them was actually also blind. He couldn't help feeling a shiver of fear in his heart. He said loudly, "Linghu Chong is here, what do you want?" When he said 'Linghu Chong is here', the blind men immediately hurled their abuses at him and waved their weapons about wishing to rush at him. They

all scolded, "Linghu Chong you little bastard, you've harmed us greatly, today we'll fight you to the death."

Linghu Chong immediately understood what was going on. He thought, "That night when Huashan School was attacked, I used my newly acquired Dugu Nine Swords' sword art to blind those enemies. I didn't know the origin of those people before, but thinking about it now, they must've been sent by Songshan School. I didn't expect to settle this business today."

He saw that the ground was very dangerous. If they staked their lives in this fight then one of them could grab him and then jump down the Ten Thousand Deep Valley.

He also saw that the Songshan disciple leading the way for them was holding in his laughter and was taking pleasure in his misfortune. He pondered, "I killed a lot of people from Songshan School at the Dragon Spring Sword-forging Valley. So we shouldn't be complacent at Mount Songshan today." He then said, "These blind friends, are they the disciples of Songshan School? Sir, could you please tell them to make way?"

That Songshan School's disciple laughingly said, "They're not from my humble school. I don't have any authority over them. Headmaster Linghu can just beat them up."

Suddenly, they heard someone shouted, "Let old man beat you up first then we'll talk." It was Monk No Commandment arriving. Behind him was Cannot Have No Commandment, Tian Boguang. No Commandment strode purposefully, grabbed two Songshan disciples, and threw them over to those blind men while calling out, "Linghu Chong's coming."

Those blind men immediately hacked and slashed their weapons around. But those two Songshan disciples' martial art weren't low and they pulled their swords out as they were flying through the air. They immediately blocked the weapons of those blind men and at the same time called out, "We're all from Songshan School, quickly get out of the way." Those blind men quickly withdrew their weapons and they were greatly confused. No Commandment

rushed up and again grabbed those two Songshan disciples and shouted, "If you don't tell these blind men to make way then I'll throw both of you bastards down the valley." As he said this, he threw the two disciples up into the air. Monk No Commandment's strength of arms was unrivalled and he managed to throw those two Songshan disciples seven to eight feet up in the air. Both of those people cried out wretchedly and they both thought that if they really fell down the Ten Thousand Deep Valley, then their bodies would instantly become minced meat.

Monk No Commandment waited for the two of them to fall back down before he extended his arms and grabbed the back of their necks. "Want to do that again?"

One of the men hastily answered, "No... I don't want to!"

The other Songshan disciple was clever. He loudly shouted, "Linghu Chong, where are you escaping? Blind friends, quickly chase, quickly chase after him!" When the blind men heard this, they all believed him and they immediately started chasing.

Tian Boguang angrily said, "Hey, little kid, are you fit to say Headmaster Linghu's name?" He then gave that man a couple of whacks on the ears and loudly shouted, "Hero Linghu is here! Headmaster Linghu is here! Whichever one of you blind men have guts then come here and receive some sword art lesson from him." Those blind men's anger was roused by the Songshan disciples beforehand and they also remembered of the enmity they had towards Linghu Chong for blinding them, that was why they were patiently waiting on the mountain road. But hearing the wretched shoutings of the two Songshan disciples, they felt fear in their hearts so they were now running up and down the mountain road like headless chickens. After a while, they stood still at a loss of what to do.

Linghu Chong, No Commandment, Tian Boguang, and all the Heng-Shan School's disciples walked past those blind men as they continued their journey up the mountain. Suddenly, they came to a place where they could see two mountain peaks with their tops broken off and naturally made some kind of a

gateway. The wind blew through where those broken tops were and the fog caressed their faces as it blew past. No Commandment shouted, "What's this place called? How can it change like that?"

That Songshan disciple bitterly answered, "This is called Facing the Heaven Gate."

Everyone then turned towards the northwest and went up another part of the mountain road. They looked up towards the spacious plain on top of the peak and were able to see countless number of people gathering up there. The Songshan disciples leading the way quickened their steps as they went up the mountain to report. This was followed by the sound of drum welcoming Linghu Chong and his followers to the top of the peak.

Zuo Lengchan was wearing a yellow gown. He led around twenty of his disciples as he came towards Linghu Chong to welcome him. He folded his hands to salute Linghu Chong. Even though Linghu Chong was now the headmaster of Heng-Shan, he had always called him as 'Martial Uncle Zuo'. After all, he was still a generation behind him. Linghu Chong immediately bowed back to return the propriety and he said, "Junior Linghu Chong pays his respect to Songshan's headmaster."

Zuo Lengchan replied, "I haven't seen you for a long time. Brother Linghu seems to be more cheerful. Brother is so handsome and young but you're already leading Heng-Shan School. This has never happened in Wulin before. Congratulations!"

He said all these coldly with a cold face. When he said 'Congratulations', his face was looking lively but there was not a hint of a congratulation in the way he said it. Linghu Chong understood that he was being sarcastic in saying all these. When he said 'this has never happened in Wulin before', he was actually being sarcastic that a man could become a leader of a bunch of nuns. The words 'handsome and young' also did not have good intentions in them. Linghu Chong replied, "Junior received Dingxian Shi Tai's last wish and became the headmaster of Heng-Shan so that I can avenge the deaths of the two Shi Tai. After I've avenged them, I'll immediately step down and let a worthy person take

over." When he said these few words, he was staring at Zuo Lengchan's eyes to see if Zuo Lengchan became ashamed or maybe angry. But nothing changed on Zuo Lengchan's face.

Zuo Lengchan said, "The five mountains sword schools have the same root but different branches. Today when the five schools merge, Dingxian and Dingyi Shi Tai's blood feud wouldn't be Heng-Shan School's matter only. But it would also become my Five Mountains School's matter. It's very good that Brother Linghu is enthusiastic in this." He stopped for a time. Then he continued, "Brother Tianmen from Taishan, Mr. Mo Da from Hengshan, Mr. Yue from Huashan, and many other friends from Wulin who are attending the ceremony have arrived. Please go ahead to meet them."

Linghu Chong replied, "Yes. Have Shaolin's Great Master Fangzheng and Wudang's Priest Chongxu arrived yet?"

Zuo Lengchan tastelessly answered, "The two of them live very close but with their high position, they wouldn't come here." As he finished saying this, he gave Linghu Chong a stare and his eyes were full of hatred.

Linghu Chong was startled, but he immediately understood. He thought, "When I took up Heng-Shan's leadership, these two seniors of Wulin came personally to congratulate me. But Zuo Lengchan believed that they wouldn't come today. That's why he hates Great Master Fangzheng and Priest Chongxu, and he even hates me for that."

At this moment, they suddenly saw two disciples in yellow gown rushing up the mountain road. It seemed that they had an urgent matter to report. Everyone gathering on top of the peak was looking at these two people. Not long after, the two disciples arrived in front of Zuo Lengchan. They reported, "Congratulations Master, Shaolin's Abbot Fangzheng and Wudang School's Headmaster Chongxu are both leading their disciples to come up the mountain."

"They've come?" Zuo Lengchan indifferently asked. "That's very good. I must go down to welcome them." His tone of speech indicated that he didn't care about it that much. But Linghu Chong saw that his gown's sleeve was trembling

slightly. After all, a person's happiness is very hard to hide. When news of Shaolin's Great Master Fangzheng and Wudang's Priest Chongxu arrival was heard, it created a sensation amongst the crowd on top of the mountain. A lot of people followed Zuo Lengchan in going down the mountain to welcome them. Linghu Chong and his Heng-Shan disciples moved to one side of the road letting those people went down.

They saw Taishan School's Priest Tianmen, Hengshan School's Mr. Mo Da, Beggar Clan's clan leader, Qingcheng School Pine Wind Monastery's Priest Yu Canghai, and all the other seniors had all arrived on the mountain. Linghu Chong saluted many people one by one when he suddenly saw a group of people coming around a corner. They were his Master, Master-Wife, and the martial brothers and sisters of the Huashan School. His heart was pained in seeing them. He quickly went up to them and kowtowed to his Master. "Linghu Chong pays his respect to two honourables."

Yue Buqun leaned to one side and coldly said, "Why does Headmaster Linghu give me such a big propriety? Isn't this a strange joke?"

Linghu Chong stood up after giving his respect and stepped back. Madam Yue's eyes were red as she said, "I heard that you've now become the Headmaster of Heng-Shan School. From now on, you can't make trouble anymore, and you must also settle down."

Yue Buqun coldly laughed. "Him? Not creating trouble? That'll be the day when the sun rises from the west. The first day he became headmaster, Heng-Shan School accepted thousands of people from the unorthodox path, isn't that enough trouble already? I also heard he joined hands with that Devil Sect's Ren Woxing to kill Dongfang Bubai and let Ren Woxing regained the throne of the Devil Sect. Heng-Shan School's headmaster unexpectedly took part in such a big matter for the Devil Sect, can't this be called creating trouble?"

"Yes, yes," Linghu Chong replied. He didn't want to talk about this matter so he changed to another subject, "At the meeting on Songshan today, Martial Uncle Zuo's intention is to merge the five mountains sword schools into one to make the Five Mountains School. What do the two honourables think of this?"

Yue Buqun asked, "What's your intention?"

"Disciple..."

Yue Buqun smiled and hastily interrupted, "This word 'disciple' doesn't need to be mentioned. If you still remembered those past days in Huashan, then... then..." He then deeply hummed looking like it wasn't easy for him to say what he wanted to say. From the day when he was expelled from the Huashan School, Linghu Chong had never seen Yue Buqun looking so pleased at him. Linghu Chong hastily said, "If you have any order, disciple... Junior will obey it."

Yue Buqun nodded his head. "I don't have any order, but the martial art people of my generation are especially sensitive about distinguishing between the orthodox and demonical paths. When that day I didn't allow you to stay on Huashan anymore, it wasn't because your Master-Wife and I were cruel-hearted, or because we didn't want to forgive you for your faults. It's just that you violated Wulin's biggest taboo, so even though I've raised you since you were young and that you're like a son to me, I still couldn't be selfish."

When Linghu Chong heard this, he became tearful. He chokingly said, "Even if my body turned to dust and my bones broken to pieces, it'll still be very hard for me to repay Master's and Master-Wife's kindness."

Yue Buqun lightly patted his shoulder to comfort him and then said, "That day at Shaolin Temple, we fought for a while. I used a few sword moves with deep meanings behind them, hoping that you would turn around and rejoin my Huashan School. But you were obstinate and made me really sad."

Linghu Chong replied, "That day at Shaolin Temple I committed an evil act, disciple should die for it. It's my biggest wish to again rejoin Master's school."

Yue Buqun smiled. "I'm afraid these words you said are somewhat hypocritical. You're already the headmaster of another school, command a lot of people, and have a lot of responsibility. You're already comfortable in that position now, why would you want to rejoin our school? Also, looking at your martial art now, how can I still be your master?" After he said this, he gave a glance to Madam Yue.

When Linghu Chong heard Yue Buqun's tone was sincere and it seemed that he wanted to take him back as a disciple again, he was extremely happy. He immediately knelt down and said, "Master, Master-Wife, disciple has offended you greatly. From now on, I will rectify my wrongs, obey master's order, and follow Master-Wife's instructions. I hope that Master and Master-Wife would be merciful and accept me back into Huashan School." At this time, he heard people clamouring to come up the mountain road. Those people were accompanying Great Master Fangzheng and Priest Chongxu up the mountain.

Yue Buqun lowered his voice and said, "Get up, we'll slowly talk about this later."

Linghu Chong was exulted and kowtowed a few times. "Thank you Master, Master-Wife!" He then stood up.

Madam Yue was sad and happy at the same time. "Your little martial sister and your martial brother Lin, they got... got married on Huashan last month." Her tone of voice sounded worried. She was afraid that Linghu Chong only wanted to rejoin the Huashan School because of Yue Lingshan, and when he heard that she had already gotten married, he might shout out in grieve and be inconsolable.

Linghu Chong was pained to hear this and he slightly tilted his head to look for Yue Lingshan. He saw her already dressed up in a beautiful gown as a young married woman. However, her appearance did not seem to have changed at all. She didn't have the glowing and healthy look that newly married young ladies have.

Her eyes met Linghu Chong's and suddenly her whole face was red, and she quickly dropped her head down. Linghu Chong felt as if a big hammer had just hit his chest and all of a sudden, he saw stars in his eyes. His body faltered and he couldn't stand straight. Suddenly he heard someone whispered in his ear, "Headmaster Linghu, you came from far away but you arrived here first. Shaolin Temple and the Courtyard of Towering Meditation are only a few feet away but I arrived late." Linghu Chong felt that someone was holding his left arm supporting him. Once he recovered, he saw Great Master Fangzheng smiling

besides him. He hastily replied, "Yes, Yes!", paid his respect and stepped aside.

Zuo Lengchan announced in a clear voice, "Everyone, there's no need to give too much propriety. Otherwise, with the thousands of people we have here, we still won't finish paying our respect to each other until tomorrow. Please enter the Courtyard of Meditation now."

The top of Mount Songshan used to be called Eji and the Courtyard of Towering Mediation was originally a Buddhist temple. But in the last one hundred years, it had been turned into habitable quarters for the Songshan School's headmaster. Even though Zuo Lengchan's name contains the word 'meditation' in it, he was never a disciple of Buddhism while his martial art was closer to Taoism.

The crowd went into the Courtyard of Meditation. Inside, there was a forest of ancient pines in the middle of the courtyard, with a hall which did not look like a Buddhist hall at all. Even though the hall was extremely large, it still couldn't be compared to the Great Hero Precious Hall at the Shaolin Temple. Not a thousand people had entered the courtyard when it was already full of people and there was no way to fit more people in.

Zuo Lengchan said in a loud voice, "Today's gathering of our five mountains sword schools is blessed by the presence of all the friends from the orthodox path. This is beyond all my expectations so the supply we've provided isn't sufficient and our reception is slow. So please don't blame us for this."

Someone from the crowd shouted, "That's alright. But there are too many people here so there's no more room to stand."

Zuo Lengchan replied, "If we go up two hundred more steps, there's a place where emperors in the ancient times used to worship the heaven and earth. The space up there is wide and would be very convenient for us. But we're only common people, so if the news of us holding a meeting in that place of worship spread out then people will ridicule us for being conceited."

In ancient times, the emperors commended their own achievements by frequently worshipping the heaven and earth in either Mount Taishan or Mount

Songshan, and offered sacrifices during these events. This event was usually a grand occasion for the whole country. But from amongst these Jianghu's heroes, who understood about the matter of 'worshipping heaven and earth'? They only felt crowded and stuffy inside that big hall. Let alone sitting, they weren't even able to breathe freely. One by one, they were saying, "We're not rebelling to become the emperor[2]. Since such a place exist, why don't we go there? The person besides me talk a lot, damn it!" As they were grumbling, there were already people rushing out of the courtyard.

Zuo Lengchan said, "Alright, then let's go and have a look at the worshipping place."

Linghu Chong thought, "Zuo Lengchan is very meticulous in his planning, so how could he have let all these people to be so crowded in here? What's his reason? He himself wants to go to the worshipping place to hold the gathering but he's too embarrassed to say it himself so he’s letting other people instigate it." His thought continued, "What kind of place is this place of worship? He said that it was related to emperors, and now he's leading everyone to go up there. Could it be that he really aspires to be an emperor? Great Master Fangzheng and Priest Chongxu said that he has great ambition and that once he's combined the five mountains sword schools, he would then move to exterminate the Sun Moon Sect. Then he would continue on annexing Shaolin and Wudang. Hey, hey, Dongfang Bubai and he actually have the same goal, 'Long live the Chief, unifies the Jianghu'!"

Linghu Chong followed the people and arrived below the place of worship. He again thought, "Hearing what Master said, it seems that he's willing to forgive my faults and allow me to return to Huashan. Why was Master so severe before but being so nice today? He must've investigated and found out that my conduct in Heng-Shan is very proper and doesn't besmirch the name of the Heng-Shan School, so he must be really happy. Little martial sister has also gotten married to Martial Brother Lin, so Master and Master-Wife must be feeling sorry for me. Also Master-Wife must've persuaded Master many times till he finally changed his attitude. Today, Zuo Lengchan will try his hardest in annexing the four

schools, and since Master is the headmaster of Huashan School, he will resist this with all of his power. He treats me very well so that I may ally with him and together protect the Huashan School. I'll do my best today to not disappoint his hope, and at the same time protect Heng-Shan School."

The place of worship was entirely constructed out of granite where each big rock there was chiselled until it was completely flat. Imagining the past when the emperor offered sacrifices here, Linghu Chong wondered how many stonemason the emperor employed to construct this place. As he scanned the area, he saw that some of the stones were newly chiselled. Even though there was moss on them already, he could still see that they were new. It was apparent that with the passage of time, this place of worship may have been quite damaged. Zuo Lengchan must have ordered his people to repair the place and had intentionally covered up those repairs so that they would not look obvious. But by doing so, it had instead looked as if he was up to no good.

As soon as the crowd arrived at this peak of Mount Songshan, they all felt invigorated. This summit stood tallest of all the other peaks around it. At that time, the sky was a clear blue without a single cloud to be seen. Linghu Chong gazed to the north and was able to see the high banks of Yumen and the Yellow River looking like a piece of thread. On the west, he could see the imperial city of Luoyang, while on the southeast, he saw layers upon layers of mountains.

He then saw three old men pointing to the south. One of them said, "That is the Big Bear Peak, that is the Small Bear Peak, those two peaks standing close together are the Dual Jade Peak, and the three peaks piercing through the cloud is called Three Outstanding Peaks."

Another old man said, "That mountain peak is the Shaoshi Mountain where the Shaolin Temple is. That day when I was at the Shaolin temple, I felt as if I was so high above, but looking from here, Shaolin temple is actually below Mount Songshan." The three old men laughed at this. Linghu Chong saw from the way these three old men dressed up that they weren't from Songshan School. But judging from their allegory of the mountains, they seem to be embellishing Songshan and belittling Shaolin. Looking at the brightness of these three

people's eyes, he deduced that they have powerful internal energies. It seemed that Zuo Lengchan had arranged many helpers for himself today, so if something were to change, they would have to contend with more than just the people from Songshan School.

He then saw Zuo Lengchan inviting Great Master Fangzheng and Priest Chongxu to go up to the place of worship. Fangzheng laughingly said, "The two of us are only two useless outsiders. We've come today just to offer our congratulations and to attend the ceremony, so there's no need for us to go up the stage and disgrace ourselves."

Zuo Lengchan replied, "Great Master Fangzheng is talking like you're an outsider to us."

Chongxu said, "All the visitors have already arrived. Headmaster Zuo, please go ahead with the big event, there's no need keep us two old chaps company."

Zuo Lengchan said, "I'll comply with your request then." He then cupped his fist to the two of them and went up to the place of worship. He'd walked up tens of steps and there was still around ten feet to the top when he stopped and announced in a loud voice, "Friends, please!"

The top of Mount Songshan was really windy and the crowd was scattered all over the place enjoying the scenery. But Zuo Lengchan's words were heard clearly by everyone up there. Everyone turned their heads around and started to gather closer, surrounding the worship place. Zuo Lengchan cupped his fist and said, "I appreciate all the friends here who have come to grace Mount Songshan with your presence. All the friends here must have heard already that today is the good day that my five mountains sword schools will join our efforts together and will become one school."

Hundreds of people on the base of the worship place shouted, "Yes, yes, congratulations, congratulations!"

"Everyone, please take a seat!" Zuo Lengchan said.

Everyone immediately sat on the ground, and the disciples from each school and sect sat together with their headmaster. Zuo Lengchan said, "Our five

mountains sword schools have the same root, different branches. We've been allied for more than a hundred years and we're just like a family already. I have been the chief of the five schools for many years already. But in these last few years, many big events have occurred in Wulin. So the seniors from the five mountains sword schools and I consulted each other and we all felt that if we don't merge into one school, then there would be a day when we encounter a big problem that we couldn't handle."

Suddenly, they heard someone who coldly interjected from the base of the worship place, "Which school's seniors did Chief Zuo consulted with? How come I don't know about this matter?" The one who said this was Hengshan School's headmaster Mr. Mo Da. As soon as he said this, it was apparent that Hengshan School disapproved of this merger.

Zuo Lengchan replied, "I just said before, many big events have occurred in Wulin which led to the conclusion that the five schools must merge into one. Amongst these big events is the inter-school killings of each other in spite of our alliance. Mr. Mo Da, my Songshan School's disciple, the Great Songyang Palm, Martial Brother Fei lost his life outside the city of Hengshan. There were people who observed this and said that you were the one who did this, is this true?"

Mr. Mo Da was startled and he thought, "When I killed that Fei, there was only Martial Brother Liu, Qu Yang, Linghu Chong, a little nun from Heng-Shan School, and Qu Yang's granddaughter there. Three of these people have already died. Could it be that Linghu Chong accidentally mentioned about it after drinking some wine? Or maybe that little nun isn't too experienced and divulged this secret?" At this time, the thousands of eyes underneath the worship place were all looking at Mr. Mo Da's face. Mr. Mo Da remained calm and composed; he shook his head and said, "This matter did not happen! How could I have killed the Great Songyang Palm with my limited skills?"

Zuo Lengchan coldly laughed. "If the fight was fair and one on one, Mr. Mo Da might not necessarily have been able to kill my martial brother Fei. But if it was an ambush, and you're using your Hengshan School's ever changing phantasmal sword moves, even masters would find it hard to fight against. We

looked at the injuries on the corpse of Martial Brother Fei, but someone already ruined it. But the placements of the sword stab couldn't change. Instead of covering up the evidence, isn't this revealing it instead?"

Mr. Mo Da was startled and he shook his head while thinking, "You're guessing foolishly. How can I admit that?" He was thinking that Zuo Lengchan was relying on the sword injuries placements on Fei Bin's corpse to say this and no one had actually divulged this secret. So he decided never to admit this to Zuo Lengchan. But after this, there would always be enmity between Songshan School and Hengshan School. Also, it was hard to say whether they would be able to go down Mount Songshan alive today. Zuo Lengchan continued, "This merger is the biggest matter that has happened to our five mountains sword schools since each of the school's inception. Mr. Mo Da, we're both the headmasters of a school and we both know which matter is important, and our grudge towards each other is very light. If my five schools benefit from it, then everyone's grudges would be forced to be put aside. Brother Mo, you don't have to worry too much about this matter. Martial Brother Fei is my martial brother, but after the five schools are merged, Brother Mo and I will also become martial brothers. The dead is already dead, and why would the living be killing each other?"

His speech was gentle, but the actual meaning behind his words was very threatening. The meaning behind his words was, if Mr. Mo Da agreed to the merging of the schools, then the matter of killing Fei Bin would just be washed away. Otherwise, the matter would have to be settled. Both of his eyes were staring at Mr. Mo Da. He asked, "South Mountain Hengshan School has no objection to the merging of the schools. Priest Tianmen of the Taishan School on the east mountain, what does your noble school think of this?"

Priest Tianmen stood up and said with a booming voice, "It's been three hundred years since Priest Dongling founded the Taishan School. Poor priest doesn't have the virtue and ability to advance the prestige of the Taishan School. But the school's history of three hundred years, it cannot end at my hand no matter what. This matter of merging the schools, I would never agree to it."

From amongst the Taishan School, a priest with a white beard stood up and said loudly, "Martial Nephew Tianmen, you're wrong. The Taishan School's four generations consist of more than four hundred people. This great benefit to everyone in the school couldn't be thwarted just by your own personal selfishness."

This white-bearded priest with a desiccated face had a loud and strong voice. There were people who recognised him and whispered, "He's Yujizi, he's the martial uncle of Priest Tianmen."

Priest Tianmen's face was originally looking ruddy, but after hearing what Yujizi said, his face turned really red and he said loudly, "Martial Uncle, what do you mean by that? Ever since Martial Nephew became the headmaster of Taishan, which matter have I done which is not in the best interest of the school? I'm opposed to the merger of the five schools in order to preserve the Taishan School. How can it be because I'm selfish?"

Yujizi laughed condescendingly and said, "The merger of the five schools will greatly flourish the five mountains schools. Which disciples in the five mountains schools wouldn't benefit from this merger? Martial Nephew, you can't be the headmaster of our school anymore."

Priest Tianmen got even more indignant when he heard this. He shouted, "What's this got to do with me being the headmaster? No matter what anyone said, Taishan School will not be annexed while I'm in charge."

Yujizi said, "What you said is really beautiful, but inside your heart, you actually don't want to relinquish your position of headmaster."

Priest Tianmen indignantly said, "You really think that I'm that selfish?" He extended his hand and took out a black dagger out of his bosom. He then shouted, "From now on, I'm no longer the headmaster. If you want to be the headmaster, then come and do it!"

Everyone saw that this black dagger looked ordinary but all the seniors of the five mountains sword schools knew that it was a relic from the time when Priest Dongling started the Taishan School. This dagger had become the symbol of

Taishan School's headmaster and had been passed down from headmaster to headmaster for the last three hundred years.

Yujizi retreated a step and coldly laughed. "You're willing to part with it?"

Priest Tianmen angrily replied, "Why wouldn't I be willing to part with it?"

"Alright, then give it to me!" As he said this, he extended his right hand and grabbed the dagger in Priest Tianmen's hand. Priest Tianmen didn't expect that Yujizi would actually grab the dagger from his hand. So as he was startled, the dagger was already snatched by Yujizi. Without thinking too much, he pulled out the long sword hanging on his waist.

Yujizi flew back and two green blurs were seen as two old priests blocked Priest Tianmen's way with their swords. They shouted, "Tianmen, you're defying your senior. Have you forgotten our school's commandment?"

Priest Tianmen saw that these two people were his martial uncles, Yuqingzi and Yuyinzi. His whole body shivered as he called out, "Martial uncles, you saw it with your own eyes, Yuji... ... What Martial Uncle Yuji did just a moment ago!"

Yuyinzi said, "We've seen it with our own eyes. You gave the school's headmaster position to Martial Brother Yuji. Abdicating your position to someone more worthy is a very good thing to do."

Yuqingzi said, "Since Martial Brother Yuji is your martial uncle, who is now also your headmaster, you've committed a very big sin by pulling out your sword to kill him."

Priest Tianmen saw that his two martial uncles were being unreasonably favourable towards Yujizi and were also unexpectedly finding faults with what he did. In an uncontrollable rage, he shouted, "I only said that in anger. How could the headmaster position be passed down so... so quickly, damn... damn it, I would never have passed it down to Yuji." In his fit of anger, he unexpectedly said some foul language.

Yuyinzi shouted, "Are you fit to be the headmaster after saying such kind of language?"

From amongst the Taishan School's group, a middle-aged priest stood up and said loudly, "Our school's headmaster has always been my master. What kind of tricks are martial uncles playing here?" This middle-aged priest had a Taoist name of Jianchu, and he was Priest Tianmen's second disciple.

This was followed by another person who stood up and shouted, "Martial Brother Tianmen already gave the headmaster position to my master. The thousands of people on top of Mount Songshan here saw and heard what happened. How could it be false? Martial Brother Tianmen said just a moment ago: 'From now on, I'm no longer the headmaster. If you want to be the headmaster, then come and do it!' You didn't hear it?" The one who said this was Yujizi's disciple.

More than a hundred people from the Taishan School's group started chanting, "Old headmaster abdicated, new headmaster takes over! Old headmaster abdicated, new headmaster takes over!"

Priest Tianmen was the most senior disciple and he also had the most reputation in the school, but five or six of his martial uncles secretly plotted against him and suddenly went against him together. So from the two hundred Taishan School's people who had come up to Mount Songshan today, more than one hundred and sixty of them were his enemy. Yujizi lifted the iron dagger high above his head and said, "This is Grand-Master Dongling's divine weapon. Grand-Master's last words were: 'Seeing this dagger is like seeing Dongling'. Should we listen to Grand-Master's last word?"

More than one hundred priests loudly shouted, "Headmaster is right!" There was also people calling out, "Disciple Tianmen is rebelling, and is not adhering to our school's rules. He deserves to be punished."

When Linghu Chong saw what was happening, he was guessing that all these people were secretly put here by Zuo Lengchan. Priest Tianmen had an irritable nature and could easily be stirred up. With just a few words, he could become extremely angry. At this moment, hearing the loud voice of his enemy, Tianmen felt he couldn't restrain himself anymore. But even though he was extremely enraged at the moment, there was nothing that he could do. Linghu Chong gazed

at where Huashan School was crowded together and saw his master standing with his hands behind his back. His master's face had no expression whatsoever. Linghu Chong thought, "Yujizi and his people set this up, and Master greatly objected to this. But he doesn't want to meddle in this and seems to be just calmly observing what's going on for now. I'll just follow his lead then."

Yujizi waved his left hand a few times and suddenly around one hundred and sixty priests from Taishan School dispersed and pulled their long swords out. They encircled the remaining fifty plus priests. All the priests encircled were Tianmen's disciples. Priest Tianmen indignantly bellowed, "You really want to fight? Let's fight to the death."

Yujizi said clearly, "Tianmen listen! Taishan School's headmaster has an order: Drop your sword and surrender. Do you submit to Grand-Master Dongling's dagger?"

Tianmen angrily replied, "Pei! Who said you're our school's headmaster?"

"Tianmen's disciples, this matter has nothing to do with you, throw down your weapons and surrender yourself! We won't look into this matter further, otherwise you'll be punished heavily," Yujizi called out.

Priest Jianchu shouted, "If you can promise to Grand-Master's dagger that you would never let the hard work of Grand-Master in establishing the Taishan School be wiped out, then all of us will support you in becoming headmaster. But if once you've become headmaster, you immediately sell our school to Songshan School, then you'll become the greatest sinner in our school. And when you die, you won't have face to meet Grand-Master."

Yuyinzi said, "You little kid, do you think you're good enough to talk to your seniors from the 'Yu' generation? When the five schools merge, wouldn't Songshan School's name also be wiped out? Five Mountains School, these two words of 'Five Mountains' include Taishan in it, what's not good about that?"

Priest Tianmen replied, "You were all secretly sowing discord and have all been bought by Zuo Lengchan. Hng, hng! If you want to kill then go ahead. But if you want me to promise to surrender to Songshan, I will never do it."

Yujizi said, "You're all refusing to obey's Headmaster's dagger! Careful! You'll die shortly and you will die unburied."

Priest Tianmen said, "Disciples loyal to Taishan School, today we'll die fighting and spill our blood on Songshan."

The disciples standing around him answered, "We'll fight to the death and will never surrender."

Even though their number was small, each of their faces showed their resolve. If Yujizi told his men to attack, it wasn't going to be quick in killing all of them. Also, the thousands of good heroes, Shaolin School's Great Master Fangzheng, Wudang School's Priest Chongxu, and the other senior masters around the base of the worship place would never allow them to take advantage of this and allow the massacre of their own martial brothers to happen. Yujizi, Yuqingzi, Yuyinzi, and their men were watching carefully, not knowing what to do.

Suddenly, someone from far to the left lazily said, "Old man has walked everywhere in this realm, I've also seen a lot of good heroes. But I rarely see a dog who disclaims what he says immediately after he said it."

Everyone looked at where the voice was coming from and they saw a person wearing hemp clothes leaning besides a big rock. His left hand was holding a big bamboo hat and he was using it to fan himself. This person looked slim, his two eyes were squinted, and his face was showing a disapproving expression. No one knew who this person was, and they also didn't know who he was scolding. They heard him continued, "You clearly already gave your headmaster position to someone else, could it be what you were saying was bullshit? Priest Tianmen, your name has this character 'Tian', I'm afraid we should change it into the word 'Shit'. Then it'll sound right." Yujizi and his men understood that he was helping them, so they all laughed.

Tianmen indignantly said, "It's my own Taishan School's matter! Outsiders don't need to worry about it."

That hemp clothed man lazily replied, "When old man sees a matter that's not pleasing to my eyes, then I'll definitely worry about it. Today is the five

mountains sword schools' good day for merger, but instead you, ox-nosed priest, pulled out your sword and created trouble here, making people lose interest. This is really bullshit."

Suddenly, they saw a flash as that hemp-clothed man jumped forward and rapidly charged at the encirclement of Yujizi and his men. He slashed the bamboo hat he was holding in his left hand down on Priest Tianmen's head. Unexpectedly, Priest Tianmen didn't block this strike. Instead he pointed his sword towards that person's chest who then hastily dropped down to the ground and rushed underneath Priest Tianmen's legs. He slapped his right hand on the ground to turn his body around. Then with a 'hu' sound, he kicked out repeatedly at the back of Priest Tianmen's body. These few moves displayed by that person were extremely weird. Every one of the heroes gathered on the mountaintop was skilled, but they had never heard of any of these moves before, let alone seen it. Tianmen couldn't guard against this attack and his acupoints were hit. The disciples around Tianmen immediately stabbed their swords towards that person. That man just laughed loudly and grabbed Priest Tianmen's back to block the incoming swords which forced the disciples to withdraw their swords in a hurry. That man shouted, "Throw down your swords, or I'll twist off this ox-nosed's head." As he said this, his right hand clutched the top of Tianmen's head.

Tianmen's martial art was useless now as his movement was controlled by that person, and he couldn't move at all. His once red face had now turned pale. Looking at the situation, it's clear that the hemp-clothed man only had to apply some power into his right hand to twist Tianmen's head around and break his neck. Jianchu said, "You suddenly ambushed us. This is not what heroes do. What's your name?" That person used his left hand to smack Priest Tianmen's ear and then lazily said, "Whoever is rude to me then I'll hit his master."

When Priest Tianmen's disciples saw that their honoured master was being insulted, they were startled and angry at the same time. Each of them only needed to pierce their long swords towards the hemp-clothed man at the same time, then that man would instantaneously become a hedgehog. But Priest

Tianmen was still under his control so none of them dared to move for fear that their actions might hurt their master. A young man scolded, "You dog..." That man again lifted his hand and slapped Tianmen's ear. He then said, "You're a disciple from the school. How can you still say such foul language?"

Suddenly, Priest Tianmen cried out loudly as he suddenly turned around and came face to face with that hemp-clothed person. Blood spouted out of Priest Tianmen's mouth. The hemp-clothed person was startled and wanted to take his hand off Priest Tianmen, but it was too late. All of a sudden, that person's whole head and face became drenched with blood from Priest Tianmen, while at the same time, both of Priest Tianmen's hands turned around and grabbed his neck. With a sharp sound, that person's neck was snapped. Priest Tianmen then threw that person's body away, which landed tens of feet away. Priest Tianmen now looked completely tall and strong, and at the same time looked strangely powerful with his face full of blood. Everyone who saw him was terrified. After some time, he violently shouted and dropped to the ground. At first, he was unexpectedly attacked by that person who used many weird moves, then he was repeatedly insulted. So he couldn't hold back his anger anymore and was willing to lose his life, so he exerted his inner energy and forcefully broke his meridian. By doing that, he managed to open up his sealed acupoints, and then he exerted himself and killed that person. But his own meridian was broken so he wouldn't be able to live any more as well. Tianmen's disciples cried out "Master!" and rushed over to support him. But when they saw that he had already died, they all started scolding loudly.

From amongst the crowd, someone suddenly said, "Headmaster Zuo, you ordered that 'Green Ocean Owl' to deal with Priest Tianmen. Isn't that too much?"

Everyone turned around to look at the person who said this. What they saw was a rustic old man who some people knew of as He Sanqi, who usually went around selling wonton in the markets around the cities. As for that person who was violently killed by Priest Tianmen, no one knew who he was or where he came from. They only heard that He Sanqi called him as 'Green Ocean Owl'. Yet,

still not many people knew who 'Green Ocean Owl' was.

Zuo Lengchan said, "What a joke. This is the first time that I have met Brother Ji. How can you say that I ordered him to do this?"

He Sanqi said, "Perhaps Headmaster Zuo hasn't been acquainted with 'Green Ocean Owl' for long, but you're well acquainted with this person's master 'White Malignant Star'."

When the word 'White Malignant Star' came out of He Sanqi's mouth, the crowd uttered their surprise. Linghu Chong vaguely remembered that many years ago Master-Wife had mentioned this name: 'White Malignant Star'. At that time, Yue Lingshan was only around six to seven years old and she was crying incessantly. Madam Yue tried to frighten her by saying, "If you keep crying then 'White Malignant Star' will come and take you away." When Linghu Chong asked who this 'White Malignant Star' was, Madam Yue replied, "'White Malignant Star' is an evil person. He likes to eat small kids who love to cry. This person has no nose, and there's only two holes on his face, just like a piece of board." At that time, Yue Lingshan was scared by this and stopped crying. As Linghu Chong thought of the past, he gazed at Yue Lingshan and saw her staring at a distant mountain peak looking as if she was pondering something. Scowling at times, she seemed to be worried about something. It was obvious that she didn't recall of this 'White Malignant Star' and that she had long ago forgotten about it. Linghu Chong thought, "Little martial sister has just gotten married, and she loves Martial Brother Lin a lot. What unpleasant matter is she thinking of? Could it be that they're fighting at the moment?" He saw Lin Pingzhi standing besides her and his face looked quite weird. He seemed to be smiling and yet not smiling, and he seemed to be angry but not quite angry. Linghu Chong was again surprised, "What kind of expression is that? On whose face did I see this expression before?" But he couldn't remember where he had seen this kind of expression before.

He then heard Zuo Lengchan reply, "Brother Yuji, congratulations on becoming Taishan School's headmaster. Regarding this five sword schools merger, what's Brother's esteemed opinion on this?" Zuo Lengchan didn't answer

He Sanqi's question but instead went around it. Then this meant that tacitly he was not disputing that he knew of 'White Malignant Star'. White Malignant Star's evil name had been known for around twenty to thirty years, but the number of people who had actually seen him or suffered under his hands was not many. It seemed that his evil reputation mainly came from his ugly appearance. However, from looking at his disciple Green Ocean Owl's behaviour, it was obvious that this master and disciple didn't belong to the orthodox school.

Yujizi grasped the dagger in his hand and was feeling proud of himself. He happily replied, "The merger of the five mountains sword schools benefits everyone of us in the five schools, and there's no harm in it at all. It's only that Priest Tianmen was very selfish and didn't think of the welfare of everyone, so he went against the idea. Chief Zuo, as I'm the headmaster of Taishan School now, I wholeheartedly approve of the merger of the five schools. Everyone in Taishan School is now under your command and will flourish under the Five Mountains School's family. If anyone tried to obstruct this, then my Taishan School will be the first one to go against them."

More than a hundred people from Taishan School boomed their answer, "Taishan School whole heartedly agrees to the merger. If anyone absurdly objects to this, Taishan School swears to go against them." These people answered together and loudly. Even though there weren't many of them, their voices were firm and reverberated throughout the mountaintop. Linghu Chong thought, "It's obvious they've practised this before hand. Otherwise, even if everyone of them agreed to the merger, their words won't be exactly the same from each other." Also hearing the respectful tone that Yujizi used when addressing Zuo Lengchan, he guessed that if Zuo Lengchan had not secretly given him a payoff before, then Zuo Lengchan must have used some kind of violent method to control him. When Priest Tianmen's disciples saw that their master had died violently and that things were out of their control, they were forced to sit there silently. Some of them grinded their teeth and cursed silently, while a few clenched their fists tightly as their faces filled with grief and indignation.

Zuo Lengchan said loudly, "Hengshan and Taishan Schools have already approved of the merger, so it seems that all our schools will be merged very soon. There's only benefit for everyone in the merging of the schools. There's no harm in it. So my Songshan School will also follow your decision and celebrate this together."

Linghu Chong coldly thought in his heart, "You certainly can talk very beautifully. All these matters were setup by you, but you're actually making it sound as if you're just following their ideas."

He heard Zuo Lengchan continue, "Among the five schools, three schools have already agreed to the merger. What does Heng-Shan School think of this? Heng-Shan School's previous headmaster, Dingxian Shi Tai, had repeatedly discussed about this matter with me. She completely endorsed this merger. Dingjing, Dingyi Shi Tai also agreed with this." From among the black-uniformed disciples of the Heng-Shan School, one disciple cried out in a clear voice, "Headmaster Zuo, what you said was wrong. Before our headmaster and two martial uncles passed away, they hated this idea of a merger and completely opposed it. As a result of opposing this merger, the three honourables met their misfortunes. How can you pass off your own opinion as that of the three honourables?" Everyone turned their heads to look who was speaking, and saw a round-faced girl. This young lady who was very good in talking was Zheng E. She was still very young so most of the people from the other schools didn't recognise her.

Zuo Lengchan replied, "The martial art of your master, Dingxian Shi Tai, is high, and her experience is really out of the ordinary. She's in fact the greatest person among everyone in our five mountains sword schools, and I admired her very much. But it's a pity that they were killed in Shaolin Temple. If she was still alive today, then she would know what is right or wrong in today's gathering." He paused for a time before continuing, "That day when I was discussing the merger with Dingxian, Dingjing, and Dingyi Shi Tai, I mentioned about this matter already. Actually it didn't matter if this merger comes to fruition or not. But if the merger actually goes through then I would have definitely asked

Dingxian Shi Tai to be the leader of the combined schools. At that time, Dingxian Shi Tai was being humble and declined, but I would definitely have supported her fully. Later on, for some unknown reason, Dingxian Shi Tai firmly declined this idea. Ai, what a pity, what a pity, such a hero unexpectedly passed away when her service here isn't done yet. Her death at the Shaolin Temple really made people sad." He had now mentioned Shaolin Temple twice in his speech, as he implicitly put the responsibility of Dingxian Shi Tai's death on Shaolin Temple. He was implying that even though the murderer might not have been someone from Shaolin School, there were many martial art masters at Shaolin who were capable of killing these two masters. Also, even if Shaolin School didn't plot the demise of the Shi Tai, they had let their murderers escape and were negligent in their responsibility to protect the people inside the temple.

Suddenly, someone with a crude voice said, "What Headmaster Zuo said was wrong. That day, Dingxian Shi Tai told me, she actually wanted to choose you to become the headmaster of the five mountains sword schools."

Zuo Lengchan felt really happy. He took a look at that person and saw that person had a horse face, mouse eyes, and looked very weird. He didn't know who that person was but since he was wearing a black gown, it indicated that he was from the Heng-Shan School. Besides him were five more people with similar appearances, wearing similar gowns, but Zuo Lengchan didn't know that they were the Peach Valley Six Fairies. Even though Zuo Lengchan felt exulted, his face stayed calm and collected.

"Honourable Brother, what's your name? Even though Dingxian Shi Tai had said that at that time, I still couldn't be compared to her. I would never be able to be as good as her."

The person who spoke out before was Peachtree Root Fairy. He now loudly replied, "I'm Peachtree Root Fairy. These five people are all my brothers."

"I have heard of your illustrious name for a long time," Zuo Lengchan replied.

"Which illustrious name have you heard of me? Did you hear about my powerful martial art or my vast knowledge?" Peachtree Root Fairy asked.

Zuo Lengchan thought, "So these six idiots were the ones who ripped Cheng Buyou apart." But thinking that Peachtree Root Fairy had just supported him, he said, "The six of you have powerful martial arts and vast knowledge. I've heard of both."

Peachtree Trunk Fairy said, "There's nothing great about our martial arts. But if the six of us teamed up together, we would be better than Chief Zuo by a bit. However, if we're fighting one on one, then we lack by a lot."

Peachtree Flower Fairy added, "But with regards to knowledge, we're way better than Chief Zuo."

Zuo Lengchan snorted and replied, "Really?"

"I'm not wrong at all. That's what Dingxian Shi Tai said on that day," Peachtree Flower Fairy replied.

Peachtree Leaf Fairy said, "When Dingxian Shi Tai, Dingjing Shi Tai, and Dingyi Shi Tai were chit chatting inside the convent, they talked about the merger of the five mountains sword schools. Dingyi Shi Tai said: 'It's alright if the five mountains sword schools don’t merge. But if we're going to merge, then we must ask Songshan School's Mr. Zuo Lengchan to become the headmaster.' Do you believe me?" Zuo Lengchan was secretly feeling very happy. He replied, "Dingyi Shi Tai gave me a lot face, I don't deserve it."

Peachtree Root Fairy said, "Don't be happy yet. Dingyi Shi Tai also said: 'Among the heroes in the realm, Songshan School's headmaster Zuo is very highly regarded. If he does become the headmaster of the Five Mountains School, that's really the best choice. But he's very selfish, narrow minded, and has no tolerance. If he really becomes the headmaster, then my female disciples would certainly suffer under him.'"

Peachtree Trunk Fairy continued his brother's speech, "Dingxian Shi Tai then said: 'On the other hand, we have six heroes here. Their martial arts are really high, and their knowledge is also vast. They would do well enough as headmaster of the Five Mountains School.'"

Zuo Lengchan laughed coldly and said, "Six heroes? Who are they?"

Peachtree Flower Fairy replied, "Of course these six heroes are the six of us." As soon as he said this, the thousands of people on the mountaintop burst into laughter. Even though most of these people didn't know of the Peach Valley Six Fairies, they saw that these six brothers looked weird and that their appearances were comical. When they heard that they were praising themselves as heroes and were saying that their 'martial arts are high and their knowledge is vast', they couldn't hold back their laughter.

Peachtree Branch Fairy said, "At that time, when Dingxian Shi Tai mentioned these words 'Six Heroes', Dingjing and Dingyi Shi Tai immediately realised that these words were referring to the six of us, and they immediately cheered. Hmmm, what did Dingyi Shi Tai say at that time? Brothers, do you remember?"

Peachtree Fruit Fairy confidently replied, "Of course I remember. At that time, Dingyi Shi Tai said: 'The knowledge of these Peach Valley Six Fairies, when actually compared to Shaolin Temple's Great Master Fangzheng, lack only by a bit. Compared to Priest Chongxu of Wudang School, their martial arts aren't as good. But within the five mountains sword schools, no one can be compared to them. Martial sisters, what do you think?' Dingjing Shi Tai then said: 'I actually think otherwise. Martial Sister Dingxian's martial art and knowledge aren't below the Peach Valley Six Fairies at all. It's a pity that we're females and we're also Buddhists. So it'll be inconvenient for us to become the headmaster of the Five Mountains School and lead the thousands of heroes. So, we should choose the Peach Valley Six Fairies for this position.'"

Peachtree Leaf Fairy continued with the story, "Dingxian Shi Tai nodded her head and then she said: 'If the five mountains sword schools are really going to merge, and these six brothers aren't the headmasters, then it would be hard for the school to flourish and prosper.'" As Linghu Chong listened on, he found it becoming funnier and funnier as he came to understand that the Peach Valley Six Fairies were deliberately trying to cause trouble for Zuo Lengchan. Zuo Lengchan had fabricated words and tried to pass them off as words said by people who had already passed away, and now the Peach Valley Six Fairies were copying him. This tactic of making use of Zuo Lengchan’s method to dispute

with him was really good as Zuo Lengchan was unable to dispute back.

On top of Mount Songshan, besides people from Songshan School and some outsiders who are under Zuo Lengchan's command, there were actually many people who disagreed strongly with the idea of merging the five mountains sword schools. Some were highly experienced heroes such as Abbot Fangzheng and Priest Chongxu who were afraid that Zuo Lengchan's ambition would become unchecked and disaster would strike in Jianghu. There were also those who saw Priest Tianmen died miserably and were feeling very angry at Zuo Lengchan. There were some who believed that after the five mountains schools had merged, the reputation of the Five Mountains School would prosper greatly, and that they wouldn't allow their own school to miss out on this; And there was also Linghu Chong and his Heng-Shan School's people who had great hostility towards Zuo Lengchan believing that Dingxian Shi Tai, Dingjing Shi Tai, and Dingyi Shi Tai were killed by him, and were hoping to exact their revenge on him. When all these people heard the nonsense that the Peach Valley Six Fairies were spouting, some people also fabricated similar things making Zuo Lengchan unable to dispute them back. But for the most part, people were just laughing quietly, while the young ones laughed slightly louder. Suddenly, a rough voice said, "Peach Valley Six Weirdos, were there other witnesses around when Dingxian Shi Tai said this?"

Peachtree Root Fairy replied, "Many Heng-Shan School disciples heard it themselves. Miss Zheng, isn't that right?"

Zheng E quickly held back her laughter and calmly replied, "That's right. Headmaster Zuo, you said that my master approved of the merger of the five schools. Who else heard this? Martial sisters, did any of you hear these words from our honourable master?"

More than a hundred female disciples answered together, "We've never heard of these words." One of the disciples said loudly, "Most likely, those words were Headmaster Zuo's own fabrication." There was also a female disciple who said, "Compared to Headmaster Zuo, my master was more inclined to support the Peach Valley Six Fairies. We've all been following the three honourables for

many years now, how could we not have known what was in their minds?"

Many people burst into laughter. Peachtree Branch Fairy loudly added, "That's right, we're not telling lies, isn't that right? Later on, Dingxian Shi Tai also said: 'When the five schools do merge then there's only one position of headmaster, while the Peach Valley Six Fairies have six people. Who do you think will be the best one to take on this position?'. Brothers, what was Dingjing Shi Tai's answer?"

Peachtree Flower Fairy replied, "This... Hmm, yes, Dingjing Shi Tai said: 'Even when the five schools merge into one, the mountains of Taishan, Hengshan, Huashan, Heng-Shan, Songshan are on the east, south, west, north, and in the middle respectively, and they can't be physically merged into one. Zuo Lengchan is also not an emperor. How could he move all these mountains together and make it one? So we'll just ask five of the Peach Valley Six Fairies to take care of each of the mountains, and have the remaining one to be the headmaster.'"

Peachtree Leaf Fairy said, "That's right! Dingyi Shi Tai then said: 'Martial sister is right. The parents of the Peach Valley Six Fairies had really good foresight, they knew that Zuo Lengchan wanted to merge the five mountains sword schools sometime in the future so they gave birth to six brothers, not five or seven. Really admirable, admirable!'" When the crowd heard this, their laughter was so loud that it reverberated through the whole mountain.

Zuo Lengchan had prepared this place of worship for the merger of the five mountains school. He had originally set the place up in all its grandeur so that all the attending heroes would be awed by it. But he had never expected that these six idiots would come out and start telling jokes in front of everyone, making this grand ceremony looking like a comical play. Zuo Lengchan was actually furious, but since he was the host at Mount Songshan, he couldn't just do whatever he wished and was forced to hold his anger in check. He secretly hatched a plan, "Once this matter is finished, if I don't kill these six idiots, then I'm not Zuo."

Peachtree Fruit Fairy suddenly wept loudly and started calling out, "This is not

good... not good! Ever since the six of us were born, we've never been more than a foot apart from each other. One is to be the headmaster of the Five Mountains School, while the others are going to live separately on five other mountains. This won't do, we can't do that." He was crying genuinely, as if the headmaster position of the Five Mountains School had been decided, and that the six of them were faced with the situation of parting ways forever.

Peachtree Branch Fairy said, "Sixth brother, don't be upset, the six of us won't be separated. Brothers, don't give up. I also won't give up. But since people expect us to become the headmaster of the Five Mountains School, we're left with no choice but to go against the merger of the five mountains schools."

Peachtree Root Fairy and the other four brothers replied together, "Right, right, why do we need to merge the five mountains sword schools?"

Peachtree Fruit Fairy snorted his nose and broke into a smile. He said, "Even if the schools are really merging, there's a great hero in the Five Mountains School. Compared to the six of us, his knowledge is higher, his martial art is more powerful, and just like the six of us, he has the favour of everyone. It's not late for this kind of person to become the headmaster."

Zuo Lengchan was worried that these six chaps would continue with their pestering and make more and more trouble. So he quickly cut them off and immediately said clearly, "Six heroes, are you the headmaster of Heng-Shan School? Or is it someone else? Are the six heroes taking responsibility for Heng-Shan School's matters?"

Peachtree Branch Fairy replied, "We originally wanted to become the headmaster of Heng-Shan School. But thinking that the headmaster of Songshan School is you, old brother Zuo, when the six of us become the headmaster of Heng-Shan, then we would be on par with you. Hey, hey, this... that..."

Peachtree Flower Fairy said, "If we're on par with him, then the six of us heroes would definitely lose our position. That's why we asked Linghu Chong to take on this difficult job and become the headmaster of Heng-Shan School." Zuo Lengchan was seething with rage, and he said coldly, "Headmaster Linghu,

you're now leading the Heng-Shan School family, but you're not restricting the people in your noble school but allowed them to spout nonsense in front of the entire realm's heroes and shame themselves."

Linghu Chong smiled. "These six Peachtree brothers are honest and sincere, and they speak candidly. But they're not the kind of people who blindly invent rumours. Their story of Dingxian Shi Tai is more reliable when compared to the nonsense from someone outside this school."

Zuo Lengchan snorted and said, "Today, on this matter of the five mountains sword schools merger, your noble school is thinking of objecting to it all by yourself?"

Linghu Chong shook his head. "Heng-Shan School is not objecting to it by ourselves. Huashan School's headmaster, Mr. Yue, is the respected master who initially taught me my skills. Today, even though I belong to another school, I don't dare to forget the instructions from my former respected master."

Zuo Lengchan replied, "The way you said that, you'll still listen to what Huashan School's Mr. Yue say?"

"That's right. My Heng-Shan School and Huashan School are uniting our effort and working together," Linghu Chong replied.

Zuo Lengchan turned his head to look at the Huashan School. He then said, "Mr. Yue, Headmaster Linghu didn't forget your past kindness to him. Congratulations! Headmaster Linghu will follow your lead whether Sir agrees to the merger or not. But what does Sir think of this merger?"

Yue Buqun replied, "Since Chief Zuo asked me earlier, I've already considered about this matter in details. But it's actually not easy to reach a decision." At that moment, everyone in the crowd turned their eyes to look at him. Many of the people in the crowd thought, "Hengshan School is weak to stand by itself, and Taishan School has divisions inside their school, so both of them were unable to resist Songshan School. At this time, Huashan School and Heng-Shan School have become allies, and adding Hengshan School to the mix, they can definitely go up against Songshan School." They then heard Yue Buqun continued, "My

Huashan School was founded more than two hundred years ago. Some time ago, our school suffered a schism and divided into the Qi Branch and the Sword Branch. All the seniors in Wulin already know about this. When I thought of the days when the two branches were killing each other, I still tremble with fear..."

Linghu Chong pondered, "Master once mentioned that the struggle between these two branches was the school's biggest shame and cannot be mentioned to the people outside of the school. Why is he now publicly discussing about this matter in front of all the realm's heroes?" He then heard Yue Buqun's sharp voice travelling over many li, and each word that he said echoed back from distant places. Linghu Chong thought, "Master's cultivation of the 'Divine Art of Violet Twilight' has gotten even higher. His voice and the way he used his inner energy seems quite different than the past."

Yue Buqun continued, "That's why I deeply feel that being apart is not as good as being together for all the sects in Wulin. Hundreds of years ago, the fightings were very fierce in Jianghu, and no one knows just how many people from the orthodox path died from such fights. Tracing the source of this, it's most likely that these fighting occur because there were too many sects in Jianghu. I've always believed that if all the sects in Wulin are to become one, then everyone will be like brothers, and all those kinds of killings would be greatly reduced. Then many heroes would not lose their lives while they're still in their prime, and the numbers of orphans and widows would also be greatly reduced." He said this with a voice full of pity towards the fate of mankind, and many people couldn't help but nod their heads when they heard this. There were some people who whispered, "Huashan's Yue Buqun is called 'Gentleman Sword'. He's really earned his reputation. His heart is full of compassion." Abbot Fangzheng joined his two palms and said, "Very good, very good! Scholar Yue is very compassionate. If everyone in Wulin thought the same way as Scholar Yue, then all the bloodshed and killings in Wulin will disappear completely."

Yue Buqun said, "Great Master is overpraising me. That was just my shallow view of things. Shaolin temple's reverend monks from generations past must've thought of the same thing a long time ago. It's evidence of Shaolin temple's

prestigious status in Wulin that with just one call, all the wise and outstanding warriors from every school and sect responds to it. This must be because of Shaolin temple's achievements for the last hundreds of years. It's true that each school and each sect's martial art has different roots and that their methods of inner energy cultivation are very different from each other. So if we actually want every pugilist out there to be under one school, then that would be easier said than done. 'A gentleman is friendly but not at the expense of principle.' Just so, our martial arts can be different but we must still be at peace with one another. Even until today, there are still a lot of sects and schools in Jianghu, which are clearly fighting in the open or are fighting in secret, and countless lives are lost because of this. All these deaths and killings, just because of some senseless fights. All the wise heroes from years past must've known that all these divisions in sects and schools are causing a lot of harm in Jianghu. But why can't we resolve all these heartaches and eliminate this division? I really don't understand this. So I've been thinking about this matter for many years now, and it was only recently that I've suddenly become enlightened and understood the key point that's been hindering this from happening. This matter affects the life and death of everyone in Wulin from the orthodox path, so I don't dare to keep this matter to myself. That's why I've cautiously raised the issue and ask everyone here to give me some advice."

The crowd one by one shouted, "Please say it, please say it!" "Mr. Yue's opinion is definitely wise." "So what's the reason behind this?" "Eliminating all the division between sects and schools is impossible!" Yue Buqun waited until the crowd calmed down before saying, "I thought about this and felt that one of the reasons is the difference between the word 'hurried' and 'gradual'. Throughout the times, the compassionate people in Wulin have always hoped to remove the division between the sects and they have often done this in a hurry. They've always tried to remove these boundaries between sects and eliminate the division in one fell swoop, but they never realised how difficult it is to do. All the sects in Wulin, the big ones number in the tens and the small ones number in the thousands, and every single sect has its tradition in the tens or even thousands of years of history. If they actually want to eliminate all these

divisions in one fell swoop, then of course it's going to be impossible."

Zuo Lengchan said, "So according to Mr. Yue's opinion, if we want to eliminate the division between sects then it can never be done? Wouldn't that be crushing everyone's hope?"

Yue Buqun shook his head. "Even though it's very difficult to do, it's actually still possible to do. I said before about the difference: hurried and gradual. As the saying goes, you botch it by rushing it. We must change our principle and the people from the orthodox path must also cooperate to go forward. If we do it in fifty years, or one hundred years, we'll definitely succeed."

Zuo Lengchan sighed before saying, "Fifty years, one hundred years, most of the heroes here would've turned into bones by then."

Yue Buqun replied, "We must do our best on this matter, and we don't have to worry whether we'll be able to actually complete this matter in our own generation or not. This is the same like planting trees for the later generations. We plant the trees and let the future generations enjoy some peace and calm. How can this be not a good idea? Also, fifty or one hundred years is the time that it would take to completely accomplish this. But if you actually want to see some slight accomplishment, then eight to ten years will be sufficient to see what have been achieved."

Zuo Lengchan said, "Eight to ten years to see a slight improvement... That's very good then. But how do we first start on this?"

Yue Buqun smiled slightly and continued, "Actually what Chief Zuo is doing right now is to the benefit of the orthodox path in Jianghu. We should first eliminate this view of many sects and schools in Wulin as it achieves nothing. First, we should get the sects and schools which are relatively near to each other, have similar martial arts, and are friendly to each to first combine as much as they can. Then within eight to ten years, the number of sects and schools would've been greatly reduced. Our five mountains sword schools should first combine to make the Five Mountains School to setup an example for the other sects. This would be a glorious achievement that would be praised throughout

Jianghu for years to come."

When he finished saying this, the crowd started to call out, "So Huashan School approves of the merger."

Linghu Chong was greatly startled, and he thought, "I never expected that Master would actually approve of the merger. Since I've already said that Heng-Shan School will follow Huashan School's lead, then I can't eat my words and not go forward with the merger." He was feeling anxious and took a look towards Great Master Fangzheng and Priest Chongxu. They both were shaking their heads and were looking quite depressed.

Zuo Lengchan had always been worried that Yue Buqun would object. This person was good at debating. His reputation in Jianghu was also very good, and it was hard to force him into doing something. He had never expected that Yue Buqun would unexpectedly support the merger. He was elated as he said, "Songshan School approves of the merger. My reason for the merger before was originally 'Unity of will is an impregnable stronghold.' Together we're strong and alone we're weak. But after hearing Mr. Yue's reason, my view has now been broadened and I realised that this merger concerns the future of Wulin and will benefit more than just our five schools."

Yue Buqun replied, "After our five schools merged, if we want to actually extend our influence then we'll definitely be in competition with the heroes from the other sects. When this happens, not only would it result in problems throughout Wulin, it would also be very unbeneficial to our Five Mountains School. Thus, the merger would also be more disadvantageous than beneficial to all the heroes in Wulin. That's why the objective of this merger must be 'to stop the fighting and to resolve the disputes'. That way, after the merger of our five schools, no sect would be disadvantaged and everyone need not have any worries."

When the crowd heard him, there were some who breathed a sigh of relief, and there were also some who were still half doubting what he said. Zuo Lengchan said, "In that case, Huashan School approves of the merger?"

"That's right," Yue Buqun answered. He paused for a while before looking at Linghu Chong. "Heng-Shan School's Headmaster Linghu was previously in the Huashan School, so he and I have more than twenty years of master-disciple relationship. After he went out of the Huashan School, I didn't abandon him and have never forgotten our relationship. I've always hoped that we can be together again under one school. Today, I've already promised him that we will again be in the same school." He said till here when he revealed his smile. Linghu Chong was shaken and he immediately understood. Linghu Chong thought, "He promised me that I'll be able to return to his school, but he didn't actually mean to return to Huashan. He actually meant that after the five schools have merged, then Master, Master-Wife, and I would again be under one school. That's also very good." His thought continued, "Master just said how the merger of the five schools must be with the aim 'to stop the fightings and to resolve the disputes'. If that's true, then the merger of the five schools is a good thing and not a bad thing at all. Looking ahead, it seems that the future of the Five Mountains School is still undecided whether its aim is going to be what Master has said or what Zuo Lengchan has envisioned. If Huashan and Heng-Shan School ally together, and if we add Hengshan School as well as some of the priests from Taishan School to our alliance, then our three and a half schools would be able to withstand Songshan School and half of the Taishan School. Only then would we be able to win."

Linghu Chong still had this disquiting thought inside his heart when he heard Zuo Lengchan said, "Congratulations Mr. Yue and Headmaster Linghu! From today onwards, both of you are again under one school. This is a really happy event." From among the crowd, hundreds of them started to applaud this.

Suddenly, Peachtree Branch Fairy loudly said, "This is inappropriate, really inappropriate, really really inappropriate!"

Peachtree Trunk Fairy asked, "Why is it inappropriate?"

Peachtree Branch Fairy answered, "The headmaster position of the Heng-Shan School should've belonged to us brothers, isn't that right?"

Peachtree Trunk Fairy and the other four brothers answered together, "Yes!"

Peachtree Branch Fairy said, "But we were polite, so we let Linghu Chong do it, isn't that right? But when we gave Linghu Chong this position, there was a clause for him to take revenge for Dingxian, Dingjing, and Dingyi Shi Tai, isn't this right?"

When he asked this, his other five brothers replied together, "Yes!"

Peachtree Branch Fairy said, "But what if the people who killed the three Shi Tai were inside the five mountains sword schools? According to my opinion, if it's not that person surnamed Zuo (left), then it's that person surnamed You (right), or maybe if it's not left or right, then it's that person surnamed Zhong (middle). If Linghu Chong joined the Five Mountains School, then he would become martial brother with this person surnamed Zuo or You or Zhong. Then how is he going to take revenge for Dingxian Shi Tai?"

The other Peach Valley Five Fairies answered, "What you said isn't wrong at all."

Zuo Lengchan was furious and he thought, "You six chaps have insulted me. Now, you'll only live for a few more hours. After that none of you would be able to spout your nonsense anymore!" He then heard Peachtree Root Fairy said, "If Linghu Chong isn't going to take revenge for Dingxian Shi Tai, then he can't be the headmaster of Heng-Shan School anymore, isn't this right? If he's not the headmaster of Heng-Shan School then he can't make the decision for Heng-Shan School, isn't this right? If he can't make the decision for Heng-Shan School, then whether Heng-Shan School joins the Five Mountains School or not isn't Linghu Chong's decision to make, isn't this right?"

As he asked each question, the other Peach Valley Five Fairies answered each question with a resounding, "Yes!"

Peachtree Trunk Fairy said, "A school cannot be without a headmaster. Since Linghu Chong can't be the headmaster of the Heng-Shan School anymore, we must select a wise person to do it, isn't this right? In Heng-Shan School, there are six heroes whose martial arts are powerful with vast knowledge. At that time, Dingxian Shi Tai has already decided, and just then Five Mountains

School's Chief Zuo has also said: 'The six of you have powerful martial art and vast knowledge. I've heard of your illustrious names for a long time already', isn't this right?"

As Peachtree Trunk Fairy asked each question, his five brothers again answered each question together with a, "Yes!" The person asking the question was getting louder and louder, while the people answering him were also getting stronger and stronger.

The crowd on the mountaintop found this to be really funny and they were also feeling happy that there were people here causing trouble for the Songshan School. Some people were laughing loudly at this, while tens of them were following the Peach Valley Five Fairies in answering, "Yes!"

After Yue Buqun approved of the merger, Linghu Chong's mind was in chaos. When he heard the Peach Valley Six Fairies spouting nonsense, he really liked it as it seemed that the six brothers were trying to get him out of trouble. But after hearing them for some time, he suddenly found it strange. He thought, "Peach Valley Six Fairies usually speak in an entangled manner, and what they say usually doesn't connect. But ever since we've arrived at Songshan, every single sentence they've said always has some deep meaning behind them. Just a moment ago what they were saying seemed to be for their own benefits, but those words they said actually had some hidden meaning behind them. And it's actually very hard to dispute what they were saying. It's really different from their usual way of randomly spouting nonsense. Could it be that there's a wise person who's directing them?"

He then heard Peachtree Flower Fairy said, "These six people in Heng-Shan School have outstanding martial arts and their knowledge and experience are just like those of grand heroes. Everyone's here not a fool, so you must know who these people are, isn't this right?" More than a hundred people laughingly answered, "Yes!"

Peachtree Flower Fairy said, "The world's right and wrong depends on people's opinion, and this depends on the people's heart. May I ask everyone, who are these six grand heroes?" More than two hundred people laughed loudly

while they answered, "Of course these six heroes are the Peach Valley Six Fairies."

Peachtree Root Fairy said, "Ah, in that case, this headmaster position of Heng-Shan School; the six of us are forced to take responsibility for it, pushed into taking on this difficult job, of noble character and high prestige, is in favour with the public, successful, comes to light, drum the mountain, opens the door..." As he talked, the sentence was getting more and more unintelligible, and the crowd was clutching their stomachs laughing loudly. Songshan School's people were now shouting loudly, "What are you six chaps rambling about? Quickly scram down this mountain!"

Peachtree Branch Fairy said, "Strange! Your Songshan School was trying everything you can to merge the five schools together. But now you unexpectedly want the six big heroes of Heng-Shan School to go down the mountain. Once the six of us are gone, then the rest of Heng-Shan School's little heroes and female heroes will of course follow us down the mountain, and this merger of the five mountains school would fail. Great! Heng-Shan School, let's go down the mountain and let their four schools merge together. Zuo Lengchan loves to become the headmaster of the four schools, we'll just let him do it. We, Heng-Shan School, won't join this celebration."

Yihe, Yiqing, and the rest of the female disciples hated Zuo Lengchan deeply. When they heard the Peach Valley Six Fairies said this, they immediately shouted, "Let's go!"

When Zuo Lengchan heard this, he was worried. He said to Linghu Chong, "Headmaster Linghu, we're martial artists, and our words are like gold. You already said that you'll follow Mr. Yue's lead in this. So should we disregard what you said?"

Linghu Chong lifted his head and took a look at Yue Buqun. Yue Buqun's face was looking intense, and he was continuously nodding his head; Linghu Chong turned his head and looked at Great Master Fangzheng and Priest Chongxu. He saw they were continuously shaking their heads seeing that he had not done what he was supposed to do. Suddenly, he heard Yue Buqun said, "Chong'er,

you and I are like father and son, and your Master-Wife is waiting for you. Could it be that you don't want to be together with us? To be like we were before?"

When Linghu Chong heard this, tears suddenly filled his eyes. Without thinking anymore, he loudly said, "Master, Master-Wife, Son actually hopes for this. Since you support the merger of the five schools, then Son doesn't dare to disobey you." He paused for a time, before continuing, "But, the deep enmity of the three Shi Tai..."

Yue Buqun loudly said, "Heng-Shan School's Dingxian, Dingjing, and Dingyi Shi Tai are the unfortunate victims of a plot, and everyone from the orthodox path regrets this deeply. From today onwards, after the merger of the five schools, Heng-Shan School's matter is also my business. Right now, the most important thing to do is to investigate this matter clearly. Then with the might of our five schools, and with the assistance of everyone from the orthodox path, we'll make minced meat out of this murderer. Chong'er, you don't need to be anxious. This murderer is our Five Mountains School's most hated enemy and we would never let him go." The way he said all this was full of righteousness and without any doubt. Heng-Shan School's female disciples cheered loudly. Yihe loudly called out, "Mr. Yue is right. If your honourable is able to preside over this and avenge our three honourable then everyone from Heng-Shan will be deeply grateful to you."

Yue Buqun said, "I'll take responsibility for this matter. Within three years, if I can't avenge the three Shi Tai, then everyone from the orthodox path can say that I'm a shameless and despicable lowlife." After he said this, Heng-Shan School's female disciples cheered loudly. Linghu Chong thought, "Even though I'm determined to avenge the three Shi Tai, I still wouldn't be able to put a time limit to my effort. Everyone suspects that Zuo Lengchan is the murderer, but how do we get proof for it? Even if we pressed him for an answer, he would never admit it. How can Master be so certain? He must've known who the murderer is and he must also have the evidence to back this up to be able to do this within three years."

He had previously agreed to accompany Yue Buqun in approving of the merger, but he was afraid that Heng-Shan School's disciples would not be willing to go with this decision. But when he saw them cheering loudly, and not a single one of them raised their objection, he felt relieved. In a loud voice, he said, "That's fabulous. My master, Mr. Yue, has already said that the most important thing is to investigate clearly who has killed the three Shi Tai, and that this person is the most hated enemy of the Five Mountains School and would never be let go. Headmaster Zuo, you approve of this?"

Zuo Lengchan coldly said, "These words are right. Why would I disapprove of it?"

"All the heroes here today have already heard. The most important thing is to investigate clearly who killed the three Shi Tai. No matter if he's the killer, or if he's the person pulling the string, or even if he's a highly respected senior, every single person must be executed," Linghu Chong announced. When the crowd heard this, half of them cheered.

Zuo Lengchan waited for them to quieten down before he said, "East mountain Taishan, south mountain Hengshan, west mountain Huashan, north mountain Heng-Shan, and middle mountain Songshan have unanimously approved of the merger. From now on, the names of our five mountains sword schools will no longer be mentioned in Wulin, and all of the five schools' disciples are now the new disciples of the Five Mountains School." He waved his left hand, and firecrackers started to go off from everywhere around the mountaintop celebrating the formal opening of the 'Five Mountains School'. The crowd was smiling and was amusedly looking around at each other. They all thought, "Zuo Lengchan has prepared everything so carefully for the merger of the five mountains sword schools. If the merger has actually failed today, it seems likely this Songshan mountaintop may have turned into a killing field and be flooded with blood."

The mountaintop was overflowing with smoke. Paper fillings were flying everywhere, the sound of the firecrackers was getting louder and louder, and no one was able to say anything. After a very long time, the firecrackers finally

stopped. This was followed by a number of people going up to Zuo Lengchan to congratulate him. It seemed that these people were the ones invited by Songshan School to assist them, or maybe they were the people who wanted to flatter Zuo Lengchan after seeing him succeed. Zuo Lengchan was humble in receiving their congratulations, and even his cold ice face revealed a smile or two.

Suddenly, Peachtree Root Fairy said, "Since the five mountains sword schools have already merged into Five Mountains School, then we'll allow nature to take its course. This is called knowing when to let things be."

Zuo Lengchan thought, "Ever since you six weirdoes have been on this mountaintop, these were the first words you said that resemble what normal people say."

Peachtree Trunk Fairy said, "Each of the schools has its own headmaster. Who do you think is the best to be the Five Mountains School's headmaster? If everyone unanimously elects the Peach Valley Six Fairies, then we'll be forced to take on the responsibility."

Peachtree Branch Fairy said, "Just then Mr. Yue said: The merger of the five schools is to the benefit of Wulin and not for personal ambition. Since it's like that, even though this position has a big responsibility, and requires a lot of work, the six of us will take on this difficult job."

Peachtree Leaf Fairy let out a long sigh, then he said, "Since everyone is so enthusiastic, how can we six brothers just sit on the side and be spectators, and not lend our strengths to the orthodox path in Jianghu?"

These six brothers were talking as if they had been elected to lead the Five Mountains School. A tall old man from Songshan School said loudly, "Who elected you to be the headmaster of the Five Mountains School? That's just crazy talk!" This person was Zuo Lengchan's martial brother, 'Tower Holding Palm' Ding Mian. At this time, people from Songshan School started to make some noise. One person said, "If today isn't a great celebration for the five schools' merger, we would've chopped all your legs off." Ding Mian added, "Headmaster Linghu, you don't care that these six crazy people are making a disturbance

here?"

Peachtree Flower Fairy loudly said, "You're calling Linghu Chong 'Headmaster Linghu'! You're electing him as the Five Mountains School's headmaster? Just then Zuo Lengchan said that there's no more Heng-Shan School or Huashan School in Wulin. Since you called him Headmaster Linghu, that means you recognise him as the headmaster of the Five Mountains School."

Peachtree Fruit Fairy said, "When compared to us, Linghu Chong isn't as good as us. But since you want Linghu Chong to become the Five Mountains School's headmaster, then you'll have to settle for second best then, and we just have to put up with it."

Peachtree Root Fairy raised his voice and called out, "Songshan School nominates Linghu Chong to be the Five Mountains School's headmaster! What does everyone think of this?"

This was followed by the tender-voiced cheers of more than a hundred females. Of course they were all the female disciples of the Heng-Shan School. Ding Mian was the one who called out 'Headmaster Linghu' and gave the Peach Valley Six Fairies this topic. He couldn't help feeling embarrassed and his face was blushing furiously, not knowing what to say. He just managed to stutter, "No, no! I... I didn't.... didn't mean it that way. I'm not nominating Linghu Chong to be the Five Mountains School's headmaster..."

Peachtree Trunk Fairy cut him off. "You're saying you don't want Linghu Chong to be the Five Mountains School's headmaster because you don't want to lose the Peach Valley Six Fairies. Since you love us so much, it would be impolite for us six brothers to refuse. We have to shamely take on this position then."

Peachtree Branch Fairy said, "How about this? There's no harm for us to take on the position for one and a half year while we wait for things to settle. Then we'll step down and give this position to a better person. There's no harm in doing that." His five brothers answered together, "Right, right, this is called taking the middle road."

Zuo Lengchan coldly said, "The six of you really talk a lot here as if all the world's heroes here are nothing. Why can't you allow other people to say a few words?"

Peachtree Flower Fairy replied, "We can, we can, why not? If you want to talk, please talk. If you want to fart, then please fart." When he said these words 'If you want to fart, then please fart', everyone around the place of worship suddenly became quiet because if anyone said anything, they could be considered farting.

After some time, Zuo Lengchan again said, "Heroes, please tell us your opinions. Ignore the nonsense those six crazy people were spouting."

Peach Valley Six Fairies took a breath together and snorted a few times. Then they said, "Someone’s farting, it smells really bad."

A thin old man from the Songshan School group said loudly, "Five mountains sword schools have the same root, different branches. We've been allied together and for the last few years, Headmaster Zuo has been our chief. Headmaster Zuo has been leading the five schools for a long time now, and has increased the prestige of the five schools. So naturally, Chief Zuo is our Five Mountains School's headmaster. Who else can take on this position?" This person participated in Liu Zhengfeng's gold basin hand-washing ceremony in Hengshan, so many people recognised him as Lu Bai. Ding Mian, Lu Bai, and Fei Bin killed Liu Zhengfeng's whole family. They were really cruel and merciless.

Peachtree Flower Fairy said, "Wrong, wrong! We must elect a new headmaster for the Five Mountains School. This position of headmaster, we must get rid of the old and exchange it with a new one."

Peachtree Fruit Fairy said, "That's right. If Zuo Lengchan becomes the headmaster again, then that's like changing the form but not the content and there wouldn't be an atmosphere of new-ness. Why would you merge the five schools then?"

Peachtree Branch Fairy said, "Everyone can become the headmaster of the

Five Mountains School, but Zuo Lengchan cannot."

Peachtree Trunk Fairy said, "According to my esteemed opinion, we should get everyone to take turns doing the job. A person can be a headmaster for a day. So I'll do it today, then you'll do it tomorrow. Everyone will share it and gets their turn. This is a really fair method and no one can take advantage of it. This is really good business, and everyone's happy."

Peachtree Root Fairy applauded and he said, "This method is really clever, so we should get the youngest young lady to do it first. I elect Heng-Shan School's little sister Qin Juan to be today's headmaster of the Five Mountains School."

Heng-Shan School's female disciples knew that the Peach Valley Six Fairies' statement was to make trouble for Zuo Lengchan, so they all cheered. For more than a thousand people there, this matter had nothing to do with them, so they also followed in cheering. In a moment, the Songshan mountaintop was again in chaos.

Chapter 33 Sword Fight

Translated by: Pokit

Edited by: Hhaung



"Ring," the two sword tips hit each other in mid-air. Sparks flew in all direction, and the two swords both bent into arches. The two both pushed out with their left hands, and then jumped back when the two hands met.

An old priest from the Taishan School said loudly, "This position of headmaster of the Five Mountains School must be held by a senior with virtue, ability, and prestige. How can it be otherwise?" This person's voice was loud, and even those people who were in the middle of the bustling noise managed to

hear it clearly.

Peachtree Branch Fairy said, "Ability, integrity, and prestige? In all of Wulin, the only person who fulfills all these requirements is Shaolin's Great Master Fangzheng." Every time the Peach Valley Six Fairies talked, everyone had laughed because no one could actually understand what they were talking about. But when they mentioned Great Master Fangzheng's name, the whole mountaintop became quiet. Great Master Fangzheng's martial art was powerful, and he was also a merciful and righteous person. He had always upheld justice in Wulin, and had also been revered by everyone for the last dozen of years. Shaolin School's reputation was flourishing, and it was also the number one school in Wulin. So when the descriptions of ‘ability, integrity, and prestige’ were used to describe Great Master Fangzheng, no one objected.

Peachtree Root Fairy shouted, "Is Shaolin temple's Abbot Fangzheng a person of ability, integrity, and prestige?"

The thousands of people there answered together, "He is!"

"Very good, since everyone agreed, Great Master Fangzheng is favoured by everyone then. Compared to the six of us, it seems Great Master Fangzheng is favoured slightly more. In that case, we'll have to invite Great Master Fangzheng to become the Five Mountains School's headmaster then."

Quite a few people from Songshan School and Taishan School immediately called out, "Nonsense! Great Master Fangzheng is the headmaster of Shaolin School. What does he have to do with our Five Mountains School?"

Peachtree Branch Fairy replied, "Just now, this old priest said he wanted to invite a senior of integrity, ability, and prestige to become the headmaster, so I found one for him. Could it be Great Master Fangzheng isn't a person of ability and integrity? Could it be he has no prestige? Alas, could it be that he's not a senior in Wulin? Are you saying Great Master isn't a senior of integrity, ability, and prestige, and that he's just a lowly nobody in Wulin? What absurdity! Who had the nerve to say that? Who didn't want him to become the headmaster? Peach Valley Six Fairies will have it out with him!"

Peachtree Trunk Fairy said, "Great Master Fangzheng has been the headmaster of Shaolin School for dozens of years already. Why can't he be the headmaster of the Five Mountains School? Could it be the Five Mountains School is above Shaolin School as of today? Which crazy person has the nerve to say Great Master Fangzheng isn’t fit to be the headmaster?"

Taishan School's Yujizi scowled. "Great Master Fangzheng is a person of integrity and ability, and everyone respects him deeply. But today we're electing the headmaster of the Five Mountains School. Great Master Fangzheng is a respected guest, how can we just drag him into our matter?"

Peachtree Trunk Fairy said, "According to what you said, Great Master Fangzheng cannot be the headmaster of the Five Mountains School because Shaolin School and Five Mountains Schools are unrelated."

"Correct," Yujizi answered.

"How come Shaolin School and Five Mountains School are unrelated? I say they're greatly related! Which five schools formed the Five Mountains School?" Peachtree Trunk Fairy inquired.

"Sir, you already know, but you're still asking about it again. Five Mountains School consists of Songshan, Taishan, Huashan, Hengshan, and Heng-Shan Schools," Yujizi replied.

Peachtree Flower Fairy and Peachtree Fruit Fairy replied together, "Wrong, wrong! Just then Zuo Lengchan said that after the five mountains sword schools merged, Songshan School and Taishan School's names will no longer exist in Wulin. How come you mentioned the name of the five schools again?"

Peachtree Leaf Fairy said, "I see he's still very much attached to his school and doesn't want to forget it. Once an opportunity arises, he'll hatch a plan and destroy the Five Mountains School. Then he'll start rebuilding his Taishan School and establish its prestige again." Many people in the crowd started laughing as they thought, "These Peach Valley Six Fairies are crazily turning everything upside down. But every time someone says something slightly wrong, they immediately latched onto it and the original speakers can't do

anything."

What all these people didn't know was that the Peach Valley Six Fairies had been debating endlessly since they managed to talk at around the age of two or three, and were particularly good at latching onto the mistakes in each other's speech. In the last dozens of years, they had become accustomed to doing this. Thus, it was no wonder that no one could be their match when the Peach Valley Six Fairies combined their six brains and mouths. Yujizi's face was green for a time, and red for a time. He said, "This is really one big bad luck for Five Mountains School with the six of you weirdos in it."

Peachtree Flower Fairy said, "You said the Five Mountains School is bad luck. That's really looking down at the Five Mountains School, and means that you don't want to stay inside the Five Mountains School."

Peachtree Fruit Fairy said, "This is only the first day that our Five Mountains School is opened, and yet you're already cursing it, saying that it's bad luck. In the future, the Five Mountains School will be glorious, and will stand as equals with Shaolin and Wudang. It will become a big school that everyone in Jianghu looks up to. Priest Yuji, how come you don't have a good heart and said something so ominous?"

Peachtree Leaf Fairy said, "I see Priest Yuji's body is at Five Mountains, but his heart is at Taishan, he's hoping the merger would fail and that it would break up by the end of the first day. With this kind of intention, how can the Five Mountains School accept him into the school?"

For the pugilists of Jianghu, they had always lived on the points of bloodied swords so they believed very much of things that were taboo. When everyone heard what the Peach Valley Six Fairies said, they all felt that the Peach Valley Six Fairies' words were logical. How could Yujizi said the Five Mountains School was bad luck on this auspicious day? Even Zuo Lengchan was dissatisfied at what Yujizi said. Yujizi knew he had said the wrong thing and he immediately stayed silent, while inwardly feeling angry.

Peachtree Trunk Fairy said, "I said Shaolin School and Songshan School are

related, but Priest Yuji said they're unrelated. So are they related or not? Are you right or am I right?"

Priest Yuji indignantly said, "Since you love to say that they're related, we'll just say that they're related."

Peachtree Trunk Fairy said, "Ha! Matters of the world are based on logic. Which mountain is Shaolin temple on? Which mountain is Songshan School on?"

Peachtree Flower Fairy answered, "Shaolin School is on Mount Shaoshi, Songshan School is on Mount Taishi. Shaoshi and Taishi both belong to Mount Songshan, is that right? Why did you say Shaolin School and Songshan School are unrelated?"

These words they said really made sense and everyone in the crowd were nodding their heads.

Peachtree Branch Fairy said, "Just then Mr. Yue said, after schools have merged together, the number of fighting in Jianghu would decrease. It's for this reason that he approved of the merger. He also said, the merging schools will be selected based on the similarity of their skills, the closeness of their locations, and their willingness to merge. Speaking of nearness, Shaolin and Songshan are near each other, they are even together on one mountain. If Shaolin School and Songshan School don't merge, then what Mr. Yue said was a little bit like breaking... breaking... breaking some... some sort of air."

The crowd knew that he managed to hold back from saying the word 'wind', but they giggled over it. They all felt it was rather unthinkable for Shaolin and Songshan to merge, but what Peachtree Branch Fairy said was also quite reasonable, and it followed what Yue Buqun said earlier. Linghu Chong was secretly impressed, "The Peach Valley Six Fairies are experts in latching onto someone's words, but I'd never expected them to say these kinds of words. I wonder who's helping them?"

Peachtree Trunk Fairy said, "Great Master Fangzheng is in favour with the public, and originally we all wanted to invite him to become our Five Mountains

School's headmaster. But someone raised the issue that Great Master Fangzheng doesn't belong to the Five Mountains School. So Shaolin and Five Mountains School must merge and become 'Shaolin Five Mountains School.' That way Great Master Fangzheng can become the new school's headmaster."

Peachtree Root Fairy said, "That's right! At the present time, there's no one who can compare to Great Master Fangzheng or more fit to become the headmaster."

Peachtree Fruit Fairy said, "We, Peach Valley Six Fairies, accept Great Master Fangzheng. Could it be there are people who don’t accept?"

Peachtree Flower Fairy said, "If there's anyone who doesn't want to accept, then there's no harm to come out and have a contest with us. Once you beat the Peach Valley Six Fairies, you might as well have a contest with Great Master Fangzheng. Once you beat Great Master Fangzheng, you might as well have a contest with all the great masters from the Da Mo Hall, Luohan Hall, Commandment Courtyard, and the Scripture Chamber. Once you beat all the great masters from the Da Mo Hall, Luohan Hall, Commandment Courtyard, and the Scripture Chamber, then you can have a contest with Priest Chongxu of Wudang..."

Peachtree Fruit Fairy interrupted, "Fifth brother, why do they have to have a contest with Wudang's Priest Chongxu?"

Peachtree Flower Fairy answered, "The two headmasters from Wudang School and Shaolin School are best friends who share weal and woe together. If someone beat Great Master Fangzheng, how could Priest Chongxu not come out?"

Peachtree Leaf Fairy said, "That's right! You're not wrong at all! Once they beat Priest Chongxu, then they'll fight the Peach Valley Six Fairies."

Peachtree Root Fairy said, "Yi! They already fought against us, why do they have to fight us again?"

Peachtree Leaf Fairy replied, "Even if we lost the first time, how could the Peach Valley Six Fairies happily admit defeat? We'll naturally dispute this with

those smelly bastards again."

The crowd was laughing madly listening to the six brothers talking back and forth. There were some who were disagreeing with them, and there were some who were calling out and following them. Yujizi was extremely mad and couldn't hold it back anymore. He flew forward with his sword in his hand and called out, "Peach Valley Six Weirdos, Yujizi doesn't accept and wants to fight with you."

Peachtree Root Fairy said, "We're all from the Five Mountains School, how can we be killing each other?"

"You talk too much. The gods detest it and the ghosts loathe it! Once we get rid of the six of you from the Five Mountains School, our eyes will see clearer and our ears will hear better," Yujizi replied.

Peachtree Trunk Fairy said, "Alright, you have a sword in hand and murder in your heart. Are you thinking of using your sword to chop chop chop chop chop chop our six heads?"

Yujizi snorted and ignored him, but his eyes were full of murderous intention. Peachtree Branch Fairy said, "Today is the merger of our five schools. If on the first day, your Taishan School kill six masters from the Heng-Shan School, how can the Five Mountains School cooperate after today? How can we still work together?"

Yujizi thought that these words sounded logical. If he killed these six people today, then there would be endless fighting as there would certainly be someone from Heng-Shan School who would seek revenge for them. He immediately restrained his anger and said, "Since you already know that we should work together, then stop hindering this big matter with your nonsense, and stop talking." He took his long sword a foot out of the scabbard then slammed it back in.

Peachtree Leaf Fairy said, "How about words that are beneficial to the Five Mountains School's future and people in the orthodox path?"

Yujizi coldly laughed. "Hng, none of you are saying anything like that!"

Peachtree Flower Fairy said, "Doesn't the matter of who's going to become the headmaster of the Five Mountains School concern our school's future and the destiny of Wulin's orthodox path? The six of us are doing our best to choose a senior master who's in favour with the public to become our headmaster here. But you're so selfish, and only want that person who gave you three thousand gold taels and four pretty ladies to become the headmaster."

Yujizi was livid as he shouted, "NONSENSE! Who said someone gave me three thousand gold taels and four pretty ladies?"

Peachtree Flower Fairy said, "Hmmm... I said the number wrongly. It's not three thousand gold taels; it's definitely four thousand taels. It's not four pretty ladies, or three ladies, but it's five ladies. You don't know who gave these to you? It's that person who you wanted to elect as the headmaster. That's the person who gave these gifts to you.

Yujizi immediately drew his long sword. "You're talking nonsense again! I want your blood splattered right here!"

Peachtree Flower Fairy cackled madly, walked towards Yujizi, and said, "You used such a despicable method to harm Priest Tianmen who was your Taishan School's headmaster. Are you still thinking of harming other people? Not only was Priest Tianmen killed by you right here, other people from your own school were harmed by you. Harming people really must be your specialty. Why don't you see and try it on my body." As he said this, he strode forward step by step. Yujizi held his long sword in front of him and severely shouted, "Stop! Walk one more step and I won't be polite anymore."

Peachtree Flower Fairy said, "Are you being polite right now? This Songshan mountaintop isn't yours. I'm allowed to walk anywhere I want, go to the east, walk to the west, what's that got to do with you?" As he said this, he again walked forward a few more steps and was now only a few feet away from Yujizi. Looking at Peachtree Flower Fairy's ugly, long horse-face with crooked yellow teeth, feeling of extreme loathing grew within Yujizi. With a stab, he thrust out his long sword towards Peachtree Flower Fairy's chest.

Peachtree Flower Fairy hurriedly dodged the stab and scolded, "Smelly traitor, you're really... really attacking!"

Yujizi had already grasped the essence of Taishan School's swordsmanship. As his first attack came out, his second attack followed and the sword moves were extremely fast. Peachtree Flower Fairy had already dodged four attacks in the time he took to scold Yujizi. But Yujizi's sword moves were getting faster and faster, while Peachtree Flower Fairy's hands and legs were very busy dodging in a disorderly fashion. "Woah, woah!" Peachtree Flower Fairy continuously called out. He wanted to take the short iron stick hanging from his waist but he was too slow to do so. As the sword flashed around, Peachtree Flower Fairy's left shoulder was pierced. Immediately within seconds of this, Yujizi's long sword fell from his hand and his whole body flew up into the air. His four limbs were each grabbed by Peachtree Root, Peachtree Trunk, Peachtree Branch, and Peachtree Leaf Fairies. This was like a rabbit caught by a falcon, and happened very quickly.

Suddenly, there was a flash of yellow and a sword chopped down towards Peachtree Branch Fairy's head. Peachtree Fruit Fairy, already beside his brothers to protect them, extended his short iron stick to block the sword. The yellow-clad person sent his second sword thrust towards Peachtree Root Fairy's chest. Peachtree Flower Fairy drew out his short iron stick to block this attack and recognized the yellow-clad person as Songshan School's headmaster, Zuo Lengchan. Zuo Lengchan knew that even though the Peach Valley Six Fairies talked in a jumble, they actually had astonishing skills. On that year when he sent a master of Huashan School's sword branch, Cheng Buyou, to Mount Huashan, Cheng Buyou was torn into four pieces. When he saw Yujizi captured by these six brothers, he knew he must rescue Yujizi promptly to prevent him from being torn apart. Actually, since he was the host, it was inappropriate for him to just fight as he wanted. But the situation was desperate so he hastily pulled his sword out to help. Zuo Lengchan attacked both Peachtree Branch Fairy and Peachtree Root Fairy to force them to release their hands to dodge the attacks. But he never expected the Peach Valley Six Fairies to work together seamlessly. While four of them were holding the enemy's hands and legs, the

remaining two were on the outside protecting. These two sword moves from Zuo Lengchan were swift and fierce but they were successfully blocked by Peachtree Fruit Fairy and Peachtree Flower Fairy.

Actually, Yujizi's life was hanging by a thread. Zuo Lengchan had used his inner energy when he was trading blows with Peachtree Fruit Fairy and Peachtree Flower Fairy because he knew he must force these two people back within six moves. If he didn't manage to do this in six moves, then it might be too late to save Yujizi from being torn apart.

Zuo Lengchan immediately circled his long sword and the sword flashed. A moment later, Yujizi uttered a shout and his head hit the ground. Peachtree Root Fairy and Peachtree Branch Fairy were now each holding an arm, and Peachtree Trunk Fairy was holding a leg. Only Peachtree Leaf Fairy was holding a leg which was still attached to the rest of Yujizi's body.

Zuo Lengchan knew he had no way of forcing the Peach Valley Six Fairies to release Yujizi quickly. So taking the bull by its horn, he chopped both of Yujizi's arms and one of his legs so the four fairies couldn't tear him apart. This situation was very similar to when your hand was bitten by a poisonous snake and you cut your arm off to save yourself. After Zuo Lengchan cut off three of Yujizi's limbs, he anticipated the Peach Valley Six Fairies would cease to give anymore trouble to this crippled man. So he retreated with a cold laughter.

Peachtree Branch Fairy said, "Zuo Lengchan, you gave gold and pretty ladies to Yujizi so he helped you to become the headmaster. How come you cut off his arms and legs? Are you trying to silence him?"

Peachtree Root Fairy said, "He's afraid we would tear Yujizi into four pieces. That's why he came out to help. But he got the wrong idea."

Peachtree Fruit Fairy said, "He thought he was being clever. What a pity. How funny. We grabbed Yujizi just to play around with him. Today is the opening day of the Five Mountains School, who would dare to kill people here?"

Peachtree Flower Fairy said, "Yujizi really wanted to kill me. But we're friends from the same school, so why would we kill him? We only wanted to throw him

up and down, scare him a bit. But Zuo Lengchan was crude, and his brain is muddled."

Peachtree Leaf Fairy, with his whole body drenched with Yujizi's blood, dragged the leg which was still connected to the body and dropped Yujizi in front of Zuo Lengchan while continuously shaking his head. He said, "Zuo Lengchan, you're too violent. How could you harm Yujizi like this? He doesn't have his two arms and one leg anymore, what should we call him from now on?"

Zuo Lengchan sucked a breath in anger and thought, "If I were just a bit slower, the four of you would've torn Yujizi into four pieces. How can he still live? How dare you to speak such words now! But I have no evidence to make this clear to everyone here."

Peachtree Root Fairy said, "Zuo Lengchan can kill Yujizi with a stab of his sword and give him a clean death. But instead he cut off his two arms and one leg to make him not alive, not dead. So merciless, so heartless."

Peachtree Trunk Fairy said, "Everyone is from the Five Mountains School. If we have any problem, let's talk about it. Why do you need to be so violent? You have no loyalty at all."

'Tower Holding Palm' Ding Mian said loudly, "You six weirdos, whether we move or not, you were going to tear him into four pieces. Headmaster Zuo went in to save Priest Yujizi precisely because he's from the same school. What you said was absurd."

Peachtree Branch Fairy said, "We were clearly just playing around with Yujizi but Zuo Lengchan thought it was real. It's hard to distinguish between real and fake. Zuo Lengchan was just being unwise."

Peachtree Leaf Fairy said, "A gentleman takes responsibility for what he does. You have already harmed Yujizi but you're trying to deny it now. There's no valour in what you're doing. There are so many heroes on this mountaintop who saw you chopped off Yujizi's two arms and leg. Do you think you can still deny it now?"

Peachtree Flower Fairy said, "Heartless, unrighteous, unwise, cowardly. How can this kind of person become the headmaster of the Five Mountains School? Zuo Lengchan, you must be dreaming." When he finished speaking, the six brothers shook their heads together.

Actually, the Taishan School's headmaster would've been torn into four pieces if Zuo Lengchan hadn't use his wonderful sword art to cut off Yujizi's two arms and one leg. The first class masters besides the worshipping place naturally could see this, and they were praising Zuo Lengchan's wonderful sword art in their hearts. But the Peach Valley Six Fairies declined this vehemently so it was hard for other people to dispute them. The people who knew that Zuo Lengchan had suffered an injustice found this really funny while the ones who didn't see the real reason felt that Zuo Lengchan behaved very crudely and violently; their faces showed their resentment.

Linghu Chong had already known the Peach Valley Six Fairies for a long time so he had a very good understanding of their characters. He thought, "The Peach Valley Six Fairies attacked Zuo Lengchan with every word they said today. How come their brains are so clear today? Most likely there's someone directing them from the side." He slowly walked closer to the Peach Valley Six Fairies to see which master was helping them, but he saw there was no one else standing beside the Peach Valley Six Fairies. The five brothers were busy trying to stem the bleeding on Peachtree Flower Fairy's shoulder. Linghu Chong turned his head around and gazed to the west. Suddenly he heard a very faint sound in his ear: "Brother Chong, are you looking for me?"

Linghu Chong was surprised and happy. Even though the voice was faint, he heard it clearly and it was Yingying's voice. He turned his head slightly to look at where that voice was coming from. But what he saw was an extremely fat and bearded big man leaning on a big rock, lazily stretching his hand to scratch his head. On this Songshan mountaintop, there was at least around one to two hundred bearded big man so no one would pay any attention to them. Linghu Chong squinted his eyes, and suddenly he saw a cunning and charming smile in that person's eyes. He was exulted and walked towards her. Yingying transmitted

her voice to him, "Don't come here, you'll ruin the secret." This voice was very faint, like it was coming from somewhere far.

Linghu Chong promptly halted his step and thought, "I don't know what kind of voice transmitting martial art you have, but it must be one of your father's secret." He immediately understood, "Those words the Peach Valley Six Fairies said were all taught by you. No wonder these six slow-witted people can say something like heartless, unrighteous, unwise, and cowardly." He felt really happy and wanted to show this. He loudly declared, "Peach Valley Seven Fairies' words are reasonable. I know the Peach Valley Six Fairies only have six fairies, but who could've thought they have one more clever and beautiful seventh fairy, the female fairy, Peachtree Calyx Fairy!"[3]

When the crowd heard Linghu Chong suddenly saying some inanity unexpectedly, they were all startled. Yingying transmitted her voice, "This is a very critical time. You're the headmaster of the Heng-Shan School, so don't say any nonsense. Zuo Lengchan is backed into a corner now, so this is your good opportunity to become the Five Mountains School's headmaster."

Linghu Chong was alarmed and he thought, "Yingying disguised herself so that she could be here at Songshan and help me become the Five Mountains School's headmaster. She's the daughter of the Sun Moon Sect's Chief, and currently a mortal enemy of the orthodox sects. If she's discovered, it's going to be very dangerous. She's braving danger just to help me gain a name in Wulin. She has such deep feelings towards me. I... I... I really don't know how to repay her."

He then heard Peachtree Root Fairy said, "Great Master Fangzheng is such a senior master but you're not willing for him to become the headmaster. Yujizi has no arm and no leg. Zuo Lengchan is heartless and unrighteous. So naturally, neither of them can become the headmaster anymore. Let's choose a young hero who has the world's

number one sword art to become the Five Mountains School's headmaster. If there's anyone who doesn't accept this, then there's no harm in trying out his sword art." As he said this, he opened his left palm and extended his arm

towards Linghu Chong.

Peachtree Trunk Fairy said, "This young hero Linghu is Heng-Shan School's headmaster. He has a deep relationship with Huashan School's Mr. Yue, and he's also a good friend of Hengshan School's Mr. Mo Da. Within the five mountains sword schools, three schools have supported him."

Peachtree Branch Fairy said, "Taishan School's priests are all insects (sounds similar to Linghu Chong's name), so most of them naturally support him and not many would go against him."

Peachtree Leaf Fairy said, "Everyone in the Five Mountains School uses a sword. So whoever has the highest sword art will, of course, without a doubt, become the headmaster."

Peachtree Flower Fairy pressed on the injury on his shoulder and said, "Zuo Lengchan, if you don't accept, there's no harm in competing swords with young hero Linghu. Whoever wins will become the Five Mountains School's headmaster. This is called the leadership challenge sword fight!"

Among the people who had come to Songshan, besides the people from the five mountains sword schools and people like Great Master Fangzheng, Priest Chongxu, and others with an interest in the events, most of the people who came here were looking for some entertainment. Everyone knew that if the merger of the five schools were successful then there would be fighting to decide for the headmaster position. These Jianghu people really didn't care for lengthy debates. They didn’t mind when the Peach Valley Six Fairies were entangling Zuo Lengchan with words and saying interesting things. But if everyone were to talk the way Yue Buqun did, and talk until the sun goes down, it would definitely bore the hell out of everyone there. So hearing Peachtree Flower Fairy say “leadership challenge sword fight', they cheered and applauded loudly.

The crowd had seen Priest Tianmen die miserably and they had also seen Zuo Lengchan chopping off limbs. These two events could be said to be scary and too close to reality. But the contest to decide on the headmaster position of the

Five Mountains School would involve masters and they would be able to see a few good fights. This would more than satisfy their cravings. That was why the crowd was applauding and cheering excitedly.

Linghu Chong thought, "I promised Great Master Fangzheng and Priest Chongxu that I will block Zuo Lengchan from becoming the Five Mountains School's headmaster so that he can't cause a disaster in Wulin. But if Master becomes the headmaster, him being a just and fair person, naturally people will be pleased and willing to accept him. Besides him, who else in the five mountains sword schools can do this job?" With a loud voice, he said, "How could everyone forget a most suitable person for this position? If we don't elect the Gentleman Sword Mr. Yue to become our headmaster, whom else can we choose? Mr. Yue's martial art is very high and his knowledge is outstanding. He's also righteous and compassionate towards people. This is well known, otherwise, how could he have gained the name 'Gentleman Sword'? My Heng-Shan School elects Mr. Yue to be the Five Mountains School's headmaster." After he said this, the disciples of Huashan School applauded and cheered.

From among the Songshan School, someone said, "Even though Mr. Yue is not the wrong choice, he's still below Headmaster Zuo by a notch." Another person said, "Headmaster Zuo has been the chief of the Five Mountains Sword Schools for so many years already. It's very reasonable that he becomes the Five Mountains School's headmaster. Why do we need to elect someone else?" Another person said, "In my opinion, the headmaster of the Five Mountains School must be Headmaster Zuo and none other. Then we'll establish four vice positions for Mr. Yue, Mr. Mo Da, young hero Linghu, and Priest Yu... Yu... Yu... either Priest Yuqingzi or Priest Yuyinzi. That'll be appropriate."

Peachtree Branch Fairy called out, "Yujizi is not dead yet. He only has two shorter arms and a shorter leg. You don't want him anymore?"

Peachtree Leaf Fairy said, "Sword fight, sword fight! Whoever has the best martial art should become the headmaster!"

The thousands of Jianghu people echoed this sentiment by shouting, "Right! Right! Sword fight, sword fight!"

Linghu Chong thought, "In the situation today, Zuo Lengchan must be overthrown first. Then Songshan School will lose their leadership. Otherwise, my Master would never become the Five Mountains School's headmaster." He immediately drew his sword and called out, "Mr. Zuo, all the realm's heroes are here. They all want us to have a sword fight to take the leadership. What do you say if we start first?" He inwardly pondered, "Zuo Lengchan's cold palm is very formidable, and my bare hand martial art is nothing compared to his, but I wouldn't lose to him when it comes to sword art. After I've won against Zuo Lengchan, I'll lose to Master and no one would be able to say anything. If Mr. Mo Da were to fight, he won't necessarily be able to beat Master. Two masters from the Taishan School are injured and dead, so they wouldn't have anyone who could compete well enough anymore. If my sword art isn't Zuo Lengchan's match and I lose to him, I would've still exhausted a lot of his internal energy. My Master can fight him afterwards and have a very good chance of winning." He hacked twice with his long sword and said, "Mr. Zuo, everyone in the five mountains sword schools uses sword, so we'll decide this with a sword." He said this first to prevent Zuo Lengchan from suggesting they fight barehanded.

The crowd called out one by one, "Young hero Linghu is quick with his word, fight with the sword." "The winner becomes the headmaster, the loser gets ready to receive his order. That's a fair deal, that's the best way." "Mr. Zuo, get down and accept this challenge. What are you scrupling about, afraid to lose?" "You already talked for half a day, what else is there to say? Go and fight!"

In a moment, that Songshan mountaintop was all a clamour with shouts. Everyone was shouting; even the most experienced seniors were shouting. These people were invited by Zuo Lengchan, but this matter of who would become the Five Mountains School's headmaster had nothing to do with them. They originally didn't want to butt in, but a martial art competition to take the leadership would be very exciting to watch, so they were all hoping to watch a few good fights. With this added urgings from the guests, it became imperative that if they didn't have a competition then this headmaster position would not be decided.

Linghu Chong was very happy to see this and he called out, "Mr. Zuo, if you're not willing to cross swords with me, how can you be the Five Mountains School's headmaster in the presence of all these people?"

The crowd called out one by one, "Sword fight, sword fight! Not fighting isn't for a hero, but for a dog!"

Many people from the Songshan School knew Linghu Chong's sword art was wonderful, and Zuo Lengchan could not be guaranteed a win against him. But there was no good reason to say why Zuo Lengchan couldn't compete swords with him. So all they could do was scowl and stay silent. In all the clamour, a clear voice was heard, "All the heroes here want a sword fight to decide the Five Mountains School's headmaster. We can't just brush away their wonderful idea." The person who said this was Yue Buqun.

The crowd called out, "Mr. Yue is right, sword fight to take the leadership, sword fight to take the leadership!"

Yue Buqun said, "Sword fight to take the leadership is one thing. But the real intention of our five mountains sword schools merging into one is to lessen the fighting between schools. That's why in this martial art competition, once the result is decided you must stay your hand and not take your opponent's life. Otherwise, it would be a great violation against the real intention of our five mountains school's merger."

When the crowd heard him talking of leadership, they all quietened down. A big man said, "That's all good, but sabres and swords don't have eyes. So if you die, that's your own bad luck. Who can you blame?" Another person said, "If you're afraid of death or injury, go hide at home and hug your doll. Why would you be here to become the Five Mountains School's headmaster?" The crowd burst into laughter.

Yue Buqun said, "Even so, to be injury free is always wonderful. I only have a few shallow ideas, but please consider them."

Someone called out, "Quickly fight! What else is there to say?" Another person said, "Don't blindly disturb him. Hear what Mr. Yue has to say." The

person before said, "Who's disturbing? Go home and ask your darling!" The other person hurled abuses back.

Yue Buqun said, "Anyone here is entitled to participate in the leadership sword fight, but there are some stipulations..." His internal energy was abundant. When he talked, he completely drowned the voices of those people hurling abuses at each other. They turned around to listen to him continue, "The leadership martial art competition is to contend for the leadership of the Five Mountains School. For that reason, if you're not a member of the Five Mountains School, you can't come and fight even if you have heavenly skills. Otherwise, this fight would be called 'World's Number One' fight, and not a way to decide the leadership of the Five Mountains School."

The crowd all answered, "Right! Non-members of the Five Mountains School can't come and compete." There was also a person who said, "Let's all fight to become the 'World's Number One'; that's also good!" This person was obviously talking nonsense, so no one replied to him.

Yue Buqun said, "Concerning this martial art competition, about not taking other's life and not injuring people from the same school, Mr. Zuo, please tell us what you think."

Zuo Lengchan coldly said, "Of course you cannot take another person's life in this fight. But not to injure other people would be very difficult. What's Mr. Yue's esteemed opinion in this?"

Yue Buqun said, "I believe the best way would be to ask Great Master Fangzheng, Priest Chongxu, Beggar Clan Leader Xie, Qingcheng School Priest Yu, and other virtuous senior masters in Wulin to be judges. Who wins and who loses will be decided by them to avoid people fighting endlessly. We're just deciding the leadership, not life and death."

Fangzheng said, "Good, good! 'Deciding the leadership and not life and death', these words will stop blood from being spilled. What does Mr. Zuo think?"

"Since it’s Great Master's concern for my humble sect, I'll definitely obey it. We were originally the five mountains sword schools, so each school should

send out one person to compete in swords to take the leadership. Otherwise, each school will send out hundreds of people and the competition will drag on for years without any conclusion," Zuo Lengchan replied.

The crowd felt that it wouldn't be very lively if there were only five people fighting. But if each school were to send out its headmaster, then no one else from any of the schools would be able to put up a challenge anyway. They then heard the people from Songshan School cheering, so no one else objected to this.

Peachtree Branch Fairy suddenly said, "Taishan School's headmaster is Yujizi. Will this ox-nosed priest with no arms and no leg also come forth and compete?"

Peachtree Leaf Fairy replied, "He's only missing both arms and a leg, why can't he go forth and compete? He still has one remaining leg. He can take off and kick people."

When the crowd heard this, they couldn't help laughing.

Yuyinzi from Taishan School indignantly said, "These six weirdos harmed my martial brother Yujizi and made him a cripple. Yet, they're still here ridiculing him. I want each of their arms and legs cut off. Come, let's fight one on one!" After he said this, he immediately drew his sword out and stood there. This Yuyinzi was tall and thin, and had an imposing appearance. As he stood there with a solemn demeanour and with his priest robe floating in the wind, he looked really grand. The crowd cheered for him.

Peachtree Root Fairy said, "From the Taishan School, you're the one who's going to compete for the leadership?"

Peachtree Leaf Fairy said, "Were you selected by your school or did you volunteer yourself?"

Yuyinzi replied, "How does that concern you?"

Peachtree Leaf Fairy said, "Of course it concerns us. Not only it concerns us, it greatly concerns us, it extremely concerns us. If you were selected by the

Taishan School to compete for the leadership, then once you lose, Taishan School's second person cannot compete again."

Yuyinzi said, "The second person cannot come out to compete, so what?"

Suddenly someone from the Taishan School said, "Martial Brother Yuyinzi isn't my choice. If he lose, of course, another master from Taishan School can go out." The person who said this was Yuqingzi.

Peachtree Flower Fairy said, "Haha, another master; is that you?"

"Good, maybe it's me," Yuqingzi answered.

Peachtree Fruit Fairy called out, "Everyone look. Taishan School again has an internal strife. Priest Tianmen has already died and Priest Yuji is injured. These two people are again fighting to become Taishan School's headmaster."

"Nonsense!" Yuyinzi retorted.

But Yuqingzi was smiling coldly and didn't say anything.

Peachtree Flower Fairy said, "So who's going to compete for the Taishan School?"

Yuqingzi and Yuyinzi answered at the same time, "Me!"

Peachtree Root Fairy said, "Alright, the two of you fight first and see who's stronger. Talking won't clear it up but there will definitely be a winner and a loser after you fight."

Yuqingzi came out and waved his hand. "Martial brother, step back! Don't get ridiculed by other people."

"Why would other people ridicule me? Martial Brother Yuji was heavily injured, I just want to take revenge for him," Yuyinzi interjected.

"Are you taking revenge or competing for the leadership?"

"Do you think we can be the Five Mountains School's headmaster based on our measly skills? Isn't that absurd? Everyone from Taishan School has unanimously supported Chief Zuo to be our Five Mountains School's headmaster a long time ago. Why would we two brothers go out and be

shamed?" Yuyinzi reasoned.

"In that case, step back. I'm the eldest in Taishan School right now."

Yuyinzi coldly laughed and said, "Hmmph, you might be the oldest, but looking at what you do every day, do you think anyone in the school still respects you?"

Yuqingzi became angry and said fiercely, "What's your meaning? You refuse to acknowledge the order of seniority? What's our school's number one rule?"

"Haha, don't forget, we're now members of the Five Mountains School. We entered the Five Mountains School at the same year, same month, same time. What order of seniority? The rules of the Five Mountains School haven't been drawn up yet, so what number one, number two? You mentioned the Taishan School's rule to keep me under control. It's a pity there's only Five Mountains School now," Yuyinzi said.

Yuqingzi didn't know what to say. His left hand pointed at Yuyinzi's nose and he angrily said, "You... you... you..."

The thousands of men called out, "Fight! See who's got higher skills!"

The long sword in Yuqingzi's hand kept trembling but he didn't put it up. Even though he was older, he was always drowning himself in wine, and his sword art wasn't as good as Yuyinzi. Even after the five mountains sword schools merged, it would be inevitable that each of the five schools would still be separated physically on five mountains. Thus, each mountain would have a leader. Yuqingzi and Yuyinzi knew their skills were far below Zuo Lengchan, so they had no plan to become the Five Mountains School's headmaster. But they were thinking of who would become the leader once they got back to their mountain. At this time, the crowd was very excited waiting for the brothers to clash weapons. Yuqingzi did not dare to fight rashly but he really resented Yuyinzi for shaming him in front of the realm's heroes. Moreover, Zuo Lengchan was likely to install Yuyinzi as the leader on Taishan, so he would be bound to follow Yuyinzi's order from now on and he would never be able to hold his head high again. For the moment, the two brothers were staring angrily

at each other. Neither of them wanted to back down.

Suddenly, someone in the crowd with a sharp voice said, "I see the two of you haven't even grasped the slightest bit of Taishan School's martial art essence. You really have thick faces to be quarrelling right here and wasting everyone's time."

Everyone turned to have a look at the person who said this. They saw a tall handsome youth with a beautiful appearance whose face was pale and whose mouth turned up at the corner carrying a cold mocking smile. He was Lin Pingzhi of the Huashan School.

Someone recognised him and called out, "He's Huashan School's Mr. Yue's new son-in-law."

Linghu Chong thought, "Martial Brother Lin has always been very cautious and doesn't speak very much. After not seeing him for just a while, I'm surprised he now actually dared to ridicule these two traitors in front of everyone here."

Yuqingzi, Yuyinzi, and Yujizi were in cahoots in harming Priest Tianmen to get on Zuo Lengchan's good side, so Linghu Chong already felt resentful towards these two priests. When Lin Pingzhi insulted them, he felt quite happy.

Yuyinzi said, "If you say I haven't grasped the slightest bit of Taishan School's martial art, does that mean you've grasped it all? Then please use Taishan School's martial art and let our eyes be opened." He said the words 'Taishan School' especially loudly. His meaning was, "You're a Huashan School's disciple, but even if you have strong martial art, it would still be Huashan School's and you couldn't possibly use my Taishan School's martial art".

Lin Pingzhi gave a cold sneer and said, "Taishan School's martial art is deep and profound. How can traitors like you who harmed your own school member be able to understand..."

"Ping'er," Yue Buqun shouted. "Priest Yuyinzi is still your elder, don't be rude!"

"Yes!" Lin Pingzhi responded.

Yuyinzi indignantly said, "Mr. Yue, what a good disciple and son-in-law you have! He can even speak nonsense about Taishan School's martial art."

Suddenly, a female voice said, "How do you know for sure he was speaking nonsense?"

A good looking young woman stepped out. Her skirt was brushing the ground, her belts were floating in the wind, and a red flower was inserted into her hair. It was Yue Lingshan. She was carrying a long sword on her back and her raised right hand held the sword handle. She said, "I'll use Taishan School's sword art and ask for your advice."

Yuyinzi knew she was Yue Buqun's daughter. He was thinking that since Yue Buqun had approved the merger of the five schools earlier, at the moment Zuo Lengchan would be on friendly terms with him, so he didn't dare to offend her. He smiled slightly and said, "Congratulations Miss Yue. Are you angry because I didn't come to your wedding and drank your celebratory wine? I admired your noble school's wonderful sword art. But this is the first time I've heard of Huashan School's disciples being able to use Taishan School's sword art."

Yue Lingshan raised her eyebrows and said, "My father wants to be the headmaster of the Five Mountains School. So, naturally, he has researched the sword arts of each of the five schools. Otherwise, even if my father wins against the other four schools' headmasters, if he used only Huashan School's swordsmanship, he can't become the Five Mountains School's headmaster."

When these words were said, it created a sensation through the crowd. A person queried, "Mr. Yue wants to become the Five Mountains School's headmaster?" Another person shouted, "Mr. Yue also knows how to use Taishan, Hengshan, Songshan, and Heng-Shan Schools' martial arts?"

Yue Buqun said in a clear voice, "My daughter talks irresponsibly. Don't worry about what my little kid said."

But Yue Lingshan continued, "Martial Uncle Zuo, if you can use Taishan, Hengshan, Huashan, and Heng-Shan Schools' sword arts to defeat the masters of

each school, then we'll naturally submit and accept you as the Five Mountains School's headmaster. Otherwise, although your Songshan School's sword art is very formidable in the world, it's still only the Songshan School's sword art which is good, and has nothing to do with the other four schools at all."

The crowd all thought these words were right. If someone was proficient with the sword arts of each school, then he should become the Five Mountains School's headmaster and this would be very fitting. But each school's sword arts had undergone countless of refinements for hundreds of years by many masters. Even if someone was taught by a master of each school, and had undergone dozens of years of practice, he might not necessarily be able to fully learn all of the sword arts from the five schools let alone the secret skills of each school that wasn't usually passed down to ordinary disciples. The possibility of someone actually grasping the essence of all the sword arts from all five schools at the same time was quite remote.

But Zuo Lengchan thought, "Why did Yue Buqun's daughter say this? She must have an intention for saying this. Has Yue Buqun become muddled? Does he really want to fight me for the Five Mountains School's leadership?"

Yuyinzi said, "So Mr. Yue is already proficient in the five schools' sword arts. This has never happened in the history of the five mountains sword schools before. I'd like to ask for Miss Yue's advice on Taishan School's swordsmanship."

"Very well!" Yue Lingshan shouted.

With a 'shua' sound, she drew the long sword she was carrying at her back. Yuyinzi was livid. "I'll compete with your father! A little girl like you dare to draw your sword against me!" He reasoned Yue Buqun would surely stop this. In his heart, he believed that the Yue couple was the only two people in Huashan School who would be able to fight him. How would he know Yue Buqun would only shake his head, sigh, and say, "My little kid doesn't know how high the heaven is. Senior Yuyin and Yuqing are Taishan School's number one masters, and you actually want to use Taishan School's sword art to fight against them. Isn't that asking for trouble?"

Yuyinzi was startled. He thought, "Yue Buqun told his daughter to use Taishan School's sword art to fight against me." He took a glance and saw that Yue Lingshan's long sword was in her right hand and it was pointing down at an angle. Her left palm was wide open and she started counting with her fingers. At the count of five, her left hand made a fist. Then she again extended her thumb out, her forefinger, and counted to five. Her five fingers were now spread open. She followed this by counting again starting from her thumb. This time, as her middle finger folded, Yuyinzi was greatly alarmed: "How could this baby know the move 'Daizong Way'?"[4]

More than thirty years ago, Yuyinzi had heard from his master the essence of the move 'Daizong Way'. This sword art move was regarded as Taishan School's highest and most profound skill. Its essence wasn't at the sword moves on the right hand, but was at the counting with the left hand. The left hand would be continuously counting. It would be counting the enemy's position, the enemy's martial art, his height, dimensions of his weapon, as well as the height of the sun and many other things. The calculations were very complicated, and once the calculations were finished, the sword would immediately attack and it would hit its target. In the past, Yuyinzi had thought of this sword move and felt he didn't have the ability to memorise and count all sorts of numbers in such a short time during a fight. So he didn't learn this skill deeply and only heard of its existence and put it at the back of his mind. His master was also actually not proficient at this technique. He only said, "This 'Daizong Way' technique is very difficult to learn and doesn't seem practical at all; but its power is unmatched. Since you don't have the desire to learn it, you won’t be able to learn this sword move, but it doesn’t matter. All of your martial brothers aren't as attentive as you, so they also wouldn't be able to learn this move. It's a pity this profound sword art, with no match in this world, will be lost to us from now on.” When his master didn't force him to learn this sword move, Yuyinzi felt relieved. Later on, he had never seen anyone in Taishan School practiced this move ever again.

Therefore, it was to his surprise that dozens of years later, he would see Yue Lingshan, who was only a young woman, use this move. All of a sudden, sweat started to form on his forehead. He had never heard his master talk about

countering this move. He believed that since he couldn't practice it, other people wouldn't be able to practice this wonderful sword art either; so he never thought of a way to counter this sword move himself. But now the strangest thing had happened and it was completely outside of his expectations. He was feeling really worried and pondered to himself, "If I rapidly change my positions, leap high and crouch low, she naturally would block me."

He immediately shook his long sword and slid three steps to the right using the move 'Clear Moon on a Cloudless Sky'. Then he turned around, lowered his body, and slantingly pierced his long sword. His sword was still five feet away from Yue Lingshan's right shoulder when he turned another circle and followed with the move 'High Mountain Sky' with a fast stab forward and fast pull back of the sword. But Yue Lingshan just stood her ground unmoving. The long sword in her right hand constantly trembled, while the fingers on her left hand unceasingly counted. Yuyinzi launched his sword with his body following it. He turned to the left side and then the right side, and with each turn he became even faster.

This pattern of sword art was called 'Taishan Eighteen Coils', and it was created by someone in the Taishan School a long time ago. That person observed that Taishan School's eighteen coils of the three gates were very complicated. It was really an arduous path with its five steps of revolution and ten steps of circles. As a result, he harmonised the sword art with the lay of the land, and it was now just as wonderful and strange as the Eight Diagrams' 'Eight Diagrams Palm Movement'. Taishan's 'Eighteen Coils' attacked higher with each coil and became more dangerous with each step. These patterns of sword moves also become more violent with each turn. All of Yuyinzi's attack seemed to have pierced through Yue Lingshan's body, but actually, none of his attacks was a genuine killing move. Both of his eyes were fixated on Yue Lingshan's ceaselessly counting left hand. In the years past, his master once said, "This move 'Daizong Way' can be said to be the ancestor of our Taishan School's sword art. It never misses and will never need a second stroke to kill someone. When a sword art reaches this stage, it has surpassed everything and has become godly. Your master actually only knows some basic skills of this skill, and if I

actually wanted to learn it, then it might be easier said than done." When he thought of his master's words, cold sweat seeped through his back.

That Taishan's 'Eighteen Coils' was divided into 'Slow Eighteen, Fast Eighteen'. The eighteen coils turned slowly and the other eighteen coils turned quickly. Each step was higher than the next, and it was said 'The person at the back will only see the soles of the shoes of the person in front, while the person at the front will only see the hair of the person at the back'. This pattern of sword art of the Taishan School was created from the steep mountain paths going up Mount Taishan. The movements were suddenly slow and suddenly fast, punctuated by very complicated turnings.

Linghu Chong saw Yue Lingshan not blocking or dodging while the fingers on her left hand kept on stretching and folding as if she was counting something. He couldn't help feeling worried and wanted to shout out, "Little martial sister, be careful!" But these five words were stuck in his throat and he couldn't call out. Yuyinzi was about to finish his sword pattern, but from the start, he didn't dare to actually attack Yue Lingshan and his long sword was always two feet away from her body. Yue Lingshan abruptly stabbed her sword out and executed five moves. Each sword move had an ancient meaning behind it.

"'Five Gigantic Swords!'" The words escaped Yuqingzi's mouth.

Mount Taishan had some very ancient pines. According to an old story, they were given the names 'Five Gigantic Pines' during the Qin period when their branches were sticking out and their green leaves covered one another. The martial uncle of Yuqingzi and Yuyinzi made a set of sword arts and called it the 'Five Gigantic Swords'. The moves in this set of sword art looked plain but contained wonderful variations. More than twenty years ago, Yuqingzi had studied this set of sword arts deeply and when he saw Yue Lingshan's execution of these five moves, the moves looked right and wrong at the same time. Yue Lingshan's moves were different from the ones he had studied, but were of a higher level compared to the ones he knew. As he stood greatly astonished, Yue Lingshan suddenly bent her waist and thrust her sword towards him. She called out, "Is this your Taishan School's sword art?"

Yuqingzi hastily lifted his sword to block and called out, "'Crane Coming to a Clear Fountain.' It's our Taishan's sword art, but..." Even though the sword was already withdrawn, he was still startled and his whole body broke into a cold sweat. When the enemy's sword came just then, the position was different from the one he had studied. That sword was dangerously close to piercing his chest.

Yue Lingshan said, "Doesn't matter, it's Taishan's sword art!"

With a 'shua' sound, she slashed her sword towards Yuyinzi.

Yuqingzi said, "Stone Block, Horse Returning! You're using it... wrongly..."

Yue Lingshan said, "You remember the sword move's name."

She swung her long sword and slashed it twice. Yuyinzi cried out loudly, and almost at the same instant, Yuqingzi's right knee was also stabbed. Yuqingzi staggered for a bit before his right leg folded underneath him and he dropped to his knee. He quickly drove his sword down powerfully to support himself, but the point of his sword just happened to hit a piece of rock, and it was broken into two pieces. But he was mumbling to himself, "'Three Happiness'! But... but..."

Yue Lingshan laughed icily and put her sword back into the sheath at her back.

The spectators promptly burst into cheers. Such a pretty young lady unexpectedly used Taishan School's sword art to defeat two of Taishan School's masters in such a short time. Her sword art was wonderful, and the people who saw the sword art display felt themselves soothed. The applause they gave her reverberated throughout the valley.

Zuo Lengchan and the other Songshan School's masters looked at each other, and all of them were hesitating. They all thought, "This little girl can actually use Taishan's sword art. But there's some big alterations and her sword moves are very violent. This little girl can't possibly be the one who thought of them; it must be Yue Buqun who imparted them to her. To actually finished learning all these sword moves probably took many, many days. If Yue Buqun has deliberately planned all these, then his will is in no way small."

Yuyinzi suddenly called out, "You... You... This isn't 'Daizong Way'!"

After he was injured, he suddenly realised Yue Lingshan wasn't displaying the moves from 'Daizong Way'. Actually, it could be said that she could take victory in just one move if she used that move, but he didn't understand why she still had to use 'Five Gigantic Sword', 'Crane Coming to a Clear Fountain', 'Stone Block, Horse Returning', 'Three Happiness' sword moves? What was more exasperating was that she actually added some modifications to the key aspects of the Taishan School's sword moves she used. His martial brother and he hurriedly thought of this but they didn't have much time so they automatically used the counter sword moves they had been practising for dozens of years already. But her sword positioning differed greatly and the two brothers were inadvertently defeated. If she had actually used another school's sword art, no matter what move it was or how wonderful, they would not have lost to this young woman. But she was really using the real sword arts of Taishan School, so they felt shame, anger, and surprise mixed together, and couldn't accept that they had lost to her.

Linghu Chong was bewildered when he saw Yue Lingshan using those sword moves to defeat her opponents. He suddenly heard someone behind him whispered, "Master Linghu, did you teach her those moves?" Linghu Chong turned his head around and saw it was Tian Boguang who asked him. He shook his head.

Tian Boguang smiled slightly and said, "That day on top of Huashan when I fought with you, I remember you used that crane coming whatever. But you weren't familiar with the move at that time." Linghu Chong was at a loss as if he didn't hear what Tian Boguang said.

As soon as Yue Lingshan started her attack, he already realised she was using the Taishan School's sword arts engraved on the wall at the cave behind the Cliff of Contemplation. But he had never mentioned to anyone the existence of the cave behind the Cliff of Contemplation. He also remembered that he had covered the hole to the cave’s entrance when he left. So how did Yue Lingshan discover it? His thought continued, "Since I could discover the cave, of course

little martial sister could also discover it. Moreover, I opened up the entrance by accident. Little martial sister could've easily found it too." Inside the cave, he had seen the unique skills of the five mountains' sword arts as well as Devil Sect's elders' engraving of the methods to break those sword arts. Although he was familiar with those moves engraved on the wall, he didn't know any of their names. The last three moves used by Yue Lingshan resembled the passing clouds and flowing water; indicating that she knew the movements very well. She managed to injure two masters of the Taishan School using these three moves and she unleashed the moves incisively. Linghu Chong inwardly praised her for this.

When he heard Yuqingzi said 'Three Happiness', he remembered the time he went with Master to Mount Taishan. After they had passed the Water Sign Cave, they encountered a long and steep mountain road which was named 'Three Happiness'. The meaning behind these words was that the length of the slope was three li, and after passing the road, you would be very happy to have done so. He never thought that sword move was actually inspired by the slope.

A thin old man slowly stepped out and said, "Mr. Yue has grasped the essence of the sword arts from each of the five mountains sword schools. This has never happened in Wulin before. I want to study my school's sword art and see how much I actually understand. I'd like to consult Mr. Yue today." From the shining huqin held in his left hand, he drew out a really thin short sword with his right hand. He was Hengshan School's headmaster, Mr. Mo Da.

Yue Lingshan bowed and said, "Martial Uncle Mo, please show mercy. I've only just casually learned a few moves of the Hengshan School's sword art. Martial Uncle Mo, please give some advice."

Mr. Mo Da had said 'I'd like to consult Mr. Yue today'. He actually wanted to fight against Yue Buqun, but Yue Lingshan unexpectedly replied to him and clearly said that she was going to use Hengshan School's sword art. Mr. Mo Da had a prestigious reputation in Jianghu. The crowd heard Zuo Lengchan said that Great Songyang Palm Fei Bin died under Mr. Mo Da's sword, so they all thought, "Yue Lingshan used Taishan School's sword art to injure two masters of

the Taishan School. Could she also use Hengshan's sword art to match him?"

Mr. Mo Da smiled. "Very good, very good! Great, great!"

"If I'm not Martial Uncle's match, then my father will fight."

Mr. Mo Da said repeatedly, "You're my match, you're my match!"

The short sword was slowly pointed out. It suddenly trembled and emitted a humming sound. From the humming noise, two thrust suddenly shot out. Yue Lingshan lifted her sword to block, but Mr. Mo Da's short sword was like a ghost as it suddenly went around behind Yue Lingshan's body. Yue Lingshan hastily turned around. Then she heard two humming sound besides her ears and saw a clump of hair floating past her. It was her own hair which had been cut off by Mr. Mo Da. She was anxious and quickly thought, "He's showing mercy, otherwise his sword could've killed me just then. Since he's not going to harm me, I can just attack him."

She didn't care about her opponent's sword path anymore. With two thrust, she aimed at Mr. Mo Da's lower abdomen and forehead. Mr. Mo Da was slightly startled and thought, "These two moves are 'Quan Ming Furong' and 'Crane Soaring to Zige'. These are my Hengshan School's unique skills. How did she learn them?"

Mount Hengshan had seventy two peaks and the five highest peaks were Furong, Zige, Shilin, Tianzhu, and Zhurong. Among the Hengshan School's sword art, there were five groups of sword arts named after each of those highest peaks. Mr. Mo Da saw that the moves Yue Lingshan used just then was the 'one move containing one group' move which meant this one move contained the essences of dozens of sword arts from that one group.

'Furong Sword Art' contained thirty six moves and 'Zige Sword Art' contained forty four moves, and each of these two sword groups contained the essences of dozens of moves. When they were simplified and harmoniously combined into one move, that one move would be very powerful and would be offensive and defensive at the same time. 'Quan Ming Furong' and 'Crane Soaring to Zige' were two of these combined moves and they both made up part of the Hengshan

School's top sword arts which were called 'Hengshan's Five Divine Swords'. The crowd just heard the continuous sound of swords clashing and they didn't know who was actually attacking or defending. They also didn't know how many moves these two people had executed in that short time.

Mr. Mo Da had planned everything before making his move on this mountaintop. He had also thought of a way to counter this ‘leadership challenge sword fight’. He didn't have the slightest thought of actually becoming the headmaster of the Five Mountains School, and he knew even better that he was no match for Zuo Lengchan or Linghu Chong. But he was the headmaster of Hengshan School, so he couldn't just bow his head and stand idle by during the leadership challenge sword fight.

He was angry at Yuqingzi for helping an evil person do evil and causing the death of Priest Tianmen. So his original plan was to have it out with that priest, but who would've thought that all three Zi of Taishan was injured beforehand, and the only remaining opponent who was his match was Yue Buqun.

When he was at Shaolin temple, he had already seen Yue Buqun's martial art clearly and he was sure that he wouldn't lose to Yue Buqun. But the one who came up to fight was unexpectedly Yue Buqun's daughter. He was already startled that Yue Lingshan was able to use Hengshan School's sword art. But he was now confounded as well as afraid to see that Yue Lingshan was able to use one of Hengshan School's highest sword arts: 'one move containing one group'. The year Mr. Mo Da's martial ancestors and martial uncle ancestors went to Mount Huashan to fight the Devil Sect's ten elders, many of them were killed. At that time, Mr. Mo Da's master was still young and he had learnt all of these five groups of sword art such as the Furong and Zige. But he only knew the general idea of the 'one move containing one group' move such as the 'Quan Ming Furong' move and the 'Crane Soaring to the Zige' move, which were part of the Hengshan Five Divine Swords. Naturally, Mr. Mo Da didn't get detailed instructions of these moves from his master. But how could this young lady from another school suddenly use these precious sword moves?

Although Yue Lingshan used those two moves, the idea behind the moves

eluded her understanding. Otherwise, Mr. Mo Da would've lost by the second move, excited as he was in seeing these moves. After he easily blocked the two moves, he saw Yue Lingshan's long sword dazzlingly executing the move 'Shilin Shu Sheng', followed by the move 'Tianzhu Cloud'. The principal of the 'Tianzhu Sword Art' was taken from the changes in the cloud, and it relied heavily on its strange variations. Its movements were very random and very hard to predict. When Mr. Mo Da saw Yue Lingshan used the move 'Tianzhu Cloud', he quickly made his decision. Instead of blocking the attack, he just walked past it. This so-called 'not blocking and walking past' was actually only good to hear. In reality, he was running away from the fight because he couldn't defeat the move. However, because the changes in his sword art were complicated, even at the moment he was running away, his short sword thrust to the east and slashed to the west and dazzled everyone there. Thus, no one knew he was actually just planning to run far away.

He knew that among the Hengshan's Five Divine Swords, besides the 'Quan Ming Furong', 'Crane Soaring to Zige', 'Shilin Shu Sheng', and 'Tianzhu Cloud', the most formidable move was called the 'Wild Goose Returning to Zhurong'. Among Hengshan's five highest peaks, Zhurong was the highest one. This 'Wild Goose Returning to Zhurong' move was also the most profound among the Hengshan's Five Divine Swords. When Mr. Mo Da's master talked about this move, his descriptions were quite vague because he didn't understand the move clearly himself. If Yue Lingshan were to use this move, even if he didn't lose his life, it still would shame him. His heart was worried and he anxiously dodged and slashed out his short sword. "Even though she's learned these wonderful moves, it seems she can only use them stupidly and doesn't seem to be able to respond to an attack automatically using these moves. Unavoidable but I have to flirt with danger and fight her with all my strength. Otherwise, Mo Da won't have a face to show myself in Jianghu anymore."

He saw Yue Lingshan moving hesitantly and knew that she was undecided about what to do, whether to give chase or not. Mr. Mo Da gloomily called out, "What a shame! Youngsters have no experience at all."

Using the move 'Tianzhu Cloud', Yue Lingshan forced Mr. Mo Da to turn around and run. Although he covered this up cleverly and it didn't seem like he had lost, the masters around there had already seen his embarrassment in running away. If Yue Lingshan had stood still, taken her sword back, and cupped her fist saying, "Martial Uncle Mo, thanks for giving way! I offended you," then the winner and loser would've been decided.

With the position Mr. Mo Da had, how could he, after losing, still turn around and fight again with someone a generation lower than him? But Yue Lingshan unexpectedly hesitated, and actually gave Mr. Mo Da such a good opportunity. As Yue Lingshan started to smile showing her dimples and as her cherry-lipped mouth opened slightly like she was about to say something, Mr. Mo Da's short sword hummed and rushed towards her. This fast attack was the culmination of Mr. Mo Da's lifetime of practice. The sword was emitting the sound of a huqin, its light flickered everywhere, and in a flash the sword and its lights encircled Yue Lingshan. Yue Lingshan called out in alarm and retreated a few steps. How could Mr. Mo Da give her time to use that move 'Wild Goose Returning to Zhurong'? The short sword in his hand was getting faster and faster executing the set 'Magical Thirteen Phantom Stances of Hengshan Mist' which was ever changing like the clouds and mist. The spectators couldn't help feeling dizzy from looking at it. If it weren't for the fact that the crowd felt that Mr. Mo Da was bullying the young, a man bullying a woman, they would've applauded a long time ago.

After Yue Lingshan used such moves like 'Quan Ming Furong', Linghu Chong had no more doubt she had used the sword arts from the engravings on the cave wall at the back of the Cliff of Contemplation. He pondered, "Why did little martial sister go up to the Cliff of Contemplation? Master and Master-Wife love her dearly; they would never have punished her to stay on that wild and dangerous cliff to meditate. No matter what kind of mistake she may have made, Master and Master-Wife would only reprimand her. The Cliff of Contemplation and the living quarters on Huashan peak aren't close to each other; the road between them is also very dangerous. Even if it were not my little martial sister but one of the female disciples, they wouldn't send her to live alone up there.

Could it be that it was martial brother Lin who was punished to meditate on that cliff and little martial sister went up there every day to deliver him his meals, just like she did when she was attending to me back then?" As he thought of this, he couldn't help his chest feeling heated. He again thought, "Martial brother Lin is a quiet person and he also follows rules and customs strictly, as close as one could get to be a 'Little Gentleman Sword'. That was the reason why Master, Master-Wife, and little martial sister like him. How could he have erred to deserve punishment on that cliff top? He can't, he couldn't have, definitely not." He then thought, "Could it be little martial sister... little martial sister..." Suddenly, he remembered something buried deep in his heart. But this memory was buried too deep. As soon as he recalled it, he immediately forgot about it again. He was stupefied for a moment. What did he remember? He couldn't recall it clearly. Just at that moment, he heard Yue Lingshan cried out in alarm. Her long sword flew out from her hand, her left foot slipped and she was now looking up from the ground. Mr. Mo Da extended his short sword and pointed it at ther left shoulder. He smilingly said, "Please rise, there's no need to panic!"

Suddenly, a 'pai' sound was heard and the short sword on Mr. Mo Da's hand was broken. Yue Lingshan had grabbed a couple of rocks from the ground and smashed one rock towards Mr. Mo Da's sword with her left hand. The short sword was very thin and it immediately broke in two as soon as it was hit. Yue Lingshan followed this by tossing the other rock on her right hand to the left side. Mr. Mo Da was startled when his weapon broke. Now, he saw her tossing a piece of rock to her left side but there was no one there. It was really strange and he couldn't understand what her intention was.

As soon as the rock hit the ground, it rebounded and hit Mr. Mo Da on the right side of his chest. With a crack, a few of his ribs were broken and blood spouted out. This unpredictable movement by Yue Lingshan was wonderfully fast. Each move was done cleanly and with agility. Everyone was stupefied. They saw clearly that after Mr. Mo Da had taken the initiative, he stopped and said, "Please rise, there's no need to panic!" Those words were the proper words spoken after a senior had defeated a junior. But Yue Lingshan's picking up the two stones and the two moves that followed were actually fast as lightning and

entirely unpredictable. But Linghu Chong understood. Those two moves used by Yue Lingshan were the moves made by the Devil Sect's ten elders to break Hengshan School's unique skills. But the engraving on the cave wall actually showed the use of a pair of copper hammer. Yue Lingshan used the two stones in lieu of the copper hammers. If she had wanted to use the stones while they were fighting, it was impossible for her to do so. But once she has acquired the stones, to toss one of them out and for it to fly back, as long as she had practiced the move, the stones and copper hammers can be treated the same.

Flying over, Yue Buqun entered the battlefield and slapped Yue Lingshan on the cheek. He shouted, "Martial uncle Mo Da has clearly let you off. How dare you to be rude to him?"

He then stooped down to help Mr. Mo Da up and said, "Brother Mo, my daughter doesn't know what's good or bad, I'm really sorry. Please forgive her."

Mr. Mo Da smiled bitterly and said, "The female tiger of your school really is out of ordinary." After he said these words, he again spouted blood from his mouth. Two disciples from Hengshan School came out to support him back to the group.

Yue Buqun stared angrily at his daughter for a while before stepping back to the side. Linghu Chong saw Yue Lingshan's left cheek was swollen, and five finger prints were left on her cheeks. It was obvious her father didn't hit her lightly. Tears were flowing from Yue Lingshan's eyes, but her mouth was slightly turned down and her expression was steely. Linghu Chong remembered, "In the past when she and I were together at Huashan, when she was naughty and got scolded by Master and Master-Wife, she would feel wronged and she would look pitiful and cute. At that time, I would do anything to cheer her up. Little martial sister is most happy when she won a sword fight against me. I only have to do the same thing, appear as if I've negligently given her an opportunity, and not let her see that I deliberately let her..."

He thought till here when his previously elusive memory resurfaced and he suddenly thought clearly "Why would she be at the Cliff of Contemplation? It's most likely that when she got married, she thought of the deep feelings we used

to have, so she went up there all by herself to think of the old days. I've already sealed up the entrance to the back cave with rocks. It's not easy to find if you hadn't stayed up there for long. In that case, she must have stayed up there not just for a short time but probably went up there more than once." He turned his head to look at Lin Pingzhi and thought, "Martial brother Lin and she just got married so they should be happy and ecstatic. But how come his expression is melancholic? Little martial sister was just slapped by her father, but he didn't go and comfort her but acts like it has nothing to do with him. That's very unreasonable."

He thought Yue Lingshan went up the Cliff of Contemplation in order to chase after the feelings from the past, but it was only a one sided guess by him and in his mind's eyes, he imagined how Yue Lingshan cried her eyes out on the cliff, how she regretted marrying Lin Pingzhi, and how she grieved incessantly for disappointing his deep feelings for her. He lifted his head and saw Yue Lingshan stooping down to pick her sword up while her tears dropped onto the grass below. A blade of grass bowed down under a bead of tear. Linghu Chong suddenly felt impulsive, "I must make her smile!" In his eyes, this Songshan mountaintop had suddenly became the Jade Maiden Peak at Huashan and the thousands of people there had turned into trees. In his heart, there was only lovesickness and his most loved person who had cried after being hit by her father. For his whole life, he had cheered her countless of time, so how could he just ignore her at this time?

He strode out and said, "Little martial... little..." He immediately remembered that to cheer her up, he had to fight for real. With his heart drumming, he said, "You've defeated the headmasters of Taishan and Hengshan; your sword art isn't a small matter. My Heng-Shan School isn't convinced you can use Heng-Shan School's sword art. Why don't you fight me?"

Yue Lingshan slowly turned around, but she didn't lift her head and it seemed she was thinking of something. After a while, she slowly lifted her head and all of a sudden her whole face was blushing. Linghu Chong said, "Although Mr. Yue's skill is high, I'm not convinced he's proficient in each of the five schools'

sword arts."

Yue Lingshan lifted her head and said, "You're originally not from Heng-Shan School. Today, you're the Headmaster of Heng-Shan. Are you proficient in Heng-Shan School's sword art now?" Her face was still stained with tears.

Linghu Chong heard her words were soft and were quite friendly; he was delighted beyond measure. He quietly said to himself, "I must make it look real and don't let her see that I deliberately let her win." He then said, "This word 'proficient', I don't dare say it. But I've already been at Heng-Shan for a long time and have practised Heng-Shan's sword arts. So, we'll both use Heng-Shan School's sword art to fight each other. Whoever uses any other sword art will lose. What do you think?" He had already decided on a plan. His own sword art was much higher compared to her, which was a well known matter. If he pretended to lose, then other people would definitely see it and Yue Lingshan wouldn't believe it also. But while fighting, if he accidentally use a move from the 'Dugu Nine Swords' or the Huashan School's sword art, he would at the same time win but lose per agreement, and no one would doubt him.

Yue Lingshan replied, "Alright, we'll have a fight!" She lifted her long sword and draw a half circle before thrusting at Linghu Chong.

Heng-Shan School's female disciples gasped when they saw her movements. The crowd didn't recognise the move as Heng-Shan School's sword art, but when they heard the admiring gasp, they knew Yue Lingshan's move was really Heng-Shan School's sword art and that it was out of the ordinary.

The move she used was really one of the moves taken from the engravings on the cave wall at the back of the Cliff of Contemplation. Furthermore, it was one of the moves that Linghu Chong had imparted to the Heng-Shan School's disciples.

Linghu Chong wielded his sword to block. He knew Heng-Shan School's sword art had movements which shifted unceasingly in many circles and were very tight. Each movement of the sword art looked soft but actually contained powerful strength. When fighting an opponent, nine out of ten moves were

defending and only one move would take advantage of a flaw to make a surprise attack. He had been together with the Heng-Shan School's disciples for a long time, and he had also personally seen Dingjing Shi Tai fought a few times against the enemies. Now when he executed the sword moves, every move was circling with meticulous intention. It was obvious he had already grasped the essence of Heng-Shan School's sword art deeply. Great Master Fangzheng, Priest Chongxu, Beggar Clan's leader, Zuo Lengchan, and many other people who were familiar with Heng-Shan School's sword art knew that Linghu Chong was really not from Heng-Shan School, but the Heng-Shan sword art he used was proper and right. Even the most common style still contained a secret attack which thoroughly fit the Heng-Shan's martial art principle of 'Needle in a Cotton'. They all inwardly praised him.

They all knew Heng-Shan School had been led by nuns for the last hundreds of years. For people of Buddhist faith, mercy is the foundation of everything. In particular, it was not suitable for women to use reckless movements, as they studied martial art primarily to protect themselves. This principle of 'Needle in a Cotton' was like concealing a needle in a wad of cotton. Provided that other people didn't offend, then the cotton would be soft and wouldn't harm them. But if you use strength to crush it, then the needle inside the cotton would pierce your palm. Whether it would pierce shallowly or deeply doesn't depend on the strength of the steel needle, but depends on the power you apply to crush the cotton. If you crush it lightly then the injury would be light, if you use a lot of strength then the injury would be heavy. This kind of martial art principle is based on the retribution principle of Buddhism; you sow your own destiny and the good and bad come from your own heart.

After Linghu Chong had learned the 'Dugu Nine Swords', he came to understand the essence of set form martial arts well. He had learned to use sword arts with an emphasis on intention and not on set movements. So when he used the Heng-Shan sword art at this time, the changes at various places were quite different from the original form, but the sword intention of the Heng-Shan's sword art was still clearly maintained. Even though the masters from other schools knew of Heng-Shan's sword art, they only knew of the main

points and didn't know the finer points and changes in the sword art. So when they saw the sword intention displayed by Linghu Chong, they all thought, "This youngster didn't get lucky in becoming Heng-Shan School's headmaster! He's actually the true heir appointed by Dingxian and Dingjing Shi Tai." Only Heng-Shan School's disciples like Yihe and Yiqing were able to see that the sword forms he used were different from the ones taught by their masters. Even though the forms were different, they realized that the meaning behind these sword moves were deeper than the original sword art. Linghu Chong and Yue Lingshan were both using Heng-Shan School's sword arts engraved inside the cave at the Cliff of Contemplation. But Linghu Chong's sword art was originally much higher compared to Yue Lingshan. Added to that he had also been together with Heng-Shan School's disciples for many days, so he knew the scope of Heng-Shan School's sword arts better than Yue Lingshan. As the two of them fought, if it weren't for Linghu Chong deliberately giving way, he would've won in just a few moves. After fighting for more than thirty moves, Yue Lingshan had exhausted the moves she learned from the cave wall and was forced to repeat them. It was good that this set of sword art was very complicated and looked really pleasant with its circling movements. There was not much distinction evident between each move. From the first move to the thirty-sixth move, they looked just like one big move. Besides Linghu Chong who had also learned this sword art from the cave wall, no one else could tell that she was repeating the sword moves.

The sword moves Yue Lingshan used were very tight, and Linghu Chong followed the proper method to counter each one of them. The two of them had learned the same identical sword moves which contained the essence of the Heng-Shan School's sword art. Their swordplays were very impressive and the movements were extremely pleasing to the eye. The spectators were watching happily and continuously applauded.

Someone said, "Linghu Chong is the headmaster of Heng-Shan School, it's not unusual the sword art he's using is so brilliant. But this Miss Yue is clearly a disciple of Huashan School. How can she also use Heng-Shan sword art?"

Someone else said, "Linghu Chong is originally Mr. Yue's disciple too, and he was also the eldest disciple. Otherwise, how could he be this proficient in this sword art? If Mr. Yue didn't personally pass it down, how can the two of them fight so harmoniously?"

There was also another one who said, "Mr. Yue is proficient in Huashan, Taishan, Hengshan, and Heng-Shan Schools' sword arts. It seems he must also know the Songshan sword art well. There's no one who fits this position of Five Mountains School's headmaster better than him."

Another person said, "That's not necessarily true. Songshan's Headmaster Zuo's sword art is much higher than Mr. Yue. In the principle of martial art, it's quality over quantity. Even if you know how to use all the martial arts in this world, what's the use? You'll only be a three-legged cat[5]. Headmaster Zuo's single Songshan sword art can defeat Mr. Yue's sword arts from five schools."

The first person from before said, "How do you know? Shamefully blowing your own trumpet."

The second person angrily said, "Blowing my own trumpet? Let's bet fifty taels if you got guts."

The first person replied, "What guts no guts? Let's bet a hundred taels. Trade the silvers first, the loser will be under Heng-Shan School."

The second person answered, "Alright, one hundred taels! What's under Heng-Shan School?"

The first person said, "The loser becomes a nun!" And the second person spat.

At this time, Yue Lingshan's moves became even faster. Linghu Chong saw her looking elegant and graceful. Remembering the old days when they practiced sword together at Mount Huashan, he gradually became absent-minded. When he saw her thrusting with her sword, he just followed it with a move of his own, not realising that this move wasn't actually Heng-Shan School's sword art.

Yue Lingshan was startled and whispered, "Plum Flower like a Bean!" She followed it with a slash at Linghu Chong's forehead.

Linghu Chong was also stupefied and whispered, "Willow Leaf like an Eyebrow!"

Even though the two of them were using Heng-Shan School's sword art, they didn't know the names for them. But these two moves they just exchanged weren't Heng-Shan School's sword arts. These were actually from the sword art they created when they were practising together at Huashan: the 'Chong Ling Sword Art'. The 'Chong' was from Linghu Chong's name, and the 'Ling' was from Yue Lingshan's name. This was the sword art they had playfully created together.

Linghu Chong was far more intelligent than his martial sister. In whatever he did, regardless of what it was, he would do it happily without a care for any rules and come up with new and creative ideas. Even though this group of sword art was created by the two of them, almost all of them were Linghu Chong's ideas. At that time, their martial arts were still shallow that there was nothing formidable about these sword moves. But the two of them had often practised these set of sword arts at a secluded place and were very familiar with this sword art. When Linghu Chong accidentally used the move 'Plum Flower like a Bean', Yue Lingshan followed with the move 'Willow Leaf like an Eyebrow'. The two of them had used these moves without any deep meaning originally, but now, all of a sudden, both of their faces turned red. Linghu Chong didn't slow down as he followed with the move 'See First in the Fog'. Yue Lingshan followed with the move 'First Time after the Rain'. The two of them had practised this set of sword art for so many times during their time at Huashan, but they were afraid that Master and Master-Wife would scold them if they found out, so they didn't tell anyone about it. But at this time, they couldn't control themselves as they used these moves in front of all the realm's heroes. In a short moment, they had traded about ten moves. Not only Linghu Chong felt he had returned to the former scenery at Huashan when they were practising sword together, even Yue Lingshan gradually forgot that she was already married and that she was in front of thousands of Jianghu's people to fight for her father's fame. In her eyes, only her carefree big martial brother was there practising the sword art they had created.

Linghu Chong saw the expression on her face becoming gentler and gentler, and there was a glint of happiness in her eyes. It was obvious she had forgotten the incident of her father slapping her before. He thought, "When I saw her earlier today, she looked melancholy and unhappy. But she's finally feeling happy now. Ai, if only this Chong Ling sword art has thousands of moves and would never finish in a lifetime!" Ever since the time he heard Yue Lingshan humming a Fujian folk song at the Cliff of Contemplation, this was the first time his little martial sister treated him like in the past. His happiness was unbounded.

After another twenty moves, Yue Lingshan's long sword slashed at his left leg and Linghu Chong lifted his left leg to kick at her sword. Yue Lingshan lowered her sword edge to chop at his leg. Linghu Chong's long sword hurriedly attacked her right waist and Yue Lingshan circled her sword. The two swords met with a resounding clang and the points of both swords vibrated. Both of them immediately thrust forward at the same time towards each other's throat. Their speed was unmatched. Looking at both swords thrusting forward at such speed, it seemed no one would be able to go up to save them and they would both meet common ruin. The crowd called out in surprise. But the crowd heard a sudden ringing sound and saw that the points of both swords pushed against each other in mid air, generating sparks and then bent together to make an arch. Both then sent their palms forwards, clashed palms, and floated down separating from each other.

No one could've guessed of this outcome; that the points of these swords could unexpectedly and opportunely meet in mid air like this. It was very hard for two sword points to come together like this just for once even after thousands of sword fights. But these two people had unexpectedly done this once in a lifetime deed. Nobody around there had ever seen such a unique incident of two sword points meeting in the middle of the air in the thousands of sword fights they had seen. But Linghu Chong and Yue Lingshan had actually practiced thousands of time to do just this, and they had accomplished what they had set out to do quite some time ago. This move must be done by the two of them simultaneously. When they started their moves, the positioning and power must be completely right. When both sword points met with enough speed

behind them, they would bend and make an arch. This sword art was not useful in actually winning a fight against an opponent. But to Linghu Chong and Yue Lingshan, this was a very amusing and interesting thing to do though it was very difficult. After they had finished practising this sword move, they took it a step further and practised till the sword points would hit with sparks flying around. When they had finished practising this move on Huashan, Yue Lingshan asked what name they should call this move by. Linghu Chong answered, "What do you think we should call it?"

Yue Lingshan laughingly answered, "The two swords meeting together simply can't take anyone's life. How about we call it 'Common Ruins'?"

Linghu Chong said, "Common Ruins, it sounded like you and I have absolutely irreconcilable enmity between us. How about we call it 'You Die I Live'!"

Yue Lingshan pouted and said, "Why I die you live? You die I live is the correct one."

Linghu Chong said, "I did say 'You Die I Live'."

"This you and I, it's not clear. No one dies in this move so we should call it 'Live Together Die Together'."

Linghu Chong clapped and said it was a good name. Yue Lingshan thought this name of 'Live Together Die Together' was too intimate, so she dropped her sword and ran.

The crowd saw the two of them were on the verge of death before escaping from an extremely dangerous situation. Cold sweat was running down their hands, and they had even forgotten to cheer. That day in Shaolin temple, when Yue Buqun and Linghu Chong fought, even though Yue Buqun used the moves from Chong Ling sword art to urge him to return to Huashan School, he didn’t use this move. Though Yue Buqun secretly peeped into their practice and found out the moves from Chong Ling sword art, he didn’t devote his time into practising this nonsense and useless ‘Live Together Die Together’ move. That was why when Fangzheng, Chongxu, Zuo Lengchan and the other masters saw

it, they were all greatly surprised.

Yingying was frightened and felt uneasy after seeing it. She saw they were both smiling as they separated and floated down. From their attitudes and postures, it seemed as if they were wrapped in a warm and gentle spring breeze. Both of them lifted their swords and fought again. When they created this sword art on Huashan, they were suited to each other and mutually loved each other. For this reason, the sword art they created contained a lot of playful elements and not much killing intention. Now as they fought, they unwittingly returned to their old scenery. Their swords were slow, their eyebrows were lifted, and gradually, the tender feelings from when they were childhood friends bursted forth. This 'sword fight', it would be better to call it 'Dancing with Swords', or better yet, a 'Sword Dance'. This 'Sword Dance', however, was not for entertaining guests but rather for entertaining oneself. Suddenly, from among the crowd, she heard someone uttered a 'Hey!" and sneered coldly. Yue Lingshan was startled when she realised it was her husband's voice. She thought, "It's not right for me to fight big martial brother like this." She circled her sword, slashed upwards, and pierced it forward powerfully. This sword movement looked beautiful as it was a stance out of the Huashan School's 'Nineteen Stances of the Jade Maiden Sword'. Linghu Chong had also heard Lin Pingzhi's cold sneer and saw how Yue Lingshan promptly changed her move afterwards. The coming attack wasn't soft anymore and didn't look anything like the Chong Ling sword art which was full of tangled up meanings.

His heart felt sour, and all of a sudden, all kinds of past events bubbled up in his minds. He remembered the days when he was being punished by Master on the Cliff of Contemplation to meditate. At that time, little martial sister came every day to deliver him his meals. One day, it snowed heavily and the two of them actually spent a night together inside the cave.

He also thought of the time when little martial sister got sick and the two of them did not met for many days. The pain of lovesickness blossomed in him then. But at that time, without knowing how, Lin Pingzhi unexpectedly gained her favour. From then on, the two of them started to misunderstand each other

as days go by.

He also thought of the day after little martial sister had learned the ‘Nineteen Stances of the Jade Maiden Sword’ from Master-Wife. She came to the cliff to test the moves against him but he was feeling bitter at that time, and he unexpectedly didn’t let…. He thought of these things in just a blink of an eye. At this moment, Yue Lingshan’s long sword had almost arrived at his chest. As Linghu Chong’s mind was in confusion, he flicked out with a finger in his left hand. ‘Ring’, he flicked at her long sword resulting in Yue Lingshan being unable to hold on to her sword. It flew out of her hand and shot up into the sky.

After Linghu Chong had flicked out the sword, he gloomily called out, "Oops!" He saw Yue Lingshan's expression had turned bitter looking like she wanted to smile, yet unable to smile. That day on the Cliff of Contemplation, Linghu Chong had also used a similar move to flick her treasured sword, the 'Sword of the Green Pool', down the bottomless abyss of a valley. From this incident, a wall had grown between the two of them. He never expected that today he would actually repeat what he did before. For these last few days, on calm nights, he had sometimes pondered on why he flicked away Yue Lingshan's long sword and realised it was because he was jealous of Lin Pingzhi. When his feelings were bubbling forth inside him, it was hard for him to control himself, so he himself was to be blamed. How could he have known that his old jealousy would come out again when he saw how Yue Lingshan's attitude changed on hearing Lin Pingzhi's voice. That day on the Cliff of Contemplation, with a flick, he was already able to shake the long sword off Yue Lingshan's hand. This time, with his current internal energy, he cannot say how far the sword would actually go as it soared high into the sky and actually didn't come down for a little while.

His thought turned quickly, "I actually wanted to lose to little martial sister and make her happy. But I flicked her long sword away now and that's really going to make her lose some face in front of all these heroes. How could I use such a despicable method to repay for little martial sister's friendship?" He took a glance and saw that the long sword was now in mid air and coming down. He

immediately shifted his body and called out, "Good Heng-Shan sword art!" He looked as if he had exhausted his energy. In fact he was positioning his body on the point where the sword was coming to. With a 'pu' sound, the long sword entered the back of his left shoulder. Linghu Chong threw himself forward and nailed his long sword on the ground.

This accident happened so fast that the crowd called out and was then stunned into silence. Yue Lingshan was alarmed as she said, "You... Big martial brother..." She saw a bearded man rushed up with his long sword up. The injury on the back of Linghu Chong's shoulder was spouting blood, and more than ten disciples from Heng-Shan School encircled him. Some of them struggled to take their medicines out to apply it on him. Yue Lingshan didn't know whether he would live or die, so she went up to see. With a flash, two swords barred her path. A female nun shouted, "Cruel woman!" Yue Lingshan was startled and retreated a few steps. She didn't know what to do.

Yue Buqun laughed long and hard, then in a clear voice said, "Shan'er, you used the sword arts from Taishan, Hengshan, and Heng-Shan Schools to defeat the three headmasters from each respective schools. That's very hard to do!"

Yue Lingshan dropped her long sword. The crowd saw that Linghu Chong had flicked her long sword away, but it was Linghu Chong who was then injured by her long sword. Those were the facts. But whether that move was Heng-Shan's sword art or not, no one could say. When they were fighting using the Chong Ling sword art, the spectators couldn't understand what they were seeing but they knew the moves were simple and artless, and completely useless. Only the dancing looked good. At the end, it turned into a mishap and everyone was surprised that it would end up like this. Now, when they heard Yue Buqun praising his daughter that she had used the each school's sword art to defeat the three headmasters, they thought this move Yue Lingshan used of sword dropping down from the air was indeed Heng-Shan School's sword art. Although some people had doubts because they felt this sword art was very different from Heng-Shan's sword art and yet they couldn't tell the origin of that sword art. So it was inconvenient to publicly debate this with Yue Buqun.

Yue Lingshan picked up her long sword and saw her sword was covered in blood. Her heart was drumming fiercely and she thought, "How is he? As long as he doesn't die, I'll... I'll..."

Chapter 34 Snatching the Leadership

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Edited by: Hhaung



Zuo Lengchan slowly raised his sword and pointed the sword at Yue Buqun's chest. Yu Buqun crossed his arms in sleeves behind his back and gazed at the sword tip without a blink. Zuo Lengchan's right sleeve started filling up just like a sail starting to gain wind.

The crowd was commenting on what they had seen when a loud and clear voice said, "Huashan School, under the careful study of Mr. Yue has thoroughly understood the sword arts from Taishan, Hengshan, and Heng-Shan Schools. Not only has he understood them, he has actually perfected them and this really

makes other people admire him. If Mr. Yue doesn't take up this headmaster position of the Five Mountains School, then there's no one else we can choose." The person who spoke was wearing a ragged and soiled gown. He was the leader of Beggar Clan, Xie Feng. Fangzheng, Chongxu, and he had the same thought that harm would come upon Wulin once Zuo Lengchan merged the five mountains sword schools, and that sooner or later, trouble would come upon the Beggar Clan. He also thought that it was better for the refined gentleman Yue Buqun to be the Five Mountains School's headmaster than the wildly ambitious Zuo Lengchan.

Ever since Beggar Clan existed in Jianghu, they had always been very powerful. Hearing what the Beggar Clan's leader said, the common people didn't dare to rashly object to his words. Suddenly, a deep and cold voice said, "Miss Yue is proficient in Taishan, Hengshan, and Heng-Shan Schools' sword arts. This is really commendable. If you can use Songshan sword art to win against my sword, then the whole Songshan School will accept Mr. Yue as the headmaster." The one who said this was of course Zuo Lengchan. As he talked, he had walked up to the middle of the courtyard with his left hand gripping his sword's scabbard. With a ringing sound, his long sword jumped out of the scabbard, and with a flicker of light, the long sword hovered in mid air. He extended his right hand and grabbed the sword's handle. This move was extremely pleasing to the eye. With a grip of his left hand, he used his internal energy to force the long sword out. This kind of deep internal energy was rarely seen or heard of. Of course the disciples of Songshan School cheered loudly, and the heroes from the other schools also applauded thunderously.

"I... I'll only use thirteen moves. If within these thirteen moves I can’t win against martial uncle Zuo..." Yue Lingshan replied.

Zuo Lengchan angrily thought, "You little girl dare to openly receive my swordplay? How daring! You even put a limit of thirteen moves. So you regard me as if I'm nothing." He then coldly said, "If you can't best me within thirteen moves, then what?"

"How... How can I be martial uncle Zuo's match? I've only learned thirteen

moves of Songshan School's sword art from my father. Martial uncle Zuo can verify this with your own hand."

Zuo Lengchan snorted.

Yue Lingshan continued, "My father said that even though these thirteen moves are Songshan School's brilliant sword art, when I use them, he's afraid that in just one move my sword would be shaken out of my hands by martial uncle Zuo, and it'll be impossible for me to even get to the second move."

Zuo Lengchan again snorted and didn't express his opinion. When Yue Lingshan first started talking, her voice was trembling. Whether it was because her strength was depleted or because she was facing such a big hero in Wulin and became afraid, no one knew. But as she continued talking, her voice gradually calmed. She went on, "I said to Dad: 'Martial uncle Zuo is without question Songshan School's number one master, but he's not necessarily the number one master in our five mountains sword schools. His martial art is high, but he may not necessarily be proficient in all the five mountains sword schools sword arts like you, Dad.' My dad then said: 'This word proficient, it's easier said than done. All I know is some basic skills only. If you don't believe me, you can fight against martial uncle Zuo once you've learned this kind of three-legged cat skills of Songshan School sword art. If you can fight against martial uncle Zuo's earth-shattering Songshan sword art for more than three moves, then I'll praise you as my good daughter.'"

Zuo Lengchan laughed coldly and said, "If you defeat me within three moves, then you'll become an even better daughter for Mr. Yue."

"Martial uncle Zuo's sword art is godly, and talent such as yours has rarely been seen in hundreds of years at the Songshan School. I had only learned a few moves of the Songshan sword art from my father and I just did that recently. How can I dare to think such wild thoughts? Father told me to receive three moves from martial uncle Zuo; but I am foolishly deluded to hope I can receive thirteen moves of martial uncle Zuo's Songshan sword art. However I don't know whether I can fulfil my wish or not."

Zuo Lengchan thought, "Don't say thirteen moves, if I let you go beyond three moves, then I already have no face to show anymore." He lifted his left hand and extended his thumb, forefinger, and middle finger to grab the point of his sword. Holding the sword point, he then suddenly let go of the long sword from his right hand and like a string plucked, the sword handle shot forward and swayed. "Make your move!"

With this stunt, Zuo Lengchan created a sensation throughout the crowd. Not only was he using his unfavoured left hand to use the sword, but he was also holding the sword by gripping the sword point with three fingers while the sword handle faced the opponent. Compared to fighting a naked blade with bare hands, fighting with a sword gripped at sword point by three fingers was ten times more difficult. Receiving a slight shake to the sword might slash his fingers, and if this happened, how would he still be able to hold onto the sword and use it?

It was obvious that Zuo Lengchan was greatly indignant and was showing complete disdain towards Yue Lingshan by using such method. In addition, he deliberately shocked everyone with this marvellous skill. Seeing him holding his sword this way, Yue Lingshan trembled. She thought, "What kind of martial art is he using? Daddy didn't teach me anything like this." And fear started to grow in her heart. She also thought, "Since it has come to this, what's the use of being afraid?" With this last thought, she quickly glanced towards the crowd of Heng-Shan School's disciples. She saw they were still in a circle but she didn't hear any crying. She guessed that although Linghu Chong's injury was serious, his life wasn't threatened.

She raised her long sword above her head and bowed. This was the move called 'The Whole School Facing the Ancestors', which was an original sword art from Songshan. The meaning of this sword move was to show respect. Songshan's disciples burst into cheers feeling quite pleased. Whenever Songshan's disciples were about to trade moves with the school's seniors, they must use this move first. The meaning was they wouldn't dare to fight with the senior but were instead asking for some pointers from the senior. Zuo Lengchan

nodded slightly and thought, "How unexpected that you can use this move! Finally you're being clever in showing me this move. I won't let you be too shamed then."

After Yue Lingshan had finished using the move 'The Whole School Facing the Ancestors', with a flash, her long sword changed into a white rainbow as it thrust towards Zuo Lengchan. This move looked really grand, and it was precisely the essence of Songshan School's sword art. Even though Zuo Lengchan was well educated in the Songshan School's sword art of 'Inside Eight Groups, Outside Nine Groups', and in these seventeen groups, he knew very well the length and speed of each sword art group, he had never seen this move before. He was greatly startled and thought, "What move is this? From my Songshan School's seventeen sword art groups, it seemed none of them is higher in level than this move. This is strange." Not only was he a great master in Songshan, he was also a great scholar of martial study of this generation. So once he saw his own school's grand and mysterious sword move, he wanted to see it clearly. He saw Yue Lingshan's attack was coming, but her internal energy wasn't powerful, so once her sword came to a few inches from his body, he could just shook it out of her hand. But if he did that, he wouldn't be able to see whether there were more strange changes in the moves after this one.

As soon as Yue Lingshan's attack came to a foot of his chest, she withdrew her sword, slanted her body, circled her long sword, and slashed down towards his left shoulder. This move looked like Songshan School's sword art called 'Wise Man Throughout the Ages', but 'Wise Man Throughout the Ages' was faster even though it was not as grand. It also looked like the move 'Floating Kingfisher', but lighter and not as grand as 'Floating Kingfisher'; It also looked a little bit like 'Jade Well, Heaven Pond', but 'Jade Well, Heaven Pond' looked more impressive and dignified. When this move was used by Yue Lingshan, it had an air of elegance about it.

Zuo Lengchan had keen eyesight and he had immersed himself in the study of Songshan School's sword art for his whole life. The fineness and the advantages of every move and every stance, the smallest details of every complicated point,

were all engraved in his mind. Now that he suddenly saw how Yue Lingshan's move contained the strong points of the many big moves of the Songshan School's sword art, while looking like it covered the weak points of those swordplays, he couldn't help feeling excited, amazed, and happy, just as if he had seen a treasure falling down from the sky.

Years ago on Mount Huashan, the five mountains sword schools fought twice with ten elders from the Devil Sect and lost quite a number of masters. Many unique skills from the five schools' sword arts also died together with these masters. Later, Zuo Lengchan had gathered all the surviving elders from the Songshan School and recorded the sword moves from their memories irrespective of their fineness and completed a sword manual. In the last dozens of years, at Wucunjing, he had altered and improved moves which weren't fierce or grand enough to make the seventeen groups of sword moves perfect. Even though he didn't create any new swordplay, he had rendered a great service by his arrangement of the Songshan sword arts.

Now, seeing that Yue Lingshan had used Songshan sword art that was not from the school's sword manual and that seemed deeper compared to all the currently existing stances and moves of Songshan sword art, he couldn't help being joyful and sighing in praise. If this sword art was being executed by a strong opponent like Ren Woxing or Linghu Chong, or even Great Master Fangzheng or Priest Chongxu, Zuo Lengchan would have to concentrate completely on fighting his opponent. Even if his opponent's sword moves were wonderful, he would have to cope with it with all of his power that he would not have the leisure to look at the opponent's sword art. On the other hand, Yue Lingshan's shallow internal energy was nothing to be afraid of. In the event of a desperate situation, he could just shake the long sword out of her hand at any time and fight for real. For now, he continued observing the changes in her sword moves intently.

The crowd saw Yue Lingshan's long sword dancing about, each move a foot away from her opponent, looking like she was deliberately giving way and looking as if she was afraid. Zuo Lengchan, though, just stood still while his

face sometimes registered happiness and sometimes worry as if he had lost his mind. This kind of martial art fighting had never been seen before. The crowd looked at each other amazed. Only the disciples of the Songshan School were observing the fight intently fearing they would miss seeing half a stance.

Yue Lingshan has learned these few moves of Songshan sword art from the engravings on the cave wall on the Cliff of Contemplation. Altogether, there were around sixty to seventy moves engraved on the cave wall. After Yue Buqun had studied them, he guessed that around forty of them were most likely already known and used by Zuo Lengchan while the rest looked brilliant but seemed insufficient to move Zuo Lengchan's heart. Only these thirteen moves were certain to awe him and make him want to see them no matter what. The stances engraved on the cave wall were definitely dead without possible variations and Yue Lingshan only used them according to the movements engraved on the wall. But when Zuo Lengchan saw them, he could imagine how all the moves could be used together, and as he thought more, the ways to use these moves seemed endless.

Yue Lingshan capably used up all thirteen moves and started from the beginning again for the fourteenth move. Zuo Lengchan thought, "Should I take a look again, or do I shake her long sword off?" These two matters were very easy for him to do. If he wanted to continue watching, even if the level of Yue Lingshan's swordplay were higher, she still wouldn't be able to hurt him. If he wanted to shake her long sword off then all he had to do was lift his hand to do it. But to choose between the two choices was not easy at all. All of a sudden, many things popped up in his head, "After this, I'm afraid there'd be no more chance to see these wonderful Songshan sword arts again. To kill this little girl is easy but where can I see these sword arts again? How can I ask Mr. Yue for a demonstration? If I let her continue, it'll seem as if I can't contend with this little girl from Huashan. How can I keep my face after that? Aiyo, she's done more than thirteen moves!" As he thought of the words 'thirteen moves', the thought of becoming the leader of Wulin overpowered the idea of studying these martial arts. He flicked the three fingers on his left hand and his sword shot up and hit Yue Lingshan's long sword generating a continuously cracking sound.

Afterwards, Yue Lingshan was left only with a sword handle and an inch of her sword blade, while dozens of broken pieces lay on the ground.

Yue Lingshan jumped back and retreated for dozens of feet, then in a loud voice said, "Martial uncle Zuo, how many Songshan sword art moves did I use?"

Zuo Lengchan closed both of his eyes thinking about those sword moves Yue Lingshan used. He recalled each move one by one, then opened his eyes and said, "You used thirteen moves! Very good, it's not easy."

Yue Lingshan bowed and cupped her fist. "Martial uncle Zuo, thank you for your mercy in letting me show off my meagre skills in using thirteen sword moves of the Songshan sword art in front of you."

The crowd sighed in admiration at the divine martial art Zuo Lengchan used to break Yue Lingshan's long sword. But Yue Lingshan had declared before that she was going to use thirteen moves of Songshan sword art in front of Zuo Lengchan. The majority of the crowd thought it wouldn't be an easy thing even to manage using three moves, let alone thirteen moves. But unexpectedly Zuo Lengchan had acted like a crazy person and let her execute up to the fourteenth move before striking out. Everyone was surprised, and there were people who thought wildly and believed Zuo Lengchan was a pervert because his mind seemed to have gone blank in front of such a beautiful young woman as an opponent.

From the Songshan School's cluster, a thin old person walked out. He was 'Crane Hands' Lu Bai and he said in a clear voice, "Headmaster Zuo's divine martial art is unrivalled. Everyone can see how elegant and open minded he is. How absurd of this Miss Yue to show off some basic skills of my Songshan School's sword arts in front of him! Headmaster Zuo merely waited for her to exhaust her skills before subduing her. In the martial art study, it's quality over quantity, so no matter which sect's or which school's martial art you're using, you must practise them until you reach the pinnacle of that martial art and only then can you stand in Wulin..." He only said till here when the crowd started nodding their heads. These words had touched directly at the thoughts of each

person there. These men of Jianghu, besides a few masters there, had actually only learned the martial art of one school. So when Lu Bai said it was quality over quantity in the study of martial art, they all approved of it. But whether these people actually had 'quality' enough in their own martial art, it was very difficult to say. On the other hand, it could certainly be said that these people did not know a large 'quantity' of martial arts.

Lu Bai went on, "This Miss Yue is quite smart. When other schools were practising their swordplay, she secretly peeped in and stole some sword moves, then praised herself to be proficient in the five mountains sword schools' sword arts. Actually, each school's martial art has its own secret that's passed down personally by the masters. If you only peeped into the moves of each stance, then how can you say that you're 'proficient' in them?" The crowd again nodded their heads, and they all thought, "Stealing other schools' martial art is Wulin's biggest taboo. The consequence of this will definitely fall on Yue Buqun's head."

That old person continued, "How can you praise yourself to be proficient in other school's martial art if all you did was peeked at other people's wonderful stances and learned it yourself? Did you teach yourself that school's martial art secret? If not, then how can that be a highly wonderful move? I steal yours, you steal mine, wouldn't that be chaotic?" Right after he finished saying this, many people in the crowd burst into laughter.

Yue Lingshan had used Hengshan sword art to defeat Mr. Mo Da and used Heng-Shan sword art to defeat Linghu Chong. However, in both fights, it looked as if they had given way to her. But when she used Taishan sword art to defeat Yuqingzi and Yuyinzi, she truly used real skills. She was actually proficient in the sword moves she used to fight Yuqingzi and Yuyinzi, and yet because she had attacked them when they were unprepared, it could still be said that she used her fine sword art in an opportunistic way to gain triumph. Even though she only pretended to know the move 'Daizong Way', besides the masters of Taishan School, no one else knew of the sham. However, the crowd wasn't willing to acknowledge that outsiders could be proficient in the martial art of another school. So when they heard what Lu Bai said, many people added their

voice to the commotion created by the Songshan School's disciples. When Lu Bai saw his speech had gained the acknowledgement of the crowd, he looked pleased with himself, and raised his voice to say, "So, for this position of headmaster of the Five Mountains School, there's no one better than Headmaster Zuo to occupy it. Also it should be known, to learn one type of martial art to its pinnacle is much better than learning a lot of martial art shallowly." When he said these words, they were clearly pointed at Yue Buqun. Dozens of young disciples of Songshan School cheered loudly at this. Lu Bai said, "Within the five mountains sword schools, if there's anyone who's confident of defeating Headmaster Zuo, then please come out and show us your skill." He turned around but no one came up.

Originally, the Peach Valley Six Fairies would surely have come out to talk nonsense. But at this time, Yingying was worried about helping Linghu Chong, so she didn't have time to direct the Peach Valley Six Fairies in making trouble for the Songshan School. Peachtree Root Fairy and his five brothers were looking at each other, but they couldn't come up with an idea on what was best to do. 'Tower Holding Palm' Ding Mian shouted loudly, "Since no one wants to challenge Headmaster Zuo, Headmaster Zuo is favoured by everyone here. Then we'll ask him to be our Five Mountains School's headmaster."

Zuo Lengchan feigned humility and said, "There's an abundance of talented people in the Five Mountains School, I have no virtue and no ability, I don't deserve to take up this heavy responsibility."

Songshan School's seventh protector Tang Yinge said clearly, "The position of headmaster of the Five Mountains School is a high position and has heavy responsibility, but we have to push Headmaster Zuo into taking this difficult job so that the thousands of Five Mountains School's disciples have good fortune, and we can contribute greatly to the orthodox path in Jianghu. Headmaster Zuo, please become our leader!"

Suddenly, gongs and drums reverberated loudly, while firecrackers went off in succession. All these had been prepared beforehand by the Songshan School's disciples. As the thunderous sound of firecrackers erupted, Songshan School's

disciples along with the invited friends of Zuo Lengchan cried out, "Headmaster Zuo, please ascend the throne! Headmaster Zuo, please ascend the throne!"

Zuo Lengchan leapt up and landed lightly on top of the place of worship. Just then, it was already dusk and the sun was about to go down the mountain. As the setting sun shone slantingly on Zuo Lengchan, the apricot yellow gown he was wearing glittered like gold and added to the grand atmosphere. He cupped his fist and turned his body around to greet the crowd below the place of worship. "Since everyone is pushing me into it, if I don't agree to take on this difficult responsibility, it would seem like I was protecting my own reputation and was not willing to make a contribution to the orthodox path in Wulin." Several hundred people from the Songshan School thunderously cheered and applauded.

Suddenly, a female voice interrupted, "Martial Uncle Zuo, you broke my long sword. But just by breaking my sword, how can you become the headmaster of the Five Mountains School?" The one who said this was Yue Lingshan.

"All the realm's heroes are here. Everyone said before that it was a sword competition to take the leadership. If Miss Yue can break the long sword in my hand like that, then everyone will accept Miss Yue to be the Five Mountains School's headmaster," Zuo Lengchan said.

"Of course I can't win over Martial Uncle Zuo. But within our Five Mountains School, it's not necessarily true that there's no one whose martial art is better than Martial Uncle Zuo," Yue Lingshan replied.

From among the people in the Five Mountains School, Linghu Chong was the only one Zuo Lengchan was afraid of. Ever since Linghu Chong had gotten heavily injured after fighting against Yue Lingshan, Zuo Lengchan had felt relieved and confident. Now hearing Yue Lingshan’s reply, he retorted, "So according to Miss Yue's opinion, within the Five Mountains, there's someone whose martial art can defeat me? Is this person your father, your mother, or your husband?" Songshan School's disciples exploded in laughter.

"My husband is of a lower generation, so he must yield to Martial Uncle Zuo if

he were to fight. My mother's sword art is well-matched with martial uncle Zuo's. While my father, I think his skills are slightly higher than Martial Uncle Zuo's," Yue Lingshan said.

Songshan School's disciples jeered at this. Some whistled loudly while some stomped their feet on the ground.

Zuo Lengchan said to Yue Buqun, "Mr. Yue, your daughter regards your martial art really highly."

"My little daughter can't stop her mouth blabbering. Brother Zuo doesn't have to treat her seriously. My swordplay is nothing when compared to Shaolin School's Great Master Fangzheng, Wudang School's Priest Chongxu, and Beggar Clan's Leader Xie," Yue Buqun replied.

Zuo Lengchan's face changed colour when he heard this. Yue Buqun had mentioned three names but his name was not one of them. Clearly, Yue Buqun was praising himself to be better than Zuo Lengchan in front of everyone.

Ding Mian said, "How about compared to Headmaster Zuo?"

Yue Buqun replied, "Brother Zuo and I have known each other for many years and we respect each other. Both Songshan and Huashan Schools' sword arts are strong, and in the last hundreds of years there has been no distinction on which one is higher. So it's very hard for me to answer Brother Ding's question."

"Judging from Mr. Yue's tone, it sounded like you believe yourself to be stronger than Headmaster Zuo?" Ding Mian said.

"The master said: 'A gentleman has nothing to fight about but if it must be, he will fight'. Since ancient times, it's unavoidable to dispute over how high someone's martial art is. I've long harboured a wish to ask Martial Brother Zuo for pointers. But today is our new Five Mountains School's inauguration, and we haven't selected a headmaster yet. If Brother Zuo and I have a sword fight, then it'll look as if we're having a fight for the position of the Five Mountains School's headmaster. Then it'll be unavoidable for people to gossip," Yue Buqun said.

Zuo Lengchan said, "If Brother Yue can win against this sword in my hand, then Brother Yue will be the headmaster of the Five Mountains School."

Yue Buqun waved his hand a few times and said, "It's not necessarily true that a person with high martial arts will also have high moral behaviour. If I manage to win against Brother Zuo, it'll not necessarily be true that I'd be able to win against the rest of the masters in the Five Mountains School." The way he said these words was very modest, but each meticulously said word proclaimed that he was a level better than Zuo Lengchan. Zuo Lengchan got angrier the longer he listened. He coldly said, "Brother Yue's reputation as 'Gentleman Sword' shakes the whole world. The word 'Gentleman' is well known to everyone. But this word 'Sword', we've heard of it a lot, but have rarely seen it. Today, as the entire world's heroes have gathered here, I'll have to ask Brother Yue to show your brilliant sword art so as to let everyone here open their eyes!"

Many people called out, "Go up and fight, go up and fight!" "All talk and no action, what kind of hero is that?" "Go and have a sword fight, decide which one is stronger, what's the use of boasting?"

Yue Buqun put both of his hands behind his back and stayed silent. His expression was solemn and respectful, and there was a hint of worry in his face. When Zuo Lengchan was planning to merge the five mountains sword schools, he had already known the martial arts of each master from the other four schools, and was confident that no one from those four schools would be able to win against him. So he did his utmost to push this merger through. Otherwise if there was someone with a more powerful martial art than him, then after the merger of the five mountains sword schools, this position of headmaster might be snatched by other people. If that happened, wouldn't that be benefiting other people instead? Yue Buqun's swordplay was brilliant and his attainment of the 'Divine Art of Violet Twilight' was also not low; both of these things were well known to Zuo Lengchan.

Thus, Zuo Lengchan incited Feng Buping, Cheng Buyou, and other masters from the Sword Branch to go up Mount Huashan, and he also sent more than ten other good fighters from other schools to attack Yue Buqun at the God of

Medicine Monastery. Although they failed, they managed to gather in detail the level of Yue Buqun's martial art. After Zuo Lengchan personally saw Yue Buqun fighting against Linghu Chong at the Shaolin temple, he became even more at ease. Even though Yue Buqun's sword art was wonderful, he was still not Zuo Lengchan's match. When Yue Buqun kicked Linghu Chong, he even got his right leg broken. That showed his internal energy cultivation was just mediocre. But as for this little kid Linghu Chong, he seemed to have suddenly advanced greatly in his sword art, which was really beyond his expectation. But he couldn't always be afraid of this loafer, and just give up this big matter that he had been planning for tens of years already. Moreover, Linghu Chong's strong point was only in his swordplay, while his barehand martial art was very ordinary. If they were to fight for real and he couldn't win by his swordplay, then he would use his fist and palm at the same time and he could immediately take Linghu Chong's life then. However, all his anxiety left him completely when he saw Linghu Chong had gotten himself willingly injured under Yue Lingshan's sword.

Now, hearing the Yue father and daughter speaking so boastfully, he thought, "I don't know how you did it, but you've studied the lost unique skills of the five mountains sword schools, and now got yourself deluded over this. If you, Yue Buqun, were fighting me, and suddenly use these moves, you would've intimidated me. But it was the wrong move to let your daughter use them first. Now I'm already prepared for these moves, so what's the use of using them again?" He also thought, "This person is very calculating and careful, if I can beat him up good and proper in front of all the heroes here then he won't be cocky anymore. Otherwise, he'll remain in my Five Mountains School and be a big trouble the future." So he said, "Brother Yue, all the world heroes have already asked you to go up and show your skill, how can you not give them face?"

"Since Brother Zuo said it, I'll have to respectfully obey your order," Yue Buqun replied, and then step by step he walked up the place of worship.

Thinking there was a good show to be seen, the crowd cheered happily.

Yue Buqun folded his hands in salute and said, "Brother Zuo, we're now under the same school. So we'll just stop at skin-deep when comparing our skills. What do you think?"

"Brother, you must definitely be careful. I'll do my best not injure Brother Yue," Zuo Lengchan replied.

The people from the Songshan School called out, "You haven't fought yet but you are already asking for mercy! It's better not to fight then." "The blade isn't born with eyes. Once it moves, who can guarantee you won't be harmed or killed?" "If you're afraid, then be clever and accept defeat and descend from the fight courtyard. It's not too late."

Yue Buqun smiled and said clearly, "The blade isn't born with eyes. Once it moves, it's difficult to avoid death or injuries. These words are right." He then turned his head toward Huashan School's disciples and said, "Disciples of Huashan, listen to me: Martial Brother Zuo and I are going to compare skills. There's no enmity in this. If Martial Brother Zuo slips and kills me, or heavily injures me, that's just because the battle is too fierce and it's not easy to stop an inch away. No one must hate Martial Uncle Zuo for this, and you must also not seek revenge on the people from Songshan School, so that you don't ruin the loyalty within our Five Mountains School." Yue Lingshan and everyone else acknowledged him loudly. Zuo Lengchan didn't expect him to talk like this so he said, "Brother Yue understands about righteousness very deeply. The loyalty within our school is most important. That's very good."

Yue Buqun smiled and said, "The merger of our five schools into one was the most difficult thing to do. If the peace of the Five Mountains School is harmed because of the two of us comparing our sword techniques and inner fighting between martial brothers in the Five Mountains School occurred, then that'll be counter to the original meaning of merging the schools."

"Right!" Zuo Lengchan agreed, while he thought, "This person is very timid. I should take advantage of this and subdue him now." When masters fight, internal strength and movements were very important, but winning and losing was often decided by the strength of will. Zuo Lengchan secretly felt happy that

Yue Buqun was showing a weakness. With a ringing sound, he drew his long sword out. When the long sword cleared the scabbard, the sound unexpectedly reverberated throughout the whole valley. Zuo Lengchan had moved his inner energy in a unique way so that the edge of the sword struck the inner wall of the sheath continuously as it comes out of its sheath and emitted a thunderous ringing sound. The people who didn't know the reason for this were astonished greatly. The people from Songshan School again cheered loudly.

On the other hand, Yue Buqun pulled out his long sword along with its scabbard from his waist. Then he freed the sword from its sheath, and slowly and silently pulled it out. Judging from the way these two people pulled their swords out, it could be said that this sword fight was between a master and a novice. It looked as if the outcome was already certain that there was no need for a fight.

Linghu Chong's shoulder blade was pierced by the long sword which penetrated all the way to the front and as a result, he suffered a really heavy injury. After witnessing Linghu Chong getting injured, Yingying became really worried and without caring about her disguise, she rushed forward with her long sword raised to protect him. Once the Heng-Shan School's disciples had surrounded him, Yihe took out the 'White Cloud Bear Gallbladder' pill and nervously spilled out five to six pills and put them in Linghu Chong's mouth. Yingying had already sealed the acupoints on his chest and on his back to stop the bleeding quite some time ago. Yiqing and Zheng E separately applied the 'Heavenly Connecting Glue' on his wound. When it was their headmaster who was injured, how could the disciples be stingy in using the medicine? They weren't afraid to apply ample amounts of medicine. In fact, they regarded this priceless medicine like it was just mud as they applied it thickly on his wound. Even though Linghu Chong's injury was serious, he was still clear-headed. When he saw how Yingying and the Heng-Shan School's disciples were deeply concerned for him, he felt apologetic, "Just because I wanted to make little martial sister smile, I made Yingying and martial sisters from Heng-Shan School worried to death." He immediately smiled and said, "I don't know how, I got careless and got... got injured. Don't... don't worry. No need... no need..."

"Don't say anything," Yingying rebuked. Even though she tried her best to sound coarse, it was still very hard to cover up her feminine voice. All the disciples of the Heng-Shan School were stunned to hear this bearded man having a tender and soft voice.

Linghu Chong said, "Let me... have a look... have a look..."

"Yes," Yiqing answered, and pulled her two martial sisters who were in front of his body to the side to let him watch Yue Lingshan's fight with Zuo Lengchan. Linghu Chong saw Yue Lingshan using Songshan sword art; Zuo Lengchan breaking her sword, and finally Zuo Lengchan and Yue Buqun facing each other for a fight on top of the place of worship place. All these he observed vaguely.

With his long sword pointed to the ground, Yue Buqun turned around to face Zuo Lengchan with a smile on his face. At this time, they were around twenty feet away from each other. The crowd was holding their breath and the whole Songshan mountaintop was deathly quiet. But Linghu Chong heard a really faint voice reciting a scripture, "If fierce beasts surrounded you and you were frightened by their sharp teeth and claws, you could call Bodhisattva Guanyin’s name, and all the beasts would quickly leave. When you see venomous serpents and scorpions, you can call Bodhisattva Guanyin’s name and praise her holy power, then they will go back to their lairs. When lightening and thunders strike the ground and hail and heavy rain start pouring down, one can call Bodhisattva Guanyin’s name and praise her holy power so that the bad weather would stop and disappear. For all living creatures, there are so many difficulties, but the holy and wonderful power from Bodhisattva Guanyin will help us get through all of them…." The voice reading this scripture was very sincere and earnest. Linghu Chong knew straight away that it was Yilin who was praying to Guanyin for his well being. Many days ago, in the outskirts of Hengshan city, Yilin had once read this scripture to him. This time he didn't turn his head around to have a look, but he remembered clearly how Yilin looked like on that day long ago when her eyes were full of love and her beautiful face looked soft and warm. A soft and warm feeling bubbled up inside his heart, "Not only Yingying, Martial Sister Yilin also regards me more important than their own lives. Even if my

body were grounded to dust and all my bones were broken, it'd still be hard for me to repay their kindness."

Zuo Lengchan saw Yue Buqun's sword was across his chest while his left hand was in a sword-form poised for writing letters. Zuo Lengchan knew this move was a Huashan sword art called 'Poetry Sword to Meet Friends'. It was the stance Huashan School used when having a friendly fight against people from the orthodox path. The meaning behind this move was when cultured men make friends, they combine sentences together to make poems, while when martial men make friends, they compare martial skills. When this move was used, it made it clear that there was no enmity between the opponents. So the sword fight should only decide the winner and loser, and mustn't take each other's lives. There was a smile on the corner of Zuo Lengchan's mouth as he said, "No need to be polite," while he thought, "Yue Buqun is praised as a gentleman, but I see he's more of a hypocrite. It's not necessarily because of his good heart that he's not showing any kind of hostility towards me. One, he might be afraid. Second, he's trying to make me bold and careless so that he can try to catch me off guard and kill me." Zuo Lengchan pointed his left hand out to the side while his right hand aimed the long sword forward. This move was Songshan School's sword art called 'Opening the Gate to See the Mountain'. He used this sword move to say, if you want to fight then fight, there's no need to be putting on air, and it also implied that his opponent was a hypocrite. Yue Buqun let out a sigh and thrust his long sword forward with the point of the sword continuously trembling. When the sword reached midway, it suddenly turned around and shot up changing into the Huashan sword art 'Concealed Green Mountain'. The sword point was vague, like it was there and wasn't there, as it fluctuated endlessly.

Zuo Lengchan slashed down powerfully in an earth-shaking imposing manner. Many of the spectators gasped and cried out. Originally, this move didn't exist as part of the Songshan sword art. But Zuo Lengchan borrowed a stance from the barehanded martial art, and used his sword like it was his fist. This move 'Split Huashan Open' was very ordinary and was thoroughly understood by everyone who had ever studied barehanded martial art before. The five mountains sword

schools had been communicating with each other for several hundred years already. So not only Songshan sword art didn't have this move, even if it existed, with Huashan School's name in its name, they probably wouldn't have used it or maybe they would've changed its form. At this time, Zuo Lengchan had intentionally changed this existing barehanded martial art into a sword move to infuriate Yue Buqun. Songshan sword art always looked grand and when he used this ordinary move 'Split Huashan Open', it still looked like it could split mountain and still unleash the power of Songshan sword art. Yue Buqun leaned to a side to dodge it while thrusting his sword slantingly using the move 'Forest of Ancient Pine'. Zuo Lengchan saw his movement was tight and cautious, like it wasn't seeking for a result but to avoid making a mistake and it was precisely the method to use when having a long fight. It was obvious Yue Buqun wasn't feeling angry from the two movements 'Opening the Gate to See the Mountain' and 'Split Huashan Open' that Zuo Lengchan used. Zuo Lengchan appraised his opponent was a strong enemy and if he kept on fighting him contemptuously, randomly using new moves, then he would've given him too much advantage. So he immediately slashed his long sword from left to right using Songshan School's real sword art 'Jade Dragon Outside of Heaven'.

Songshan's disciples had all learned this move, but who could have used it in such a surging and grand manner? As Zuo Lengchan's long sword traversed through the air, it looked bent and straight, like it was something alive, and the disciples all cheered loudly. From the moment the heroes of the other schools arrived at Mount Songshan, they had been watching the Songshan School's people beating drums, releasing firecrackers, and applauding Zuo Lengchan no matter what he said. So everyone in the crowd felt at least some loathing in their heart. But this time, when they heard Songshan disciples cheering loudly, they felt that it was reasonable, so they also cheered. This move of 'Jade Dragon Outside of Heaven' executed by Zuo Lengchan looked as if a spirit snake or a divine dragon came to life. Regardless of whether they used sword or other weapons, the people in the crowd all sighed in praise. When the old masters of Taishan and Hengshan School saw this move, they all couldn't help rejoicing, "Lucky the one he's fighting up there is Yue Buqun, and not me!"

Zuo Lengchan and Yue Buqun were using their own school's sword art to fight each other. Songshan's sword behaved more like a halberd; its qi was very thick akin to a thousand soldiers and ten thousands horses rushing forth, scattering yellow dust from thousands of li away. Huashan's sword was light and lively, like a pair of swallows flying amongst the willow during the spring time, going high and low, left and right, and flying around. In that moment, even though Yue Buqun didn't look like he was going to lose, the Songshan sword qi from the sword art's mostly offensive moves was slashing everywhere on top of the place of worship that Yue Buqun tried not to clash his long sword with his opponent's sword the entire time. It was evident that even though his sword art was wonderful, it was only relying on 'agility' and therefore not a match for the powerful Songshan sword art.

It seemed the two of them were masters of the martial study, so as they competed swords, there was no fixed path or structure that they followed. Zuo Lengchan used the seventeen sword paths of the Songshan sword art all mixed together. Yue Buqun used fewer sword stances but Huashan sword art had many complicated variations and the moves also came out one after another effortlessly. After trading more than twenty moves, Zuo Lengchan suddenly lifted the long sword in his right hand while his left palm fiercely struck out. This palm enveloped thirty six fatal acupoints on his opponent's upper body, and if Yue Buqun were to dodge it, he would immediately be pierced by the sword. But Yue Buqun's face turned purple as he gathered his qi and shot his left palm out to clash palms with Zuo Lengchan. With a thunderous sound, the two palms clashed. Yue Buqun flew back, but Zuo Lengchan just stood there motionless.

Yue Buqun called out, "Is that palm move Songshan's martial art?"

Linghu Chong was deeply concerned when he saw the two of them had clashed palms. He knew Zuo Lengchan's Polar Ice Energy was very formidable. Even Ren Woxing with his deep and abundant internal energy was in a very dangerous situation after being hit by it, and it unexpectedly made the four of them into snowmen. Even though Yue Buqun had been cultivating his qi for a

long time, it still wasn't as good as Ren Woxing. So if they were to clash palms a few more times, even if he didn't turn into a frozen corpse, it was certain that he wouldn't be able to endure it.

Zuo Lengchan smilingly said, "This is the palm move I created. I'll pick a disciple from the Five Mountains School and impart this skill to him in the future."

"I have to ask Brother Zuo for some pointers then," Yue Buqun replied.

"Very good," Zuo Lengchan replied while he thought, "His Huashan School's 'Divine Art of Violet Twilight' is also very good. After he received my 'Polar Ice Energy Palm', he could speak without quivering."

Zuo Lengchan immediately wielded his long sword and thrust it towards Yue Buqun. Yue Buqun counterattacked with his sword. After many moves, a crashing sound was heard as they again clashed palms. Yue Buqun's long sword circled and slashed out at Zuo Lengchan's waist. Zuo Lengchan blocked it with a vertical sword move, moved his qi into his left palm and struck out at the back of Yue Buqun's body. This downwards palm strike had a powerful force and was wonderfully positioned. Yue Buqun turned his left palm around and with a light clapping sound, they clashed palms for the third time. Yue Buqun lowered his body to fly out. But Zuo Lengchan felt an aching pain in the middle of his left palm. He lifted his palm to have a look and saw there was a small hole there with black blood seeping out. Half startled and half angry, he scolded, "Crafty thief, shameless!"

He was thinking Yue Buqun must have concealed a poisonous needle in his palm and this had pierced the middle of his palm when they suddenly clashed. The blood seeping out of his palm had already turned black from poison. He never thought this person with the nickname 'Gentleman Sword' would actually have such a contemptible conduct. He inhaled a breath of air, and tapped three acupoints on his left shoulder with his right finger to stop the poison from going up. He thought, "Such a trivial poison needle, how can it stop me? But I must fight him quickly and mustn't let him drag it along." He promptly attacked with his sword like a blast of rain. Yue Buqun wielded his sword to counter attack,

his sword moves had also changed into very violent moves. At this time, the evening had just set in, and the fight between these two people on the place of worship couldn't be seen that clearly anymore. But it was still easy to see by everyone gathered around the place of worship that the fight had turned deadly. Great Master Fangzheng said, "Mercy, mercy! Why did you suddenly turn so violent?"

After more than ten moves, Zuo Lengchan felt the poison on his palm spreading up while his opponent's defence remained very tight so he kept on increasing the force of his sword. Yue Buqun was finding it hard to keep up and seemed like he was unable to keep blocking anymore. Suddenly, Yue Buqun changed his swordplay. Now, his sword was suddenly extending and withdrawing, and the stances looked really strange and weird. The crowd below the place of worship was surprised and one by one whispered to each other, "What sword art is this?" The people being asked were asking back, and every one was just shaking their heads without being able to summon up an answer.

Linghu Chong had been leaning on Yingying. When he suddenly saw his master's swordplay becoming both fast and weird, and very different from the sword art of Huashan School, he was surprised. Then he glanced around and saw that Zuo Lengchan's swordplay had also changed. Now, Zuo Lengchan was using sword moves which were unexpectedly very similar to the ones his master were using. The two of them were attacking and defending very quickly, and the swordplay coordination between the two of them was seamless, as if they were martial brothers who had been practising this set of sword arts together for dozens of years already. In the next twenty moves, Zuo Lengchan kept on advancing with each of his move while Yue Buqun continuously retreated.

Linghu Chong was very good at looking at flaws in other people's martial art. So he was getting really anxious when he saw the flaws in his master's swordplay getting bigger and bigger while the situation was getting more and more dangerous. Seeing that Zuo Lengchan's win was guaranteed, Songshan School's disciples cried out in joy. Zuo Lengchan's attacks were swift and continuous.

When he saw his opponent's swordplay was disorderly and that within ten moves he would be able to disarm him, he became happy and he hurriedly increase the strength of his attack. Sure enough, as his sword slash was blocked by Yue Buqun, he felt the strength in Yue Buqun's arm was quite weak. Zuo Lengchan twirled his sword quickly and Yue Buqun was unable to hold on to his sword as it was sent shooting up into the sky. Songshan School's disciples cheered thunderously.

Suddenly, Yue Buqun rushed forward with his bare hands. Both of his hands attacked ruthlessly with seizing, stabbing, and slapping strikes. His body was floating like a ghost, shifting here and there. He shifted to the west, while his hand unthinkably attacked quickly and strangely. Zuo Lengchan was astonished and called out, "This... This... This..." and exerted himself to block.

Yue Buqun's long sword had dropped straight onto the place of worship penetrating the ground, but no one paid any attention to it.

"Dongfang Bubai!" Yingying whispered.

Linghu Chong was also thinking of the same thing. The move his master used at that moment was the same martial art that Dongfang Bubai had used with the embroidering needle when fighting against the four of them. He was so astonished that he forgot about his injury and stood up. From besides him, a small hand extended itself to hold him underneath the armpit, but he was completely oblivious to it. A pair of startled tender eyes were looking at him but he didn't notice that either. At that time, from among the thousands of people on the Songshan Mountaintop, there was only this pair of eyes that wasn't looking at the fight between Zuo Lengchan and Yue Buqun. From the beginning of the fight, Yilin had never taken her eyes off Linghu Chong.

Zuo Lengchan cried out ferociously, and Yue Buqun flew out to stand on the southwest corner of the place of the worship. Yue Buqun was only about a foot away from the edge and his body was faltering looking like he was about to fall off the place of worship. The long sword in Zuo Lengchan's right hand was still dancing and it was getting faster and faster. The moves he used were Songshan sword arts. Every single move was protecting the fatal acupoints on his whole

body. His sword art was wonderful and its power ferocious and each slash of the sword reverberated with the sound of wind generated by it. A lot of people were exclaiming loudly in praise. After a time, they realized that Zuo Lengchan was just brandishing his sword around his own body and never advanced to attack Yue Buqun. Something wasn't right.

His swordplay was only defending and there wasn't even half a move attacking Yue Buqun. With this kind of swordplay, it looked like he was just practising his swordplay. How could he cope with an attack from a strong opponent? Suddenly, Zuo Lengchan's sword pierced forward and stopped in mid air. He leaned his head slightly to one side, looking like he was trying to listen to some strange noise. The crowd saw a thin line of blood flowing from both of his eyes down to his cheeks and were dripping from his chin. From the crowd, someone exclaimed, "He's blind!"

This voice wasn't very loud, but Zuo Lengchan angrily shouted, "I'm not blind, I'm not blind! Which dog said I'm blind? Yue Buqun, Yue Buqun, you traitor! If you got guts, then come fight with your grandpa for three hundred more stances." His voice was getting louder and louder, and his voice was full of anger, pain, and hopelessness. He was just like a beast that had been mortally wounded roaring loudly in its death throes.

Yue Buqun was smiling as he stood at the corner of the place of worship.

When everyone had seen clearly that both of Zuo Lengchan's eyes had been blinded by Yue Buqun, they were all in utter disbelief. Only Linghu Chong and Yingying were not surprised by this. After Yue Buqun had lost his long sword, the technique he used afterwards was very similar to the one Dongfang Bubai used. That day on Dark Wood Cliff, Ren Woxing, Linghu Chong, Xiang Wentian, and Shangguan Yun cooperated together to fight Dongfang Bubai but they were still not his match. Only after Yingying turned around to attack Yang Lianting that they were luckily spared. Even then, at the end, Ren Woxing was still blinded in one eye. At that time, there was only a thin line difference between life and death for all of them. When Yue Buqun's body started to float rapidly, even though he wasn't as good as Dongfang Bubai, it became certain

that Zuo Lengchan would still lose when fighting him one on one. As expected, not long after, both of Zuo Lengchan's eyes were blinded by a needle.

Linghu Chong wasn't happy at all to see his master won. Instead, he suddenly felt indescribable fear in his heart. Yue Buqun's temper had always been peaceful and calm, and he had also treated Linghu Chong amiably. Linghu Chong had always regarded his master with affection and awe. Later on, when his master expelled him from the school, he knew it was because of his own faults. He felt it was a deserved punishment in reality because he liked to handle things eccentrically, unreasonably and do as he pleased. He was only hoping that Master and Master-Wife would be able to forgive him, and he had no anger towards them at all. But when he saw Master standing at the edge of the place of worship with his sleeves floating in the wind and his manner elegant and scholarly, without knowing why, an intense feeling of hatred rose up in his heart. Perhaps it was because the martial art Yue Buqun used had made him thought of Dongfang Bubai's grotesqueness, or perhaps he felt Master had won in an extremely dishonourable and unscrupulous manner. He was at a loss for some time when his wound suddenly became painful and he sat down dejectedly.

Yingying and Yilin extended their hands at the same time to support him while asking, "What's wrong?"

Linghu Chong shook his head and forced a smile. "Noth... Nothing."

They again heard Zuo Lengchan cried out, "Yue Buqun, you traitor! If you got guts, come out and fight to the death. Running here and there, what a disgraceful bastard! You... come, come and fight!"

Tang Yinge from Songshan School said, "Go up there and help master come down."

"Yes!" Two disciples, Shi Dengda and Di Xiuying, answered. They flew up the place of worship and said, "Master, let's go down!"

"Yue Buqun, you're afraid to come?" Zuo Lengchan shouted.

Shi Dengda extended his hand to help. "Mas..."

Suddenly, a light reflected. Zuo Lengchan slashed his long sword from Shi Dengda's left shoulder to his right waist, and followed by slashing at Di Xiuying's chest. These two attacks were very formidable, and the end was unthinkable. In a flash, the two Songshan School disciples had been chopped into four pieces. The crowd below gasped in fright, stunned.

Yue Buqun slowly walked towards the middle of the place of worship and said, "Brother Zuo, you're already handicapped so I won't fight you anymore. Are you still thinking of fighting me for the headmaster position of the Five Mountains School?"

Zuo Lengchan slowly lifted his long sword and pointed the sword at Yue Buqun's chest. Yue Buqun had no weapon in his hand. His long sword which had fallen from mid-air was still penetrated on the floor of the place of worship and was now lightly swaying in the wind. Yue Buqun inserted both of his hands into his sleeves, while both of his eyes stared unblinkingly at the sword point just three feet away from his chest. The blood on the sword point was dripping onto the ground with a light 'tap, tap, tap' sound. The sleeve on Zuo Lengchan's right hand started to puff up like a sail gathering up wind. The sleeve on his left hand drooped down and looked ordinary which indicated that he had concentrated his whole energy into his right arm. The stirring of his internal energy made his sleeve billowed. This was not a small thing at all. It signalled that this attack would be as powerful as a thunderbolt when released.

Suddenly, a white blur was seen as Yue Buqun slid back more than ten feet and in a blink had come back to where he was standing. This retreat and return was done with such speed that it took only an instant. He just stood there for a moment before sliding to the left and back for more than ten feet, and just like before swiftly returned to his original place to face Zuo Lengchan's sword. Everyone had all seen it clearly. No matter how fierce or formidable Zuo Lengchan's attack would be, he still wouldn't be able to hit Yue Buqun.

Zuo Lengchan was confusedly thinking of many things. If his Qiankun Toss didn't pierce Yue Buqun's chest and Yue Buqun managed to avoid it, then with his two blind eyes, he would be prey to Yue Buqun without being able to fight

back. He then thought of all the efforts he had put in into the planning of the merger of the five schools. He never expected that everything would have come to nothing. He had failed when success was just within his reach. Instead he had fallen into a plot. Suddenly, his heart turned sour and he felt warm blood rushing up. With a cry, fresh blood sprayed out from his mouth. Yue Buqun leaned slightly to one side and evaded the blood. His face was showing a smiling expression. Zuo Lengchan shook out his right hand, and the long sword broke in the middle. He immediately followed it by throwing it onto the ground. He looked up and laughed loudly, the sound of his laughter reverberating far throughout the valley. While still laughing, he turned his body around and strode purposefully off the place of worship. When he reached the edge of the place of worship, his left feet stepped in mid-air, but he was ready for this as his right leg kicked out and he flew down the place of worship.

A few disciples of Songshan School rushed forward and called out, "Master, we'll go together and chop up everyone from Huashan School."

Zuo Lengchan said in a clear voice, "Gentleman's words must be believed! It's already said it's a sword fight to take the leadership, and it will only depend on martial art to gain victory. Mr. Yue's martial art has gained him victory from me so everyone must now accept him as headmaster. How can you have thoughts of dissent?" When his eyes were first blinded, he was startled and angry, and couldn't help hurling abuses. But after he calmed down a bit, he regained the aura of a master and was very firm, resembling a grand hero. The entire crowd really admired him for this. Otherwise, with countless number of Songshan School's disciples here and their many helpers, along with the advantage they held here, if they actually fought with Huashan School's people, no matter how high Yue Buqun's martial art was, it would still be very hard to match the strength of Songshan School. Among the people who had come to Mount Songshan to mingle with the five mountains sword schools, many of them were there to curry favour with people higher than them. So when they heard what Zuo Lengchan said, they immediately cheered, "Let Mr. Yue be the Five Mountains School's headmaster. Let Mr. Yue be the Five Mountains School's headmaster!" The disciples of Huashan School exclaimed even louder. Actually,

this outcome was really outside their expectations, and the disciples of Huashan School could hardly believe that this had happened.

Yue Buqun walked to the edge of the place of worship and folded his hands in salute. "When Brother Zuo and I were comparing our skills, we originally weren't going to hurt each other. But Martial Brother Zuo's martial art was just too high and he shook out the long sword out of my hand. So in desperation, I was just trying to protect myself and lost my discretion and resulted in harming Martial Brother Zuo's eyes. My heart feels very uneasy about this. Let's look for a good doctor to treat Martial Brother Zuo."

Someone below said, "The blade has no eyes. How can it prevent injuries?"

Another person said, "You didn't keep going and kill him. That's very righteous."

"I don't deserve it!" Yue Buqun humbly replied. He was still cupping his hand in salute without talking, and he also didn't have any intention of going down the place of worship.

Someone below shouted, "Whoever wants to become the Five Mountains School's headmaster, go up and fight."

Another person said, "Anyone with too bright of eyes, go up and ask Mr. Yue to dig it out. That will be alright."

Hundreds of people called out in unison, "Mr. Yue be the Five Mountains School's headmaster, Mr. Yue be the Five Mountains School's headmaster!"

Yue Buqun waited for the clamour to calm down slightly before saying in a clear voice, "Since it's everyone's wish, I don't dare to decline. Today is the inauguration of the Five Mountains School so there's no set rules yet. I'll just follow the existing hierarchy. The matters in Hengshan, I'd like to ask Mr. Mo Da to preside over them. The affairs in Heng-Shan will still be managed by Brother Linghu Chong. The matters of Taishan, I'd like to ask Priest Yuqing and Priest Yuyin to get together with one of the foundation disciple of Martial Brother Tianmen to preside over the school. For the affairs of Songshan School, Martial Brother Zuo's eyes are an inconvenience, but it must be considered..." Yue

Buqun paused for a while as his eyes ranged over the cluster of Songshan School's people. Then he slowly said, "In my opinion, I'd like to ask Martial Brother Tang Yinge and Martial Brother Lu Bai to preside over the daily matters of Songshan together with Martial Brother Zuo for the time being."

This was really beyond Lu Bai's expectation, and he stammered, "This... This..." The people of Songshan School along with the people from the other schools were surprised to hear this.

Tang Yinge had been Zuo Lengchan's second-in-command for a long time so it was expected. But Lu Bai had just made things difficult for Yue Buqun by coldly ridiculing and hotly satirising him. He never expected Yue Buqun to forget all he did and appoint him to be one of the people to preside over Songshan School's affairs. The disciples of Songshan School were originally furious over the blinding of Zuo Lengchan's eyes, and many of them wished for an opportunity to arise to repay him in kind. But hearing Yue Buqun sending Tang Yinge, Lu Bai, and Zuo Lengchan to preside over Songshan's matters just as it were in its original state, they felt that Yue Buqun was not imposing his will on them by force and their anger somewhat cooled.

Yue Buqun said, "Today, our five mountains sword schools have merged. If we don't get along well, then this merger of the five schools will just be in words and will only be an empty name. From today onwards, everyone is in the same school and must get along well with each other. I have no virtue and no ability, and only temporarily hold the headmaster position of the Five Mountains School. So I must discuss with all the brothers here on all sorts of things. I don't dare to do it on my own. It's already night now and everyone is exhausted. Let us all go to Songshan's courtyard to rest, drink wine, and have some meals!" The crowd cheered and one by one went down from the mountaintop.

As Yue Buqun descended from the place of worship, Great Master Fangzheng, Priest Chongxu, and the other masters came over to congratulate him. Fangzheng and Chongxu were originally worried that once Zuo Lengchan had merged the five schools, his wild ambition would continue and he would want to annex Shaolin and Wudang, and brought disaster upon Wulin. Everyone

knew Yue Buqun was a modest gentleman, so they were relieved that he was wielding the power of the merged schools and their congratulations to him were sincere.

Great Master Fangzheng whispered, “Mr. Yue, at this moment, the intentions of the disciples of Songshan School are unpredictable and they’re not favourable towards Shizhu. As the saying goes, we must not harbour ill intention towards other people, but we must guard ourselves. Shizu must be careful while you’re on Mount Songshan.”

“Yes, thank you for Great Master Abbot’s advice,” Yue Buqun replied.

“Mount Shaoshi is just a doorstep away from here, and it’s very easy to answer to your call,” Fangzheng said.

Yue Buqun saluted deeply by cupping his hands and said, “I’ll remember Great Master’s kind intention with gratitude.” Then he spoke a few words with Priest Chongxu and Beggar Clan’s leader Xie, before quickly going over to Linghu Chong and asking, “Chong’er, is your wound alright?”

Since the moment he expelled Linghu Chong from Huashan, this was the first time he had called him ‘Chong’er’ in such a pleased and warm manner. But Linghu Chong’s heart was cold and he tremblingly said, “It’s... It’s not serious.”

“Why don’t you come back to Huashan with me to take care of your injury and get together with your Master-Wife again?” Yue Buqun asked. If Yue Buqun had asked this a few hours earlier, Linghu Chong would’ve been madly happy and would have agreed immediately. But now, he hesitated and was rather quite afraid to go up Huashan.

“So?” Yue Buqun asked.

“Heng-Shan School has good medicine, once disciple... disciple’s injury is better, I’ll come and visit Master and Master-Wife,” Linghu Chong answered.

Yue Buqun turned his head slightly and gazed at his face, looking like he wanted to discover his real intention. After some time, he said, “That’s also good! Set your mind at ease and take care of your injury. I hope you can visit

Huashan soon.”

“Yes!” Linghu Chong responded as he struggled to stand up to give his propriety.

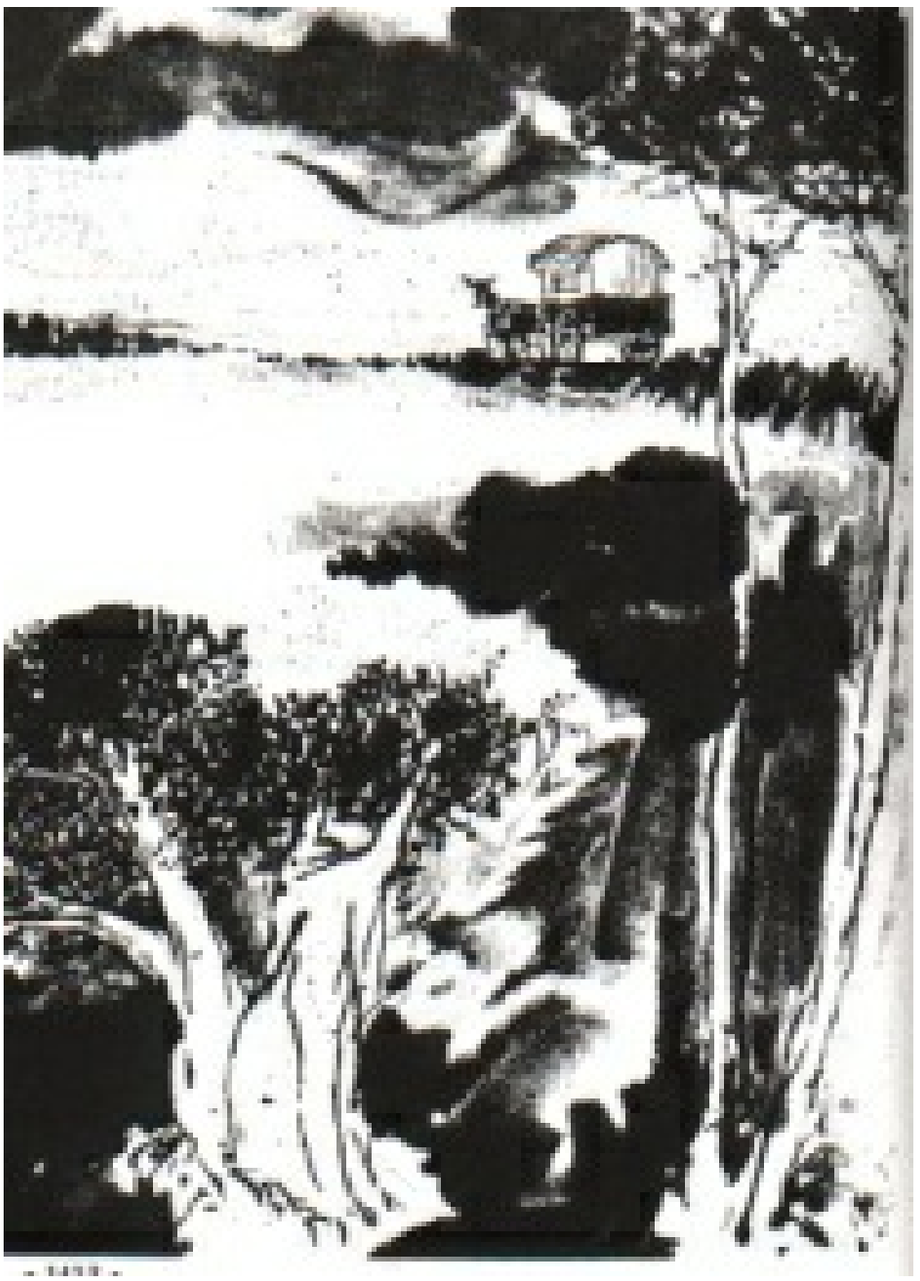
Yue Buqun extended his hand to hold Linghu Chong’s right hand and warmly said, “There’s no need!” Linghu Chong contracted his body away from Yue Buqun's hand while his face couldn’t help showing his fear. Yue Buqun snorted and scowled angrily, but then immediately smiled and sighed, “Your little martial sister is still like before. She still doesn’t know how soft or hard to be when she attacks. Luckily you didn’t get stabbed on your fatal acupoint!” He then nodded towards Yihe and Yiqing, who were the two most senior disciples, and slowly turned around. He walked towards a group of hundreds of people waiting for him. As he neared, those people surrounded him and praised his high martial art, his righteousness, and his appropriate handling of the matters. Crowding around him and flattering him continuously, they all went down from the mountaintop.

Linghu Chong kept an eye on the back of his master’s body until he disappeared from his view. The people from each school had also gone down from the mountaintop. Suddenly, he heard a female voice at his back uttered, “Hypocrite!” Linghu Chong faltered as his wound pained sharply and this word ‘Hypocrite’ was like a big hammer pounding on his chest. All of a sudden, he felt he couldn’t draw his breath anymore.

Chapter 35 Vengeance

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Edited by: Hhaung



Moonlight poured on the wide and straight road like a stream. Light fog and mist shrouded the trees by the road. Sweet smell from wild flowers was heavy for a moment and then light for the next. Small breeze stroked people's face. Linghu Chong hadn't had any wine for a long time, but now he felt a bit tipsy like he just had some.

The sky gradually got darker, and finally there was no one else around the place of worship besides the Heng-Shan School people. "Martial Brother Headmaster, are we also going down?" Yihe questioned. She was still calling

Linghu Chong as 'Martial Brother Headmaster', which meant that she did not acknowledge the merging of the five schools nor accept Yue Buqun to be their headmaster.

"We'll stay here for the night, is that alright?" Linghu Chong felt the further away he was from Yue Buqun, the better it was. Also, he did not wish to see Yue Buqun's face again at the Songshan's courtyard.

When he said this, the female disciples of the Heng-Shan School cheered happily. They all actually felt the same thing, and no one wished to go down. Back in Fuzhou, they had asked Huashan School to help their martial elders who were in trouble. But in spite of the motto 'Five mountains sword schools, same root different branches', Yue Buqun flatly refused to help them. Heng-Shan School's disciples had always kept this matter in their hearts. At the moment, everyone was still feeling angry that Linghu Chong had gotten injured by Yue Lingshan. So from the combination of all these together, they all refused to accept the fact that Yue Buqun had snatched the leadership of the Five Mountains School. Thus, staying by the place of the worship for the night was agreeable to them.

"Martial Brother Headmaster can't move too much, so staying here is best," Yiqing said agreeing with Linghu Chong. "But, this big brother..." As she said this, she glanced toward Yingying.

"This isn't a big brother," Linghu Chong laughed. "She's young lady Ren."

Yingying had been supporting Linghu Chong all this time, but when she heard him divulging her identity, she became bashful and quickly stood up to flee for a few steps. Linghu Chong wasn't guarding against this so his body tipped backwards. Yilin, who was standing besides him, quickly extended her hand to hold his left shoulder and called out, "Careful!"

Yihe, Yiqing, and the others all knew Yingying and Linghu Chong had a deep love for each other. One of them was willing to risk her life at Shaolin temple because of love, while the other led a group of Jianghu heroes to attack Shaolin temple because of her. When Linghu Chong became the headmaster of the

Heng-Shan School, this young lady Ren came personally to congratulate him and she also defeated the scheming of the Devil Sect. It could be said she had done a big favour for Heng-Shan School. When they heard this big bearded man in front of them was young lady Ren, mixed feelings of happiness and surprise rose up. The disciples of Heng-Shan School had long regarded this young lady Ren to be their future Headmaster-Wife, so when they saw her, they felt very intimate towards her.

After Yihe and some of the other disciples took care of provisions such as clear water and meals, they lay down besides the place of worship. Because of his serious injury, Linghu Chong also felt sleepy and exhausted, so he fell into a deep sleep in a short time.

In the middle of the night, from somewhere far away, they suddenly heard a female voice shouting, "Who's there?"

Even though Linghu Chong was heavily injured, his internal energy was still abundant. When he heard this, he promptly woke up and knew it was a Heng-Shan School disciple guarding the perimeter asking someone who was coming up the peak. He heard someone answered, "I'm a disciple from the same Five Mountains School. I'm Headmaster Yue's disciple, Lin Pingzhi."

"Why did you come here in the middle of the night?" the Heng-Shan School disciple who was on night watch duty inquired.

"I have an appointment underneath the place of worship," Lin Pingzhi answered. "I didn't know martial sisters are resting here. Sorry for the offence." His speech was very polite.

"Little kid surnamed Lin, you're trying to win by number concealing your Five Mountains School's friends here," an elder's voice came from the west. "Are you trying to give me trouble?"

Linghu Chong recognised the voice to be Qingcheng School's headmaster, Yu Canghai. He was startled and thought, "Martial brother Lin has an enmity with Yu Canghai for killing his parents. This appointment must be for repaying his blood debt."

"I didn't know the martial sisters from Heng-Shan are resting here," Lin Pingzhi replied. "Let's find someplace else to settle our business so we don't bother their dreams."

"So we don't bother their dreams? Hey, hey, you've already disturbed them, but you're trying to be the nice guy now. Like father-in-law, like son-in-law. What do you have to say? Quickly say it now so we can all go back to sleep peacefully," Yu Canghai laughed loudly.

"I don't think that you'll be able to sleep peacefully ever again," Lin Pingzhi coldly said. "When your Qingcheng School came to Mount Songshan, you brought thirty four people with you. I made an appointment with you only, how come three came?"

Yu Canghai looked up and laughed loudly. "Who do you think you are? Do you think you're worthy to talk to me like that? Your father-in-law is the new headmaster of the Five Mountains School, so I came here to listen to what you have to say just to give him face. What do you want to fart about? Let's hear it. If you want to fight then draw your sword and let me see your Lin family's Evil Resisting Sword Art. Let's see how much you've improved."

Linghu Chong slowly sat up. Under the pale moonlight, he saw Lin Pingzhi and Yu Canghai facing each other at around thirty feet apart. Linghu Chong thought, "That day when I was injured in Hengshan, this shorty Yu wanted to kill me. Luckily Martial Brother Lin showed himself and interfered, and saved my life. If that shorty Yu had hit me on that day, how can Linghu Chong be alive today? Martial Brother Lin's martial art has advanced greatly since he joined the Huashan School but he still won't be at the level of this shorty Yu. He made the appointment here with shorty Yu; Master and Master-Wife must surely be behind him to help. But if Master and Master-Wife didn't come then I can't just stand by and do nothing."

Yu Canghai laughed derisively. "If you got guts then come by yourself to Mount Qingcheng to get your revenge, instead of making a surreptitious appointment here with me while concealing a group of nuns here to ambush me. What a joke, what a joke!"

When Yihe heard this, she couldn't hold back her anger and shouted, "Whatever love or hatred this kid surnamed Lin has toward you, what's that got to do with our Heng-Shan School? You shorty priest, you talk nonsense! You can fight till you die, we're just here to watch. I know you're afraid, but don't drag Heng-Shan School into it." She was very resentful towards Yue Lingshan. When you like someone, you like everything associated with that person. When you don't like someone, you don't like anything associated with that person. So by this reasoning, Yihe also detested Yue Lingshan's husband.

Yu Canghai and Zuo Lengchan had always been friends. Zuo Lengchan had personally written two letters to invite him to the monastery to strengthen the situation today. So when Yu Canghai came to Mount Songshan at this time, he expected Zuo Lengchan to become the Five Mountains School's headmaster. That was why even though the Huashan School's people had an enmity with him, he didn't care about it in the least. But who could've thought this headmaster position of the Five Mountains School was unexpectedly snatched by Yue Buqun? Because of this unexpected event, the Qingcheng School didn't feel like staying on Mount Songshan and was going to go down the mountain that very night. As the Qingcheng School's party was going down from the Songshan mountaintop, Lin Pingzhi walked up besides him and whispered about the appointment. He wanted Yu Canghai to meet him tonight beneath the place of worship. Even though Lin Pingzhi spoke quietly, he was very rude in his expression and in his choice of words which made it hard for Yu Canghai to decline. At that time, Yu Canghai pondered, "Your Huashan School has just come into power as head of the Five Mountains School and yet you've become arrogant already. But you're still green and the Five Mountains School might still split up, so I'm not afraid of you at all. But I must protect against your helpers attacking in numbers."

With that thought in his mind, Yu Canghai deliberately came to the meeting a bit late to see if Lin Pingzhi had brought a large number of helpers with him. When he saw Lin Pingzhi had turned up to the peak all by himself, he was delighted. He then brought two of the Qingcheng School's people to the peak with him, while the rest was dispersed around the waist of the mountain to alert

him if anyone was coming up to the peak. But, when he reached the peak, he saw there were many people sleeping underneath the place of worship. Yu Canghai inwardly felt miserable and thought, "A thirty years old mother has been defeated by a little baby. I only checked if he brought helpers with him up to the peak. I never thought his helpers would already be waiting on top of the peak. I've walked into their ambush. Now I have to think of a way to get out of it."

He knew Heng-Shan School's martial art wasn't below Qingcheng School's. Even though three of their senior Shi Tai had passed away and Linghu Chong had also been seriously injured and the current stature of Heng-Shan School was on the wane as they were left with no master-hands, there were still a lot of them. If the hundreds of nuns form their sword formations to attack, the situation would be extremely dangerous. When he heard what Yihe said, he felt relieved even though she was being very rude to him and insulted him by calling him 'shorty'. Her words made it clear that Heng-Shan School wouldn't help Lin Pingzhi.

"It's very good you are not helping each other," Yu Canghai said. "There's no harm for everyone to open your eyes widely and watch my Qingcheng School's swordplay, and see how it compares to Huashan School's swordplay." He paused for a tick before continuing, "Everyone, Yue Buqun was lucky to defeat Martial Brother Zuo because I don't think his swordplay is very good. Every family and every school in Wulin has its own unique skill. Huashan sword art isn't necessarily able enough to rule the world. From what I see, Heng-Shan sword art is much better compared to Huashan's." Heng-Shan School's disciples did not know whether his words had a double meaning or not. But Yihe didn't care about it as she said, "Hey, you two, if you want to fight then fight. Quit yapping your mouth here in the middle of the night disturbing people's sleep. How inconsiderate!"

Yu Canghai was fuming but he thought, "I have to deal with this kid Lin today, so I can't settle my debt with you stinking nuns right now. But from today onwards, whenever I cross paths with your Heng-Shan School, I'll make sure to

give you a lot of trouble." He was a petty person and was used to being arrogant. If the people of the generation below him didn't show much respect and didn’t speak flatteringly when meeting him, he would become unhappy. If Yihe had said those words at any other time, he would've blown his top.

Lin Pingzhi walked up a couple of steps. "Yu Canghai, you've long coveted my family's sword art and killed my parents for it. Even the dozens of people from my Fortune Prestige Escort agency were all killed by your Qingcheng School. Your blood with compensate this blood debt tonight."

"My own son was killed by you, Pig!” Yu Canghai shouted in anger. “Even if you hadn't come looking for me, I would've cut you into thousands of pieces and peeled your flesh off, Dog! Were you trying to hide by becoming a disciple of Huashan and getting Yue Buqun as your backer?" With a ringing sound, he drew his long sword out of its scabbard. It was the fifteenth of the month that day so there was a bright moon in the sky. Even though his body was short, the sword was long. The moonlight reflected off the steel like rippling water. The sword in front of his body was trembling. The situation was far from ordinary.

Heng-Shan disciples all thought, "This shorty's reputation isn't a small matter." Lin Pingzhi still hadn't drawn his sword as he walked up another two steps. He was now only around ten feet apart from Yu Canghai. His head was slightly turned while his eyes were full of fire observing Yu Canghai.

When Ling Pingzhi did not draw his sword, Yu Canghai thought, "You, little kid, are very reckless. If I use the 'Flood Dragon Soaring from the Deep Blue Pool' now, you'd have a new mouth two and a half feet long from your lower abdomen to your throat. But you're a junior to me so I can't move first." Then he shouted, "Still not drawing your sword?" He was waiting for Lin Pingzhi to press his hand on his sword handle and start drawing his sword out. At the moment before Ling Pingzhi's sword was completely out of the scabbard, he would use the move 'Flood Dragon Soaring from the Deep Blue Pool' to cut his stomach. Heng-Shan disciples would then only be able to say his hand was fast but not that it was a sneak attack. Linghu Chong saw the long sword trembling in Yu Canghai's hand and he called out, "Martial brother Lin, be careful, he's

going to stab at your stomach."

Lin Pingzhi laughed mockingly and suddenly rushed forward. His move was extremely fast, as in an instant, there was only a distance of less than one foot between him and Yu Canghai. Their noses were practically touching. This rushing move was so strange that no one could have imagined it, and it was so fast that it was very hard to describe. With this single rush, the long sword on Yu Canghai's right hand was now behind his opponent's body and there was no way for him to bend his long sword to stab the back of Lin Pingzhi's body. Lin Pingzhi's left hand was also holding Yu Canghai's right shoulder while his right hand was pressing against Yu Canghai's chest. Yu Canghai felt tingling pain on the ‘Shoulder Well’ acupoint on his shoulder and felt his right arm became weak and the long sword dropped from his hand. Everyone saw how Lin Pingzhi subdued his opponent in just one move and how his hand movements were strange. His movements looked exactly like the moves Yue Buqun used to defeat Zuo Lengchan, even the movement path he had taken was exactly the same. Linghu Chong turned his head around to look at Yingying. They stared at each other and cried out quietly at the same time, "Dongfang Bubai!"

Linghu Chong and Yingying were staring at each other and they both saw fear and dismay in each other's eyes. It was obvious Lin Pingzhi's move was the same as the martial art that Dongfang Bubai used on that day at Dark Wood Cliff. Lin Pingzhi didn't force out the gathered energy in his right hand as he saw the dread on Yu Canghai's face lighted under the moonlight. It couldn't be said that Lin Pingzhi was feeling happy as he felt that death would have come too easily for Yu Canghai if he was killed in just one move.

In that moment, from somewhere far, they heard Yue Lingshan shouting, "Brother Ping, Brother Ping! Father told you not to bother him for now." She was running up the peak as she shouted. When she saw Lin Pingzhi and Yu Canghai standing face to face, she was stupefied. She rushed forward a few steps and saw Lin Pingzhi was holding Yu Canghai's fatal acupoint on one hand while his other hand was on Yu Canghai's chest. She let out a sigh of relieve. "Father said Priest Yu is our guest today and we shouldn't make any trouble for

him."

Lin Pingzhi snorted and added more internal energy into pressing Yu Canghai's 'Shoulder Well' acupoint. Yu Canghai's major acupoint became even more painful, but when he examined it closer, he found his opponent's internal energy was ordinary and there was nothing special about it. It was only painful because it was pressing on his major acupoint. Otherwise according to the theory of internal energy cultivation, Lin Pingzhi was still far below him. In that realisation, he felt sadness and anger mixed together in his heart. Clearly, his opponent's martial art was sloppy and ordinary. Even if Lin Pingzhi studied for ten more years, he still wouldn't be his match. But Lin Pingzhi had now taken advantage of his negligence and his reputation would now be gone forever. Furthermore, Lin Pingzhi wanted to avenge his parents so most likely he wouldn't listen to his master's order and thus take his life right now.

"Father told you to spare his life today," Yue Lingshan pleaded. "Are you afraid he's going to run off to the edge of the world?"

Lin Pingzhi lifted his left palm and slapped Yu Canghai twice. Yu Canghai was furious, but his enemy's right hand was still pressed against his chest. This youngster's internal energy was not good but when he exerted his energy, it still shook Yu Canghai's heart meridian. If this right palm were to kill him, it would have been the best thing for him. But the thing he feared most was Lin Pingzhi using a fourth or fifth class internal energy which would make him dead but not dead, alive but not alive, and make him very miserable. He weighed the importance of the matter in a flash and didn't dare to move at all. After Lin Pingzhi had slapped him twice, he laughed long and hard before jumping back around thirty feet away. Lin Pingzhi turned his head slightly to regard Yu Canghai. Yu Canghai wanted to pick his sword up but he considered himself to be a senior and he was already subdued in just one move. If he foolhardily rushed forward to fight under the eyes of so many people, that could be said like a beggar fighting. Compared to losing the fight, he would be even more ashamed. So even if he took a step across to continue fighting, he wouldn't have taken the second step. Lin Pingzhi sneered and walked away. He unexpectedly

didn't pay any attention even to his wife.

Yue Lingshan stamped her feet, and took a glance toward Linghu Chong who was sitting underneath the place of worship. She immediately walked towards him and said, "Big martial brother, your... your wound is alright?"

As soon as Linghu Chong heard her voice in the beginning, his heart was already racing. At this time he got even more excited, he stammered out, "I... I... I..."

"Don't worry, he won't die!" Yihe coldly said to Yue Lingshan.

Yue Lingshan heard her but didn't listen to her. Her eyes gazed at Linghu Chong, and she quietly said, "When I lost my sword, I... I didn't mean to injure you."

"Yes," Linghu Chong replied. "Of course I know, of course I know... I... I... of course I know." He had always been open-minded and carefree, but in front of his little martial sister, he became very muddle headed. He said the word 'of course I know' for three times, not knowing what he was driving at.

"Your injury is very heavy, I'm extremely sorry, but I hope you won't blame me," Yue Lingshan apologetically said.

'No, I won't, of course I won't blame you."

Yue Lingshan silently sighed and lowered her head. She quietly said, "I'm going!"

"You... you want to go?" Linghu Chong's disappointment was evident in his speech and expression.

Yue Lingshan slowly walked away with her head down. Just before she went down the mountaintop, she stopped and turned around. "Big martial brother, about the two martial sisters of Heng-Shan School who came to Huashan, father said we're being impolite and we're very sorry. When we return to Huashan, we'll make up for our offence and accompany them down the mountain."

"Yes, very good, very... very good!" Linghu Chong watched her as she went down the mountaintop until she disappeared behind a pine tree. He suddenly

thought of the time on the Cliff of Contemplation when she delivered wine and meals to him every day. But when she left, he had always been reluctant to part and only managed to utter a few words, until finally she shifted her feelings toward Lin Pingzhi and her feelings toward him changed. When he pondered of the things that happened in the past, he was only making things difficult for himself. Suddenly he heard Yihe coldly laughed and said, "What's so good about that girl? Her heart's undecided, and she doesn't treat people with the least bit of sincerity at all. Compared to our young lady Ren, she's not even fit to carry her shoes."

Linghu Chong was surprised and not until now did he think of Yingying who was besides him. He treated little martial sister in such an absentminded manner, of course Yingying had seen it all. His face couldn't help becoming hot. But he saw Yingying leaning on the corner of the place of worship looking like she had dozed off. He thought, "It's good that she's fallen asleep." But Yingying was so alert, how could she have fallen asleep at that time? Linghu Chong knew he was lying to himself. He tried to find a few words to say to her, but he didn't know what to say. But to repay Yingying, he immediately thought of something. At this time, there were no words that could be said, and the best thing to do was not to say anything. However, the best way would be to lead her thought away from what just happened. So he lied down slowly and suddenly groaned lightly like he had hit his wound and it was feeling painful. Of course Yingying would be worried so she came over and quietly asked, "Does it hurt?"

"It's alright," Linghu Chong answered and extended his hand to hold Yingying's hand. Yingying wanted to snatch her hand back but Linghu Chong was gripping it pretty tightly. She was afraid if she used too much force then it'll hurt his wound so she just let him hold her hand. Linghu Chong had lost a lot of blood and was feeling very sleepy, so he slept deeply not long after that.

When dawn broke, the whole mountain was basked in crimson sunlight. Everyone was afraid to startle him into wakefulness so no one dared to say anything. Linghu Chong felt his hand was empty. He didn't know how long it was before Yingying pulled her hand back. But both of her eyes were staring at

his face looking very concerned. Linghu Chong smiled at her and sat up. "Let's go back to Heng-Shan!"

At this time, Tian Boguang had already chopped a tree down and made a stretcher out of it. So Monk No Commandment and he carried Linghu Chong to go down the mountain peak. When their party passed by the Songshan's courtyard, they saw Yue Buqun was waiting for them at the entrance with his face smiling, wanting to see them off. Madam Yue and Yue Lingshan weren't besides him.

"Master, disciple can't kowtow to bid you goodbye," Linghu Chong said.

"No need, no need," Yue Buqun smiled. "We'll talk when your injury is better. I have no one to help me in my position as the Five Mountains School's headmaster. Later on, I have to rely upon you in helping me with a lot of things." Linghu Chong forced out a smile.

Monk No Commandment and Tian Boguang carried him and walked quickly like they were flying, and they walked very far in just a short time. On the mountain road, they passed by the groups that had come to the meeting at Mount Songshan. When they reached the foot of the mountain, they hired mule-drawn carriages and let Linghu Chong and Yingying rode in them.

When night fell, they came upon a small town and saw a teahouse shed with lots of people sitting inside. They were all from Qingcheng School and Yu Canghai was also among them. When he saw the disciples of Heng-Shan arriving, his face changed colour and he turned his back towards them. The small town had no other teahouse so the Heng-Shan's people sat down on a rock step on the opposite eaves to rest. Zheng E and Qin Juan went inside the teahouse to get some hot tea for Linghu Chong to drink.

Suddenly, they heard the sound of galloping horses and two horses came over with dust flying behind them. When they arrived in front of the town, the two horses were reined in. There were one male and one female riding the horses; they were Lin Pingzhi and Yue Lingshan.

"Yu Canghai, you know I didn't give permission for you to rest, why don't you

run away quickly? Are you waiting for death here?" Lin Pingzhi called out.

Linghu Chong was on the mule-drawn carriage when he heard Lin Pingzhi's voice. He asked, "Martial brother Lin has caught up?"

Qin Juan was sitting inside the carriage waiting for him to drink his tea, she immediately rolled open the curtain on the carriage to let him observe the happenings outside the carriage. Yu Canghai was sitting on a stool sipping a cup of tea in his hand and did not pay attention to Lin Pingzhi. After he had taken another sip, he said, "I'm waiting here to send you to your death."

"Good!" Lin Pingzhi responded. This word 'good' had just been spoken when he had already jumped down his horse, had his sword out, thrust it forward, leapt back on his horse and with a shout rode away with Yue Lingshan. A disciple of Qingcheng School who was standing on the side of the street had a gash on his chest sprouting blood, then he slowly fell over.

This attack done by Lin Pingzhi was strange and unpredictable. When he dismounted and had his sword out, it looked like he was going to attack Yu Canghai. When Yu Canghai saw him attacking, it was precisely what he wished for and he secretly felt happy. He expected that when they fight, he would be able to take Lin Pingzhi's life to avenge for last night's insult. If Yue Buqun later came for him, that was a matter for the future. But who could’ve thought the opponent's sword would be able to change direction in midair, and fast as lightning killed a Qingcheng disciple, then got on his horse to run away. Yu Canghai was alarmed and angry at the same time as he leapt to chase, but his two enemies had ridden their horses very fast and there was no way for him to chase them.

The attack by Lin Pingzhi just then was immeasurably weird and unbelievably quick. Linghu Chong's jaw dropped from seeing it and he thought, "If he used this attack on me, and I don't have a weapon with me, then I'd have no way of fighting back and I would've been killed by him." He pondered over the swordplay and knew Lin Pingzhi’s skill was far below him. But the move Lin Pingzhi used just then was so fast, even he wouldn't be able to break it.

Yu Canghai was stamping his feet and angrily pointing at the dust left behind by Lin Pingzhi's horse as he hurled abuses at them. But Lin Pingzhi and Yue Lingshan had gone very far, how could they hear his abuses? His whole body was filled with anger and there was nowhere to vent it. He turned around and scolded, "You stinking nuns, you knew that Lin was coming so you came here first to help him. Alright, that animal Lin, has run away. Whoever got the nerves, come and fight to the death with me."

The number of Heng-Shan disciples was multiples that of Qingcheng School's people. Furthermore they also had some good fighters like Monk No Commandment, Yingying, Peach Valley Six Fairies, and Tian Boguang. If they were to actually fight, Qingcheng School had no hope of winning. Yu Canghai knew the strengths and weaknesses of both parties, but he was in a rage, so even though he was experienced and careful, he couldn't restrain himself. Yihe promptly pulled her long sword out and angrily replied, "If you want to fight, then come. Who's afraid of you?"

"Martial Sister Yihe, ignore him," Linghu Chong said.

Yingying whispered a few words to the Peach Valley Six Fairies. Peachtree Root Fairy, Peachtree Trunk Fairy, Peachtree Branch Fairy, and Peachtree Leaf Fairy suddenly flew towards a horse underneath the cool shed. That horse was Yu Canghai's ride. A neighing sound was heard as the Peach Valley Four Fairies separately grabbed each of the horse's legs and tugged hard at them. With a loud ripping sound, that horse was torn into four pieces and its internal organs and blood flew out everywhere. It was a big and strong horse, but with just their bare hands, the Peach Valley Four Fairies had unexpectedly ripped it apart. The four of them had such rarely seen powerful strength.

Qingcheng School's disciples were startled and all their faces changed colour. Even the people from Heng-Shan School were frightened till their hearts were thumping loudly.

"Old priest Yu, that Lin has an enmity towards you," Yingying said. "We're not going to help any party and we're just going to be spectators on the side, so don't implicate us. If you really want to fight, you're not our match so why don't we

all just save our strength?"

Yu Canghai was frightened and became timid. So with a hissing sound, he put his long sword back into its sheath. "River water doesn't mix with well water. You go your own way and we'll go our own way. Please go first."

"That won't do, we're going with you," Yingying replied.

"Why?" Yu Canghai scowled.

"To be frank," Yingying explained, "that Lin's sword art is really weird, so we must see it."

Linghu Chong was surprised. What Yingying just said was exactly what he was thinking about. Lin Pingzhi's swordplay was really weird, and 'Dugu Nine Swords' seemed incapable of breaking it, so he wanted to have a clearer look at it.

"You want to see that little kid's sword art, what's that got to do with me?" When these words came out of Yu Canghai's mouth, he knew he had said the wrong thing. His enmity with Lin Pingzhi was as deep as the ocean, so Lin Pingzhi wouldn't just kill one Qingcheng disciple and give up. He would surely come back to seek his revenge, and Heng-Shan School's people wanted to see how Lin Pingzhi used his sword and how he would kill the people of Qingcheng School. Anyone who studied martial arts would wish to observe other peculiar martial arts out there, and everyone in the Heng-Shan School used sword so they weren't willing to just let this opportunity passed them by. But they would be following the Qingcheng School who were like lambs going to the slaughter, and they would see how a butcher chopped them up. From among the people in the world who take advantage of other people, how could anything exceed this?

Yu Canghai was feeling angry and he wanted to say something sarcastic, but he held it in and only lightly snorted. He thought, "This little kid Lin is only using some weird moves and he despicably did sneak attacks on me, and on both attacks, my hand wasn't fast enough. Could it be that he has no real skills? Otherwise, why didn't he dare to fight me openly? Alright, you'll follow and I'll

let you see clearly how I'm going to chop that little animal into little pieces." He turned around and returned to his seat under the shed. He picked up the teapot to pour himself a cup of tea but he heard a 'ta, ta, ta' sound as his right arm trembled, and the teapot's lid rattled. Just then when Lin Pingzhi was in front of him, he was calm and collected, slowly sipping his cup of tea, and wasn't muddled when facing a strong enemy. But now, his heart couldn't help thinking, "Why's my hand trembling? Why's my hand trembling?" He exhorted himself to be stronger and calm himself down, but the teapot lid kept on rattling. The disciples of Qingcheng School thought their master was being very angry. Actually, deep in Yu Canghai's heart, he knew he was terrified. If Lin Pingzhi's sword had been directed at him, he wouldn't have been able to block it.

Even after Yu Canghai had finished a cup of tea, his heart was still troubled and he ordered the disciples to bury the dead disciple in the wilderness outside the town, while the remaining people rested underneath the cool shed. The inhabitants of the town were already scared when they witnessed a person who had killed another person from far away, so they all closed their doors tightly. Who would dare to take a peek?

The Heng-Shan School party scattered into the shop and under the eaves of other people's houses to sleep. Yingying sat alone in her mule carriage, and was quite far away from the mule carriage that Linghu Chong was riding in. Even though the whole world already knew of the love between Linghu Chong and her, her bashfulness wasn't the slightest bit lessened. Even when Heng-Shan disciples reapplied the medicine on Linghu Chong's wound, she didn't go to have a look. Zheng E and Qin Juan knew her heart, so they continuously told her the condition of Linghu Chong's injury. Yingying only nodded her head and didn't say anything.

Linghu Chong pondered about the sword move Lin Pingzhi used. There was nothing special about the sword move in itself, but the move was done too suddenly and there was no indication that it was going to be executed at all. No matter who was attacked by this move, even if that person was a master, that person would find it hard to counter the move. That day on Dark Wood Cliff,

they besieged Dongfang Bubai and he was just holding a piece of embroidering needle to fight them. But the four of them, who were masters, had no way to resist him. When he thought about it at this time, it wasn't because Dongfang Bubai had a high internal energy nor was it because his moves were extremely skilful, but it was because his movements were fast like lightning. His attack, defense, rush, and retreat were all completely beyond his opponents' expectations. When Lin Pingzhi stopped Yu Canghai underneath the place of worship and when he killed that Qingcheng School disciple with his sword, his martial art was exactly the same as Dongfang Bubai's and the thrust Yue Buqun had used to blind Zuo Lengchan's eyes. Evil Resisting Sword Art and Dongfang Bubai's 'Sunflower Manual' had the same source, so he guessed that the move that Yue Buqun and Lin Pingzhi used must be the 'Evil Resisting Sword Art'.

When he thought till here, he couldn't help shaking his head and mumbled, "Evil resisting, evil resisting! Resist what evil? This martial art is evil itself." Then he thought, "At the present time, the only one who can go up against this sword art is probably only Grand Martial Uncle Feng. After my injury is healed, I must go back up to Huashan and ask for Grand Martial Uncle Feng's advice on how to break this sword art. Grand Martial Uncle Feng said he doesn't want to see people from the Huashan School, but I'm no longer from Huashan School at this time." His thought then continued, "Dongfang Bubai is already dead. Yue Buqun is my master, Lin Pingzhi is my martial brother. The two of them wouldn't use this sword art to go up against me, then why do I need to go research on how to break this sword art?" Suddenly he thought of something and sat up abruptly. As he moved, the mule carriage shook and his wound became really painful that he gasped.

Qin Juan was standing besides the cart and she quickly asked, "Do you want to drink tea?"

"No, little martial sister, please ask young lady Ren to come here." Qin Juan acknowledged his request and went to get Yingying. After a while, Yingying followed Qin Juan back. She asked lightly, "What's the matter?"

"I suddenly thought of something. Your father once said, your sect's

'Sunflower Manual' was given to Dongfang Bubai. So I thought the martial art in 'Sunflower Manual' isn't as good as the divine martial art your father is practising, but..."

“But my father's martial art was shown to be not as good as Dongfang Bubai's, is that right?"

"That's right. I don't understand why."

For people who studied martial art, when they saw a wonderful book of martial art, if they didn't learn it by themselves, they would give it to another person like their father, spouse, martial disciple, brothers, or their lovers, and they would probably study it together. To give up on it was really out of the ordinary.

"I've already asked my dad about this before,” Yingying said. “He said: One, the martial art in the Manual can't be learnt; it'll be harmful to learn it. Two, he also didn't know that after learning the martial art written on the Manual, the result would be so powerful."

"Can't be learnt? Why?"

Yingying's face turned red. "Why can't it be learnt? How would I know?" After a pause, she went on, "What's so good about Dongfang Bubai's fate?"

Linghu Chong groaned and inwardly felt that his master was on the way in following Dongfang Bubai's path. He had now defeated Zuo Lengchan and snatched the leadership of the Five Mountains School. Linghu Chong didn't like this situation at all. 'Long Live the Chief, unify the Jianghu', those were the flattering words which were often said on the Dark Wood Cliff. In Linghu Chong's heart, it seemed it would also gradually become Yue Buqun's motto.

"Take care of your injury, don't think too much,” Yingying quietly said. “I'm going to sleep."

"Yes." He lifted the curtain on the carriage and saw the moonlight shining down on Yingying's face. Suddenly, he felt apologetic toward her. Yingying slowly turned around to go but suddenly she said, "Your martial brother Lin

wears a flowery gown." After she said this, she went toward her own carriage.

Linghu Chong thought it was strange. "She said Martial Brother Lin is wearing a flowery gown. What does she mean? Martial Brother Lin has just become a groom so he's wearing the gown a newly-married groom wears. There's nothing strange about that. This little girl, not paying attention to someone's sword art, but instead paying attention to what someone else is wearing. How interesting."

When he closed his eyes, he could see Lin Pingzhi's sword moves in his mind, but he couldn't remember what kind of flowery gown Lin Pingzhi was wearing. He slept till the middle of the night when he heard horses galloping towards them from somewhere far. Two horses were coming from the west. Linghu Chong sat up and lifted the screen. Out on the street, he saw Heng-Shan disciples and Qingcheng School's people all awake. Heng-Shan disciples had formed groups of seven to form the sword formation and they were standing still by their position. Some Qingcheng people were rushing towards the end of the street while some were leaning their backs to the wall. They were far different from the calm and collected Heng-Shan disciples.

The two horses galloped through the big street. With the moonlight shining brightly, it was easy to see that it was the Lin Pingzhi husband and wife couple coming.

"Yu Canghai!" Lin Pingzhi called out. "In order to steal my Lin family's Evil Resisting Sword Art, you killed my parents. Now, I'm going to execute the moves one by one to give you a look. Pay close attention!"

He reined in his horse and flew down from his horse. His long sword was still strapped on his back as he rushed towards the Qingcheng School's people. Linghu Chong paid attention to what he was wearing and saw that he was wearing a green jade gown with seams threaded with gold, sleeves embroidered with deep yellow flowers, and a gold belt tied around his waist. With Lin Pingzhi's lightning fast movement, the gown gorgeously glittered under the moonlight. Linghu Chong thought, "Martial Brother Lin was originally very plain. Once he became a groom, he has become very different. It's no wonder youngsters are usually proud of themselves. He's taken such a wife, of course

he's very happy and wanted to dress up a bit."

Last night besides the place of worship, Lin Pingzhi made a surprise attack on Yu Canghai with his bare hand. Now, he was doing exactly the same thing. How could Qingcheng School let him do it again? Yu Canghai shouted and four disciples immediately went up to meet him with their swords up. Two swords were aimed at his left and right chest, and the other two swords swept at his left and right legs. Peach Valley Six Fairies were startled and they couldn't help shouting. The three of them shouted, "Little kid, careful!" The other three shouted, "Careful, little kid!"

Lin Pingzhi extended his right hand and with a matchless speed, pressed on the wrists of the two Qingcheng disciples who were attacking his chest to turn their hands around and pushed on the elbows of the two Qingcheng disciples who were chopping at his lower body. Four miserable cries were heard as two of them fell over. These two people were originally attacking Lin Pingzhi's chest, but when their wrists were pressed, their long swords turned around and pierced their own stomachs.

"Evil Resisting Sword Art, stance number two and stance number three! Did you see it clearly?" Lin Pingzhi called out. He then turned around and galloped off on his horse. The Qingcheng people were stunned and none of them gave chase. When they saw the other two disciples, they saw one of them had his long sword slantingly piercing the other's chest from below, and the other person had done the same. These two people had stopped breathing but their right hands were still clutching on their sword handles making their bodies support each other and preventing them from falling down. Linghu Chong saw clearly the way Lin Pingzhi executed his press and push. He was astonished but felt admiration in his heart. He thought, "Brilliant, that's really a sword art and not a hand seizing technique. It's just that there was no sword in his hand."

The moonlight illuminated the ground and showed Yu Canghai's short body standing besides the four corpses lost in his thought. Qingcheng School's people encircled him but gave him a wide berth. No one dared to say anything. After a long time had passed, Linghu Chong gazed outside of his carriage again and saw

Yu Canghai was still standing there unmoving as his shadow gradually lengthened. This scene was extremely eerie.

Some of the Qingcheng disciples had walked away, and some had sat down on the ground, while Yu Canghai was still standing stiffly like a corpse. Linghu Chong felt pity for him. This master of Qingcheng School didn't know what to do and was just waiting for death and that made Linghu Chong feel very sorry for him. He gradually became sleepy and finally went to sleep. While dreaming, he suddenly felt his mule carriage moving followed by some shouts. The sky had actually brightened and the people had started on their journey. He took a peek from the side of the carriage and saw they were on a very straight road. Some disciples of the Qingcheng School were riding on horseback and some were walking. Seeing their dejected and withered bodies from the back, Linghu Chong felt an unspeakable misery surrounding them. They looked like a group of cow and sheep walking to the slaughter house. He thought, "All these people know Lin Pingzhi will come again, and they also know they have no way of fighting back. If they scattered to run away, then Qingcheng School will be destroyed. Could it be, when Lin Pingzhi go up Mount Qingcheng, there will be no one to answer him at the Pine Wind Monastery?"

At noon, they arrived at a big town. The people of Qingcheng ate their meals in a wine shop, while the disciples of Heng-Shan School went to the opposite restaurant to eat. The Qingcheng people were eating quickly with big bowls and big cups, while the nuns all ate quietly. Everyone knew these people were only living from dawn to dusk and surviving from meal to meal.

At the hour of Wei (1-3pm), they were going along the bank of a river when they heard sound of galloping horses. It was the Lin Pingzhi husband and wife couple riding towards them. Yihe whistled and the disciples of Heng-Shan School stopped immediately. With the orange sun beating down on them, the two horses galloped alongside the river. When they got near, Yue Lingshan reined her horse in first, while Lin Pingzhi continued to come forward. Yu Canghai swept his hand across and his people turned around to rush south along the river.

"Shorty Yu, where are you running off to?" Lin Pingzhi laughed loudly as he rushed forward on his horse. Yu Canghai suddenly turned around with the sword in his hand. The reflection from the sword was like a rainbow as it thrust towards Lin Pingzhi's face. This attack was unexpectedly very fierce and Lin Pingzhi was surprised as he hastily pulled his sword out to block. The disciples of Qingcheng started to encircle him. Yu Canghai attacked faster and faster, slashing high and low. This sixty years old man attacked with youthful agility and all of his stances were offensive. Eight Qingcheng disciples brandished their long swords and surrounded Lin Pingzhi on his horse, but they didn't go forward to slash at the horse.

When Linghu Chong saw the situation, he understood Yu Canghai's intention. The strong point of Lin Pingzhi's sword art was in its immeasurable variations and lightning fast speed. As he was on top of a horse, this strong point was greatly reduced. If he wanted to attack, he would only be able to attack the person in front of him and the horse he was riding wouldn't be able to retreat like a ghost to make people unable to grab him. The eight disciples of Qingcheng formed a sword net as they surrounded his horse to prevent Lin Pingzhi from dismounting.

Linghu Chong thought, "Qingcheng's headmaster is really not someone ordinary. This method is very formidable." Lin Pingzhi's sword art changed irregularly, and it was fantastic. But because he was on his horse, Yu Canghai was able to match him. After looking at a few more moves, Linghu Chong's eyes shot toward Yue Lingshan. Suddenly, greatly surprised, his whole body shook.

Six Qingcheng disciples had already surrounded her and were slowly crowding her towards the edge of the river. They had split open the stomach of her horse and as the horse fell down to the ground with a long neigh, she jumped up from her horse's back. Yue Lingshan leaned to one side to dodge the incoming two attacks and stood firm. The six Qingcheng disciples exerted themselves in attacking as if their lives were at stake. Linghu Chong recognised Hou Renying and Hong Renxiong among these six people. Brandishing a sword

in his left hand, Hou Renying's movements were very fierce.

Even though Yue Lingshan had learnt the five schools' sword arts engraved on the cave wall on the Cliff of Contemplation, she had not learnt the sword art of the Qingcheng School. The sword moves engraved on the cave were actually too brilliant, so she actually had not truly comprehended them. It was only her father who had taught her, and she knew the moves only. At the place of worship, she had used Taishan sword art to defeat the masters from the Taishan School, and Hengshan sword art to defeat the headmaster of the Hengshan School. This caused her opponents to be startled and she took advantage when they were intimidated. But she had no way of imitating that method to deal with these Qingcheng disciples. Linghu Chong had seen a few moves exchanged and he knew Yue Lingshan was unable to resist for long and was feeling anxious. Suddenly, he heard a long cry and saw a Qingcheng disciple had his left arm cut off by Yue Lingshan using a Hengshan sword art. Linghu Chong felt happy hoping that these six disciples would retreat in fear. But how could he have known that five of them didn't even retreat half a step, while the one with his left arm cut off crazily charged forward instead. When Yue Lingshan saw his body was soaked in blood and his expression was terrifying, she retreated a few steps in fear. While retreating, her foot stepped on nothing and she fell down on the gravel at the edge of the river.

"Shameless, shameless!" Linghu Chong snorted.

Suddenly he heard Yingying said, "We also used this method to fight Dongfang Bubai."

He didn't know when she had arrived besides him. Linghu Chong thought what she said wasn't wrong. That day on Dark Wood Cliff, their defeat was guaranteed already, but luckily Yingying attacked Yang Lianting and disturbed Dongfang Bubai's concentration and this had enabled them to kill him. At this time, Yu Canghai was actually also using the same strategy. Of course Yu Canghai didn't know how they defeated Dongfang Bubai, but through his wisdom, he had also come to the same idea. Linghu Chong expected Lin Pingzhi to have his concentration divided when he saw his wife in danger and to turn

around to save her. But he never expected Lin Pingzhi to keep fighting Yu Canghai with all his strength and unexpectedly didn't pay any attention to his wife being in danger.

After she fell down, Yue Lingshan quickly jumped up with her long sword dancing around. The six Qingcheng disciples knew Qingcheng School's survival and their own lives depended on whether they were able to kill their enemies, so they all disregarded their lives and rushed forward. The one with his arm cut off had already abandoned his long sword, and he was now rolling around on the ground trying to seize Yue Lingshan legs with his right hand. Yue Lingshan was frightened and she called out, "Brother Ping, Brother Ping, come help me!"

"Shorty Yu wants to have a look at the Evil Resisting Sword Art, so I'm letting him have a good look. Let him have a good death!" Lin Pingzhi shouted loudly as he used his wonderful moves to suppress Yu Canghai from taking a breather. Yu Canghai had already researched the stances of Evil Resisting Sword Art and he knew all the moves by heart and decided that there was nothing special about those stances. Suddenly, at this moment, there were so many wonderful variations in the sword art and it was also done as fast as lightning making Yu Canghai roar again and again as he got more and more desperate. Yu Canghai knew his enemy's internal energy was far below his so he kept on aiming his sword towards Lin Pingzhi's long sword, hoping that Lin Pingzhi's sword would be shaken off his hand when both swords clash. But from the beginning of the fight, he had not managed to get the swords to clash yet.

Linghu Chong was angered and shouted, "You... You... You..." In the beginning, he was thinking Lin Pingzhi was being stopped by Yu Canghai from going over to help his wife. But when he heard what Lin Pingzhi said, he realised Lin Pingzhi didn't actually care about the safety of Yue Lingshan and he actually attached more importance to jesting with Yu Canghai.

At this time, the sun was fiercely shining down and Linghu Chong saw Lin Pingzhi sneering, showing his excitement and hatred. It seemed his heart was full of happiness in seeking this revenge. He was like a cat who had captured a mouse and was cruelly playing with it first before biting it to death. But when a

cat plays with a mouse, it doesn't have this kind of hatred and malice.

"Brother Ping, Brother Ping, quickly come!" Yue Lingshan called out repeatedly. She shouted till her voice was hoarse as the situation became gravely desperate.

"I'm coming. Hold on for a while. I'm showing the entire set of Evil Resisting Sword Art for him to see. Originally, Shorty Yu didn't have any enmity with us, but he did all the things he did because of the 'Evil Resisting Sword Art'. So I'm going to show him the entire set of sword art and let him see it clearly, don't you think so?" Lin Pingzhi replied leisurely. It was apparent he wasn't actually directing these words to his wife, but was directing them more towards Yu Canghai. He was afraid his enemy wouldn't understand his meaning, so he added, "Shorty Yu, don't you think so?" His body was elegant and he moved his sword gracefully. His movements were like the moves from 'The Nineteen Stances of the Jade Maiden Sword' that the female disciples of Huashan School learned. But this move Lin Pingzhi was using had a demonical aura around it.

Linghu Chong originally wanted to watch the stances of his Evil Resisting Sword Art. This was a really good opportunity to do just that as Lin Pingzhi was now revealing everything in front of Yu Canghai. But he was concerned about Yue Lingshan's safety. Even if he was certain that in the future Lin Pingzhi would use this sword art to kill him, he still couldn't look further as he heard Yue Lingshan continuously calling out for help. He couldn't take it anymore and called out, "Martial Sister Yihe, Martial Sister Yiqing, quickly go and save Miss Yue. She... she can't hold on any longer."

"We already said we won't help any party, I'm afraid it's inappropriate for us to get involved," Yihe replied.

The people of Wulin were especially fastidious about the word 'Trust'. Some characters from the unorthodox path, despite their ‘no evil they won't do’ attitude, once they gave their words, they wouldn't go back on it. If anyone ate his own words, then people in Wulin would despise him. Even Tian Boguang who was such a notorious rapist would abide by his words. When Linghu Chong heard what Yihe said, he knew it was the truth. Last night, besides the

worship place, she already said clearly to Yu Canghai that they wouldn't be involved. If at this time they helped Yue Lingshan then it would damage the reputation of Heng-Shan School. He was still worried and quickly said, "This... This..." then he called out, "Monk No Commandment? Tian Boguang?"

"The two of them went together with Peach Valley Six Fairies last night," Qin Juan answered. "They said looking at Shorty Yu is too gloomy, so they went to drink wine. Also, the eight of them are also Heng-Shan School..."

Yingying suddenly flew out towards the edge of the river and pulled out two short swords from her waist. She loudly shouted, "Look clearly, I'm Divine Sun Moon Sect's Chief Ren's daughter, Ren Yingying. I'm not from Heng-Shan School. Six men ganging up on a girl, this really makes people uncomfortable to see. Miss Ren thinks this is unfair so I'm going to interfere."

Linghu Chong was happy to see Yingying going out to help. He let out a sigh of relief but his wound felt painful, so he sat down inside the carriage. When the six Qingcheng disciples saw Yingying coming, they unexpectedly didn't pay any attention to her but continued attacking Yue Lingshan with total disregard for their lives. Yue Lingshan retreated a few steps, and with a 'pu' sound, her left leg treaded on the river water. She wasn't accustomed to being around water, so as her foot entered the water, she became nervous and her swordplay became disorderly. Suddenly, she felt pain on her left shoulder as it was pierced by one of her enemies. That enemy with no arm took advantage of the situation and rushed forward and seized her right leg. Yue Lingshan chopped down with her long sword and struck him at his back as that armless person opened his mouth wide and bit her leg viciously. Yue Lingshan's vision darkened and she thought, "I'm going to die like this?" She then gazed at Lin Pingzhi thrusting his sword out while his left hand made a sword form sweeping across the air to make an arch. The stance he was using was really elegant, it was a sword art which really looked leisurely. She felt a wave of bitterness in her heart and felt really dizzy. Suddenly, she saw a pair of short swords in front of her and she heard two splashing sounds as two Qingcheng disciples fell into the river. Yue Lingshan fell down feeling confused and lost. Yingying waved her short swords around,

and after more than ten moves, the remaining three Qingcheng disciples had all retreated after being injured and disarmed. Yingying kicked away the dying one-armed Qingcheng disciple and pulled Yue Lingshan up. She saw Yue Lingshan's lower half of the body was soaked in the river so her skirt was all wet while her gown on top was splashed with blood all over. She immediately supported her to go up the river bank.

Lin Pingzhi called out, "Have you had a good look at my Lin family's Evil Resisting Sword Art?" The sword reflection flashed everywhere and surrounded a Qingcheng disciple standing besides his horse when the sword suddenly pierced that disciple between his eyes. Lin Pingzhi laughed out loud and cried out, "Fang Renzhi, you wicked thief, that death was too easy for you!" He lifted his rein and jumped over Fang Renzhi’s falling body and then galloped off. Yu Canghai was already exhausted, so how could he dare to give chase?

Lin Pingzhi reined in his horse and suddenly shouted, "You're Jia Renda!" then galloped his horse over. Jia Renda had already stepped back far away some time ago, and when he saw Lin Pingzhi coming after him, he shouted and in a mad rush, turned around to run away. But Lin Pingzhi just patiently chased him, and when he caught up, he slashed his long sword and hamstrung Jia Renda's right leg. Jia Renda fell down hard on the ground. Lin Pingzhi lifted his rein and his horse stepped on Jia Renda's body. Jia Renda cried out miserably but he didn't die. Lin Pingzhi laughed maniacally and turned his horse around to trample Jia Renda's body again. After a few more passes, Jia Renda was finally quiet. Lin Pingzhi didn't give the people of Qingcheng School another glance before going besides Yue Lingshan and Yingying. He said to his wife, "Get on the horse!"

Yue Lingshan looked at him angrily. After a while, she gritted her teeth and said, "You go by yourself."

"You?"

"Why do you care?"

Lin Pingzhi took a glance at the Heng-Shan School's disciples and laughed

coldly. Then he put his heels on his horse and gave its head. Yingying couldn't figure out why Lin Pingzhi was treating his newly-wedded wife so indifferently and she couldn't help feeling surprised. Yingying said, "Madam Lin, come to my carriage to rest."

Both of Yue Lingshan's eyes were full of tears and she tried her hardest not to let her tears flow down. She chokingly said, "I'm... I'm not going. Why... Why did you save me?"

"I didn't, it was your big martial brother Linghu Chong who saved you."

Yue Lingshan felt sour in her heart and couldn't hold back her tears anymore as it flowed down her cheeks. "You... Can I please ask you for a horse?"

"Alright." Yingying turned around to lead a horse over.

Yue Lingshan stammered, "Thank you, you... you..." She jumped on the horse's back and went towards the east, opposite of where Lin Pingzhi had gone before. It seemed that she was going back to Songshan. Yu Canghai was surprised to see her galloping past, but he didn't pay her any attention. He thought, "After another night, that animal Lin will come and will kill a few of my men again. He wants to kill my disciples one by one till I'm left all by myself before he comes for me."

Linghu Chong couldn't bear seeing Yu Canghai looking like he had lost his mind, so he ordered, "Let's go!"

"Yes!" the person at the driver seat answered. With a shout, the whip was cracked and the mule started to pull the carriage forward. Linghu Chong gasped in surprise. He saw Yue Lingshan was going to the east, so his heart automatically also wanted to go with her, but he didn't expect the mule carriage would be going towards the west. His heart sank, but he didn't order the mule carriage to turn around to go to the east. He opened the screen in the carriage and couldn't see Yue Lingshan anymore. His heart was heavy as he thought, "She's been injured and she's going all by herself with no one to tend to her injuries, how's she going to fare?" Suddenly, he heard Qin Juan said, "She's going back to Songshan to her parents. She's going to be safe there, you don't

need to worry."

Linghu Chong felt relieved and replied, "Yes." While he thought, "Martial Sister Qin is very observant, she even knew what I was thinking."

At noon the next day, their party arrived at a small restaurant to eat their meals. This restaurant couldn't actually be regarded as a shop. It only consisted of a grass shed besides the main road with many long tables placed underneath, and they offered tea and meals to the passer by. When Heng-Shan School people arrived, the shop didn't have too much rice left. Luckily many people in the party were bringing rice with them as well as tools like bowl, chopsticks, and et cetera. So they immediately cooked the rice besides the grass sheds.

Linghu Chong had stayed in the carriage for a long time and it was getting stuffy in there. With the Heng-Shan School's medicine taken internally and applied externally, Linghu Chong's injury had improved by a lot. Zheng E and Qin Juan supported him to get down from the carriage and sit under the shed. He gazed towards the east and thought, "Will little martial sister come?" He then saw a cloud of dust as a group of people came from the east. They were Yu Canghai and his Qingcheng School who had come to the shed, and they also dismounted from their horses to take their meals there. Yu Canghai sat alone at a table unspeaking and with no expression on his face. He knew his life was doomed already and he didn't even bother to avoid the people of Heng-Shan School. There really is no bigger matter than death. Regardless of how the Heng-Shan School people were going to see how he would die, he didn't care about it.

Not long after, the sound of a galloping horse was heard coming from the west. The horse came slowly towards them and on top of the horse was a person wearing a flowery gown who really was Lin Pingzhi. He reined in his horse outside the shed and saw that the Qingcheng School people only gave him a look then ignored him. Every person who was cooking was cooking his meal, while the ones drinking tea were drinking their teas. This situation was really beyond Lin Pingzhi's expectation. He laughed aloud and said, "Even if you're not going to fight, I'm still going to kill you." He jumped down from his horse and

slapped the horse's buttock to let it go eat some grass. He saw there were still two empty tables underneath the shed so he went to one of them to sit.

Once Lin Pingzhi had entered the shed, Linghu Chong sniffed a strong fragrance. Linghu Chong then observed the clothes Lin Pingzhi was wearing and realised that the fragrant scent was coming from it. On Lin Pingzhi's hat was a piece of green jade, on his finger was a ruby ring, and on the tips of both of his shoes were two pearls. He was dressed just like a young master from a rich family and didn't look anything like a warrior from Wulin. Linghu Chong thought, "His family opened up the Fortune Prestige Escort House, so he was originally a young master from a rich family. He has suffered a few years of hardships in Jianghu, so after he's gotten some skills, he's enjoying all those wealth now." He then saw Lin Pingzhi taking a piece of snow white handkerchief out of his bosom and lightly dabbing his face with it. Lin Pingzhi's appearance was delicate and pretty. The way he took out his handkerchief, dabbed his face, and shook his clothes; it was just like an actor on stage playing the role of a pretty young woman.

After Lin Pingzhi had sat down, he lightly said, "Brother Linghu, you're well!"

"You're well!" Linghu Chong nodded his head.

Lin Pingzhi turned his head slightly and saw a Qingcheng disciple holding a pot of hot tea to give to Yu Canghai. "You're called Yu Renhao, aren't you? Years ago when my whole family was killed, you were there too. Even when your face is ashen, I still recognise you." Yu Renhao dropped the teapot on the table, turned around suddenly with his hand already on his sword handle, and then retreated for two steps.

"I'm Yu Renhao, what do you want?" His voice was rough, but it was trembling as he spoke and his face had turned ghostly pale.

"Ying Xiong Hao Jie, The Four Aces of Qingcheng!" Lin Pingzhi smiled. "You're number three, but there's no aura of a hero at all. This is funny, really funny."

'Ying Xiong Hao Jie, The Four Aces of Qingcheng' was Qingcheng School's

four disciples with the strongest martial arts. They were Hou Renying, Hong Renxiong, Yu Renhao, and Luo Renjie. Among these people, one of them had been killed by Linghu Chong in the Huiyan Wine House, while the remaining three were present at that moment. Lin Pingzhi laughed mockingly and said, "That Brother Linghu once said: 'Dumb Bear Wild Pig, the Four Asses of Qingcheng'. That's too good for you to be compared to animals. In my opinion, hng, hng, you're even worse than animals."

Yu Renhao was afraid and angry, and his face had turned even paler, but he didn't draw his sword out in spite of this.

At this moment, the sound of galloping horses from the east was heard. Two horses seemed to be galloping quickly coming over here. When they arrived in front of the shed, the person in front reined in his horse. Everyone turned around to have a look, and some people gasped in surprise at seeing that person. The person riding in front had a short and fat stature with a humpback whose nickname was called 'Hunchback of the North' -- Mu Gaofeng. The person riding the horse at the back was unexpectedly Yue Lingshan. When Linghu Chong saw Yue Lingshan, his chest felt hot and his heart was happy. But Yue Lingshan's hands were tied behind her back, and the rein to her horse was being led along by Mu Gaofeng. It was obvious she had been captured by him.

Linghu Chong couldn't bear not doing anything and he was itching to do something. Then his mind thought, "Her husband is here, why do they need an outsider to get involved? If her husband doesn't care, then I'll think of a way to save her."

When Lin Pingzhi saw Mu Gaofeng was here, it was just like he had seen treasures falling down from the sky. He was deliriously happy. Lin Pingzhi pondered, "The people who killed my father and mother also included this humpback. I never expected such a chance circumstance to happen today and he has unexpectedly delivered himself here. The heavenly gods really have eyes." But Mu Gaofeng didn't recognise Lin Pingzhi.

That day in Hengshan at Liu Zhengfeng's house, even though the two of them had met, Lin Pingzhi was disguised as a humpback and his face was full of

ointment. So compared to the beautiful and adorned youngster who was sitting there, the two characters were completely different. Later on, Mu Gaofeng found out Lin Pingzhi's humpback was fake, but he never saw his real face at all.

Mu Gaofeng turned his head around to say to Yue Lingshan, "It's very rare to have so many friends here. Let's go." When he saw the people of Heng-Shan School and Qingcheng School there, he felt quite afraid and expected there would be people who would come out to help Yue Lingshan so it would be better to remove himself from there as fast as possible. He shouted and led the horses to get out of there.

The day before, Yue Lingshan was injured and was on her way back to Mount Songshan alone to be by her father and mother. But not long into her journey, she met Mu Gaofeng. Mu Gaofeng was a narrow-minded person. He had lost to Yue Buqun when competing internal energy in the past, then the Lin Zhennan husband and wife were also rescued by Yue Buqun, so he felt disgraced and really insulted. Later on, he heard Lin Zhennan's son, Lin Pingzhi, had joined the Huashan School and took Yue Buqun's daughter as his wife, so he naturally thought the 'Evil Resisting Sword Art' was also taken into the Huashan School and he got really furious because of this. When the Five Mountains School was established, he of course heard of the news. But the people of the five mountains sword schools didn't like him and Zuo Lengchan didn't give him any invitation. So he got angry and hid nearby Mount Songshan to wait for the people of Five Mountains School as they came down the mountain. If they were in a large group, or if there was a senior, he wouldn't show himself. But if someone was alone, he was planning to vent his anger on that person. But as he observed the groups of people coming down the mountain, all of them were in groups of tens or hundreds so he couldn't do anything. So it was very convenient for him to suddenly see Yue Lingshan riding all by herself, and he immediately intercepted her.

Yue Lingshan's martial art was never as good as Mu Gaofeng. Added to that, she was injured and because Mu Gaofeng ambushed her, he had the initiative. So at the end, she was captured by him. When Mu Gaofeng heard her making

threats to him saying she was Yue Buqun's daughter, he was ecstatic and a plan was quickly hatched in his head. He was going to hide her in a secret place and then exchange her with the 'Evil Resisting Sword Art'. As he was hurrying along, he didn't expect they would meet with Qingcheng and Heng-Shan Schools.

Yue Lingshan thought, "If I let him take me away now, who will rescue me then?" Without giving a thought to her shoulder injury, she slanted her body and let herself fall down from the horse's back.

"What's the matter?" Mu Gaofeng shouted and leapt off the horse. He then stooped down to grab Yue Lingshan's body from the back. Linghu Chong thought Lin Pingzhi wouldn't just stand aside on seeing his wife being insulted but would definitely go out to help her. But who would have thought Lin Pingzhi didn't care at all? Lin Pingzhi took out a folding fan with a gold-painted handle from his left sleeve and lightly fanned himself. The jade-coloured fan continuously shook. It was currently the third month and the northern snow was just beginning to melt; who would use a fan at this time of year? But Lin Pingzhi was indeed using a fan and leisurely fanning himself.

Mu Gaofeng grabbed the back of Yue Lingshan's body and said, "Be careful falling down again." Then he lifted his hand and dropped her onto her horse's saddle. He then jumped on his horse wishing to go on their way.

"Person surnamed Mu, someone here said that your martial art is ordinary, what do you say to that?" Lin Pingzhi said.

Mu Gaofeng was startled and saw Lin Pingzhi was sitting alone at a table. He didn't seem to belong either to the Qingcheng School or the Heng-Shan School. He also couldn't tell where he came from, so he asked, "Who are you?"

"Why do you ask me? The one who said your martial art is ordinary wasn't me," Lin Pingzhi smiled.

"Who said it?"

Lin Pingzhi slammed his fan closed and pointed it at Yu Canghai. "That Priest Yu from Qingcheng School. He just saw a really wonderful swordplay, the

world's number one sword art. I think it was called the Evil Resisting Sword Art."

When Mu Gaofeng heard the words 'Evil Resisting Sword Art', he was excited. He peered at Yu Canghai and saw him holding a tea cup looking absentminded as if he was hearing but wasn't listening to what Lin Pingzhi was saying. "Priest Yu, congratulations on seeing the Evil Resisting Sword Art. It's not fake?"

"Not fake!" Yu Canghai answered. "I saw it from head to tail, every move and every stance, I saw all of them already."

Mu Gaofeng was surprised and happy; he jumped down from his horse and sat at Yu Canghai's table. "I heard this sword manual was taken by Yue Buqun. How did you see it?"

"I didn't see the sword manual, I only saw a person using this sword art."

"Oh, is that so? There's real Evil Resisting Sword Art and there's fake Evil Resisting Sword Art. Fuzhou's Fortune Prestige Escort House's descendants learned the useless type of Evil Resisting Sword Art. When people see them use it, their teeth will fall off from laughing too much. Is the one you saw real?"

"I also don't know whether it's real or fake. But the person who used this set of sword art was a descendant of the Fortune Prestige Escort House."

Mu Gaofeng laughed loudly. "You're the leader of a school but you don't know whether the sword art is real or fake. Didn't Lin Zhennan from the Fortune Prestige Escort House die under your hand?"

"Whether the Evil Resisting Sword Art is real or fake, I can't tell. Hero Mu is brilliant and have a lot of experience, you'll definitely figure it out," Yu Canghai replied.

Mu Gaofeng knew this short priest was experienced in martial art, and that he was also a first class figure in Wulin. For him to suddenly say such a thing, there must definitely be a deeper meaning to it. Mu Gaofeng giggled and swept his eyes across. He saw everyone was looking at him strangely like he had said something really wrong. "If I have a look at it, I'll definitely be able to

distinguish it."

"If Hero Mu wants to have a look, there's someone here who can use that sword art," Yu Canghai replied.

Mu Gaofeng's heart shivered as if it was suddenly cold. He swept his eyes across again to look at each person. He saw Lin Pingzhi's expression was the most uncaring, so he asked, "Is this the youngster who can use it?"

"Admirable, admirable! Hero Mu really has good eyesight, just one look and you're able to figure it out," Yu Canghai said.

Mu Gaofeng observed Lin Pingzhi from head to toe, and saw his gown was gorgeous like he was a young master from a wealthy family. He thought, "The way Shorty Yu said that, there must be a plot against me. The enemy has a lot of people. A good man doesn't want to be disadvantaged so there's no need to bother with them. I'll just go with my plan. Since Yue Buqun's daughter is in my hand, I don't have to fear him not coming to exchange the sword manual for her." So he laughed loudly and said, "Shorty Yu, I haven't seen you for a long time but you still love to joke around. I have some matters to do today, so forgive me for not accompanying you. Evil Resisting Sword Art is good, Killing Demon Sword Art is also good but I don't care about it, so goodbye."

As soon as Mu Gaofeng finished saying these words, his body shot out and landed on his horse's back. His body was very nimble. At the same instance, people there felt there was a blur in front of their eyes looking like Lin Pingzhi had jumped out and hindered Mu Gaofeng's horse's path, but then they saw he was still lightly fanning himself, sitting at his table looking like he had never left it at all. Everyone was greatly astonished but Mu Gaofeng shouted and urged his horse to go. Masters like Linghu Chong, Yingying, and Yu Canghai saw clearly how Lin Pingzhi had extended his hand to stab twice and done something to the horse. Sure enough, after a few steps, Mu Gaofeng's horse suddenly ran into a pillar of the grass shed. The force with which the horse ran into the pillar was enormous and it brought half of the grass shed down. Yu Canghai leapt outside of the shed while the grass and hay fell on top of Linghu Chong, Lin Pingzhi, and other people's heads. Zheng E extended her hand to remove the grass on

Linghu Chong’s head. But Lin Pingzhi just kept on staring at Mu Gaofeng and was oblivious to anything else. Mu Gaofeng hesitated, dismounted the horse, and released the rein. That horse rushed forward a few steps and ran into a big tree. With a long neigh, it fell down on the ground with a bloody head. This horse’s movement was really strange and it became obvious both of its eyes were blinded because Lin Pingzhi had stabbed them with his unbelievably quick hand technique.

Lin Pingzhi used his fan to slowly wipe away the grass on his left shoulder. "A blind person riding a blind horse; that's very dangerous you know!"

Mu Gaofeng laughed loudly. "You, little kid, really are arrogant. You must have real skill. Shorty Yu said you know how to use the Evil Resisting Sword Art. There's no harm in letting grandpa have a look."

"Alright, I'm going to give you a look. You killed both my parents and sinned deeply just because you wanted to have a look at my family's Evil Resisting Sword Art. You're just like Yu Canghai," Lin Pingzhi replied.

Mu Gaofeng was stunned. He never expected this little master was Lin Zhennan's son. He secretly thought, "You have the nerve to openly challenge me here, so you must be feeling secure. His five mountains sword schools have become one school. These Heng-Shan School's nuns must all be his helpers." At this thought, he turned his hand around to grab Yue Lingshan and thought, "The enemy is many and I'm alone. This little girl is his wife. Once I have her under my hand, what can this little kid do?"

Suddenly, he heard the sound of the wind whistling behind him as a sword was hacked down on him. Mu Gaofeng slanted his body to dodge it, and saw Yue Lingshan was the one wielding the sword. Yingying had actually cut off the ropes tying Yue Lingshan's hands, opened up her sealed acupoints, and had also placed a long sword in her hand. After her attack was evaded by Mu Gaofeng, Yue Lingshan felt her injury flaring up again. Also, her acupoints had been sealed for a long time already so her limbs were aching. So even though she felt really angry, she didn't chase after him.

Lin Pingzhi laughed derisively. "Your reputation in Wulin is already well known for many years already, but you're actually so shameless. If you still want your life, crawl on the ground and give grandpa three kowtows while calling me 'grandpa' three times. Then I'll let you live for one year. After one year, I'll come and look for you again."

Mu Gaofeng threw his head back and laughed out loud. "Little kid, that day in Hengshan at Liu Zhengfeng's house, you disguised yourself as a little hunchback and kowtowed to me and called me 'grandpa'. You even staked your life to become my disciple. Grandpa wasn't willing, so you joined Old Yue's school and swindled yourself a wife, isn't this right?"

Lin Pingzhi didn't answer. His eyes were filled with fires of anger, but his face was filled with excitement. He snapped his fan closed and put it on his left hand, while his right hand lifted up his gown as he stepped out of the grass shed to walk towards Mu Gaofeng. The breeze blew past and carried a sweet fragrance to everyone's nose.

Suddenly, two cries were heard. The faces of Qingcheng School's Yu Renhao and Ji Rentong changed colour, and blood was gushing out of their chests as they fell down. The people besides them couldn't help calling out in fright. They saw clearly Lin Pingzhi was going forward to deal with Mu Gaofeng, but without knowing how, he unexpectedly drew his sword and killed those two people. After he killed them, he had promptly put his sword back into its sheath. Besides Linghu Chong and a few other masters there, the other people there only felt a flicker of cold light. They didn't see clearly how he drew his sword out let alone how he used his sword to kill those two people. A thought flashed in Linghu Chong's mind, "When I first met with Tian Boguang, it was also hard for me to fight against him. But after I've learned the Dugu Nine Swords, his fast knife was no longer fast enough in my eyes. But I'm afraid Tian Boguang wouldn't even be able to take three moves from Lin Pingzhi's fast sword. And me? How many moves would I be able to take?" All of a sudden, his palms were all sweaty.

Mu Gaofeng pulled out a sword from his waist. This sword of his was really

strange as it was shaped in an arch. A hunchback using a sword which also had a hunchback; so the sword was called a hunchback sword. Lin Pingzhi sneered, and walked up to him step by step. Mu Gaofeng suddenly howled like a wolf and his body rushed forward with his hunchback sword slashing an arc at Lin Pingzhi's lower body. Lin Pingzhi's long sword left its scabbard and was thrust towards Mu Gaofeng's chest. This sword move was executed later but it arrived first and was also very fierce and accurate. Mu Gaofeng let out a roar and his body shot back out. But there was already a big rip on the chest of his cotton-padded jacket exposing his hairy black chest. Lin Pingzhi's sword only had to go two inches further forward to have cut Mu Gaofeng's chest open. The crowd cried out in astonishment.

Even though Mu Gaofeng had just escaped from his death, he was very fierce and unexpectedly didn't show any fear at all as he roared and charged towards Lin Pingzhi again. Lin Pingzhi stabbed out twice with his sword. With two 'tang, tang' sounds, he had blocked the hunchback sword twice. Lin Pingzhi laughed mockingly as his sword was getting faster and faster. Mu Gaofeng slashed high and low. The light from his hunchback sword was making up a wall of steel around his body. When Lin Pingzhi thrust out his long sword and clashed against the hunchback sword, his arm felt a burst of numbing pain. It was obvious Mu Gaofeng’s internal energy was much stronger compared to his, and if he weren't careful, his long sword would be shaken out of his hand. After this, he didn't dare to attack head on anymore and he observed for a crack in Mu Gaofeng's defence before he would quickly attack that point with his sword. Mu Gaofeng didn’t care what his enemy was doing and was concentrating fully on revolving his hunchback sword around his body so that not even wind nor rain could penetrate, and it unexpectedly didn't show any crack at all.

Even though Lin Pingzhi's sword art was high, he didn't know what to do. But with this kind of fighting, Lin Pingzhi was in an invincible position. Even if he couldn't harm his opponent, there was no leeway at all for Mu Gaofeng to make a mistake. Every master there saw that if Mu Gaofeng wanted to attack then his sword net would reveal a weakness, and Lin Pingzhi's quick sword would attack immediately and Mu Gaofeng would find it impossible to block. This kind of

defending oneself with a flying sword was really taxing on the user’s internal energy. Each move had to be done with all your power, and only then would the movements be like unceasing flowing water covering your front and back continuously. But no matter how deep your internal energy was, you still couldn't use it forever.

Within the sword net weaved by that hunchback sword, Mu Gaofeng kept on roaring. He slashed high and low with his earth-shattering roars accompanying each sword move. Lin Pingzhi had attacked a few times thinking he was going to get through the sword net, but every time it was blocked by the hunchback sword.

Yu Canghai observed this for a long time when he suddenly saw the circle of the sword net had decreased by around half a foot. It was apparent Mu Gaofeng was gradually exhausting his internal energy. With a howl, Yu Canghai lifted his sword forward and slashed out three times at Lin Pingzhi's back. Lin Pingzhi turned his sword around to block. Mu Gaofeng's hunchback sword sliced out at Lin Pingzhi's lower body. Normally, Yu Canghai and Mu Gaofeng would've lost a lot of face in joining forces to attack a youth as they were both reputable seniors. But Heng-Shan School's people had all seen how violent and cruel Lin Pingzhi was in killing the Qingcheng disciples, and they had also seen how Yu Canghai wasn't his match. So at this time, when they saw the two masters joining forces, they all felt there was nothing strange about that but instead thought it was a natural thing to do. If the two of them didn't join hands, how could they fight back against Lin Pingzhi's lightning fast swordplay?

With Yu Canghai's help, Mu Gaofeng's swordplay had changed and he was now attacking as well as defending. The three of them had fought for more than twenty moves when Lin Pingzhi's left hand circled around and turned his fan's handle around to point it towards the ground. A half inch needle shot out from his fan's handle and pierced Mu Gaofeng's right leg's 'Huantiao' acupoint. Alarmed, Mu Gaofeng quickly brandished his hunchback sword, but he suddenly felt the acupoint on his left leg was also numb. He didn't dare to move anymore and wildly brandished his hunchback sword to protect his body. Both

of his legs were gradually losing strength and finally he couldn't help but to fall on his knees.

Lin Pingzhi laughed. "It’s too late for you to kowtow now!" Saying this, he attacked Yu Canghai with three moves.

Even though Mu Gaofeng was kneeling on the ground, the hunchback sword in his hand didn't slow down at all as it quickly slashed and thrust. He knew he had lost so there was a sense of desperation in his fighting as he was trying to bring common ruin to his enemy. In the beginning, all his movements were defensive and there wasn't a single attacking move at all. But at this time, he was sacrificing his life and he had changed his swordplay into full attack mode without any defence at all. Yu Canghai knew he didn't have much time. If he couldn't win within a few moves and Mu Gaofeng fell down, then he would be all by himself, so his sword was now moving like a violent storm. He suddenly heard Lin Pingzhi laughing long and loud, and his vision darkened making him unable to see anything any longer. Both sides of his shoulders then felt cool as both of his arms flew off from his body.

Lin Pingzhi was laughing madly and calling out, "I'm not going to kill you! I'm going to let you run around Jianghu with no arms and no eyes. Your disciples, families, I'll kill them all and spare no one. You're only going to have enemies in this world and no family."

Yu Canghai only felt unbearable pain near where his arms were, but he understood in his heart, "What he has done to me is ten thousand times more merciless than killing me with his sword. Even though I still live, I don't have any martial art at all, and he can just humiliate me as he wants." Using Lin Pingzhi's voice to locate him, he lifted his head to rush at Lin Pingzhi's chest.

Lin Pingzhi laughed heartily and leaned his body to dodge. Now that his hatred had been avenged, he was lost in ecstasy and wasn't being cautious anymore. He retreated for a couple of steps and arrived besides Mu Gaofeng. Mu Gaofeng swiped his hunchback sword but Lin Pingzhi blocked it with his sword. Mu Gaofeng suddenly lunged at him and hug both of his legs firmly. Lin Pingzhi was startled and then he saw dozens of Qingcheng disciples rushing at

him from all directions. He struggled to free both of his legs, but he couldn't get them free from Mu Gaofeng's iron grip. He quickly stabbed his sword at Mu Gaofeng's hunchback. As his sword pierced the hunchback, a jet stream of black smelly water shot out from it. Lin Pingzhi moved his legs to jump out of the way, but he forgot both of his legs were being firmly hugged by Mu Gaofeng so his whole face was sprayed by the smelly water, and he cried out in pain. This smelly water was actually poison. Inside Mu Gaofeng's hunchback was a sack of leather concealing this poison water. Covering his face with his left hand and with both of his eyes closed, Lin Pingzhi randomly slashed and chopped at Mu Gaofeng's body with his right hand. Lin Pingzhi's attacks were done swiftly but Mu Gaofeng didn't try to avoid them as he continued to hold onto Lin Pingzhi's legs firmly.

At this time, Yu Canghai had distinguished the cries of those people and rushed to them with his mouth wide open. He managed to find Lin Pingzhi's right cheek and clamped down tightly on it. The three of them were entangled into one group and they were losing their minds. Qingcheng School disciples were using their swords to randomly chop at Lin Pingzhi's body.

Linghu Chong saw all these clearly from his carriage. In the beginning, he was startled, but when he saw Lin Pingzhi being surrounded by the Qingcheng disciples chopping with their swords, he hastily called out, "Yingying, Yingying, quickly help him!"

Yingying shot out with the short sword in her hand. 'Tang, tang, tang', the sounds of weapons clashing rang continuously, and the disciples of Qingcheng were kept at several steps away from the entangled mess of Lin Pingzhi, Mu Gaofeng and Yu Canghai. Mu Gaofeng crazed roaring gradually died off as Lin Pingzhi's sword penetrated the back of his body again and again. Yu Canghai's whole body was bloody and he was still biting down firmly on Lin Pingzhi's cheek.

After some time, Lin Pingzhi gathered some strength in his left hand and pushed Yu Canghai away powerfully. At the same time, he cried out miserably as a chunk of flesh was torn off by Yu Canghai and blood dripped down

fiercely from his right cheek. Mu Gaofeng had already died some time ago, but he was still holding both of Lin Pingzhi's legs tightly. Lin Pingzhi used his left hand to feel around to trace where Mu Gaofeng's arms were, then he raised his sword and chopped off the arms to free himself. Yingying saw the terrifying look on Lin Pingzhi's face and she couldn't help backing away from him. Qingcheng disciples crowded around their master to help him and they didn't pay any more attention to their strong archenemy.

Qingcheng disciples then suddenly wept. "Master, master!" "Master's dead, master's dead!" They lifted Yu Canghai's corpse and ran to a place somewhere further away, afraid that Lin Pingzhi would chase and kill them.

Lin Pingzhi laughed loudly and called out, "I've taken my revenge, I've taken my revenge!"

After seeing such a soul-stirring incident, Heng-Shan School disciples were startled and lost all colours from their faces. Yue Lingshan slowly walked towards Lin Pingzhi and stopped besides him. "Brother Ping, congratulations on your revenge."

Lin Pingzhi was still laughing madly and crying out, "I've taken my revenge, I've taken my revenge!"

Yue Lingshan saw him with his eyes closed tightly so she asked, "What's wrong with your eyes? Let's wash the poison first."

Lin Pingzhi was stupefied and his body swayed like he was about to fall. Yue Lingshan put her hand under his armpit to help him walk into the grass shed. Then she poured a tray of clean water on his head. Lin Pingzhi cried out miserably showing his unbearable pain. The Qingcheng disciples standing at a far away place were startled and they again ran for a few more steps.

"Little martial sister, take these medicines and give them to Martial Brother Lin. Bring him into our carriage for him to rest," Linghu Chong said.

"Many... many thanks," Yue Lingshan stammered.

"NO!" Lin Pingzhi cried out. "What's so good about being betrayed by him!

Whether I'm alive or dead, what does that have to do with him?"

Linghu Chong was startled, and he thought, "When did I offend you? Why do you hate me?"

"Heng-Shan School's wonderful medicines are well known in the world, it's hard to come by..." Yue Lingshan softly said.

"Hard to come by what?" Lin Pingzhi angrily retorted.

Yue Lingshan let out a long sigh and poured another tray of clean water on his head. This time, Lin Pingzhi only snorted and gritted his teeth to stop crying out. "He's so worried about you. You've always talked well about him. Why don't you go with him? Why do you still care about me?"

When the Heng-Shan School disciples heard this, their faces lost their colours. Yihe loudly shouted, "You... You... dare to say such shameless words?"

Yiqing quickly pulled on Yihe's sleeve. "Martial sister, with his injuries, his mood isn't good. Why must you argue with him?"

"Pei!" Yihe angrily replied. "I'm just angry..."

At this time, Yue Lingshan had taken out a handkerchief and was wiping the wound on Lin Pingzhi's cheek. Lin Pingzhi suddenly pushed out forcefully with his right hand. Yue Lingshan wasn't prepared for this so she was thrown outside and hit a stone wall outside the grass shed.

Linghu Chong was greatly angered and he shouted, "You..." But he remembered the two of them were husband and wife. When husband and wife disagreed on something and fought, it was inappropriate for other people to intervene. Furthermore, from what Lin Pingzhi had just said, it was obvious there was a bit of jealousy towards him. Lin Pingzhi definitely knew about the way he intensely loved his martial sister. Also, his own injury was serious so Linghu Chong couldn't possibly get involved in this matter, so he quickly stopped from saying anything more. But the anger in him caused his whole body to tremble.

Lin Pingzhi laughed coldly. "I'm shameless in what I said? Who are actually

the shameless ones?" He pointed outside the grass shed and said, "That Shorty Yu, Hunchback Mu; they were the ones who wanted my Lin family's Evil Resisting Sword Art. They wanted to steal it and killed my father and mother for it. Even though they were ruthless and merciless, they were still gentleman enough to follow the rules of a scoundrel in Jianghu, unlike... unlike..." He then turned around and pointed to Yue Lingshan and continued, "Unlike your father, Gentleman Sword Yue Buqun, who used such a contemptible and sly method to obtain my family's sword manual."

Yue Lingshan supported herself on the wall as she slowly stood up, but when she heard Lin Pingzhi's accusation, her body shook and she sat back down. She tremblingly said, "Did... did this really happen?"

Lin Pingzhi laughed coldly. "Shameless lowly people! Both of you, father and daughter, conspired very well to entice me. Huashan School's Miss Yue is married to me, a little kid with nowhere to go with no family to return to. Why is that if it isn't for the Evil Resisting Sword Manual? Once the sword manual is in your hand, why do you still bother with me?"

Yue Lingshan gasped and cried. She said sobbing, "You... you're blaming a good person here, if I had that idea, then let me... let me be punished by heaven and earth."

"You secretly set your traitorous plan up," Lin Pingzhi said. "From the beginning, I've been kept in the dark and didn't understand a single thing. Now with both of my eyes blind, I can see everything clearly. If the two of you, father and daughter, set all these up, then why... why..."

Yue Lingshan slowly walked towards him and said, "Don't let your imagination run wild. My heart towards you is still the same as before." Lin Pingzhi snorted in contempt. Yue Lingshan went on, "Let's go back to Huashan and tend to your injuries. It doesn't matter if your eyes get better or not. If I have any ill intention behind this, then let me... let me die more miserably than Yu Canghai."

Lin Pingzhi laughed coldly. "I don't know what kind of crafty idea you have

for talking so nicely to me."

Yue Lingshan didn't pay anymore attention to him but she said to Yingying, "Sister, I'd like to borrow a carriage from you."

"Of course you can. Would you like to have two Heng-Shan School's sisters to accompany you on your journey?"

Yue Lingshan couldn't stop whimpering as she replied, "No... no need, many... many thanks."

Yingying pulled a carriage over and gave her the rein and whip. Yue Lingshan held onto Lin Pingzhi's arm and said, "Let's get on the carriage!" Lin Pingzhi wasn't willing, but both of his eyes couldn't see a thing and it was very hard for him to walk. After hesitating for a while, he finally went inside the carriage. Yue Lingshan bit her lip and jumped onto the driver seat. She nodded her head at Yingying to show her thanks, then cracked her whip urging the mule to draw the carriage towards the northwest. She didn't give a glance towards Linghu Chong at all.

Linghu Chong watched the carriage disappearing into the horizon. His heart was sour and tears was about to flow down from his eyes. He thought, "Both of Martial Brother Lin's eyes are blind, and little martial sister is also injured. The two of them has no one else to rely on while slowly going on their long journey, what would be best thing to do? If Qingcheng School's disciples chased them to take revenge, how can they fight back?" He saw the disciples of Qingcheng had surrounded Yu Canghai's corpse and then put it on a horseback before going southwesterly. Even though they went in the opposite direction to that of Lin Pingzhi and Yue Lingshan, how would he know if they turn north after going dozens of li into their journey and go after the Lin husband and wife? As he pondered over what Lin Pingzhi and Yue Lingshan said to each other, he felt there were still countless unsaid feelings associated with them. Even though other people wouldn't be able to see the love and hate between a husband and wife, it was clear the two of them would definitely not have a harmonious marriage. He thought little martial sister was still so young, her parents loved her so dearly, and the martial brothers in the school cherished her deeply, but to be

insulted so by Lin Pingzhi, he couldn't help shedding his tears for her.

On the very same day, after they had gone for more than ten li, they rested inside the main hall of a broken down temple for the night. It was the middle of the night and Linghu Chong had been sleeping but his sleep had been interrupted by unsettling dreams for a few times already. In his sleep, he suddenly heard a soft voice calling him, "Brother Chong, Brother Chong!" Linghu Chong groaned and woke up. He then heard Yingying's voice, "Come outside, I have something to talk to you about."

Linghu Chong quickly sat up and walked outside the temple. He saw Yingying sitting on top of the stone steps with both of her hands cupping her cheeks. She was gazing at the moon which was half covered by the cloud. Linghu Chong walked towards her and sat besides her. The night was deep and everything was peaceful. After some time, Yingying said, "You're concerned about your little martial sister?"

"Yes. There are many things which are hard to understand."

"You're worried she'll be bullied by her husband?"

Linghu Chong let out a sigh. "That's their own matter, how can other people meddle in it?"

"You're afraid the Qingcheng disciples will go after them?"

"Qingcheng disciples are pained by the loss of their master, so when they see the two of them injured, they'll want to go and harm them. That'll be a reasonable assumption."

"Why don't you think of a way to save them?"

Linghu Chong sighed. "I heard what Martial Brother Lin said. He's quite jealous of me. Even if I have good intention in helping him, I'm afraid I'll ruin the harmony between the two of them even more."

"That's one. The other apprehension you have in your heart is that I'll be unhappy, isn't that right?"

Linghu Chong nodded his head and held her left hand. Her palm was very

cold. He softly said, "Yingying, you're the only person I have in this world. If a suspicion also aroused between the two of us, then what would that mean?"

Yingying slowly rested her head on his shoulder. "Since your heart already thinks like that, how can there be suspicion between us? It's not too late yet, let's go chase after them and don't let suspicion keep us away and rouse a lifelong of hatred."

Linghu Chong was startled and his eyes glazed over in fear. "Lifelong of hatred, lifelong of hatred!" He saw in his mind dozens of Qingcheng disciples surrounding the carriage Lin Pingzhi and Yue Lingshan was riding, and dozens of swords viciously thrusting and stabbing at it. He couldn't stop his body from trembling when thinking about it.

"I'll go wake sister Yihe and Yiqing up so you can order them to go back to Heng-Shan by themselves," Yingying said. "We'll secretly protect your little martial sister on her journey, then we'll go back to the White Cloud Convent after that."

Yihe and Yiqing saw that Linghu Chong's injury had not completely healed yet, so they were quite worried. But since his mind was already decided and he was also anxious to save his little martial sister, it wasn't appropriate for them to advise him otherwise. So they gave him a big bottle of medicine and put it in the carriage. When Linghu Chong gave the order to Yihe and Yiqing, Yingying stood on the side looking the other way. She didn't dare to look at Yihe and Yiqing, thinking they would laugh at them for going together in one carriage at night. Not until their mule-drawn carriage had gone for a few miles that she let out a sigh and the blushing on her cheeks subsided.

She recognised the way they were taking. It was a major road going northwest towards Mount Huashan and it was unlikely for them to get lost. The mule drawing their carriage was healthy and it galloped quite fast. In the calm of the night, they could only hear the rumbling of wheels and the tick-tock sound of the hooves.

Linghu Chong felt appreciative towards Yingying and he thought, "For my

sake, she agrees to do anything. She knows I'm very concerned about little martial sister so she comes with me to protect her. She really knows me well. I wonder from which of my previous lives did she come from?"

Yingying hurried the mule up and it went quickly for a few miles before it slowed down again. "We'll protect your martial sister and martial brother in secret. If they meet with trouble along the way then we'll go out to help. It's best if we don't let them know. I think it'll be easier if we disguise ourselves."

"That's right. Disguise yourself as that big bearded man!"

Yingying shook her head. "That won't do. Your little martial sister already saw me in that disguise besides the place of worship."

"Then what should be our disguise?"

Yingying pointed to a farmhouse in front of them with her whip and said, "I'll go and steal some clothing. We'll change into a... a... two brother and sister from the farm." She originally wanted to say 'a couple', but as it reached the tip of her tongue, she felt it was inappropriate and immediately changed her word. Linghu Chong guessed it but knew she was very shy, so he didn't dare to make a joke about it and just smiled to himself. But Yingying was just turning her head around and caught a glimpse of his smile, and her face turned red.

"What's so funny?"

Linghu Chong smiled. "Nothing. I was just thinking, if that family doesn't have any girl, and there's only an old granny and a young kid living there, then I'd have to call you granny again."

Yingying giggled and remembered the days when she had just met Linghu Chong and he kept on calling her granny at that time. She felt warmth in her heart as she jumped down from the carriage to go towards that farmhouse. Linghu Chong saw her leaping lightly to go over the wall, followed by the sound of a dog barking. But after one bark, it became quiet again, he thought Yingying must've kicked it dizzy. After some time, he saw her coming out with some clothes in her hands. When she reached the side of the carriage, he saw that she appeared to be smiling and she had a funny expression on her face. She

quickly threw the clothes into the carriage, jumped into the carriage, then started laughing loudly. Linghu Chong picked up some of the clothes and inspected them under the moonlight. They were the clothes of an old peasant and an old woman. The clothes of the old woman were particularly big, inlaid with green flower laces. It was in an old style and clearly not the clothes of a young farm girl at all. Among the clothes, there was also a man's cap, a head cover for a woman, and a tobacco tube.

Yingying laughed. "You're Linghu the half deity! You guessed right there was a granny in the farmhouse, but it's a pity there's no kid..." She said till here when she blushed furiously and stopped talking.

Linghu Chong smiled teasingly. "So they're brother and sister. The two are really good to each other. One doesn't want to take a wife, the other doesn't want to get married, they live till seventy eighty years old and they're still together."

Yingying bit her lip smiling. "You know it's not like that."

"They're not brother and sister? That's really strange."

Yingying couldn't help laughing. Then at the back of the carriage, she put on the clothes of the old farm woman on top of her gown and she also put on the head cover on her head. Then she grabbed some dirt from the side and rubbed it on her face. After that, she helped Linghu Chong to change into the old peasant's clothes. Linghu Chong was barely a few inches away from her cheek and when he felt her breath caressing his face, he couldn't help feeling moved. He really wanted to just give her a hug and kiss her, but he knew she was extremely stern and wasn't the least bit licentious. If he offended her and raised her ire, then it would be hard to say what would happen, so he quickly collected his thought and didn't dare to move.

He suddenly looked quite strange as he was restraining himself from doing something. Yingying saw him and understood. She smiled. "Good kid, granny adores you." She extended her palm and rubbed the dirt on his face. Linghu Chong shut his eyes closed and felt her warm and soft palm lightly massaging his face all over. He felt unspeakable comfort and hoped she could continue

doing this forever.

After some time, Yingying said, "Done. Your little martial will definitely not recognise you at night, but be careful not to speak."

"Rub the dirt on my neck too."

"Who's going to look at your neck?" Yingying asked with a laugh. But she quickly understood his meaning. Linghu Chong wanted her to massage his neck. With a bent middle finger, she knocked softly on his forehead and turned around to sit on the driver's seat. With a whistle, she urged the mule forward and suddenly she couldn't help laughing, and she laughed harder as she went on. She was actually laughing till she bent forward and was finding it hard to sit.

Linghu Chong smiled and inquired, "What did you see in that farmhouse?"

"I didn't see anything funny. That grandpa and grandma are... are husband and wife..." Yingying laughed.

"So they're not brother and sister, but husband and wife instead," Linghu Chong smiled.

"You're teasing me again, I'm not talking."

"Alright, they're not husband and wife, they're brother and sister."

"Stop interrupting me, can you not? I jumped over the wall, and a dog barked, so I gave it a slap and made it faint. But the grandpa and grandma were woken up because of it. The grandma said: 'Amao must've seen a weasel coming to steal the chicken.' Grandpa said: 'Old black isn't barking anymore, it can't be a weasel.' That old grandma suddenly laughed and she said: 'I think that weasel must've followed your example from the past when you visited my home in the middle of the night. You always brought a piece of meat to give to my dog.'"

Linghu Chong smiled. "This grandma is really bad. She's scolding you and saying you're a weasel."

He knew Yingying was very shy. She was talking about the private matter between the old husband and wife farmers, so he pretended not to understand. Then, perhaps, she would continue with her story. Otherwise, if he said

something a little bit romantic, she would stop talking altogether.

Yingying laughed and continued, "That grandma was talking about the time before they got married..." She said till here when she straightened her body and lifted the rein high to urge the mule to quicken its run.

"So what happened before they got married? They must've adhered to customs really strictly. Even in the middle of the night, sitting all by themselves in a carriage, they definitely wouldn't dare to hug or kiss." Yingying snorted and stopped talking.

Linghu Chong continued, "Dear, darling, what did they say? Tell me please." Yingying smiled but kept her silence.

In the middle of the night, they only heard the hooves of the mule hitting the road and the peacefulness was really pleasing to the ear. Linghu Chong looked out and saw the moonlight was like water flowing out into the straight and broad road, and the mist enveloped the trees on the side of the road. The mule-drawn carriage slowly entered the mist and everything outside couldn't be seen clearly anymore, even the back of Yingying's body was wrapped around a haze of mist.

It was just at the beginning of spring, so the fragrance from the flowers was sometimes thick and sometimes light as the wind carried it, the pleasure of it all was unspeakable. Linghu Chong had not drunk any wine for a long time, but with this feeling in his mind, it felt just like being intoxicated. Yingying was still carrying a smile on her face as her thought went back to what those two old husband and wife were talking: The old grandpa said: 'That night I didn't have any meat at all, so I killed a chicken from your neighbour and fed it to your dog. What's that dog called?' Old grandma answered: 'Big Flower.' Old grandpa said: 'That's right, Big Flower. It ate half a chicken and didn't bark anymore. Your father, mother, all didn't know. Our Amao must've have gotten the same thing tonight.' Old grandma said: 'You knew you're merry, and paid no attention to others' hard work. Later on, my tummy became big and father hit me viciously.' Old grandpa said: 'Lucky your stomach became big, otherwise why would your father agree to marry you to such a poor kid like me? That time, I was looking

forward to your stomach getting big!' Old grandma suddenly got mad and scolded: 'You devil, so you did it deliberately and you've been hiding the truth from me. I... I won't spare you now.' Old grandpa said: 'Don't be noisy! Amao will also bear a kid. What are you noisy about?'

By that time, Yinying was afraid Linghu Chong would be worried, so she didn't listen anymore and stole the clothes before leaving a big silver ingot on the table and going out. She was going around lightly and that husband and wife didn't notice at all. It was because they were already old and slow, and they were talking excitedly, so they didn't feel her presence at all.

When Yingying thought of the conversation between the two of them, her face and ears turned red. Fortunately, it was at night, otherwise if Linghu Chong were to see her face, she would've been totally embarrassed. She stopped urging the mule and the big carriage gradually slowed down to normal speed. They turned around a bend and arrived besides the bank of a large lake. There were willows hanging around the bank of the lake and in the middle of the lake was the reflection of the round moon flickering about as the surface of the lake moved.

Yingying softly asked, "Brother Chong, are you asleep?"

"I'm asleep, I'm dreaming."

"What are you dreaming?"

"I'm dreaming I'm carrying a big piece of meat and going up the Dark Wood Cliff to feed your family dog."

"You're not a proper person. No wonder your dream is also not proper," Yingying said smiling.

The two of them sat alongside each other inside the carriage, gazing at the lake. Linghu Chong extended his right hand and put it on the back of Yingying's left hand. Yingying's hand trembled slightly but she didn't take her hand back. Linghu Chong thought, "If only we could be like this forever and not see the bloodshed in Wulin ever again. Even if I were to become a god, I still wouldn't be as happy as right now."

"What are you thinking?" Yingying asked and Linghu Chong told her what he was just thinking of. Yingying turned over her hand and gripped his hand. "Brother Chong, I'm really happy."

"Me too."

"Even though I appreciated you commanding that group of heroes to attack Shaolin temple, I wasn't as happy as I am now. If I were your best friend, and I was trapped inside the Shaolin temple, you would've also tried to save me because of the code of righteousness of Jianghu. But right now, you only think of me, and are not thinking of your little martial sister..." As she mentioned 'your little martial sister', Linghu Chong's whole body quivered and he blurted out, "Aiyo, let's go catch up to her!"

Yingying softly said, "Only now I believe that in your heart, you finally thought of me a bit more, and thought of your little martial sister a bit less."

She lightly pulled on the rein to turn the mule around. The mule-drawn carriage returned to the major road, and with a crack of her whip, the mule ran quickly. In just a short time, they had covered more than twenty li and their mule had become weary, so it slowed down. After turning a couple of bends, they saw a field of tall sorghum in front of them with the major road running straight through the middle of it. The pale moonlight on the ground looked like a piece of big green silk spreading throughout the ground. As they gazed far away, they saw a carriage at the other end of the road, which seemed to be still and unmoving.

"This carriage looks like Martial Brother Lin's carriage," Linghu Chong remarked.

"Let's go slowly and take a look," Yingying replied. She then urged the mule to go slowly as it got nearer to the other carriage. After they had travelled for a bit, they became aware that the carriage in front was actually still moving, but very slowly. They also saw there was a person walking besides the mule, who was unexpectedly Lin Pingzhi. From the shape of the driver's body, they saw it was Yue Lingshan who was sitting on the driver's seat. Linghu Chong was

surprised and he extended his hand to the rein to stop their mule. "What are they doing?" he whispered.

"Wait here, I'll go have a look," Yingying said.

If they were to catch up with the other carriage, then the other party would have discovered them. So they must use qinggong to secretly peep in on them. Linghu Chong really wanted to go with her, but his injury had not healed yet so he couldn't use his qinggong. He nodded his head and replied, "Alright."

Yingying lightly leapt off the carriage and rushed into the thicket of tall sorghum on the side of the road. The tall sorghum had grown very thick so once someone entered it, they wouldn't be seen even in the light of day. But these tall sorghum had not grown very tall yet and their leaves weren't that dense, so your head would still be exposed outside. She stooped down as she went and followed the sound of the hooves, until she was finally alongside Yue Lingshan's mule-drawn carriage.

She heard Lin Pingzhi said, "My sword manual was already taken by your father a long time ago, and I don't have any other move he doesn't know. Why must you insist on following me everywhere?"

"You've always been suspicious of my father having plans on your sword manual without any reason at all. Listen to your own conscience. When you first entered Huashan School, you didn't have any sword manual, but I've always been... always been good to you, could it be, it all means nothing to you?" Yue Lingshan reasoned.

"My Lin family's Evil Resisting Sword Art is well known throughout the world. Yu Canghai, Mu Gaofeng, they both couldn't find anything on my father so they searched me. How do I know you didn't deliberately treat me well because of your father’s and mother's order?"

Yue Lingshan whimpered. "If you think that way, then what can I do?"

"Did I mistakenly blame you then?” Lin Pingzhi vehemently asked. “This 'Evil Resisting Sword Manual', didn't your father finally take it from my hand? Everyone knows, if you want the 'Evil Resisting Sword Manual' then you must

take it from this little kid Lin. Yu Canghai, Mu Gaofeng, hng hng, Yue Buqun, what's the difference? The only difference is Yue Buqun succeeded, while Yu Canghai and Mu Gaofeng failed."

"You're slandering my father, who do you think I am?" Yue Lingshan angrily retorted. "If not for... if not for... hng hng..."

Lin Pingzhi halted his steps and shouted, "What are you going to do? If not for me being blind, injured, you're going to kill me, isn't that right? My eyes were blinded a long time ago."

"So when you first knew me and treated me well, your eyes were already blind?" She reined in the mule and stopped the carriage.

"That's right! How would I know you had planned everything? Because of this 'Evil Resisting Sword Manual', you actually went to Fuzhou to open up a small wine shop. When that kid Yu from Qingcheng School bullied you, actually your martial art was much higher than him, but you pretended not to know any martial art and made me helped you. Hng, Lin Pingzhi, you were one blind stupid kid, relying on your three legged cat martial art and actually daring to be heroic and be outraged by injustice," Lin Pingzhi said. "You're everything to your father and mother, if not for something big and important, why would they agree to let you show your face in public? Why would they agree to let you sell wine in such a humble shop?"

"Father originally sent second martial brother to go to Fuzhou," Yue Lingshan replied. "It was me who wanted to go down the mountain to play, to follow second martial brother."

"Your father controls the school's disciples so strictly. If he believed it was inappropriate, even if you kneeled and implored him for three days and three nights, he still wouldn't allow you to go. Naturally, it was because he couldn't trust second martial brother that he also sent you to watch over things."

Yue Lingshan was quiet, looking like she felt Lin Pingzhi's conjecture wasn't completely unreasonable. After a little while, she said, "You can believe me or not, but before I got to Fuzhou, I've never heard of 'Evil Resisting Sword

Manual'. Father only said, big martial brother had beaten up the disciples of Qingcheng so there's a dislike between the two parties. At that time, the Qingcheng School was carrying out a large operation and was moving to the east. So he's afraid it would be disadvantageous to our school. That was why second martial brother and I went to Fuzhou to investigate."

Lin Pingzhi let out a sigh. It seemed he had softened up as he said, "Fine, I'll believe you this time. But I've already changed into this. Why are you still following me for? You and I are only husband and wife in names only, we're not real husband and wife. You're still a virgin, you can just go back... go back to Linghu Chong!"

When Yingying heard 'You and I are only husband and wife in names only, we're not real husband and wife. You're still a virgin', she couldn't help being surprised, and she thought, "What's the reason for that?" She immediately became bashful and her whole face turned bright red. Even her neck was feeling hot. She thought, "For me to listen to the private conversation of a husband and wife of another family is already very inappropriate, but to think of a reason for that, that's really... that's really..." She turned around to go, but she only went for a few steps before her curiosity got the better of her and she halted to listen for more. But she was afraid of being discovered so she didn't dare to return to her previous hiding spot, and now she was further away from the two of them. However, the conversation between them could still be clearly heard by her. She heard Yue Lingshan quietly said, "After we had been married for three days, I already knew you really hate me. Even though we were in the same room, you didn't want to be on the same bed with me. Since you already hate me so, why did you... did you... marry me?"

Lin Pingzhi sighed. "I don't hate you."

"You don't hate me? Then why did you pretend to be very caring towards me during the day, but at night when we got back to our room, you didn't even want to talk to me? Father and mother have already repeatedly asked how you were treating me. I've always told them you treated me very well, very well, very well... sob..." She said till here when she suddenly bawled her eyes out.

Lin Pingzhi leapt up onto the carriage and holding both of her shoulders, he then severely said, "You said your father and mother asked you repeatedly wanting to know how I treated you, is this true?"

"Of course it's true," Yue Lingshan answered in sobs. "Why do I need to lie to you about this?"

"You know I didn't treat you well, I didn't even share the same bed with you. So how did you answer them?" Lin Pingzhi inquired.

"I was already married to you, so I belong to the Lin family. I was hoping you would have a change of feeling soon. I treated you genuinely, how can I... how can I lay out my own husband's fault?"

Lin Pingzhi gritted his teeth and did not answer her for a long time. After a long time, he slowly said, "Hng, I thought your father was worried about you so he was showing mercy towards me. Who would've thought the entire thing was covered up by you? If you didn't answer like you did, I would've died on Mount Huashan a long time ago."

"How can that be?" Yue Lingshan sobbingly asked. "Newly married couples can be a little bit at odds with each other, how can the father-in-law kill the son-in-law just because of that?"

Yingying heard till here when she advanced forward a few more steps.

Lin Pingzhi said with hatred in his voice, "He wants to kill me not because I don't treat you well, it was because I learned the Evil Resisting Sword Art."

"I really don't understand this. These last few days, the sword art that father and you have been using is really strange, but its power is incredibly powerful. Father defeated Zuo Lengchan and snatched the Five Mountains School's headmaster position, while you killed Yu Canghai and Mu Gaofeng, could it be... could it be that sword art is the Evil Resisting Sword Art?"

"That's right! That really is my Fuzhou's Lin family's Evil Resisting Sword Art! Years ago, my great grandfather Yuantu used this seventy two groups of sword moves to intimidate the demonical and created the 'Fortune Prestige Escort

House' business. All the heroes in the realm respected and feared him because of this." When he talked of this matter, his voice became louder and it was full of pride.

"But, you've never told me you've learned this set of sword art."

"How could I dare? Linghu Chong tried to snatch that Buddhist robe in Fuzhou but he couldn't do it, but this sword manual written on the Buddhist robe instead fell into your father's hand..."

"No, it can't be!" Yue Lingshan sharply interrupted. "Father said, big martial brother was the one who snatched the sword manual. I begged him to return it to you, but he wasn't willing at all." Lin Pingzhi snorted and laughed coldly.

Yue Lingshan continued, "Big martial brother's sword art is very formidable and even my father isn't his match, could it be the sword art he's using isn't the Evil Resisting Sword Art? That it wasn't learned from your family's 'Evil Resisting Sword Manual'?"

Lin Pingzhi again laughed derisively. "Even though Linghu Chong is sly and deceitful, he's nothing compared to your father. Also, his swordplay is a mess, how can it be compared to my family's Evil Resisting Sword Art? During the fight besides the place of worship, he couldn't even compete with you and was injured heavily under your sword, hng hng, so how can his sword art be compared to my family's Evil Resisting Sword Art?"

"He deliberately let me win," Yue Lingshan quietly mumbled.

Lin Pingzhi laughed coldly. "His love for you is so deep!" If these words were heard by Yingying the day before, she would've gotten enraged even though she knew already Linghu Chong deliberately lost that sword fight. But after spending the night together in the same carriage and talking clearly besides the lake, they knew each other's hearts, and she now felt sweetness in her heart instead. "He treated you really well before, but right now, he treats me much better. You can't blame him for this, it's not because he had a change of heart toward you, but it's because you've been bullying him too fiercely."

"So big martial brother's sword art isn't the Evil Resisting Sword Art," Yue

Lingshan concluded. “Then why did Father always say he stole your family's 'Evil Resisting Sword Manual'? That day when Father expelled him from the Huashan School, he declared this to be one of his big crimes. Then, I've... I've been wrongly blaming him."

Lin Pingzhi laughed mockingly. "What wrongly blaming? Linghu Chong also wanted to rob my sword manual. He had actually already stolen it. But that bandit met with the grandpa bandit, so after he got injured and fainted, your father took it from his body and took the opportunity to lay the blame on him to cover his track. This is called thief crying thief..."

"What thief crying thief!” Yue Lingshan angrily retorted. “You're saying such a horrible thing!"

"The things your father did, aren't they horrible? The things he did, am I not allowed to say them?"

Yue Lingshan let out a sigh. "That day in Xiangyang Lane, that Buddhist Robe was stolen by the bad people from Songshan School. Big martial brother killed these two people and took the Buddhist robe back. This is not necessarily because he wanted to get it for himself. Big martial brother is a very bighearted person. Ever since he was small, he'd never been greedy and never coveted other people's things. When Father said he took your sword manual, I doubted it. But since Father said it, and I also saw how Big Martial Brother had suddenly advanced a lot in his swordplay to the level above that of my father, I believed everything was true."

Yingying thought, "You can say these words now, then Chong-lang's[6] love for you wasn't in vain."

Lin Pingzhi sneered coldly. "He's so good, why didn't you go with him?"

"Brother Ping, even until now, you still don't understand my heart. Big martial brother and I have grown up together since we were little. In my heart, he's just like my real brother. I love him dearly like a family member and regard him as my big brother. I've never regarded him as my lover. Ever since you came to Mount Huashan, you and I have matched really well. If I don't see you for some

time, then my heart becomes unhappy and uneasy. My feeling towards you will never change."

"Your father and you are somewhat different, you're... you're like your mother." His voice had become softer as he said this; it was clear his true feeling towards Yue Lingshan was being moved. The two of them didn't speak another word for a long time before Yue Lingshan broke the silence, "Brother Ping, you have such a deep hatred toward my father, so it won't be easy for the two of you to reconcile. I'm already married... I... I will definitely always follow you. Let's go somewhere far and find somewhere secluded to pass our days happily there."

Lin Pingzhi laughed coldly and replied, "What you thought is quite good. But the whole world would've known by now that I killed Yu Canghai and Mu Gaofeng, so your father naturally knows that I've learned the Evil Resisting Sword Art. How can he let me keep on living in this world?"

"You said my father sought your sword manual. Based on the fact, there's nothing I can do to defend him," Yue Lingshan dejectedly said. "But you keep on saying that he's going to kill you after you've learned the Evil Resisting Sword Art. What's the logic in that? The 'Evil Resisting Sword Manual' belongs to your family, so it's perfectly justified and totally natural for you to learn this sword art. There's no reason at all for my father to want to kill you, and he won't kill you just because of this."

"You can say this because you don't understand what kind of person your father is. You also don't understand what this 'Evil Resisting Sword Manual' really is."

"Even though I'm totally devoted to you, I still don't understand what's in your heart."

"That's right, you don't understand! You don't understand! Why do you want to understand?" He became really irritable at this point.

Yue Lingshan didn't dare to speak too much, so she said, "En, let's go!"

"Go where?"

"Wherever you want to go, I'll go with you. I'll go with you even to the edge of the world."

"What you're saying is true? No matter what happens in the future, you won't regret it?"

"I've made up my mind to be with you, to marry you. I've long ago decided to be with you forever. How can I regret it? Your eyes' injury, whether it's going to heal or not, I'll accompany you always, attend to you, and be together until both of us died."

These words were said sincerely, and Yingying was moved on hearing them. Lin Pingzhi snorted sounding like he didn't believe her. Yue Lingshan softly said, "Brother Ping, you still don't believe me. I... I... tonight I'm going to give you everything, you... so you will trust me always. Tonight will be our wedding night, and we'll become real husband and wife. From today onwards, become... real husband and wife..." Her voice became softer and softer as she spoke, at the end it was barely audible.

Yingying became terribly embarrassed, and she thought, "If I still listen to what they're doing now, how can I still be a person?" She slowly moved away while secretly scolding, "This Miss Yue really is shameless! They're in the middle of a major road, how can... how can... pei!"

Suddenly, she heard Lin Pingzhi ferociously crying out. His voice was extremely sad and shrill, followed by him shouting, "Scram! Don't come over!"

Yingying started and thought, "What's going on? Why is this Lin being so fierce?" This was followed by Yue Lingshan weeping loudly. Lin Pingzhi shouted, "Go away, go away! Quickly go far far away, I'd rather be killed by your father, I don't want you to come with me."

"You're being so mean to me... what... what did I do wrong..." Yue Lingshan cried.

"I... I..." Lin Pingzhi stammered. After a pause, he went on, "You... You..." But he stopped talking.

"Say what your heart wants to say," Yue Lingshan said. "Did I do something wrong, or maybe you're blaming my father and don't want to forgive me. Just say it clearly once and then you don't need to do anything, I'll immediately kill myself with my sword." With a hissing sound, she drew her sword. Yingying thought, "She's going to be forced to die by Lin Pingzhi, I have to save her!" She quickly walked back and got very near to the carriage so she could rescue her.

Lin Pingzhi again stammered, "I... I..." After some time, he let out a long sigh and said, "It's not your fault, it's me who is no good."

Yue Lingshan cried mournfully. Lin Pingzhi relented and said, "Alright, I'll tell you."

"You can hit me, kill me, but don't leave me not understanding anything," Yue Lingshan said between sobs.

"Since your feeling towards me isn't fake, then I'll tell you everything so your heart can die over this."

"Why?" Yue Lingshan was perplexed.

"Why? My Lin family's Evil Resisting Sword Art is very famous throughout Wulin. Yu Canghai and your father are both headmasters of a school, their own sword arts are already strong, but they still planned on stealing my family's sword manual. But my father's martial art is useless, and other people can just bully and humiliate him without him being able to fight back at all, now why is that?"

"Maybe because father-in-law wasn't suitable to learn martial art, or maybe his body was weak," Yue Lingshan guessed. "From among the school's disciples in Wulin, it's not necessarily true that every one of them has strong martial art."

"You're wrong. Even though my father's swordplay was no good, it was only because he didn't study it enough. His internal energy was weak, and his attainment of the sword art was also poor. But the Evil Resisting Sword Art that he taught me, the foundation was wrong, and from the beginning to the end, it wasn't right."

Yue Lingshan hummed deeply and said, "This... This is really strange."

"Actually, it's not strange," Lin Pingzhi said. "Do you know what my great grandfather Yuantu originally was?"

"I don't know."

"He was originally a monk."

"So he was a Buddhist. Some heroes of Wulin do a lot of outrageous things in Jianghu, but when they got older, they got quite worn out from all the things happening in the world, so they become Buddhists. This can happen," Yue Lingshan said.

"No. My great grandfather didn't become a Buddhist when he got old. He was a monk first before returning to secular life again."

"There were also heroes who were monks when they're young. Our founding ancestor of the Ming, Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang, he was a monk before he became the emperor."

Yingying thought, "Miss Yue knows her husband is narrow-minded. Not only does she not dare to offend him, she keeps trying to reassure him."

She then heard Yue Lingshan went on, "Father-in-law must've told you that your great grandfather Yuantu was a monk when he was young."

"My father never talked about it, I don't think he knew about it. My house at the Xiangyang Lane has a Buddhist hall in it; we went in there together on that night."

"Yes."

"Why was this 'Evil Resisting Sword Manual' recorded on a Buddhist robe? It was because he was originally a monk, and when he saw the sword manual, he quickly wrote it down on his Buddhist robe and got out. Once he returned to secular life, he built a Buddhist hall at home and didn't dare to forget about Buddha."

"Your guess is very reasonable," Yue Lingshan agreed. "But, it's also possible

that the sword manual was given to Grandfather Yuantu by an eminent reverend, and that the sword manual was originally written on the Buddhist robe. So Grandfather Yuantu may have obtained this sword manual frankly and uprightly."

"It's not like that."

"Your conjecture isn't necessarily right."

"It's not my conjecture; it's what Grandfather Yuantu wrote on the Buddhist robe."

"Ah, so that's how it is."

"He wrote this at the end of the sword manual. He was originally a monk, but because of an especially lucky chance, he heard of this sword manual from other people's mouth and wrote it down on the Buddhist robe. He warned that this sword art is too cruel and sinister, and once you learned it, you'll die without an heir. It's already unsuitable for even nuns or monks to learn as it violates the compassion of the Buddha, so for secular people, they shouldn't learn this even more."

"But he had already learned it himself."

"At that time, I also thought the same thing as you. This sword art is said to be cruel and sinister, and inadvisable to be practised, but after Grandfather Yuantu studied it, didn't he still manage to take a wife and get an heir?"

"That's right. But it could be that he took a wife and got an heir first before studying this sword art."

"It can't be," Lin Pingzhi said. "Everyone who studies martial art in this world, no matter how heroic you are, or how powerful your martial art already is, once you see this sword manual, you couldn't possibly not practice it because you want to see how the first move goes. Once you've tried the first move, you'll definitely try the second move. Once you've tried the second move, you cannot not try the third move. Even if you haven't seen a sword manual before, once you've seen it then you'll definitely go crazy about it and it's very difficult to free

yourself from it, and you'll practice it from top to bottom. Even if you know there's an enormous disaster tied to practising it, you still won't care about it."

Yingying heard till here when her thoughts turned to her father. "Daddy once said, this 'Evil Resisting Sword Manual' actually has the same root as our sect's 'Sunflower Manual' and they have the same fundamental principle. It's no wonder Yue Buqun's and Lin Pingzhi's sword art actually looks very similar to Dongfang Bubai's." She also thought, "Daddy said, there's something harmful in the martial art contained in the 'Sunflower Manual'. He knows that once a person who studies martial art sees the content of this martial art secret, he would definitely fall under its trap and would find it hard to free himself from it even if he knows it'd be disastrous to study it. So he simply refused to look at the Manual, which was the most sensible thing to do." A thought suddenly flashed in her mind, "Then why did he give it to Dongfang Bubai?" She thought till this point, and she automatically deduced, "So at that time Daddy already saw Dongfang Bubai harbouring an ill intention, so he gave him the Manual to harm him. But Uncle Xiang didn't know anything about this, and Dongfang Bubai was also ignorant of this and was still blissfully unworried. Actually, my father is such an astute and formidable person. How could he have been muddled headed for so long? It's just that a person's thought isn't as good as the thought of heaven. Dongfang Bubai unexpectedly struck first, captured daddy, and imprisoned him under the West Lake. But his heart wasn't especially bad. If at that time, he were to have killed daddy, or may have given an order not to give him food and drink, how could Daddy have the opportunity to take his revenge? Actually, it was a really lucky thing that we were able to kill Dongfang Bubai. If not for Chong-lang's help, Daddy, Uncle Xiang, Shangguan Yun and me, the four of us would've been killed by Dongfang Bubai at that time. Also, if it weren't for Yang Lianting messing with his heart, Dongfang Bubai would still be undefeated." She thought till here, and she couldn't help feeling that Dongfang Bubai was somewhat pitiful.

She thought, "After he captured my dad, he treated me generously and gave me a lot of gifts. When I was in the Divine Sun Moon Sect, I was no different from a princess. Today, when my own dad is the Chief, I instead, didn't have the

authority I used to have. Ai, now that I already have Chong-lang, why do I still need that authority for?" As her thoughts wandered to the past, she thought her father's scheming was very deep and she couldn't help be frightened. "Even now, Dad still hasn't told Chong-lang the method of dispersing the internal energy. Chong-lang had already amassed several different qi from other people, and they still haven't been dispersed yet. This disaster will get bigger and bigger as days go by. Sooner or later, he will definitely be in trouble. Daddy said he must join our sect and once he did, not only will he be imparted with this technique, he will immediately be sworn in as the heir to the Chief. But Chong-lang isn't willing to submit and he will be in a great deal of trouble later." She was half happy and half worried. As she quietly stood in the cluster of tall sorghum, her thoughts wildly went from here to there, but no matter what she thought about, it always returned to Linghu Chong.

At this time, Lin Pingzhi and Yue Lingshan were also quiet. After a long time, Lin Pingzhi said, "After Grandfather Yuantu saw this sword manual, he of course practised it straight away."

"If there's really a big trouble associated with this set of sword art, it wouldn't just come out straight away," Yue Lingshan reasoned. "It's always after practising for ten years or so that the harm would come. Grandfather Yuantu must've taken a wife and gotten an heir before this trouble manifested itself."

"That's. Not. It." Lin Pingzhi stressed each word without any hesitation. After a pause, he went on, "In the beginning, I also thought the same thing as you did. But after a few days, I found out it wasn't so. My grandfather simply couldn't be Grandfather Yuantu's son. He's most likely adopted by Grandfather Yuantu. Grandfather Yuantu took a wife and got an heir merely to fool everyone."

Yue Lingshan gasped in surprise and said in a trembling voice, "Fool everyone? But... why?"

Lin Pingzhi snorted but didn't answer her. After some time, he said, "When I first saw the sword manual, I was already very close to you. Several times, I thought I should wait till we get married and become a real husband and wife before I start studying the sword art. But it's impossible for a martial art person

to resist not studying what's written in that sword manual. I finally... I finally... castrated myself to practice the sword..."

Yue Lingshan absentmindedly replied, "You... You... castrated yourself to practice sword?"

"That's right," Lin Pingzhi gloomily said. "The first sentence in the Evil Resisting Sword Manual is: 'To dominate Wulin, swipe your sword and castrate yourself'."

"Why... why?"

"To practise this Evil Resisting Sword Art, you must start with the internal energy first. If you don't castrate yourself, once you practise it, you'll immediately feel like you're on fire, fire deviate, and die."

"That's how it is." Her voice was like a mosquito and very hard to hear.

Yingying was also thinking, "So that's why!" Now, she understood everything clearly why Dongfang Bubai, who was such a masculine man with the number one martial art of the world, was wearing woman's clothes, embroidering, and was so crazy about Yang Lianting. So in order to practise this demonical martial art, he had become not a man and not a woman.

She then heard Yue Lingshan sobbed lightly and said, "Back then, Grandfather Yuantu pretended to take a wife and get an heir to fool everyone, you... you're also..."

"That's right, after I castrated myself, I still married you to fool people. But it's only to fool your father."

Yue Lingshan wept sorrowfully upon hearing this.

"I've told you everything now," Lin Pingzhi said. "You must hate me to the bone now. Why don't you go away?"

"I don't hate you," Yue Lingshan sobbed. "You were forced by circumstances and had no other alternatives. I only hate... only hate whoever wrote that 'Evil Resisting Sword Manual' back then. Why... why did he want to harm other people like that?"

Lin Pingzhi giggled. "This senior was a eunuch."

Yue Lingshan groaned. "So... so my father... is also... is also like you..."

"Since he's studied this sword art, how can he be different? Your father is the headmaster of a school, if anyone found out he castrated himself and then spread the word out, how can he not become the laughingstock of Jianghu? That's why if he knew that I've learned this sword art, he must definitely kill me. He's already asked several times how I treated you because he wanted to know whether I've castrated myself or not. If at that time you complained even a little bit, then my life would've been gone."

"Now he knows."

"I've killed Yu Canghai, killed Mu Gaofeng," Lin Pingzhi was brimming with pride as he said this. "Within a few days, the word would've spread throughout Wulin and the whole world will know."

"In that case, I'm afraid... I'm afraid my father won't let you go then. Where should we run off to?"

"We? You already know what I am now, you still want to follow me?"

"Of course. Brother Ping, my feeling towards you will always be... always be the same. Your lot in this world is so pitiful..." She had not finished saying this when she suddenly cried out and jumped off the carriage as Lin Pingzhi pushed her out.

"I don't want your pity! Who wants your pity?" Lin Pingzhi angrily retorted. "Lin Pingzhi's swordplay is complete. I'm not scared of anything. Wait until my eyes are better. Lin Pingzhi will then rule the world. Yue Buqun, Linghu Chong, Monk Fangzheng, Priest Chongxu, they are not my match."

Yingying inwardly got angry and she thought, "Wait till your eyes are better? Hng, have your eyes ever been good?" When Lin Pingzhi was injured, she originally felt quite sad for him. But when she saw how uncaring he was towards his wife, how ruthlessly he treated her, and also how conceited he was, she couldn't help despising him.

Yue Lingshan sighed. "You must first look for a place to hide for a while. Wait till your eyes are better before doing anything else."

"I have a method to deal with your father."

"It must be horrible to hear and of course you can't say what it is. Father also doesn't need to worry about you for now."

"Hng, I understand your father way more than you do. Tomorrow, I'm going to tell the first person I see about this."

Yue Lingshan worriedly said, "Is that necessary? Aren't you..."

"Necessary? This is the method to preserve my life. I'm going to tell every person I meet. In no time at all, word would've spread to your father's ear. Then, since Yue Buqun knows it was me who said this, he cannot kill me to shut me up. On the contrary, he must protect my life."

"Your idea is really strange."

"What's so strange about it? Whether your father has castrated himself or not, no one would be able to see it. When his beard falls off, he'll glue them on and there will be people who will believe it and those who won't. But if I suddenly die without any reason, everyone will say Yue Buqun is the one who did it. This is called wishing to cover it up but exposing it more instead." Yue Lingshan sighed and didn't say anything else.

Yingying thought, "This Lin Pingzhi has a very keen mind, and his method really is formidable. Miss Yue is in a very difficult position here, she’s trapped in the middle. Her parents' reputation will unavoidably be destroyed, but if she thought of a way to prevent it from happening, then it'll endanger her husband's life."

Lin Pingzhi went on, "Even if both of my eyes can't see a thing from now on, I've avenged my parents and I will never regret it. Linghu Chong told me the last words of my father. He said there's a relic in the old residence at Xiangyang and I should never take a look at it. This was the instruction Great Grandfather left behind. Now, I've taken a look at it. Even though I violated Great Grandfather's

instruction, I've taken revenge for my parents. If it weren't like this, other people would've said my Lin family's Evil Resisting Sword Art has an unearned reputation, and that the heads of the Fortune Prestige Escort House had been cheating people."

"Back then, both father and you suspected big martial brother. You were both saying that he took your Lin family's 'Evil Resisting Sword Manual', saying he fabricated Father-in-Law's last words..."

"Just say I blamed him wrongly. What do you want to do?" Lin Pingzhi interrupted. "At that time, didn't you suspect him too?"

Yue Lingshan softly sighed. "Big martial brother and you haven't known each other for a long time, so it's not surprising you suspected him. But father and me, we shouldn't have doubted him. The only person in this world who truly believed him was only mother."

Yingying thought, "Who said only your mother?"

Lin Pingzhi coldly laughed. "Your mother truly adores Linghu Chong. I don't know how many times your parents argued because of this little kid."

Astounded, Yue Lingshan asked, "My father and mother argued over big martial brother? My father and mother never argue, how do you know about this?"

Lin Pingzhi laughed coldly and answered, "Never argue? That's only to put on an appearance in front of other people. For this matter, Yue Buqun put on his hypocrite mask. I heard it all with my own ears, could it be fake?"

"I didn't say fake, but it's really strange. How come I've never heard of it, but you heard of it?"

"I'll tell you now, it's all irrelevant. That day in Fuzhou, two people from Songshan School snatched that Buddhist robe away. These two people were killed by Linghu Chong, so naturally the Buddhist robe was taken by Linghu Chong. But at that time he was heavily injured and lost consciousness. I searched his body, but I didn't know where that Buddhist robe had gone to."

"So in Fuzhou city, you had already searched big martial brother."

"That's right, so what?"

"Nothing."

Yingying thought, "If Miss Yue follows this cunning and irritable little kid, she'll be miserable for the rest of her life." Suddenly she also thought, "I've been here for so long, Chong-lang must be worried." She tilted her ear to one side to listen but there was no noise at all, so she thought that he must be settled and everything was well.

She then heard Lin Pingzhi continued, "The Buddhist robe wasn't on Linghu Chong's body anymore, so it must've been taken by your parents. From Fuzhou till Huashan, I quietly observed things. But your father covered up really well and I didn't manage to see anything wrong at all. Your father was sick at that time. Of course, who would've known that once he's seen the 'Evil Resisting Sword Manual', he immediately castrated himself to practise the sword. During the journey, there were a lot people there, so I didn't dare to peep in on your parents. Once we returned to Huashan, I hid on top of the precipice outside your parents' bedroom every night to hear their conversations and to find out where my sword manual is."

Yue Lingshan asked, "Every night you hid yourself on top of the precipice?"

"That's right."

Yue Lingshan again repeated her question, "Every night?"

Yingying couldn't hear Lin Pingzhi's answer. She thought he must've nodded his head. But she heard Yue Lingshan sighed and said, "You have a strong will."

"For vengeance, I had to succeed."

"Yes," Yue Lingshan meekly agreed.

Lin Pingzhi narrated, "I listened in for more than ten nights, but I didn't hear anything unusual. But one night, I heard your mother said: 'Martial brother, I feel there's something amiss with your appearance recently. Did you have some kind of trouble learning that Divine Art of Violet Twilight? Don't seek perfection

too much and invite trouble.'

Your dad laughed and replied: 'No, my martial art practise is going smoothly.'

Your mother said: 'Don't hide it from me. How come your voice has changed recently? The pitch of your voice has become higher and sharper, just like a girl.'

Your dad said: 'Nonsense! My voice has always been like this.'

When I heard him say these words, I heard his voice was really sharp just like a girl throwing a tantrum. Your mother said: 'You're still denying it? In your whole life, you've never said those words to me. In the years we've been together, when have you concealed anything from me when something's troubling you?'

Your dad said: 'What's there to trouble me? En, the meeting at Songshan isn't too far away and Zuo Lengchan's intention to annex the four schools is very obvious. I'm troubled by this, that's some of it.'

Your mother said: 'I see that it's more than this.'

Your dad got angry again and in his sharp voice said: 'It's your blind suspicion, what else is there besides this?'

Your mother answered: 'When I say it out, don't get angry. I know you've wrongly blamed Chong'er.'

Your dad said: 'Chong'er? He and his Devil Sect people meddle together, he also has a relationship with his Devil Sect Miss Ren, everyone in the world knows about this already. How did I wrongly blame him?'"

When Yingying heard him narrating Yue Buqun's words, mentioned her own name, furthermore mentioning 'he also has a relationship with his Devil Sect Miss Ren, everyone in the world knows about this already', her whole face slightly heated up, but a soft and tender feeling rose up from her heart. She then heard Lin Pingzhi continued, "Your mother said: 'You didn't wrongly blame him for making friends with people from the devil sect. I'm saying you wrongly blame him for stealing Ping'er's Evil Resisting Sword Manual.'

Your dad said: 'Could it be he didn't steal the sword manual? His swordplay suddenly advanced tremendously, he's even higher skilled than you or me, haven't you seen that already?'

Your mother said: 'He must've met with something else for that. I'm certain he didn't take the Evil Resisting Sword Manual. It's true that Chong'er likes to make trouble and he doesn't listen to our teachings. But ever since he was little he's always been frank, and he'd never steal anything. After Shan'er became fond of Ping'er and he was jilted, he's still such a proud person. Even if Ping'er gave him the sword manual willingly, he still wouldn't accept it.'"

Yingying heard till here and she felt an unspeakable happiness in her heart. She was hoping she could give Madam Yue a hug right then and express her gratitude. Yingying was thinking it wasn't in vain that you've raised Chong-lang since he was little; from everyone in Huashan, you are the only person who truly understands him. She also thought based on Madam Yue's words, if Linghu Chong had a chance someday, then he must repay her well for what she just said.

Lin Pingzhi went on, "Your dad snorted and said: 'It looks like you regret expelling this little kid Linghu Chong from our school.'

Your mother said: 'He violated the school's rules, and you carried out our ancestor's instructions and upheld the school's principle, so no one can criticise you for this. But your accusation of him turning over to the unorthodox path is already enough, why did you have to wrongly blame him for stealing the sword manual too? Actually you know this much better than me. You know he didn't take Ping'er's Evil Resisting Sword Manual.'

Your dad shouted: 'How would I know? How would I know?'"

Lin Pingzhi's voice had also become high and acute imitating Yue Buqun's sharp voice in shouting angrily. In the still and calm night, a sharp cry of an owl was heard frightening Yingying. After a pause, Lin Pingzhi continued, "Your mother slowly said: 'Of course you know, because you're the one who took this sword manual.'

Your dad angrily roared: 'You... You're saying... I..." But after saying these few words, he stopped. Your mother's voice was completely tranquil as she said: 'That day when Chong'er was injured and unconscious, I stemmed his bleeding. At that time, I saw a Buddhist robe on him on which many small words were written, looking like some type of sword art. The second time I replaced his medication, that Buddhist robe had disappeared. At that time, Chong'er was still unconscious. Within that time, there was no else who had entered the room besides the two of us. And I didn't take that Buddhist robe.'"

Yue Lingshan choked and whimpered, "My dad... my dad..."

Lin Pingzhi said, "Your dad had already tried to interrupt a few times already, but after saying one or two words, he didn't say anything more. Your mother's voice gradually got softer and she said: 'Martial brother, our Huashan School's swordplay is made by our own school, and the Divine Art of Violet Twilight is an outstanding qigong to fight against other people. Our martial arts reputations have also been well spread in Jianghu, so there's no need to learn another school's swordplay. But recently, Zuo Lengchan's wild ambition has become even more fervent and he wants to annex the four schools. The Huashan School is in your hand. Whatever happens it won't be annexed by Zuo Lengchan's hand. Let's contact Taishan, Heng-Shan, and Hengshan Schools. When the time arrives, the four schools will fight against his school, and I think we'll have a sixty percent chance of winning. If we didn't win, then we'll go out fighting and give our lives at Songshan. When we arrived at the Nine Fountains, we won't have to be ashamed in front of the Huashan School's ancestors.'"

Yingying heard till here and she secretly praised, "This Madam Yue really is an upper class heroine, she's much stronger in spirit compared to her husband."

Then she heard Yue Lingshan said, "My mother's words are very reasonable."

Lin Pingzhi coldly laughed and said, "But at that time your father had already taken my sword manual and had already started practising it. Why would he be willing to listen to Master-Wife's advice?" He suddenly called her 'Master-Wife', showing his true heart that he still had not lost the respect he had for Madam Yue. Then he continued, "Then your father said: 'What you said is from the

point of view of a woman boasting the braveness of her husband. After we've given our lives, Huashan School will still be swallowed by Zuo Lengchan. And after we're dead, it's not necessary that we'll still have enough face to see the ancestors of Huashan School.'

Your mother didn't reply for a long time, then she sighed and said: 'If you're really anxious about this and wants to protect our school, then I won't blame you. But... But practising this Evil Resisting Sword Manual will only bring harm. Otherwise, why did the descendants of the Lin family not learn this sword art and were forced by other people till they have no way out? I advise you to stop practising it before harm comes to you.'

Your father shouted: 'How did you know I was learning the Evil Resisting Sword Art? You... You... are you spying on me?'

Your mother replied: 'Why do I need to spy when I already know?'

Your father shouted: 'Say it, say it!' He was hissing at the top of his voice. Even though his shout was really loud, he seemed to be rather discouraged.

Your mother said: 'Everyone already noticed that your voice has completely changed. Couldn't you feel it yourself?'

Your dad was still denying it: 'My voice has always been like this.'

Your mother said: 'Every morning, lots of your beard fall off inside the quilt...'

Your father sharply shouted: 'You saw it?' His voice sounded terrified.

Your mother sighed and said: 'I've seen it some time ago but I've never said anything. You can fool other people with your glued-on beard, but how can you conceal it from your wife who has shared your pillow for dozens of years already?'

Your father didn't deny it anymore seeing that everything was exposed. After a long time, he asked: 'Who else knows of this?'

Your mother answered: 'No one.'

Your father asked: 'Shan'er?'

Your mother said: 'It's unlikely that she knows.'

Your father said: 'Then Ping'er naturally doesn't know then?'

Your mother answered: 'He doesn't know.'

Your father said: 'Alright, I'll listen to your advice. This Buddhist robe, tomorrow, we'll think of a way to return it to Pingzhi, and we'll slowly think of a way to clear Linghu Chong's name. I won't study this sword art anymore starting from today.'

Your mother was jubilant and she said: 'That's for the best. But this sword art harms people, so how can we let Ping'er take a look at it? It's best to just destroy it.'"

Yue Lingshan said, "Of course father didn't agree. If he agreed to destroy this sword manual, then things wouldn't have come to this."

"You guessed wrong. Your father said: 'Very good, I'll destroy the sword manual immediately!' I was extremely startled and wanted to say something to stop him. The sword manual belongs to my Lin family, whether it harms people or not, he has no authority to destroy it. At this time, I heard the window creaked open and I hastily pulled my head in. Then I saw a red item which was that Buddhist robe floating down, and the window was closed again. In a moment, that Buddhist robe floated besides me and I tried to grab it but it was outside my reach. At that time, I knew that whether I can avenge my parents or not depended on whether I can grab that Buddhist robe or not. So I disregarded my life and with my right hand I held onto the precipice, and I kicked out with my left feet. I felt the tip of my foot snagging the Buddhist robe and I quickly pulled it in. It was very lucky that I hooked that Buddhist robe in and it didn't disappear into that bottomless Heavenly Gorge."

Yingying was captivated listening to his narration. She thought, "The really lucky thing would be if you didn't manage to hook that Buddhist robe in."

Yue Lingshan said, "Mother knew Father had tossed that sword manual into the Heavenly Gorge. Actually, father was already familiar with that sword art and the Buddhist robe was of no use to him anymore. But because of this you

managed to learn this sword art, isn't that right?"

"That's right."

"That's really Heaven's will. The gods have arranged everything and they want you to avenge father-in-law and mother-in-law. That... That... That's very good."

"But there's one matter. In the last few days, I've been racking my brains but I still don't understand. How come Zuo Lengchan also knows how to use the Evil Resisting Sword Art?" Yue Lingshan groaned and her voice was indifferent. It was obvious she didn't care if Zuo Lengchan knew how to use the Evil Resisting Sword Art or not.

Lin Pingzhi said, "You didn't learn this sword art, so you don't know its obscurity and cleverness. When Zuo Lengchan and your father fought on top of that place of worship, at the end of the fight, the two of them were using Evil Resisting Sword Art. But Zuo Lengchan's sword art was completely false, each of his move was deliberately trying to lose to your father. His swordplay foundation is already very high, every time he was in a difficult situation, he quickly changed his move to avoid it, but at the end, he was finally blinded by your father. If... en... If he used Songshan sword art, and he was defeated by your father, then there's nothing strange about that. Evil Resisting Sword Art is matchless under heaven and the Songshan sword art is a worthy opponent. Zuo Lengchan didn't castrate himself so he didn't complete his practise of Evil Resisting Sword Art; this is also not strange. What I don't understand is, where did Zuo Lengchan learn his Evil Resisting Sword Art from, why was the one he learned was pleasing to the eye but false?" His last few words were said hesitatingly, revealing that he was still thinking deeply about this.

Yingying thought, "There's nothing to be heard anymore. Zuo Lengchan's Evil Resisting Sword Art is most likely stolen from my sect. He only learned a few moves, but he didn't understand this shameless method. Dongfang Bubai's Evil Resisting Sword Art is much more formidable than Yue Buqun's. If you had seen it, even if you have three heads working together, you still wouldn't have worked it out." She was just about to quietly step back when she suddenly heard the sound of horses' hooves coming from far away. There were more than

twenty horses galloping quickly through the main road coming towards them.

Chapter 36 Grief

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Several small shoot had already grown out from Yue Lingshan's grave. Linghu Chong thought, "There are shoots already at little apprentice sister's grave now. How is she inside the grave?" Suddenly, sound of bamboo flute came from behind his back.

Yingying was worried Linghu Chong might be in trouble so she quickly used her qingggong to go back besides her carriage. "Brother Chong, there are people

coming!"

But Linghu Chong just laughed. "You're eavesdropping on other people killing chicken and feeding dog again, aren't you? Otherwise, why would you listen for so long?"

"Pei!" Yingying retorted, her face becoming hot as she thought of Yue Lingshan and Lin Pingzhi talking about 'becoming real husband and wife' inside their carriage. "They were... they were talking about practising... practising the Evil Resisting Sword Art."

"You hesitated! There must be some other odd things. Quickly come up and tell me everything. You can't hold anything back from me."

"I'm not coming up! It's not proper."

"Why is it not proper?" Linghu Chong asked while laughing.

"I don't know!"

The sound of the horses' hooves had gotten nearer by now. Yingying said, "I think these are the surviving Qingcheng School people coming to take their revenge!"

Linghu Chong sat up. "Let's go there slowly, we still have a bit of time."

"Yes," Yingying knew Linghu Chong was very concerned about Yue Lingshan, and that he must help even though he was heavily injured. Moreover, her mind wouldn't be at ease if she left him by himself aboard the carriage while she went to help. She quickly supported him to get down from the carriage. Linghu Chong stepped onto the ground with his left foot and felt a slight pain in his wound, causing him to falter and bump the wheel of the carriage. The mule drawing the carriage had made no sound at all so far, but as the carriage was shaken, it thought it was being urged to move so it lifted its head to neigh. Yingying's short sword flashed and the mule's head dropped to the ground cleanly cut.

"Good!" Linghu Chong lightly praised her. He wasn't actually praising her quick swordplay. With her martial art, there was nothing special for her sword to

be able to cut the mule's head off in one stroke. But what was special was her quick thinking which prevented the mule from making any noise at all. As to how the carriage was going to move later and how they were going to travel, it was another matter.

Linghu Chong had walked for several steps when he heard the horses' hooves had come even nearer. He quickened his steps. Yingying pondered, "He wants to get there before the enemy so he's walking really fast, but it'll affect his wound. If I carry him, wouldn't that make him feel ashamed?" She giggled and said, "Brother Chong, I'm sorry." She didn't wait for Linghu Chong's answer but extended her right hand to grab his waist while her left hand grabbed his collar. She lifted his body up and used her qinggong to quickly go through the field of tall sorghum. Linghu Chong appreciated it but he also felt this was funny. He thought in his heart that he was the respectable headmaster of Heng-Shan School, but she was carrying him like she was carrying a baby. If someone were to see this, he would definitely lose face. But if they didn't do this, then they wouldn't be able to stay ahead of the Qingcheng School people and little martial sister would be in danger. She obviously had lifted him because she knew what he was thinking in his heart.

After Yingying had gone further forward for dozens of steps, the sound of the horses' hooves had gotten much closer. She turned her head around but all she could see in the darkness was dots of flames of the torches carried by the people on the horses. She said, "These people are really daring, they're actually carrying fire to chase them."

"They're staking their lives to carry out their strike so they don't care about anything. Aiyo, this isn't good!"

Yingying had also thought of it and she said, "Qingcheng School wants to burn the carriage."

"Let's cut them off and don't let them through."

"There's no need to worry, we'll be able to save the two of them."

Linghu Chong knew her martial art ability. Furthermore, Yu Canghai had died,

and the remaining Qingcheng School people were extremely insignificant, so he didn't worry anymore. Yingying carried Linghu Chong until they were dozens of feet away from Yue Lingshan's carriage, then she helped him to sit within the field of tall sorghum. She whispered, "Sit quietly here and don't move."

Then from inside the carriage, Yue Lingshan said, "The enemy is coming quickly. They're Qingcheng School's rats."

"How do you know?" Lin Pingzhi asked.

"They're carrying torches to chase us. Hng, they really are fearless."

"Everyone's carrying a torch?"

"That's right."

Lin Pingzhi had gone through a lot of trials and tribulations so his mind was very meticulous and he was much more alert than Yue Lingshan. "Quickly get down!" He hastily said. "Those rats are going to burn the carriage!"

"Yes!" Yue Lingshan agreed. She also thought this was very reasonable. "Otherwise why are they carrying so many torches for?" She leapt down from the carriage and extended her hand to grip Lin Pingzhi's hand. Lin Pingzhi also jumped down. The two of them walked for dozens of feet to hide within the tall sorghum, and they were actually very close to where Linghu Chong and Yingying were hiding.

With thunderous sound of the hooves, Qingcheng School people arrived at the carriage. They first cut off its path before surrounding it from all sides. One of the person shouted, "Lin Pingzhi, you dog, are you trying to be a turtle? You still don't want to stick your head out?" They heard no sound coming from inside the carriage.

Another person said, "I'm afraid they've gone off the carriage and fled." Linghu Chong and Yingying then saw a torch arching through the darkness as it was tossed towards the carriage. Suddenly, a hand shot out from inside the carriage, grabbed the torch, and tossed it back.

The Qingcheng people made a lot of noise and shouted, "The dog is inside the

carriage! The dog is inside the carriage!"

This was really beyond Linghu Chong's and Yingying's expectation. They never expected there would be another strong helper inside the carriage. But Yue Lingshan was even more surprised. Lin Pingzhi and she had been talking for so long but they never knew there was another person inside the carriage. Looking at how this person had tossed the torch back, it showed that his arm was quite strong and his martial art was quite high. The disciples of Qingcheng tossed in eight more torches, and that person tossed each one back. Even though his tosses didn't injure anyone, it stopped the remaining Qingcheng disciples from throwing anymore torches. They instead circled the carriage from far away and made a lot of noise. Under the firelight, everyone saw that it was a withered and sallow hand with blue veins sticking out. It was clearly the hand of an old person.

A person shouted, "It's not Lin Pingzhi!"

Another person shouted, "It's not his wife either."

Another person said, "That son of a turtle is afraid to come out, he's probably injured."

They hesitated for a long time and saw there was no movement in the carriage at all. Suddenly, with a cry, more than twenty of them charged forward with their swords drawn to stick them into the carriage. With a loud cracking sound, a person leapt up from the top of the carriage and a sword flickered in his hand. He flew behind the Qingcheng disciples and slashed out with his sword dropping two Qingcheng disciples to the ground. That person was wearing a yellow gown, appearing to be a person from Songshan School. His face was covered by a piece of cloth and only his bright eyes could be seen. His sword was wonderfully quick, and within a few moves, another two Qingcheng disciples had been struck by his sword and dropped to the ground.

Linghu Chong was holding Yingying's hand, and both of them thought of the same thing, "This person is also using the Evil Resisting Sword Art."

But this person wasn't Yue Buqun, judging by the shape of his body. The two

of them again thought of the same thing, "In this world, besides Yue Buqun, Lin Pingzhi, and Zuo Lengchan, there's actually a fourth person who knows how to use the Evil Resisting Sword Art."

Yue Lingshan whispered to Lin Pingzhi, "This person's sword art looks similar to yours."

Lin Pingzhi gasped in surprise and he asked, "He... He can also use my sword art? You didn't see it wrongly?"

After a time, three more Qingcheng disciples were struck down by the sword. By then, Linghu Chong and Yingying had worked out that person's sword art. Even though this person was using the sword moves from the Evil Resisting Sword Art, his speed in jumping, rushing, and retreating was way below that of Dongfang Bubai's. He was not even as good as Yue Buqun or Lin Pingzhi who could mysteriously appear and disappear. It was just that this person's martial art was high and he was far above all of the Qingcheng disciples there. Added to that, Evil Resisting Sword Art was fantastic so even though it was one against many, he still held the upper hand.

Yue Lingshan said, "His sword art looks really similar to yours but he's not as quick as you."

Lin Pingzhi sighed and replied, "If he's not fast, he doesn't know the essence of my family's sword art then. But... but, who is he? How does he know how to use this sword art?"

As the sound of battle raged on, another Qingcheng disciple was pierced by the masked person's long sword through the chest. That masked man shouted, pulled his long sword, and cut another person's waist separating him into two. The remaining Qingcheng people trembled in fear and four of them ran away. That person roared and rushed forward for two steps. From among the Qingcheng disciples, some of them cried out and turned their heads to run away. Seeing this, the remaining disciples were discouraged and they all fled. Some of them rode double, while some were in too much of a hurry to ride their horses so they sprinted away on their feet. In just a moment, they had all scattered

away. That masked person was obviously quite exhausted as he propped his long sword on the ground and panted heavily. Linghu Chong and Yingying discovered from his gasps that just from fighting for a short time, this person had consumed a lot of internal energy and he had probably been injured internally as well.

At this time, there were around seven to eight torches still burning on the ground. The darkness was interspersed with light from the glinting torches. This old yellow-gowned person was gasping for breath for a long time before he lifted his long sword and slowly put it back into its sheath. Then he said, "Young Hero Lin, Madam Lin, I received Songshan's Headmaster Zuo's order to help." His voice was extremely faint and hoarse. Each word was uttered indistinctly as if he had something in his mouth or as if a part of his tongue was missing and that his voice had come out from his throat.

"Many thanks for your help," Lin Pingzhi replied. "Sir, please tell me your honorable name." As he said this, he walked out of the field of tall sorghum with Yue Lingshan.

"Headmaster Zuo learned that young hero and madam were heavily injured after dealing with traitors. So he ordered me to protect you and send the two of you to someplace safe to treat your injuries, and to make sure your father-in-law can't find you," that old person said.

Linghu Chong, Yingying, Lin Pingzhi, and Yue Lingshan all thought, "How did Zuo Lengchan know about this?"

"Headmaster Zuo and you have good intentions, I really appreciate it," Lin Pingzhi replied. "I'll be at your service once my injury is better, but I don't dare to trouble your honourable persons."

"Both of young hero's eyes were injured by Hunchback of the North's poison. Not only would it be hard to heal, this person's poison is extremely formidable and if not for Headmaster Zuo's Daogui medicine, I'm afraid... I'm afraid... it'll be hard to say what would happen to young hero's life."

After Lin Pingzhi was splashed by Mu Gaofeng's poison, both of his eyes and

his whole face had been feeling extremely itchy that he felt like digging his own eyes out. But he endured it and had been restraining himself ever since, so he knew this person was saying the truth. Hesitantly he asked, "Headmaster Zuo and I aren't family or friends so why is Headmaster Zuo being so concerned about me? If you don't say this clearly, then it'll be difficult for me to follow your directions."

That old person let out a laugh. "Sharing a common hatred is just like friendship borne out of a common cause. Both of Headmaster Zuo's eyes were harmed by Yue Buqun. If we look for the source of the injuries to both of your eyes, the root of trouble was also likely to be Yue Buqun. Yue Buqun already knows that young hero has learned the Evil Resisting Sword Art, so even if young hero runs to the end of the world, he will still chase and kill you. He's now the headmaster of the Five Mountains School and his authority is as high as the heaven. How can young hero fight him all by yourself? Moreover... moreover... hey hey, Yue Buqun's own daughter is already accompanying young hero from dawn till dusk. Young hero has heavenly skill but you'll still find it hard to protect yourself from the plotting from the pillow next to you..."

Yue Lingshan suddenly shouted, "Second martial brother, so it's you!"

As she called this out, Linghu Chong's whole body shook. Hearing this old person speaking, even though his voice was vague, it sounded really familiar to him and it felt like someone he knew. When he heard Yue Lingshan's shout, he immediately recognised that person to be Lao Denuo. But Yue Lingshan had told him before that Lao Denuo was killed by someone at Fuzhou so he never thought this person could be him. Then what Yue Lingshan told him before must be false. Then he heard that old person coldly said, "Little girl is quite alert to be able to recognise my voice." He didn't use his throat to speak anymore, his voice was clear and he really was Lao Denuo.

"Second martial brother," Lin Pingzhi said, "if you pretended to be killed at Fuzhou, then... then eighth martial brother was killed by you?"

"No," Lao Denuo snorted. "Ying Bailuo is only a small kid, why do I want to kill him for?"

"You're still denying it?" Yue Lingshan shouted. "He... He... Little Lin was chopped with a sword from the back, this must be your doing too. I've always wrongly blamed big martial brother. Hng, you did good. You killed some old guy and chopped his face up, then you put your gown on the dead person so everyone thought you were killed."

"Your guess is right," Lao Denuo acknowledged. "If I didn't do that, how can Yue Buqun let me go that easily? But I wasn't the one who slashed at Young Hero Lin's back."

"Not you? Could there be another person?"

Lao Denuo coldly said, "It's not just another person, it's your father."

"Nonsense!" Yue Lingshan shouted. "You did this bad thing, but you're blaming someone else for it. There's nothing wrong with my father at all, why would he want to harm Brother Ping?"

"Because at that time, your father has already gotten the Evil Resisting Sword Manual from Linghu Chong's body. This sword manual belongs to the Lin family so the first person Yue Buqun wanted to kill was your Brother Ping. If Lin Pingzhi lives, how can your father learn the Evil Resisting Sword Art?" Lao Denuo explained.

Yue Lingshan didn't know how to answer. In her heart, she knew those words were logical but she could never believe that her own father would plot against Lin Pingzhi. She almost said the words 'nonsense', but instead she said, "If we take that my father was the one who wanted to harm Brother Ping, how come his sword didn't kill him?"

Lin Pingzhi suddenly said, "This attack was really done by Yue Buqun. Second martial brother isn't wrong."

Yue Lingshan stammered, "You... You... You also believe this?"

"Yue Buqun chopped at my back and injured me heavily. I knew that I had no way of fighting back so I dropped to the ground and pretended that I had died. At that time, I didn't know it was Yue Buqun who plotted against me. But as I

was beginning to lose consciousness, I heard eighth martial brother's voice. He called out: 'Master!' When eighth martial brother called out 'Master', he saved my life, but gave his life instead," Lin Pingzhi related.

Startled, Yue Lingshan said, "You're saying eighth martial brother was also... also... also killed by my father?"

"Of course! After I heard eighth martial brother called out 'Master', he cried out miserably. Then I lost consciousness totally and didn't know anything else," Lin Pingzhi said.

Lao Denuo continued the story, "At first, Yue Buqun wanted to give you another stab. But I was watching from the dark and I coughed lightly. Yue Buqun didn't dare to stay and quickly went back to his room. Brother Lin, my cough can be said to have saved your life."

"If... If my father really wanted to harm you, later on... later on he got many opportunities, why didn't he kill you then?" Yue Lingshan argued.

"After that I guard every step of my way so he had no other opportunity to kill me," Lin Pingzhi coldly said. "You were actually very lucky for me. All day long we were always together, so it wasn't convenient for him to kill me."

Yue Lingshan cried and said, "So... so... you took me as your wife to fool other people, and also... also... to use me as your shield."

Lin Pingzhi ignored her and said to Lao Denuo, "Brother Lao, you're working together with Headmaster Zuo now?"

"Headmaster Zuo is my respected master. I am his third disciple."

"So you've changed school and entered Songshan."

"I didn't change school and entered Songshan. I've always been under Songshan School. It's just that I received my respected master's order to join Huashan to research on Yue Buqun's martial art, as well as to keep an eye on the movements of Huashan School."

Linghu Chong was suddenly enlightened. Before Lao Denuo joined the Huashan School, he already knew martial art and everyone in the school knew

this. But his martial art was very mixed and ordinary, like the martial art around the area of Yungui. They had never suspected that he was actually a Songshan disciple. So this intention to annex the other four schools had actually been in Zuo Lengchan's heart for a very long time and he had actually planned this kind of move a long time ago. Then Lao Denuo killing Lu Dayou and stealing the Violet Twilight Secret Manual was obvious and was no longer a mystery. Even Master, who was always very vigilant towards other people, was deceived by him.

Lin Pingzhi pondered for a while then said, "In that case, Brother Lao took the Violet Twilight Secret Manual and Evil Resisting Sword Manual from Huashan back to Songshan for Headmaster Zuo to practice. Your accomplishment is really great."

Linghu Chong and Yingying were both nodding their heads. They thought, "So Zuo Lengchan and Lao Denuo are able to use the Evil Resisting Sword Art because of this. Lin Pingzhi's brain works really fast."

With deep hatred, Lao Denuo vehemently said, "I'm going to speak frankly. The two of us, together with my respected master, we've all fallen under this bastard Yue Buqun's hand. This person is really dangerous and we've all fallen into his violent scheme."

"Hey, I understand," Lin Pingzhi said. "The Evil Resisting Sword Manual you stole was an altered version by Yue Buqun. That's why Headmaster Zuo and Brother Lao's Evil Resisting Sword Art are different."

Lao Denuo gritted his teeth and said, "When I entered the Huashan School back then, Yue Buqun had already detected my deception from the outset but he didn't do anything. He just secretly paid close attention to what I was doing. When Yue Buqun wrote the Evil Resisting Sword Manual down, the sword art looks really wonderful but it was actually just good to look at and it lacked the internal energy method. He deliberately prepared this fake sword manual for me to steal so when my respected master practiced the sword art, it wasn't complete. As soon as they got into a life and death battle, he led my respected master to use this sword art so that the real sword art would be pitted against the fake

sword art. By doing this, he guaranteed his own victory. Otherwise, how can the headmaster position of the Five Mountains School fall into his hand?"

Lin Pingzhi let out a sigh. "This traitor Yue Buqun really is crafty and fierce. Both of us have really fallen into his trap."

"My respected master understands this matter completely. Even though I ruined everything, he didn't blame me at all. But how can I, as his disciple, be at peace knowing this? So I'm staking my life to climb the mountain of sabres and walk through fire to kill that traitor Yue Buqun and avenge my respected master." These words were said with venom and anger by Lao Denuo. It was obvious this was a matter gnawing deeply in his heart.

Lin Pingzhi hummed. Lao Denuo went on, "Both of my respected master's eyes were harmed, so he's secretly staying on Songshan's west peak. On the west peak, there are more than ten other people whose eyes are also bad. They were harmed by Yue Buqun and Linghu Chong. Brother Lin, come with me to see my respected master. You're Fuzhou's Lin family sole heir to the Evil Resisting Sword School, so you're the headmaster of the Evil Resisting Sword School. My respected master of course will treat you with respect. If both of your eyes can be cured then that would be best, otherwise, you can secretly hide with my respected master and together plan your revenge. How can that be not wonderful?"

These words excited Lin Pingzhi. Both of his eyes had been poisoned and he himself knew that there was no hope for a cure. All these talks of curing his eyes were only to cheat and comfort himself. Zuo Lengchan and he were both blind, they both had the same problem and the same enemy, so this was already very good. But he knew Zuo Lengchan's methods tend to be very fierce, so when Zuo Lengchan suddenly turned nice toward him, there was bound to be another plan behind this. Lin Pingzhi said, "Headmaster Zuo has a very good idea. But I don't know how I can repay him for this. Can Brother Lao please tell us more first?"

Lao Denuo laughed. "Brother Lin is an unequivocal person. Once everyone has joined forces, then everything will become clear. My master and I were

duped by Yue Buqun with an incomplete sword manual. So of course I’m not resigned to it. Along the way, I saw Brother Lin's immense power and wonderfully matchless sword art in the killing of Mu Gaofeng, and the execution of Yu Canghai and the Qingcheng's clowns. They were all scattering away at the mere sight of you. It's obvious you have the real Evil Resisting Sword Art. I really admire you and really find you interesting....."

Lin Pingzhi understood his intention so he interrupted, "Brother Lao wants me to let you and your master have a look at the real Evil Resisting Sword Manual?"

"This is the Lin family's secret and outsiders mustn't peep into it. But from today onwards, we'll form an alliance in blood to kill Yue Buqun. If Brother Lin's eyes are cured, you're still young and have a lot of energy, so you wouldn't be afraid to face him by yourself. But looking at the situation today, if my respected master and I learn the Evil Resisting Sword Art, then the three of us can join hands, and only then will we have a hope of killing Yue Buqun. Brother Lin, please don't blame me," Lao Denuo said.

Lin Pingzhi was thinking in his heart: 'Both of my eyes are blind and I actually don't know how I'll be able to survive. Moreover, if I didn't promise this, then Lao Denuo will kill both him and Yue Lingshan. If Lao Denuo has spoken sincerely, then his proposal has more benefit than harm.' He replied, "I'm flattered that Headmaster Zuo and Brother Lao wish to be allied with me. My whole family has been broken up and decimated, and I'm already a handicapped person with no sight. Even though my misfortune was mainly because of Yu Canghai, Yue Buqun's plotting was also the main reason for this. So I have the same idea as you and your master to execute Yue Buqun. Once we're allies, I wouldn't dare to keep this Evil Resisting Sword Manual as a secret. I'll take it out and give it to you and your master to peruse."

Lao Denuo was exultant. "Brother Lin is very generous. My master and I are very appreciative to be able to look at the real Evil Resisting Sword Manual. From today onwards, Brother Lin will forever be our Songshan School's honoured guest. You and I will be like brothers, and we'll share everything."

"Many thanks. I'll follow Brother Lao back to Mount Songshan. After that, I'll

immediately recite the real Evil Resisting Sword Manual out for you and your master."

"Recite it out?"

"That's right. Brother Lao doesn't know that the real Evil Resisting Sword Manual was actually recorded by my great grandfather Yuantu on a Buddhist robe. This Buddhist robe was stolen by Yue Buqun so he could pry into my family's sword art. Later on, he made a mistake and this Buddhist robe fell into my hands. I was really afraid that Yue Buqun might find out so I memorised this sword manual and quickly destroyed that Buddhist robe. If I had hidden that Buddhist robe on my body, and with my worthy wife besides me, how could I still live till today?" Yue Lingshan had been staying quiet and listening from the side all this time, but when she heard him ridiculing her, she cried again. She sobbingly said, "You... You..."

Lao Denuo was already inside the carriage listening to their dialog before so he knew Lin Pingzhi was telling the truth. "That's very good, why don't we go back to Songshan together?"

"Very good," Lin Pingzhi replied.

"We must abandon the carriage and get some horses to ride through the small roads. Otherwise, if we meet Yue Buqun along the way, we won't be his match at all," Lao Denuo said. He then turned his head slightly and asked Yue Lingshan, "Little martial sister, are you going to help your father? Or are you going to help your husband?"

Yue Lingshan stopped weeping and said, "I'm not helping anyone! I'm... I'm a cruelly fated person. I'll become a nun tomorrow. I'm finished with my father and husband. I won't see any of you again from now on."

Lin Pingzhi coldly said, "It really befits you to become a nun at Heng-Shan."

Yue Lingshan angrily replied, "Lin Pingzhi, when you had nowhere to go, my father helped you. If not for him, you'd have died under Mu Gaofeng's hand and would not be still alive today. Even if you reasoned my father was rude to you, I wasn't being rude to you. What do you mean by those words?"

"What's my meaning? I want to make everything clear to Headmaster Zuo." His voice sounded very fierce. Suddenly, Yue Lingshan cried out miserably.

Linghu Chong and Yingying cried out at the same time, "Oh, no!" They immediately leapt out from the field of tall sorghum. Linghu Chong shouted, "Lin Pingzhi, don't harm little martial sister."

At this time, the two people Lao Denuo was most scared of were Yue Buqun and Linghu Chong. When he suddenly heard Linghu Chong's voice, he was startled out of his wits. He quickly grabbed Lin Pingzhi's left shoulder and jumped onto one of the Qingcheng disciples' horses. Then he put his heels to the horse and galloped away in a mad rush. Linghu Chong was worried about Yue Lingshan so he had no time to chase the enemy. He saw Yue Lingshan lay slumped on the driver's seat with a sword sticking out of her chest. He looked for her breath and found it to be slow and faint. Linghu Chong shouted, "Little martial sister, little martial sister."

"Is... Is it big martial brother?" Yue Lingshan asked faintly.

Linghu Chong happily replied, "Yes... it's me." He extended his hand to pull the sword out, but Yingying hastily stopped him. "You can't pull the sword out."

Linghu Chong saw the sword had penetrated half a foot deep into her body and it was a fatal injury. If he pulled the sword out, she would die straight away. He didn't know what to do and his heart was grieved. He started to cry and called out, "Little... little martial sister!"

"Big martial brother, it's already good that you're here with me. Brother Ping... Brother Ping, has he gone?"

Linghu Chong gritted his teeth and with tears running down his cheeks, he said, "Don't worry, I'll definitely kill him to avenge you."

"Don't, don't! His eyes are already blind. If you want to kill him, he wouldn't be able to fight back. I... I... I want to go to mom."

"Alright, I'll take you to Master-Wife." Yingying heard Yue Lingshan's voice was becoming fainter and fainter, and knew that she only had a very short time

left in this world. She couldn't help shedding her tears.

"Big martial brother, you've always treated me well," Yue Lingshan said. "I... I'm sorry. I... I'm going to die."

Linghu Chong shed his tears. "You can't die, we'll think of a way to cure you."

"I'm... I'm hurt... deeply. Big martial brother, I want to ask you for something, you... you must promise me."

Linghu Chong gripped her left hand and said, "Say it, say it, I promise."

Yue Lingshan sighed. "You... you... don't agree... I've... asked too much of you..." Her voice was becoming softer and softer, and her breath becoming even weaker.

"I promise, say what you want."

"What did you say?"

"I promise, what do you want me to do? I'll do it for you."

"Big martial brother, my husband... Brother Ping... his... his... eyes are blind... he's pitiful... do you know?"

"Yes, I know."

"He's all by himself in this world. Everyone bullies him... bullies him. Big martial brother... after I die, please take good care of him, don't... don't let him be bullied..."

Linghu Chong was startled. He never expected Yue Lingshan to still hold on to the feelings she had for Lin Pingzhi when Lin Pingzhi was her violent killer. At that moment, Linghu Chong really detested Lin Pingzhi, and all he wanted to do was to chop him into thousands of pieces. In the future, it would already be almost impossible for him to spare his life, so how could he agree to look after this bastard?

Yue Lingshan slowly said, "Big martial brother, Brother Ping... Brother Ping, he didn't really want to kill me... he's afraid of my father... he wanted to gain Zuo Lengchan's trust, so... so he stabbed me first..."

Linghu Chong angrily said, "That selfish, ungrateful bastard. You... you still care for him?"

"He... he didn't deliberately try to kill me, it's just that.. it's just that his hand slipped. Big martial brother... I beg you, beg you to look after him..."

As the moonlight reflected off her face, Linghu Chong can see her eyes were unfocused and her pupils were dull, entirely unlike her normally clear bright eyes. A few drops of blood were splashed on her cheeks, and her earnest face was begging him. Linghu Chong thought of the past ten years he had together with his little martial sister while they were at Huashan, holding hands and traveling everywhere. Sometimes when she wanted him to do something, she would show this earnest looking expression to him. No matter how difficult that thing was, even if it violated what his heart wished for, he had never refused her even once. This time, her earnest request was full of grief. She knew clearly she only had a short time left and that she didn't have another opportunity to ask Linghu Chong for anything else. This was the last and most pressing earnest request from her. All of a sudden, Linghu Chong felt his chest feeling hot and he knew if he promised her this, then not only would there be endless trouble in the future, he would even be forced to do many things that he wouldn't be willing to do. But looking at Yue Lingshan's earnest and sorrowful look, he nodded his head. "Fine, I promise you, you can put your heart at ease."

Yingying heard him and couldn't help interrupt him. "You... how can you promise that?"

Yue Lingshan tightly gripped Linghu Chong's hand. "Big martial brother, many... many... thanks... I'm... I'm at ease... at ease." Her eyes suddenly shone and the edge of her mouth smiled, looking like she was very satisfied. Linghu Chong saw her expression and thought, "Just being able to see her happy, it doesn't matter how much trouble and pain I have to go through, it's all worth it."

All of a sudden, Yue Lingshan softly sang a song. Linghu Chong felt as if his chest had just received a thump as he heard her singing a Fujian folksong. She was singing the tune, "Sisters, going up the mountain to pluck tea." This was the Fujian folksong that Lin Pingzhi had taught her. That day on the Cliff of

Contemplation, his heart hurt like it was twisted because he heard her singing this folksong. Now as she sang this song again, she was thinking of the sweet days Lin Pingzhi and she had shared while they were at Huashan. The sound of her song was becoming fainter and her grip on Linghu Chong's hand gradually loosened. She at last release her hold and slowly closed her eyes. She had stopped singing, and her breathing had also stopped. Linghu Chong's heart sank. It felt as if the whole world had also died. He wanted to cry but he couldn't. He extended both of his hands and carried Yue Lingshan's body. He softly said, "Little martial sister, little martial sister, don't be afraid! I'm going to carry you to your mom. No one will bully you anymore."

Yingying saw a red patch at the back of his body. His wound had burst open again and blood was oozing out of it. The patch of blood on his gown was getting larger and larger, but looking at the situation, she didn't know how to advise him. Linghu Chong absent-mindedly carried Yue Lingshan's body for more than ten steps while he kept on mumbling, "Little martial sister, don't be afraid, don't be afraid! I'll carry you to Master-Wife." Suddenly, both of his knees lost strength and he fell down onto the ground and lost consciousness.

When he became half aware, he heard a crisp and clear sound of a zither. The zither sound repeated itself playing a tune that sounded familiar to him and he was enjoying it immensely. His whole body felt weak and he didn't even feel like opening his eyelids. He only hoped that he could listen to the sound of the zither forever. The zither sound really didn't stop and continued playing. After listening to it for a while, Linghu Chong fell asleep again.

The second time he became conscious, the quiet and beautiful zither sound was still playing and he could also smell a fragrant scent. He slowly opened his eyes and saw all sorts of flowers in front of his eyes. Red flowers, white flowers, yellow flowers, purple flowers; they were all piled in front of him. He wondered, "What's this place?" Hearing the zither sound repeating, he realised it was the tune Yingying often played called the 'Song of Peace and Serenity'. He turned his head around and saw the back of Yingying's body. She was sitting on the ground gently playing the zither. Gradually, he realised they were inside a

cave. The sunshine entered from the mouth of the cave as he lay on a bed of soft grass. Linghu Chong wanted to sit up and as he tried, the grass underneath him made a rustling sound. The zither sound stopped abruptly and Yingying turned her head around looking very happy. She slowly walked up to Linghu Chong and sat beside him. Her eyes stayed on him for the whole time, and her face was overflowing with tender affection.

In a brief moment, Linghu Chong's heart swelled with happiness. He knew he had lost consciousness after he had seen Yue Lingshan die miserably, and Yingying had helped him into this cave. He suddenly felt a wave of sadness in his heart, but gradually, he felt unbounded warmth and tenderness coming from Yingying's eyes. The two of them affectionately sat opposite each other for a long time without saying anything.

Linghu Chong extended his left hand and lightly caressed the back of Yingying's hand. Suddenly, in the midst of the fragrance from the flowers, he smelled roasted meat in the air. Yingying took a branch full of stringed up frogs and laughingly said, "They're burnt again!"

Linghu Chong burst into laughter. The two of them were brought back to the day besides the creek when they caught some frogs and burnt them. From the first time they had eaten frogs together to this second frog feast, many things had happened in between; but the two of them were still together at the end. After having a few laughs, Linghu Chong's heartache returned and he started shedding some tears again. Yingying helped him to sit up; pointing to the mountain outside, she softly said, "Miss Yue is buried there."

Holding back his tears, Linghu Chong said, "Many... many thanks."

Yingying slowly shook her head. "There's no need to thank me. Every person has his own fate, and every person also has his own action and reward."

Linghu Chong felt apologetic. "Yingying, I can never forget the feelings I have for my little martial sister, please don't blame me."

"Of course I don't blame you. If you were just a man who likes to play around and look for girls all the time, then I wouldn't have cared about you." She then

whispered, "The reason I started... I started adoring you is because you told me how much you love your little martial sister at the Bamboo Lane in Luoyang. Miss Yue was a good lady, but she wasn't... she wasn't destined to be with you. If you didn't grow up with her, and she had seen you later, she would most probably have liked you."

Linghu Chong pondered for a long time, then he shook his head. "She wouldn't. Little martial sister looked up to my master, so the man she liked must be similar to her father, a man of few words who carry himself in a stately manner. I'm only her playmate; she had never... never respected me."

Yingying said, "Maybe what you said is right. It just happened that Lin Pingzhi is similar to your master, very proper but with a belly full of secret plots."

Linghu Chong sighed. "Just before little martial sister died, she still didn't believe Lin Pingzhi truly meant to kill her and she still loved him completely. That's... that's also very good. She wasn't grieved at all before she died. I want to see her grave."

Yingying held his arm as they walked out of the cave. Linghu Chong saw the grave was made up of a pile of rocks. Even though the rocks were of uneven size, they were organised neatly. In front and at the back of the grave were fresh flowers. Seeing they were done by Yingying, he felt appreciative towards her. A cut tree trunk was erected in front of the grave, and words were written on it with a sword-point: "Tomb of Heroine Yue Lingshan from Huashan". Linghu Chong was startled and shed more tears. He said, "Perhaps little martial sister would've liked to be called Madam Lin."

"Lin Pingzhi is such a ruthless and unrighteous person. In the netherworld, Miss Yue would have understood his wicked heart, and she wouldn't want to be called Madam Lin." While she thought in her heart, "You don't know Lin Pingzhi and she were husband and wife in name only; they're not real husband and wife."

"You're probably right," Linghu Chong agreeing with her. He then saw mountain peaks surrounding them on every side, and realized that they were

inside a valley. The forests were the colour of deep green and mountain flowers grew everywhere. Birds were calling out continuously from the top of the trees. It was a very secluded and quiet place they were in.

"We'll stay here for some time to look after your injury and the grave," Yingying suggested.

Linghu Chong replied, "That's very good. Little martial sister is alone in this wilderness, even if she had become a ghost, she'll still be timid." When Yingying heard him said such a sentimental word, she couldn't help sighing.

The two of them lived in the valley comfortably, eating frogs and picking fruits. Linghu Chong only had an external injury so with Heng-Shan School's medicine applied externally and taken orally, along with his abundant internal energy, he was mostly recovered from his injury after staying there for more than twenty days. While he was recuperating, Yingying taught him how to play the zither every day. Linghu Chong was very intelligent and he concentrated fully on his practise, so he advanced very quickly. One day, he woke up early in the morning and saw several small shoots had already grown out from Yue Lingshan's grave. Linghu Chong thought, "There are shoots already at little martial sister's grave now. How is she inside the grave?"

Suddenly, the sound of a bamboo flute came from behind his back. He turned his head around and saw Yingying was sitting on a piece of rock playing the 'Song of Peace and Serenity' with a bamboo flute. He walked over to her and saw it was a new flute Yingying had made from a bamboo branch by using her sword and perforating holes through it. He took the zither, put it across his knee, and started playing, following the tune she was playing. As he gradually put his mind into playing the tune, there was no other thought in his mind. When the song was completed, he felt his vigour greatly roused. They smiled at each other.

Yingying said, "You're already familiar with this 'Song of Peace and Serenity'. Today, let's practise the 'Smiling Proud Wanderer'. What do you think?"

"That song is difficult to play, I don't know when I'll be able to play it together

with you."

Yingying smiled. "This music is very profound, I also still don't understand many parts of it. There's something different with this song, it's hard to explain, but it seems if two people were to play it together, they'd be able to enlighten each other. Compared to one person fumbling around, we'll definitely advance much faster."

Linghu Chong clapped and said, "You're right! On that day, when I heard Hengshan School's martial uncle Liu and Devil... and Sun Moon Sect's Elder Qu playing this song together, the zither and the bamboo flute were in harmony, and their sound was really moving. Martial uncle Liu said that this song was originally for a zither and a bamboo flute to play together."

"You play the zither, I play the flute. We'll slowly practise it part by part."

Linghu Chong smiled. "But it's a pity it's a flute and not a se. Zither and se are very harmonious together and it would've been wonderful."[7]

Yingying's face turned red and she replied, "These last few days, I haven't heard you speaking any satirical remarks and I thought you've changed. But you're still the same."

Linghu Chong made a face at her. He knew Yingying was very shy. Even though they were in a secluded valley and there were only the two of them there, she never allowed him to speak indecently. He was afraid if he jested a bit more, she would ignore him for the rest of the day so he quickly went near her to look at the music score. After listening to her explanations, he started to play his part. Playing the zither wasn't an easy matter; added to that, the song 'Smiling Proud Wanderer' was very profound with a lot of complicated changes, so this made the playing even more difficult. But Linghu Chong was bright, and he was also being directed by a master. Additionally, he had also improved a lot in his zither playing from the time he started studying it at Bamboo Lane in Luoyang since he had been practising it every chance he got. Even though it was hard for them to be harmonious in the beginning, slowly, they finally managed to play well together. Even though their playing couldn't be as wonderful as that of Liu

and Qu, there was a hint of a rhythm in their playing. Within the next ten days, the two of them became very close to playing the zither and flute together harmoniously. This calm surrounding of this green valley separated them from the world, and gradually they came to forget everything about the fierce fighting in Jianghu. Both of them felt if they could spend the rest of their lives in that green valley, and not be drawn into the killings in Wulin, then they would be very happy.

One afternoon, after Linghu Chong and Yingying had been playing together for more than an hour, Linghu Chong's internal energy was suddenly disturbed and his mind not tranquil. He made a few mistakes and his heart became more worried which made his fingering method became even more chaotic. Yingying asked, "Are you tired? Rest for a while before continuing."

"I'm tired but not tired. I don't know what's wrong. I feel a bit agitated. I'm going to go pick some peaches. We'll practise again at night."

"Alright, don't go too far."

Linghu Chong knew there were a lot of wild peach trees southeast of the valley, which would have ripened by now. He passed through the bushes and went for around eight to nine li before arriving at the grove of wild peach trees. He leapt up and picked two peaches. The second time he leapt, he picked three peaches. He saw the peaches were quite ripe and there were already a lot of peaches on the ground which had fallen from the trees. In the next few days, all the peaches might have fallen down and become rotten on the ground. He quickly picked dozens more, and he thought, "After we eat these peaches, we'll spread the seeds all over the valley. Then in a few years time, there'll be peach trees everywhere. Wouldn't that be wonderful?"

Then he suddenly thought of the Peach Valley Six Fairies, "With peach trees growing everywhere in this valley, wouldn't this be called a Peach Valley? Then will Yingying and I become the Peach Valley Two Fairies? Later on, we'll have six children, wouldn't they become Little Peach Valley Six Fairies? If those Little Peach Valley Six Fairies talk like the old Peach Valley Six Fairies, wouldn't that be troublesome?"

He was just about to laugh thinking about this when he suddenly heard a sound from somewhere far amongst the trees. Linghu Chong immediately hid himself in the tall grass. He thought, "My mouth's getting tired of eating frogs and fruits. That sound must be some kind of a beast. Yingying will be very happy if I can catch an antelope or a deer." He had not finished thinking when he heard the sound of footsteps. It was the sound of two people walking. Linghu Chong started. "How can there be people in this valley? They must've come here because of Yingying and me."

Then he heard the voice of an elder saying, "You're not wrong? Yue Buqun will definitely come here?"

Linghu Chong was even more confounded. He thought, "They're chasing my master? Who are these people?"

Another person with a low and deep voice said, "Fragrant Master Shi has already asked around. Yue Buqun's daughter and son-in-law suddenly went missing, and we couldn't find a single trace of them in any market, town, pier, or river. They must've hidden themselves in a nearby valley to look after their injuries. Sooner or later, Yue Buqun will come here to look for them."

Linghu Chong's heart ached as he thought, "So they know little martial sister was injured, but they don't know she's already dead. A lot of people must be looking for her whereabouts, especially Master and Master-Wife. If not for this valley being completely secluded, they would've searched this place a long time ago."

That elder then said, "If you didn't guess wrong, then Yue Buqun would come here sooner or later. Let's setup an ambush at the entrance of this valley."

The person with the low and deep voice said, "If Yue Buqun doesn't come, then we can lead him here after we setup the ambush."

That elder clapped twice and said, "This plan is wonderful. Brother Xue, I never thought you have so many ideas."

That person surnamed Xue replied, "Elder Ge said it well. Subordinate hopes that you'll be able to promote me. If Elder has anything for me to do, I'll do it

with all my heart and power to repay Elder's kindness."

Linghu Chong felt disappointed as he thought, "So they're Yingying's subordinates from the Sun Moon Sect. It's best if they go far away from here and don't disturb Yingying and me." He also thought, "At this time, Master's martial art has advanced greatly. Even though there are many of them, they're still not Master's match. No one in Wulin is capable of matching Master's skill and intelligence. With only their intelligence, how can they even hope to ambush Master? This is called 'playing with axe in front of Lu Ban'."

Suddenly, three clapping sound was heard from somewhere far. That person surnamed Xue said, "Elder Du has also arrived."

Elder Ge also clapped for three times. The sound of footsteps was heard as four people hurried to come to them. Two of these people had very heavy footsteps and as they got nearer, Linghu Chong thought they were carrying something.

Elder Ge happily said, "Elder Du, did you capture the Yue family's little girl? You've done a great achievement."

A person laughed loudly and said, "It's from the Yue family, but it's the big girl, not the little one."

Elder Ge gasped in surprise, sounding like he was surprised and happy at the same time. "How... How... You captured Yue Buqun's wife?"

Linghu Chong was greatly surprised and he immediately wished to go out to help, but he recalled that he wasn't carrying a sword with him. With no sword in his hand, his martial art was just ordinary. This made him really worried. He then heard Elder Du said, "You're not convinced?"

Elder Ge replied, "Madam Yue's swordplay is good. How did Brother Du manage to capture her? Ah, you must've used the confusion poison."

Elder Du laughed, "This lady arrived in a restaurant absent-mindedly and just drank her bowl of tea without thinking. Other people said Yue Buqun's wife, Ning Zhongze, is great, but actually she's nothing."

Linghu Chong got angry and secretly thought, "My Master-Wife heard her beloved daughter was injured and missing, but she couldn't find her after dozens of days of searching. Of course her mind would be in chaos. This is her cherished daughter we're talking about! How can you call her nothing? I'm going to kill each one of you with my sword for insulting my Master-Wife." He then thought, "How can I snatch a sword? If no sword, then a sabre will do." Then he heard Elder Ge said, "Since we have already captured Yue Buqun's wife, things are going well. Brother Du, the plan right now is how do we lead Yue Buqun here?"

"What do we do after we lead him here?" Elder Du questioned.

Elder Ge hesitated before saying, "We'll use this lady as hostage and force him to abandon his sword. I expect the Yue Buqun husband and wife would have deep feelings toward each other, so he wouldn't dare to defy us."

"What Brother Ge said was very reasonable. But I'm afraid if Yue Buqun's heart is very violent, and the feelings between him and his wife aren't deep, then things might get a little thorny for us," Elder Du reasoned.

"This... This... En, Brother Xue, what do you think?" Elder Ge said.

That person surnamed Xue said, "In front of two elders, it's not subordinate's place to speak out...."

He only said till here when there was another three clapping sound coming from the west. Elder Du said, "Elder Bao has arrived." In a short time, two people flew in from the west and their footsteps were really quick.

Elder Ge said, "Elder Mo has also arrived."

Linghu Chong quietly called out in misery, "Hearing their footsteps, it seems that these two people's martial arts are even higher than Du and Ge. How can I save Master-Wife with only my bare hand?" He then heard Elder Du and Ge called out together, "Brother Mo and Bao have arrived, this is really good."

Elder Ge also said, "Brother Du has done a great service by capturing Yue Buqun's wife."

An elder happily said, "Wonderful, wonderful! The two of you have worked hard."

Elder Ge said, "That's Elder Du's accomplishment."

That elder replied, "We all received Chief's order to handle this thing. No matter who did it, we'll all get a share of Chief's good fortune."

This elder's voice sounded quite familiar to Linghu Chong's ears. He thought, "Could it be that I've seen him on Dark Wood Cliff before?" He then exerted his qi to listen to their conversation, but he didn't dare stick his head out to have a look. All of the elders from the Devil Sect had high martial art, so if he moved even slightly, then he might immediately be discovered by them.

Elder Ge said, "Brother Bao and Mo, Brother Du and I were just discussing how we were going to entice Yue Buqun to come here, so that we can capture him and take him to Dark Wood Cliff."

The other elder said, "What plan did you come up with?"

Elder Ge answered, "We haven't thought of a good plan yet. Brother Bao and Mo must be able to come up with a good plan."

The first elder said, "When the five mountains sword schools were fighting at the place of worship place over the leadership, Yue Buqun blinded both of Zuo Lengchan's eyes and his power shook the entire Mount Songshan. After that, no one else from the five mountains sword schools dared to challenge him. I heard this person has obtained the real Evil Resisting Sword Art from the Lin family and he's now completely different from before. We must think of all possibilities and we mustn't look down on him."

Elder Du said, "That's right. Even if the four of us cooperate, it's still not certain if we'll be able to win against him."

Elder Mo said, "Brother Bao, you've already decided on a plan, please share it with us."

That Elder Bao said, "Even though I've thought of a plan, it's nothing wonderful. I'm afraid the three of you will laugh at it."

Elder Mo, Ge, and Du said together, "Brother Bao is our sect's brain trust. The plan you thought of must be really good."

Elder Bao said, "Actually, it's only a silly plan. We'll dig a deep pit, and cover it with grass and branches on top. Then we'll seal this lady's acupoints, put her at the edge of the pit and lead Yue Buqun to it. When he sees his wife on the ground, he'll definitely go over to help her. Then 'Boom'... he'll fall... Aiyo, not good..." He was hitting his hands together at the same time he was speaking. The other three elders and the remaining four people laughed out loud.

Elder Mo laughingly said, "Brother Bao's plan is wonderful. We'll all naturally hide ourselves on the side to wait for Yue Buqun to drop into the pit. Once he drops in, we'll cover the top of the pit with blades and don't let him leap out. Otherwise, with such strong martial art, I'm afraid he might not drop in but instead jump out of the hole."

Elder Bao hesitated and said, "But there's still some difficulty with this."

Elder Mo said, "What difficulty? Ah, that's right, Brother Bao is afraid of Yue Buqun's strange sword art. Once he fell into the hole, will we be able to stop him?"

Elder Bao said, "Brother Mo's guess is right. This time, Chief sent us to handle this thing and our enemy is the best master from the five mountains sword schools alliance. Even if we die for Chief, we'll still be highly honoured, and we wouldn't be harming the reputation of both the Divine sect and Chief's. As the saying goes: Those who thought of trivial things are not gentlemen, those who are not violent are not men. Since we're dealing with a gentleman, we must use treacherous method. I think we must add something inside the trap."

Elder Du said, "What Brother Bao said fits well with us. We're carrying a lot of 'Hundred Flowers Soul Consuming Powder'. We can spread them around the tree branches and grass covering the hole. When Yue Buqun falls into the hole, he'll suck in a breath of this powder..." He said till here, when they all burst into laughter.

Elder Bao said, "We can't be late, we must begin now. Where's the best place to

lay this trap?"

Elder Ge replied, "Three li west from here, there's a towering cliff on one side with a deep abyss on the other side. There's only a small road you can walk through there. If Yue Buqun doesn't come then we'll just forget it, on the other hand, if he comes then he'll definitely have to go through this small road."

Elder Bao said, "Very good, let's go there and take a look." After he said this, he started walking while the rest followed behind him.

Linghu Chong thought, "They wouldn't be able to dig this trap in just an hour. I'll go quickly tell Yingying about this and get myself a long sword, then I'll go and rescue Master-Wife." He waited until all the Devil Sect's people had gone before quietly going back.

After walking for a few li, he suddenly heard the sound of people digging. He thought, "How come they're digging here?" Linghu Chong quickly hid himself behind a tree. When he poked his head out to take a look, he saw four Devil Sect's people digging with their bodies bent over while a few elders were standing by the side. He was quite near to them this time and was able to see the profile of one of the elders. He secretly shivered in fear. "This person is actually the one called Bao Dachu who I saw in Hangzhou's Mount Gu at the Plum Manor. So Elder Bao is actually Bao Dachu. Back then when Ren Woxing escaped from the West Lake, the first Devil Sect's elder he took back was this Bao Dachu."

Linghu Chong had seen him deal with Mr. Huang Zhong before so he knew Bao Dachu's martial art was high. In his heart, he was thinking that Master had just taken up the headmaster position of the Five Mountains School, so he must have made some trouble for the Devil Sect. The Devil Sect wouldn't just stay quietly and let this happen, so Ren Woxing sent some people out to retaliate. So Linghu Chong was thinking there would be more than just these four elders who had been sent. He saw that the four people were using a pair of halberds and hatchets to loosen the ground and dig out the dirt. Linghu Chong thought, "They did say they wanted to dig the hole by that cliff, but how come they're digging here?" Then he realized, "It's rocky beside the cliff, so how can it be

easy to dig a hole there? This Elder Ge is a stupid person, speaking blindly without thinking first." With the Devil Sect people digging a hole here, his way back was blocked and he was prevented from getting a sword. He thought it was very inappropriate to dig a hole with weapons and reasoned they were unlikely to finish digging the hole any time soon. But he didn't want to go around them to get a sword because he didn't dare to be too far away from his Master-Wife.

Suddenly, Elder Ge laughed and said, "Yue Buqun is already old, but his wife is still so young and pretty."

Elder Du laughingly said, "She looks good, but she's not that young. She looks to be in her early forties. If Brother Ge is interested, wait until we capture Yue Buqun and report back to Chief. Then you can ask for this lady, what do you think?"

Elder Ge laughed. "I wouldn't dare to ask for her. But there's no harm in playing with her."

Linghu Chong was furious. "Shameless bastard, you got some nerve to insult my Master-Wife. Wait until I give every single one of you a horrible death." Linghu Chong couldn't endure Elder Ge's licentious laughing so he stuck his head out to take a look. He saw Elder Ge was giving Madam Yue's cheek a pinch. Madam Yue's acupoint was sealed so she couldn't fight back nor even utter a sound. The Devil Sect people all laughed merrily over this.

Elder Du laughingly said, "Brother Ge is so wary, you don't dare to play with this lady here?"

Linghu Chong was livid. If this Elder Ge really became rude toward his Master-Wife, then he would come out and stake his life with these Devil Sect people despite having no sword in his hand. But he heard Elder Ge laughing lewdly and said, "It's not that I don't dare to play with her, but I'm afraid I might spoil Chief's mission, and then even if I have a hundred heads, they might not be enough to be beheaded."

"That's the best," Elder Bao coldly said. "Brother Ge, Brother Du, both of you

have good qinggong. Lead Yue Buqun to come here. I predict in two hours, everything will be in place here." Elder Ge and Du acknowledged together, "Yes!" Then they went toward the north.

After the two of them were gone, only the sound of digging was heard in that empty valley with the occasional instructions from Elder Mo. Linghu Chong hid in the underbrush and didn't even dare to take a deep breath. He thought, "I've been gone for so long, Yingying must surely be worried and she'll definitely come out to look for me. When she hears this digging sound, she'll come over to take a look and then she can help my Master-Wife. Once these Devil Sect's elders saw Young Lady Ren, how would they dare to disobey her? Considering Chief Ren, Brother Xiang and Yingying's face, I shouldn't fight with the people from the Devil Sect. That would be the best way." Thinking till here, he felt that the longer he waited the better it would be. That pervert Elder Ge had been gone for quite some time so Master-Wife didn't have to bear with his insult anymore.

At last, the Devil Sect people finished digging and put the branches on top of the trap. They then scattered the confusion poison on top and further added grass on top of it. Bao Dachu and the other five people separately hid themselves around the trap to patiently wait for Yue Buqun's arrival.

Linghu Chong quietly picked up a big rock with his hand and thought, "I'll wait till Master come. As soon as he comes near the trap, I'll throw this rock onto the trap. Once the rock falls into the trap, Master will see it and he'll be vigilant."

At this time, it was only the beginning of summer. The sound of cicadas sang throughout the dell, and occasionally cries of little birds were heard. Besides those sounds, nothing else was heard. Linghu Chong kept his breathing slow and light, while straining to listen to Yue Buqun and the two elders' footsteps.

After more than an hour, he suddenly heard a female voice crying out from a far away place. It was Yingying's voice. Linghu Chong thought, "Yingying has discovered there are outsiders here. I wonder who she saw, my master or those two elders?"

Then he heard the footsteps of two people coming; one was in front of the other as they rushed forward. He heard Yingying continuously calling out, "Brother Chong, Brother Chong, your master is here to kill you. You mustn't come out."

Linghu Chong was startled. "Master is here to kill me?"

Then he heard Yingying calling out again, "Brother Chong, quickly go. Your master wants to kill you." She was using all of her energy to shout, it was obvious she wanted Linghu Chong to hear her from far away.

Yingying was calling out, her hair loose, and running quickly with a sword in her hand while Yue Buqun was behind her with nothing in either of his hands. Yingying was now only around ten steps away from falling into the trap, while Linghu Chong and Bao Dachu were anxious, not knowing what to do. Suddenly, Yue Buqun shot out and grabbed Yingying's back with his left hand while his right hand quickly grabbed both of her wrists and twisted her arms behind her back. In just a short moment, Yingying was rendered motionless. Her hand loosened and the long sword dropped onto the ground. Linghu Chong and Bao Dachu were too late to save her because Yue Buqun moved incredibly fast. Yingying's martial art was also very high but she unexpectedly couldn't run away, and in just one move, she was captured by him. Linghu Chong was alarmed and he nearly called out. Throughout all this, Yingying was still calling out, "Brother Chong quickly go away. Your master wants to kill you!" Hot tears bubbled up in Linghu Chong's eyes as he thought, "She cares so much about me that she ignored her own safety."

Freeing his left hand, Yue Buqun sealed the acupoints on Yingying's back. Then his right hand released her and she dropped to the ground. Just then, he saw Madam Yue was lying still on the ground. Yue Buqun was surprised, but he was immediately on alert that there must be danger nearby. He didn't approach his wife but calmly looked around. He saw nothing strange and so lightly said, "Young Lady Ren, that thief Linghu Chong killed my beloved daughter. Were you a part of this too?"

Linghu Chong was again surprised. He thought, "Master said that I killed little

martial sister. Where did he hear this from?"

"Your daughter was killed by Lin Pingzhi," Yingying answered. "What's that has to do with Linghu Chong? You kept on saying Linghu Chong killed your daughter, that's wrongly blaming the wrong person."

Yue Buqun laughed aloud. "Lin Pingzhi is my son-in-law. Don't you know this? They're newly wed, and so loving toward each other. Why would he kill his own wife for?"

"Lin Pingzhi wanted to rely on Songshan School, so to make Zuo Lengchan believe that he has nothing to do with you, he killed his own wife," Yingying explained.

Yue Buqun again laughed loudly. "Nonsense, Songshan School? Is there still a Songshan School in this world? Songshan School has merged into the Five Mountains School. Within Wulin, Songshan School's name is no more. Why would Lin Pingzhi go to rely on Songshan School? Also, Lin Pingzhi knows Zuo Lengchan is my subordinate. Instead of coming to his father-in-law who is the headmaster of the Five Mountains School, he went to rely on a blind person who can even barely protect himself. Even among the dumbest person in this world, this kind of stupidity simply couldn't exist."

"It's up to you whether you want to believe me or not. You can ask Lin Pingzhi yourself when you find him."

Yue Buqun's voice turned grim as he said, "The person I'm looking for right now isn't Lin Pingzhi. It's Linghu Chong. Everyone in Jianghu is saying that Linghu Chong was rude to my daughter and that she fought back against that traitor with all of her power until she was finally killed. You've weaved this lie to hide Linghu Chong, so it's obvious you're working together with him."

Yingying snorted and laughed derisively.

"Young lady Ren, your father is the Chief of the Sun Moon Sect. I originally wouldn't have given you any trouble, but to force Linghu Chong to come out, there's no other way, I'm forced to punish you a little bit. First, I'm going to chop off your left hand. Then, I'll chop off your right hand. Next would be your left

foot, followed by your right foot. If that bastard Linghu Chong still has the slightest bit of conscience, then he will show up."

"I don't think you dare," Yingying shouted. "If you harm one hair on my head, my father will kill everyone in your Five Mountains School and not leave a single one alive."

Yue Buqun smiled and said, "I don't dare?" After he said this, he slowly pulled out the long sword hanging on his waist out of its scabbard.

Linghu Chong couldn't take it anymore so he rushed out of the underbrush and shouted, "Master, Linghu Chong's here!"

Yingying gasped in surprised and hastily said, "Go away, go away! He doesn't dare to harm me."

Linghu Chong shook his head as he walked a few steps closer. "Master..."

"Little thief, you still have some face to call me: 'Master?'" Yue Buqun said severely.

Linghu Chong's eyes were brimming with tears as he knelt on the ground and said in a trembling voice, "Emperor of Heaven, Linghu Chong has always treated Miss Yue with respect. I would never dare to be rude to her. Linghu Chong has received your kindness and was brought up by you. If you want to kill me then kill me."

Yingying was worried; she called out, "Brother Chong, this person is half-male, half-female, he's lost his humanity long ago, quickly go away!"

Yue Buqun's face suddenly turned murderous as he turned toward Yingying and grimly said, "What do you mean by that?"

"You practised the Evil Resisting Sword Art, cas... cas... carelessly disturbed yourself and made yourself half-dead half-alive just like a ghost. Brother Chong, do you remember Dongfang Bubai? All of them are crazy, don't treat them like ordinary people." Yingying was hoping Linghu Chong would flee at once. She knew that after what she just said, Yue Buqun would never let her go but she didn't care about that.

Yue Buqun coldly said, "Where did you hear those cynical remarks you just made?"

"From Lin Pingzhi's own mouth. You stole Lin Pingzhi's Evil Resisting Sword Manual, you think he doesn't know? When you threw that Buddhist robe down the canyon, Lin Pingzhi was hiding outside your window. He took that robe. That's why he... he also learned the Evil Resisting Sword Art. If not for this, how would he be able to kill Mu Gaofeng and Yu Canghai? With regards to how he finished learning the Evil Resisting Sword Art, of course, you know how this is done as well. Brother Chong, listen to Yue Buqun's voice. It's just like a girl. He... he and Dongfang Bubai are the same, they lost their normal sex a long time ago."

She heard the conversation between Lin Pingzhi and Yue Lingshan inside the carriage, but Linghu Chong did not. She knew Linghu Chong respected and loved his Master. She also didn't want to add to his sadness, and this topic was very inconvenient to speak of, so she had not mentioned it in the last few months. But at this time, it was very urgent so she was forced to reveal this to make Linghu Chong understand, to make him see that the person in front of him wasn't a great headmaster in Wulin. But he was merely a freak who had lost his sex, and that he was also an insane person who could not be spoken to with reason.

The murderous look on Yue Buqun's eyes became fiercer. He loathingly said, "Young lady Ren, I wanted to spare you your life. But after this nonsense you spouted, I can't allow you to live anymore. You courted your own death, don't blame me for this."

Yingying shouted, "Brother Chong, quickly go, quickly go!"

Linghu Chong knew his master's hand was extremely fast, and with just a tremble of his sword, Yingying would immediately lose her life. When he saw Yue Buqun had lifted his sword, looking like he was going to thrust out, he shouted, "If you want to kill someone, then kill me, don't harm her."

Yue Buqun turned his head around and laughed coldly. "You've just learned a

little bit of a three-legged sword art and you think you can run amuck in Jianghu? Pick up the sword. I'll kill you to make you believe."

"I wouldn't dare... wouldn't dare to fight against mas... fight against you," Linghu Chong stammered out.

"Even today, what are you putting on air for?" Yue Buqun shouted. "That day on the boat on the Yellow River and the Five Tyrant Ridge, you allied yourself with the people from the unorthodox path, and deliberately made me lose face. I've already decided to kill you back then, but it's very good for you that I've been putting up with you so far. At Fuzhou, you fell into my hand. If it wasn't for my wife blocking me, I would've sent you to the King of Hell back then. I made a mistake back then, and now you've instead taken my daughter's life."

Linghu Chong hastily called out, "I didn't... I didn't... "

"Pick up the sword!" Yue Buqun angrily shouted. "You only have to win against this sword in my hand and then you can kill me straight away. Otherwise, I also won't spare you. This Devil Sect's witch likes to speak nonsense, let me cripple her first!" When he finished speaking, he slashed his sword to behead Yingying.

Linghu Chong's left hand was still holding the big piece of rock. Originally, he wanted to use it to help Yue Buqun by stopping him from falling down the trap. At this point, with no time to think, he quickly tossed the rock at Yue Buqun's chest. Yue Buqun leaned his

body to one side to dodge it. Linghu Chong rolled on the ground, picked up the long sword Yingying had dropped on the ground, and stabbed it at Yue Buqun's left leg. If Yue Buqun had slashed his sword toward Linghu Chong initially, Linghu Chong would've stood still and was prepared to get stabbed. But after hearing Yingying revealing his secret, Yue Buqun was so startled and angry that he actually chopped at Yingying first. Linghu Chong couldn't do anything else but help. Yue Buqun blocked three attacks and retreated for two steps. He was secretly amazed. He just blocked three times, but his whole arm was shaken and felt numb. When they fought at the Shaolin Temple, they fought for more

than a thousand moves, but Linghu Chong didn't use his true internal energy with his sword. But at this time, he did not give way in his three attacks.

Linghu Chong forced Yue Buqun to step back, while he extended his hand backwards to release Yingying's sealed acupoints. Yingying called out, "Don't worry about me, watch out!"

White light flashed as Yue Buqun's long sword thrust forward. Linghu Chong had seen Dongfang Bubai, Yue Buqun, and Lin Pingzhi's martial arts, so he knew his opponent's movements were unbelievably quick like a ghost or a demon. If he waited till he saw a flaw in the oncoming attack, he would've gotten stabbed. So he counterattacked by

slashing at Yue Buqun's lower abdomen with his long sword.

Yue Buqun quickly leapt back and scolded, "What a fierce small thief!" Actually, even though Yue Buqun had raised Linghu Chong since he was small, he didn't understand him. If he had actually ignored Linghu Chong's counter attack and kept on thrusting his sword, he would've taken Linghu Chong's life. Even though Linghu Chong was using a

common ruin method, he would never have continued his attack and pierced his master's lower abdomen. Yue Buqun was judging other people by what he would do himself so he immediately leapt back, missing a good opportunity to injure his opponent.

After several moves, Yue Buqun couldn't stand it anymore so he increased the speed of his sword. Linghu Chong concentrated his mind to keep up. In the beginning, Linghu Chong was thinking that if he were to die under his master's hand, there was no pity in that for him except Yingying would also be killed. Furthermore, Yingying's word had

harmed his master so she would definitely be tortured before she die. Thus, he exerted himself in fighting back with all of his heart so as to protect Yingying. After fighting for several dozens moves, Yue Buqun's changes became complicated. Linghu Chong concentrated fully on the fight and he was gradually enlightened. His eyes were now only looking at the point of his opponent's

sword.

With Dugu Nine Swords, the stronger the enemy was the more powerful it became. That day below the West Lake inside the prison, he fought with Ren Woxing whose martial art was of one of the highest quality which was very rare in this world. But no matter how Ren Woxing's sword rose, shifted, and changed, Linghu Chong's Dugu Nine Sword

adapted reactively against his moves. Whether it was attacking or defending, he countered each move successfully. At present, Linghu Chong had already learned the Art of Essence Absorbing and his internal energy had improved greatly since that time below the West Lake. Even though Yue Buqun's Evil Resisting Sword Art was weird, he

had not learnt it for very long and he was not as good as Linghu Chong who had studied his Dugu Nine Sword for quite some time now. Compared to Dongfang Bubai, Yue Buqun was much worse.

After fighting for more than a hundred and fifty six moves, Linghu Chong didn't think deeply anymore when wielding his sword as there was barely any time to think with Yue Buqun's quick swordplay attacking him. Even though the Lin family's Evil Resisting Sword Art was made up of seventy two moves, each move had several dozens changes, and as it went through all the variations, the changes became very complicated. If other people saw this swordplay, even if they didn't become dizzy from looking at it, they would still be bewildered from seeing this complicated swordplay and they wouldn't be able to execute their own sword moves. But the Dugu Nine Swords that Linghu Chong learned had no set moves to speak of, so it was natural for him to follow the movements of his opponent. If the enemy only had one move, then he would only have one move. If

the enemy had a thousand moves then he would also have a thousand moves. Thus, in Yue Buqun's eyes, Linghu Chong's swordplay was very complicated and was far better than his own sword art. He was afraid that even if they fought for three days and three nights, Linghu Chong would still come up with more new moves. Yue Buqun thought till here and he couldn't help feeling afraid. He

also thought, "This witch from the Ren family has already found out the secret of me learning this sword art. If I can't kill these two people today, this matter will be spread throughout Jianghu. Then how can I still have the face to be the headmaster of the Five Mountains School? All of my planning

would've been ruined. But that traitor Lin Pingzhi already told this Ren witch, so what would prevent him from saying this to other people? This... this..." With anxiety in his heart, his swordplay became even fiercer but his mind was agitated and his swordplay was actually hindered. The Evil Resisting Sword Art depended on speed to take

victory. If you fought for more than a hundred moves yet was still unable to win, then the fierceness of this sword art would unavoidably be lessened. Also, with his heart separated, the power of his sword art was greatly reduced.

Linghu Chong's mind was moved as he suddenly saw a flaw in his opponent's sword art. The most important aspect of the Dugu Nine Swords was to see the weakness in the opponent's martial art. No matter whether it was bare hand, kicks, sabres, or swords, every move must have a weakness. Once a flaw has been seen, you could take

advantage of if by attacking it. That day at the Dark Wood Cliff, he fought with Dongfang Bubai who, only holding a piece of embroidery needle, moved as fast as lightning and was unbelievably quick. So even though there were still weaknesses in the movements of his body and attacks, they were only fleeting. Linghu Chong only managed to see the flaws but they were gone in the next instant which made him unable

to attack those flaws. That was the reason why the four masters, Linghu Chong, Ren Woxing, Xiang Wentian, and Yingying, were unable to win against a little embroidery needle. Later on, Linghu Chong saw Yue Buqun and Zuo Lengchan fighting at the place of worship, and Lin Pingzhi fighting with Mu Gaofeng, Yu Canghai, and the Qingcheng

disciples. Recently, he had been thinking hard about the flaws in the movements of that sword art, but he had always run into the single difficulty --

the speed of the opponent's swordplay. When a flaw could only be seen fleetingly, it was very hard to attack.

At this time, he had endured fighting against Yue Buqun for close to two hundred moves when he saw Yue Buqun exposing a weakness underneath his right armpit in a slash of his sword. Yue Buqun had used this move earlier. Originally, the changes in his swordplay were very complicated and he didn't repeat any of his moves in the past two hundred moves. But now, he has finally repeated one move. After several more moves, Yue Buqun's long sword slashed out horizontally exposing a weakness on his left waist. He had again repeated another move. Suddenly, a thought flashed in Linghu Chong's mind, "His Evil Resisting Sword Art is extremely quick, and his flaws aren't actual flaws. Even though there's no weakness in his sword moves, I've finally found out a weakness in his swordplay -- his swordplay repeats."

In this world, in whichever sword art, no matter how complicated and how many changes your swordplay had, you would eventually finish using all the sword moves. Once the sword moves were used up and you still weren't able to gain victory, then it would be unavoidable that you would have to reuse the sword moves you had used earlier in the fight. But for masters, their refined sword arts would always have eight or ten groups, and within each group there would be dozens of moves, and each move would have its variations. So it was very unusual for them to fight for more than a thousand moves before the outcome of the fight was decided. Even though Yue Buqun knows a lot of other swordplay he could use, he knew Linghu Chong's sword art was actually too strong and that Linghu Chong was also familiar with the Huashan School's sword art. So besides the Evil Resisting Sword Art, there was no other sword art he could use that could gain victory. By now, Yue Buqun had repeated many moves. Knowing he now had the opportunities to take victory, Linghu Chong felt happy.

When Yue Buqun saw the corner of Linghu Chong's mouth smiling, he was secretly startled. Yue Buqun thought, "What's this little thief smiling about? Has he figured out a way to defeat me?" He immediately moved his internal energy,

and was suddenly advancing and retreating to go around Linghu Chong in a circle. His sword moves were like a violent storm and they were getting faster and faster. Yingying was still lying down on the ground and from her position, she couldn't see Yue Buqun's body clearly anymore. She felt dizzy looking at him; her chest felt nauseated and she felt like throwing up.

After fighting for thirty more moves, Yue Buqun's left hand stabbed forward while he withdrew his right hand. Linghu Chong knew this was the third time he had used this move. After fighting for so long, Linghu Chong felt tired as his injury was just beginning to heal. He knew the situation was highly dangerous, and under Yue Buqun's lightning fast attack, if he was just slightly careless, he would lose his life and Yingying would be tortured. So seeing Yue Buqun using this move again, he immediately sent his sword out and stabbed it at his opponent's right armpit. The spot that this slanting sword was stabbing at was the weakness of Yue Buqun's next move. This was really anticipating what the enemy was going to do and made Yue Buqun's really anxious. Even though this move by Yue Buqun was extremely quick, Linghu Chong's attack was done earlier. The move from the Evil Resisting Sword Art had not changed yet, but Linghu Chong had already thrust at Yue Buqun's armpit making him unable to block or dodge. Yue Buqun cried out sharply, sounding surprised, angry, and desperate. Linghu Chong's sword had already arrived at his opponent's armpit, but when he heard Yue Buqun's sharp cry, he

immediately thought, "I'm going too far, he's my master, how can I injure him?" He quickly pulled his sword back and said, "The winner and loser has been decided. Let's save Master-Wife, then... then we'll go our own ways!"

Yue Buqun's face was pale as he slowly nodded his head. "Alright! I admit defeat."

Linghu Chong tossed his long sword on the ground and turned his head around to look at Yingying. Suddenly, Yue Buqun shouted and his long sword thrust out as fast as lightning and stabbed Linghu Chong's left waist. Greatly astonished, Linghu Chong quickly extended his hand to pick up his sword. But how could he be fast enough? With a 'pu' sound, the point of the sword had

entered the back of his waist. Luckily, Linghu Chong's internal energy was abundant. When the sword reached his body, his muscle automatically retracted, making the sword slid to one side so that the sword point pierced his body slantingly and did not injure any fatal points. Yue Buqun was exulted. He pulled out his sword and quickly followed it with a chop. Linghu Chong hastily rolled for a few feet. Yue Buqun rushed forward with his sword slashing ferociously. Linghu Chong rolled again.

'Tang' sounded as Yue Buqun's sword chopped the ground and missed Linghu Chong's head by only a few inches. Yue Buqun lifted his sword, and with a fierce-looking laugh, he lifted his sword high above his head. He rushed forward for a step and chopped his sword down on Linghu Chong's head again. Suddenly, there was nothing underneath his

foot, and his body slumped to the ground. He was greatly surprised and nervously sucked in a breath of air and was waiting for his right foot to hit the ground to leap up. But all of a sudden, the sky revolved and the ground turned, and he lost consciousness. With a booming sound, he fell into the trap.

Linghu Chong had just escaped from death. Using his left hand, he pressed on the wound on his waist and struggled to sit up. Then he heard several people calling out at the same time from the underbrush, "Young lady! Sacred Lady!" Several people rushed out. They were Bao Dachu, Elder Mo, and the other four Devil Sect people. Bao Dachu was

the first to arrive on the side of the trap. He held his breath, reversed his sabre, and hit Yue Buqun's head repeatedly. He knew Yue Buqun's internal energy was good so the confusion poison wouldn't affect him for long. These hits would put him out for half a day. Linghu Chong hastily scrambled besides Yingying and asked, "Which... which acupoints did he seal?"

"You... You... Are you ... Are you alright?" Yingying was frightened. Her voice quivered and she found it hard to control herself. Her teeth were chattering.

"I won't die, don't... don't be afraid."

"Behead that bastard!" Yingying shouted.

"Yes!" Bao Dachu acknowledged.

"Don't kill him!" Linghu Chong hastily interrupted.

Yingying saw he was worried, so she said, "Alright, then quickly... quickly capture him."

She didn't know there was confusion poison in the trap already and she was afraid Yue Buqun would jump up again since no one up on the ground was Yue Buqun's match.

"As ordered!" Bao Dachu acknowledged. He didn't dare to say that they had dug the trap themselves and that they had been hiding on the side all this time. But when the young lady was captured by Yue Buqun, everyone was afraid of dying so they didn't dare to go out and help. If someone looked into this matter, this would become a big thing, so they had to pretend that they had arrived there by luck and sheer coincidence. Bao Dachu clutched the back of Yue Buqun's neck and lifted him up. Then his hand shot out like the wind and he sealed twelve of Yue Buqun's acupoints. He then took out some rope and tied both of Yue Buqun's hands and legs tightly. Confusion poison, hits on the head, sealed acupoints, and tied ropes -- these were four things that restricted Yue Buqun. Even if Yue Buqun's skill was much higher, it would still be very hard for him to escape.

Linghu Chong and Yingying were looking at each other like they were in a dream. After a long time, Yingying cried and Linghu Chong hugged her. Having escaped from death just then, they both felt life couldn't be sweeter. After Linghu Chong helped release Yingying's sealed acupoints, he saw his Master-Wife was still lying on the ground.

"Aiyo!" Linghu Chong called out. He quickly went over to help her up and release her acupoints. "Master-Wife, sorry for the offence."

Madam Yue had seen everything. She knew Linghu Chong's personality and knew he had a very deep love toward Yue Lingshan. Linghu Chong had treated Yue Lingshan like she was a goddess from heaven, so he would never have dared to offend her at all. He didn't even dare to scold Yue Lingshan and he was

even willing to risk his life for her.

To think that he would torture or kill her, that was just a very ridiculous thing to think of. Moreover, she had seen with her own eyes how well he treated Yingying, so how could his personality be different? Linghu Chong used his sword to stop her husband but he

stilled his hand from killing him. On the other hand, her husband, the respectable headmaster of the Five Mountains School, had suddenly become violent and unexpectedly used a despicable method that even people from the unorthodox path despised and other people would mock at. Madam Yue felt completely discouraged. She lightly asked, "Chong'er, was Shan'er really killed by Lin Pingzhi?"

Linghu Chong's heart was pained and tears rolled down his cheeks. He chokingly said, "Disciple... I... I..."

Madam Yue interrupted, "He doesn't regard you as his disciple anymore, but I still regard you as my disciple. If you like, I'm still your Master-Wife."

Linghu Chong's heart swelled with gratitude as he paid his respect to her, while calling out, "Master-Wife! Master-Wife!"

Madam Yue gently caressed his hair and tears were streaming down her eyes. She slowly said, "Was what young lady Ren said true? Did Lin Pingzhi kill Shan'er because he's learned the Evil Resisting Sword Art and has also gone to rely on Zuo Lengchan?"

"That's right."

"Turn around," Madam Yue chokingly said. "Let me have a look at your injuries."

"Yes," Linghu Chong replied and turned around.

Madam Yue tore the gown at his back and sealed four acupoints around his injuries. "Do you still have Heng-Shan School's medicine?"

"I do," Linghu Chong answered. Yingying took the medicine out from his bosom and gave it to Madam Yue.

Madam Yue wiped the blood on his wound and applied the medicine. She then took out a white handkerchief from her bosom and pressed it on his wound. Then she tore a piece of cloth from her skirt and wrapped the injury up. Linghu Chong had always regarded Madam Yue as his own mother, so seeing her treating him like this, he was greatly comforted and forgot all the pain from his injury.

"In the future," Madam Yue said. "You will of course kill Lin Pingzhi to avenge Shan'er."

With tears in his eyes, Linghu Chong said, "Little martial sister... Little martial sister... Just before she died, she asked Son to look after Lin Pingzhi. Son couldn't bear hurting her so I promised her. This matter... This is a really difficult matter."

Madam Yue let out a really long sigh and said, "Retribution! Retribution!" She then said, "Chong'er, you cannot be too good to other people when dealing with them in the future!"

"Yes!"

Suddenly, he felt something warm flowing down the back of his neck. He turned his head around and saw Madam Yue's face was pale. Startled, he called out, "Master-Wife, Master-Wife!"

When he stood up to support her, he saw a dagger sticking out of her chest. The dagger had pierced her heart. She had already passed away. Linghu Chong was dumbfounded and he wanted to call out but no sound was coming out of his mouth. Yingying was also alarmed. But because she had no relationship with Madam Yue, she was just startled and

feeling pitiful but not mournful. She went besides Linghu Chong to hold him, and after some time, Linghu Chong started crying. Bao Dachu saw the two young lovers had met with a mournful loss and that they would have a lot of things to say to each other, so he didn't dare to disturb them. He was also afraid that Yingying would ask the origin of the trap so the six of them needed to consult each other first on what to say to deceive her. So they carried Yue Buqun

up and retreated far away.

"Where... Where are they taking my master?" Linghu Chong asked.

"You're still calling him master?" Yingying asked.

"Ai, I'm very accustomed to it. Why did Master-Wife have to commit suicide? Why did... why did she have to kill herself?"

Yingying answered with hatred in her voice, "Of course it's all because of that traitor Yue Buqun. Married to such a despicable and shameless husband, if she can't kill him, then it's better to commit suicide. Let's kill Yue Buqun quickly and avenge your Master-Wife."

Linghu Chong hesitantly said, "You're saying we should kill him? He was once my master and he brought me up."

"Even though he's your master and he's also brought you up, he's tried to kill you a few times already. The love and hate between you two have been wiped out a long time ago. But you haven't repaid the kindness shown by your Master-Wife. Didn't your Master-Wife die under his hand?"

Linghu Chong sighed and mournfully said, "My Master-Wife's kindness will be difficult to repay in my lifetime. Even though there's nothing between Yue Buqun and I anymore, I still can't kill him."

"It doesn't have to be you." Yingying then raised her voice and called out, "Elder Bao!"

"Yes, young lady," Elder Bao loudly answered and walked over along with Elder Mo and the other people.

"Did my father send you to handle things here?"

Bao Dachu bowed and replied, "Yes, Chief commanded Subordinate along with Elder Ge, Du, and Mo to lead ten brothers to think of a way to capture Yue Buqun and bring him back to the altar."

"Where's Elder Ge and Du?"

"More than four hours ago they went to lead Yue Buqun here. We haven't seen

them since, I'm afraid... I'm afraid..."

"Search Yue Buqun's body."

"Yes!" Bao Dachu acknowledged and searched Yue Buqun's body. From Yue Buqun's bosom, he took out an embroidered flag, which was the five mountains sword schools alliance's flag, around ten gold and silver taels, and two copper plates. Bao Dachu was indignant as he reported, "Reporting to young lady: Elder Ge and Du have definitely met with this bastard's violent hand. These are the two elders' sect plate." As he said this, he lifted his leg and gave a hard kick to Yue Buqun's waist.

"Don't harm him," Linghu Chong shouted.

"Yes," Bao Dachu respectfully answered.

"Bring some cold water and wake him up," Yingying ordered.

Elder Mo took out the water canteen on his waist, opened the lid, and poured the cold water on Yue Buqun's head. After some time, Yue Buqun groaned and opened his eyes. He felt terrible pain on his head and waist, and groaned again.

Yingying inquired, "Person surnamed Yue, did you kill Elder Ge and Du from my sect?"

Bao Dachu picked up the two copper plates and tossed them up repeatedly making a 'zheng, zheng' noise.

Maybe Yue Buqun didn't feel he would be lucky enough to escape with his life so he scolded, "I killed them. All the demonic disciples from the Devil Sect must be executed."

Bao Dachu wanted to kick him again, but he considered the depth of Linghu Chong's friendship with Chief and also of the fact that Linghu Chong was going to be Young Lady's future husband. Therefore, since Linghu Chong had already said 'don't harm him', he didn't dare to disobey his order.

Yingying coldly laughed. "You're the headmaster of an orthodox sect but when you handle things, you're a hundred times more wicked than the Divine Sun Moon Sect's people. But you still have the face to scold us as the demonic

disciples. Even your wife hated you so bitterly that she'd rather commit suicide than to continue being your wife. Do you still have the face to live in this world?"

Yue Buqun scolded, "Little witch, you're speaking nonsense! My wife was clearly killed by you but you're trying to slander me by saying she killed herself."

"Brother Chong, listen to him," Yingying said. "He's so shameless,"

Linghu Chong spoke indistinctly, "Yingying, I'd like to ask you a favour."

"You want me to release him? I'm afraid it's easy to capture a tiger but it'll be hard release it. This person's heart is very calculating and filled with hatred. His martial art is also very strong. Later on, when he find you again and we might not be as lucky as today."

"We'll let him go today. Our relationship as master and disciple finishes today. I already know all of his sword art in my mind. If he dares to find me again, then things won't go well for him."

Yingying knew it wasn't easy at all for him to kill Yue Buqun. But if from now on Linghu Chong didn't care about their old relationship anymore, then he wouldn't be afraid of facing Yue Buqun again. "Alright, we'll spare his life today. Elder Bao, Elder Mo, spread the word in Jianghu of how we have spared Yue Buqun's life. Also say how Yue Buqun has cut off his own limb to learn the demonical sword art, and that he's now not male not female. Let all the heroes in the realm hear about this."

Bao Dachu and Elder Mo acknowledged the order together. Yue Buqun's face turned ashen and both of his eyes turned malicious. But thinking he still had his life, there was a still a trace of happiness in his eyes.

Yingying said, "You hate me. Do you think I'm afraid?" She slashed her long sword and cut the ropes binding him. She walked near him and unsealed the acupoints on his back. Her right palm pressed against his mouth, while her left palm hit the back of his head. Yue Buqun's mouth opened, and he felt a small pill in his mouth. At the same time, Yingying's right hand pinched his nose

blocking his air. When Yingying cut his ropes and unsealed the acupoints at the back of his body, her back was facing toward Linghu Chong and was blocking his vision, so Linghu Chong couldn't see her putting the pill into Yue Buqun's mouth. Linghu Chong only saw her releasing his master and he felt comforted. With his nose blocked, Yue Buqun had to use his mouth to draw breath. At the same time, Yingying used force on her right hand to force Yue Buqun to take the pill along with his breath.

After Yue Buqun had swallowed the pill, he was scared out of his wits thinking the pill he just swallowed was the Devil Sect's most evil pill called the 'Divine Three Corpse Brain Pill'. He had heard people said, that after talking this pill, every year during the dragon boat festival you must take a medicine to prevent the corpse bug inside the pill from coming out. Otherwise, the corpse bug would come out, enter your brain, and chew your brain out. There was no need to say how painful it would be. Furthermore, you would be crazed and you would become worse than a crazy dog. Even though he was intelligent, full of ideas, and calm under pressure, he was still sweating profusely and

his face had turned pale thinking of this situation.

Yingying stood straight as she said, "Brother Chong, they sealed his acupoints too heavily. These last two acupoints will loosen a bit only after some time, so he just has to endure it for now."

"Many thanks," Linghu Chong replied.

Yingying smiled captivatingly and thought, "I secretly did something and deceived you, but this is all for your own good." After some time, she knew that the pill in Yue Buqun's stomach would have transformed and there would be no way for him to vomit it out anymore. She bent down to release the two acupoints, and as she did so, she whispered, "Every year during the dragon boat festival, come up the Dark Wood Cliff and I'll give you the medicine."

When Yue Buqun heard this, he knew the pill he took just then was really the 'Three Corpse Brain Pill'. He couldn't help shaking as he tremblingly asked, "That... That was the Three Corpse... Three Corpse..."

Yingying giggled and in a loud voice said, "Correct, respected sir. This kind of wonderful drug is not easily made. In our sect, only people of high positions with outstanding martial arts are entitled to take it. Elder Bao, isn't this right?"

Bao Dachu bowed and said, "Thanks to Chief's kindness that he gave this divine pellet to Subordinate. Subordinate will always be loyal and will always follow his order. After I've taken this pill, Chief's confidence in me has increased and it has actually given me untold benefits. Long live the Chief, unify the Jianghu."

Linghu Chong was startled. "You gave my mast... gave him the three corpse brain pill?"

Yingying laughingly answered, "He swallowed it in a hurry himself. He was probably so hungry that he was just about to eat anything. Yue Buqun, you must protect Brother Chong and my life from now on to benefit yourself."

Yue Buqun's heart was filled with hatred but he thought, "If this witch met some kind of accident and was killed by someone, then... then I'll die miserably. Even if she's still alive but has received some kind of heavy injury and couldn't make it back to Dark Wood Cliff before the Dragon Boat Festival, then where would I look for her? Also, maybe she doesn't intend to give me the medicine in the first place..." He thought till here and he couldn't help shivering. Even though he had divine martial art, he didn't know what to do. Linghu Chong sighed thinking that Yingying was originally from the Devil Sect so her action had a demonical air to it, but she had done this because of him so he couldn't blame her for this.

Yingying said to Bao Dachu, "Elder Bao, go back and report to Chief. Say that the Five Mountains School's Headmaster, Mr. Yue, has sincerely surrendered to our sect and that he has also taken our sect's divine pill, so it's not possible for him to rebel."

Bao Dachu was initially worried when he saw Linghu Chong wanting to release Yue Buqun. He was really afraid that he would be blamed by Chief when he returned to the gathering altar. So when he saw Yue Buqun took the 'Divine

Three Corpse Brain Pill', he was greatly exulted. With joy, he hastily replied, "Young lady presided over the whole battle and everything was completed successfully. Chief will surely be happy. Chief flourishes the divine sect and benefits the common people."

Yingying said, "Mr. Yue has already turned over to our sect so we can't mention the things that would damage his reputation to outsiders. And you also mustn't mention him taking the divine pill. This person's position in Wulin is very high, his wisdom and knowledge are high, his martial art is good, Chief will definitely have use of his position."

"Yes, I will follow Young Lady's order," Bao Dachu answered.

When Linghu Chong saw how distressed Yue Buqun was, he couldn't help feeling sad. Even though Yue Buqun wanted to kill him and had been very violent toward him, he could not forget the past twenty years when he and Master-Wife had brought him up. Linghu Chong had always regarded him as his own father. Suddenly, everything had changed into hatred and he was feeling very bad. He wanted to say a few things to comfort him but it was as if there were something stuck in his throat that he couldn't make a sound.

Yingying said, "Elder Bao, Elder Mo, go back to Dark Wood Cliff. Ask daddy on my behalf if he is well, ask uncle Xiang if he is well. I'll wait.. wait for him... wait for master Linghu to get better, then we'll come to the gathering altar to see daddy."

If it were another girl, Bao Dachu would've said, "I wish for Master to recover soon and return to Dark Wood Cliff with young lady. Then we'll all drink a congratulatory wine to you as soon as possible." Toward a pair of young lovers, this speech would've been extremely good. But toward Yingying, how would he dare to say such thing? He didn't even dare to take a look at the two of them as he lowered his head and bowed continuously. Bao Dachu's face was tense and he just answered yes to everything and was looking very respectful. He was actually really afraid Yingying might find out he was actually laughing inside.

This lady was afraid people would mock her and Linghu Chong for loving

each other so she had caused many troubles for the warriors in Jianghu. This was very well known throughout Wulin. Bao Dachu didn't dare to linger too much longer, so he immediately took his leave from Yingying and Linghu Chong, and took the other people with him as he went. When they were leaving, he was even more respectful toward Linghu Chong than Yingying. He was an old person in Jianghu who had gone through a lot of experience, so he knew being respectful toward Linghu Chong would make Yingying very happy.

Yingying saw Yue Buqun was standing woodenly. "Mr. Yue, you can go too. Are you going to take your wife's remain to bury in Huashan?"

Yue Buqun shook his head. "I'd like to bother the two of you to bury her in this small mountainside!" After he said this he didn't give another glance toward the two of them before he quickly left. In just a short time, he had disappeared behind the trees. Such quick movement was rarely seen in Jianghu. By the fall of the evening, Linghu Chong

and Yingying had buried Madam Yue's remain besides Yue Lingshan's tomb. Linghu Chong cried out again.

The next morning, Yingying asked, "Brother Chong, how's your injury?"

"This injury isn't serious, there's no need to worry."

"That's very good. Our place here has been discovered by other people. I'd like to wait for you to rest for a few days here, then we'll go to another place."

"That's also good. Little martial sister has her mother to accompany her, she won't be afraid anymore." His heart was pained and he also said, "My master has always been upright all his life, but his temperament has changed greatly because of that demonical sword art."

Yingying shook her head and said, "That's not necessarily true. When he sent your little martial sister and Lao Denuo to Fuzhou to open up the wine shop, he was already trying to get the Evil Resisting Sword Manual. That's not necessarily what a gentleman does."

Linghu Chong was silent. He had already thought of this matter before but he had never dared to think about it deeply. Yingying went on, "Actually, it shouldn't be called the Evil Resisting Sword Art. It should be called 'Demonical Sword Art'. If this sword manual were to be circulated in Jianghu, there'll be endless harm. Yue Buqun still

lives in this world; Lin Pingzhi also has the sword manual memorized. But I don't think he would give everything to Zuo Lengchan and Lao Denuo. Lin Pingzhi is such a calculating person. Why would he be willing to give this sword manual to other people?"

Linghu Chong said, "Both Zuo Lengchan and Lin Pingzhi are blind, but Lao Denuo isn't. So Lin Pingzhi would probably be taken advantage of. These three very smart people are living with each other and yet are suspicious toward each other, I wonder what would happen. Two against one, Lin Pingzhi would be afraid that he'll be disadvantaged."

"Are you really going to think of a way to protect Lin Pingzhi?"

Linghu Chong looked at Yue Lingshan's tomb and said, "I shouldn't have promised little martial sister that I'd protect Lin Pingzhi. This person is worse than a dog. I hate him with all my heart, how can I go and help him? But I've already promised little martial sister. If I eat my words, then it'll be hard for her to be peaceful under the nine fountains."

"When she was still alive, she might not have known who really treated her well, but after she died, she would definitely understand. She wouldn't want you to protect Lin Pingzhi!"

Linghu Chong shook his head and said, "That's hard to say. Little martial sister and Lin Pingzhi were very loving in the past. She knew Lin Pingzhi's intention toward her was evil but she still couldn't bear to see him harmed."

Yingying thought, "This is true. If it were me, I wouldn't care how you treat me, I'll always wish you well with all my heart."

Linghu Chong stayed in the valley for more than ten days and his new injury became much better. He said that once they arrived back in Heng-Shan, he

would give the headmaster position to Yiqing. Then there would be nothing worrying him, and he would be able to travel the world with Yingying and find a secluded and nice place to live in.

Yingying said, "This matter of Lin Pingzhi, what are you going to do about the responsibility given by your departed little martial sister?"

Linghu Chong scratched his head and said, "It's the thing giving me the most headache. It's best if you don't mention it anymore. I'll just deal with it when it comes to me."

Yingying smiled and didn't say anymore. The two of them gave their respects in front of the two tombs and took their leave.

Chapter 37 Forcing Marriage

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The two figures in the reflection looked exactly the same, both had baggy lady's robes, even the hair bun were no different. It was an exact copy of him. Linghu Chong was so frightened that his heart almost stopped beating.

After Linghu Chong and Yingying came out from the valley, they walked for half a day and arrived at a small town. They went to a noodle shop to eat some noodle. Linghu Chong had picked up a few strings of noodles with his

chopsticks when he chuckled and said, "We haven't paid our respect to heaven and earth to get married..."

Yingying's whole face immediately became bright red. "Who said I'm going to pay respect to heaven and earth to marry you?" she angrily replied.

"We'll get married in the future," said a smiling Linghu Chong. "If you're not willing, then I'll grab you and make you pay respect to heaven and earth."

Yingying was looking like she was smiling but not smiling at the same time. "You were so well behaved when we were in the valley. Once we come out, you're speaking such improper crazy talks again."

Linghu Chong was still smiling as he replied, "We must definitely be most proper concerning this lifelong great matter. Yingying, that day in the valley, I suddenly thought of something. After we become husband and wife, I wonder how many kids we'll have."

Yingying stood up abruptly with a scowl on her face. "If you keep saying these things, I won't go back with you to Heng-Shan."

"Alright, alright, I'll stop, I'll stop," Linghu Chong laughed. But he continued, "There are so many peach trees in that valley that it looks like a peach valley. If we have six ghosts, wouldn't they become Little Peach Valley Six Fairies?"

"How can we have six ghosts?" Yingying muttered as she sat back down. At the same time she said this, she understood what he meant. This was more crazy talk from Linghu Chong. Her eyes widened showing the whites all around them; she looked at Linghu Chong and quickly lowered her head and stuffed noodles into her mouth. Her heart was filled with sweetness.

"When we go back to Heng-Shan together, there will be some dirty minded person and there'll also be people who thought that we've gotten married. I'm afraid you won't be happy hearing such vulgar nonsense," Linghu Chong said.

This was exactly what Yingying was thinking of. She said, "That's right. It's best if we disguise ourselves as farmers; then no one would be able to recognise us."

"You have such a beautiful and lovely face. No matter what we change into, it'll always shock people. When other people see us, they'll secretly praise: 'Hey, such a beautiful girl. What is she doing with a silly little kid? How can such a rare and beautiful flower be inserted into a pile of dung?' But when they look closer, they'll definitely see this rare flower is actually the Divine Sun Moon Sect's young lady Ren while this pile of manure is the person young lady Ren favoured, Linghu Chong."

"You don't need to be so modest," Yingying smiled.

"I think, when we go back to Heng-Shan this time, I should become someone ordinary and secretly look around first. If everything's quiet and safe, I'll go there by myself and give up this headmaster position to someone. Then I'll meet with you at some secret place and we'll go down the mountain together. The gods wouldn't know, the ghosts wouldn't know, how can this be not good?"

Hearing him said this; she knew he was being considerate to her so she felt really happy. She laughingly said, "That's very good. But when you go up Mount Heng-Shan, it's best if you shave your own head and disguise yourself as a Shi Tai, especially when you are going to see those Shi Tai. No one would be suspicious of you. Brother Chong, come, I'll help you change to become a little nun. I'm only afraid you might be too good looking."

Linghu Chong waved his hand. "No, no. Once I see a nun, I'll lose all my bet. If Linghu Chong pretends to be a nun then I might get bad luck later on. That won't do at all."

Yingying laughed. "A gentleman is flexible, why do you need so many taboos for? I have to shave you now."

Linghu Chong also laughed. "There's no need to dress as a nun. But to go up Xianxing Peak, I'll need to dress as a woman. But once I speak, people will know I'm a man. I have an idea. Do you remember the person from the Hanging Temple on Mount Cui Ping beyond the Porcelain Oven Pass?"

Yingying hummed as she thought. Then she clapped her hands and said, "Wonderful, wonderful! There's a mute and deaf servant at the Hanging Temple.

Even when we turned that temple upside down, she didn't hear a single thing. When you ask her anything, she just stupidly looks at you. You want to disguise as this person?"

"That's right."

"Alright, let's go buy a gown for you to change into," said Yingying laughing.

Yingying used two silver taels to buy a head of long hair from a country girl. She combed it well before putting it on Linghu Chong's head. Then she let him change into a farmer woman's gown and he now looked like a woman. She then daubed some yellow powder and drew seven to eight black moles on his face. And she also stuck a piece of medicinal wrap on his lower right cheek. Linghu Chong looked in the mirror and he couldn't even recognise himself.

Yingying laughed and said, "Your figure is similar to hers, but your expression isn't. You have to wear this stupid and foolish expression: slow-witted and clumsy like."

Linghu Chong laughed. "Wearing a stupid and foolish expression is very easy, there's nothing to change. Slow-witted and clumsy, that's also Linghu Chong's true colour."

"The most important thing is when someone suddenly tries to scare you from behind, you mustn't give yourself away," Yingying cautioned.

Along the road, Linghu Chong practised to be this mute and deaf woman. The two of them didn't spend the night in an inn but lodged in an abandoned temple. Yingying again and again suddenly shouted behind him and Linghu Chong was adequately deaf to it. Within a day, they arrived at the foot of Mount Heng-Shan. They made an appointment to meet each other in three days at the Hanging Temple's field. Linghu Chong then went up the Xianxing Peak alone, leaving Yingying to spend her time nearby on the mountain.

When Linghu Chong arrived at Xianxing Peak, it was already evening. He pondered, "If I enter the convent and take a look around, martial sisters Yiqing, Zheng E, Yilin and the other martial sisters are all very observant, so they'll definitely get suspicious. It's still best if I secretly look around first."

He quickly found a secluded mountain cave and slept there until the moon was in the middle of the sky. Then he went to the living quarters of Wuse Convent at Xianxing Peak. As he neared the living quarters, he heard the sound of long swords clashing continuously. Linghu Chong was startled as he thought, "Which enemy has come here?" He touched the short sword he was hiding inside his bosom and flew towards the sword clashing sound. The sound of fighting was coming from a house more than a hundred feet outside of Wuse Convent. There was light shining out from the house's windows. Linghu Chong rushed besides the house and heard the sound of fighting become fiercer. However, when he put his eyes to the window, he immediately felt at ease. It was Yihe and Yilin practising sword while Yiqing and Zheng E were standing on the side watching. Yihe and Yilin were practising the sword art that Linghu Chong had taught them before, which was the sword art taken from the cave behind the Cliff of Contemplation on Mount Huashan. The two of them were already quite familiar with the sword art.

As they fought, Yihe's sword gradually got faster and Yilin was barely able to keep up. Yihe thrust her sword point straight out in front of her chest. Yilin tried to circle her sword to block it but she was too late. "Ah," Yilin cried out softly. The point of Yihe's long sword was already pointing at Yilin's heart. Yihe smiled and said, "Martial sister, you lost again."

Yilin was very ashamed as she lowered her head and replied, "I've been practising but I haven't improved at all."

"You've improved compared to last time. Let's go again," Yihe said as she hacked her sword down in the middle of the air.

"Little martial sister's tired already," Yiqing interrupted. "Go to sleep with martial sister Zheng. We'll practise again tomorrow."

"Yes," Yilin replied. She put her sword back into the scabbard then took her leave from Yihe and Yiqing. Then she pulled on Zheng E's hand and went out of the door.

When Yilin turned around, Linghu Chong saw that she looked sad. He

thought, "This little martial sister is always unhappy."

Yihe closed the door, then looked at Yiqing and they both shook their heads. They waited till the footsteps of Yilin and Zheng E were far away before Yihe said, "I always see little martial sister's mind not being calm. Her heart is always in turmoil; this is a big taboo for people like us. I don't know how to advise her."

Yiqing replied, "It's very hard to advise, she must understand it herself."

"I know why her mind isn't calm, her heart is always thinking of..."

Yiqing waved her hand and said, "This is the sacred ground of Buddha, don't say such kind of talk. If we're not in a hurry to avenge master then we could've let her understand it slowly and there would be no harm."

Yihe said, "Master used to say: everything in this world is destined and there's nothing we can do about it; especially when you have to concentrate your mind on something that must be done gradually. If it is forced then you can easily fall into the world of evil. I see little martial sister is emotional both inside and outside, and with her kind of personality, she's actually unsuitable to be a person of Buddhism."

Yiqing let out a sigh and said, "I've never tasted that kind of feeling before, but... but in the end, our school must have a Buddhist to be the headmaster. Martial Brother Linghu once said that he's only going to be the headmaster of this school temporarily only. But first we have to deal with that traitor Yue Buqun, who killed our master and martial uncles..."

Linghu Chong was greatly startled when he heard this. "How can it be my master who killed their master and martial uncles?" Then he heard Yiqing went on, "If we don't avenge this deep hatred, then we, as their disciples, won't be able to eat and sleep peacefully."

Yihe said, "I'm even more anxious compared to you. Alright, we'll intensify her sword training tomorrow."

"The common saying goes: you botch it by hurrying it, but not forcing it will

let you advance greatly. However, in the past few days, I've seen little martial sister's vigour becoming less and less," Yiqing said.

"That's right," Yihe agreed. The two martial sisters picked up their weapons and extinguished the light. Then they went inside and lay down on their beds.

Linghu Chong quietly stood outside the window and his mind was in turmoil. "Why did they say my master killed their master and martial uncles? Also, why do they need to avenge their master before getting someone to receive the school's leadership? And why must they supervise little martial sister Yilin's sword training around the clock?"

He stood there thinking to himself for a long time, but he still didn't understand the reason. He slowly walked away and thought, "I'll ask martial sisters Yihe and Yiqing later."

Suddenly, Linghu Chong saw his own shadow slowly swaying. He raised his head and looked at the moon. The moon looked as if it was hanging on the tip of a tree. He immediately thought of something and he nearly called out. He thought, "I should've realised this a long time ago. Why did they understand this matter, but I didn't?" He quickly went besides the wall of a small house and leaned on it so that the guards around the Heng-Shan School wouldn't be able to see his shadow.

When his mind became calm, he thought back to the Shaolin Temple where Dingxian and Dingyi Shi Tai were killed. At that time, Dingyi Shi Tai had already died, and Dingxian Shi Tai passed away straight after she had given him the leadership of the school. Dingxian Shi Tai didn't reveal who the murderer was. When he checked their bodies, there were no sign of external or internal injuries nor was there any sign of poison on the two Shi Tai's bodies. The way they died was really weird, but it was inappropriate for him to open their gowns to check more thoroughly. Later, after he had come out from Shaolin Temple, Yingying told him she opened their gowns and checked on their injuries. She saw two little holes on the skin above their hearts. It looked as if someone had used needles to pierce their hearts. At that time, he had jumped up and said: 'Poison needle? Who uses poison needles in Wulin?' and Yingying had replied:

'Daddy and Uncle Xiang's experiences are vast, but they also don't know. Daddy said that it wasn't a poisoned needle. It's actually a sharp weapon aimed at a fatal point that killed them. But the needle piercing Dingxian Shi Tai was slightly slanted.' He had said: 'Yes. When I saw Dingxian Shi Tai, she was still alive. This needle had pierced into her chest, so it wasn't done secretly, and they were actually fighting face to face. The person who killed the two Shi Tai must've been a master with high martial art.' Yingying said: 'That's what my daddy also said. Since we have this clue, it won't be hard to find out who the murderer is.' At that time, he had slapped the wall of the cave and said loudly: 'Yingying, while the two of us still have our lives, we must avenge the two Shi Tai,' and Yingying replied: 'Yes.'

Both of Linghu Chong's hands were pressed on the wall and he couldn't help shivering. He thought, "The master who is capable of killing the two Shi Tai by using a small piece of needle must either be using the Sunflower Manual or the Evil Resisting Sword Art. Dongfang Bubai had always been on top of the Dark Wood Cliff embroidering, so he couldn't be the one killing people in Shaolin Temple. Also, looking at his martial art, his needle couldn't have missed when he tried to kill Dingxian Shi Tai. Zuo Lengchan had learned the fake Evil Resisting Sword Art. At that time, martial brother Lin had only gotten the sword manual so he couldn't have learned it completely; perhaps he might not even have gotten the manual at that time..." He thought back to the snow field when he met with Lin Pingzhi and Yue Lingshan and he thought, "That's right, at that time, Lin Pingzhi's voice hasn't changed yet. It doesn't matter if he had gotten the manual or not because he couldn't have completed his learning of the Evil Resisting Sword Art then" As he thought till here, sweat started to come out from his forehead.

At that time, the person who could use a needle to fight openly from the front and kill the two Shi Tai from Heng-Shan School must have had a martial art which was not that much higher compared to Dingxian Shi Tai because that one needle did not manage to kill her. There was only Yue Buqun who could've done it. He also thought of how Yue Buqun had deliberately planned to take the headmaster position of the Five Mountains School and had actually allowed Lao

Denuo to stay inside the school for more than ten years without revealing his real identity. At the end, he allowed Lao Denuo to steal a fake sword manual and easily blinded both of Zuo Lengchan's eyes. Dingxian and Dingyi Shi Tai were putting all their efforts in fighting against the merger of the five schools, so Yue Buqun took the opportunity to do away with them and removed a big obstacle to the merger of the schools. This must have been the reason. Why wasn't Dingxian Shi Tai willing to reveal her murderer? It must be because Yue Buqun was his master. If the murderer were Zuo Lengchan or Dongfang Bubai, why wouldn't Dingxian Shi Tai say it?

Linghu Chong again thought back to the day when he was inside that mountain cave having a conversation with Yingying. Yue Buqun had kicked him heavily in the Shaolin Temple, but he didn't get injured and instead Yue Buqun's leg was broken. Yingying felt this was really strange. She said her father had also thought for a long time and still could not come up with a reason. Linghu Chong had absorbed the internal energies of many people and it was true that these internal energies were enough to protect his body. But he must move these internal energies in order to harm others; unlike the completed internal energy art which was capable of countering the enemy's attack without him having to move the internal energies. As he thought of this, he realised Yue Buqun must have deliberately put on such a show for Zuo Lengchan. To make sure the leg was really broken, Yue Buqun must have used his own internal energy to break it and let Zuo Lengchan see it to show that his martial art was just average and that there was nothing to worry about so that Zuo Lengchan could go forward with his plan of the merger. Zuo Lengchan had made painstaking effort to finally merge the five schools and when it had finally happened, Yue Buqun had taken everything from him. This reasoning was not hard to understand, but no matter what was said, Linghu Chong had never have any suspicion towards his master. Perhaps, this suspicion had always been buried deep in his heart and every time he arrived at this thought, his mind immediately fled from it because he was not willing and did not dare to think about it. Only at this time when he heard Yihe and Yiqing conversing with each other that he finally could not avoid it any longer.

For his whole life, he had loved and respected his master. Unexpectedly, his master was such a person. Now he felt his life was all meaningless. At that moment, he felt he couldn't even gather enough strength to go to the Heng-Shan Other Courtyard to take a look, so he found a secluded and calm field on the mountain and slept.

In the morning of the next day, Linghu Chong arrived at the Tong Yuan Valley when the day was already bright. He walked besides a small creek and saw his disguised form in the water's reflection. He checked his gown and shoes to see that nothing was out of place before he proceeded to the Other Courtyard. He went around the main entrance, wishing to enter from the side entrance. Just as he arrived besides the gate, he heard noises from the inside.

There were many people from inside the courtyard shouting loudly: "Really strange! Damn it, who did this?" "When did this happen? How come the gods didn't know, the ghosts didn't feel it; the hands and feet are really agile!" "These people's martial art aren't bad, how come they could be played by other people without uttering a word?"

Linghu Chong knew something strange had taken place. He stayed by the side entrance and looked inside. The courtyard and the walkways were full of people looking at the branches of a Gongsun tree. Linghu Chong lifted his head up to take a look and he also felt it very strange that his heart was also calling out like the other people in the courtyard. High on top of the tree were eight people hanging down. They were Qiu Songnian, Madam Zhang, Monk Xibao, Priest Yuling, and their other group members making seven of them, while the other person was ‘Slippery and Hard to Grip’ You Xun. The eight of them had apparently had their acupoints sealed and all of their limbs tied up, and they had been hung up there swinging to and fro. They were more than ten feet above the ground. Besides following the blowing of the wind, they could not move at all. All eight of them had embarrassed expressions, which were rarely seen. Two black snakes were seen slithering around their bodies, which were actually the 'Double-Snake Ruthless Beggar' Yan Sanxing's precious weapons. It was ordinary for these two snakes to be slithering about Yan Sanxing's body, but

when they were slithering about the other seven people's bodies, expressions of fear and loathing was added to the angry and ashamed appearances of these people.

Someone from the crowd leapt up. He was Night Cat 'Nothing He Can't Do' Ji Wushi. His hand was holding a dagger, and he quickly cut the bindings of 'Tung Cypress Whiz Duo'. These two people then fell from mid air and a short and stout Old Man extended his hand to stop them and put them on the ground. In just a brief moment, all eight of them had been helped down by Ji Wushi and each person had had their acupoints unsealed. Once Qiu Songnian was freed, he promptly hurled some abuses. He then saw the crowd of people were wide eyed looking at him; some were smiling, some were amazed, some were saying, "Has!", some were saying, "Plot!", some were saying, "Careful!", and some were saying, "Life!". Madam Zhang took a glance and saw there was one word written on each of Qiu Songnian's and the other six people's foreheads. The words said: 'Plot Has Been Defeated, Be Careful Worthless Life!'

The other people were alarmed and one by one they repeated, "Plot Has Been Defeated, Be Careful Worthless Life!"

Monk Xibao angrily shouted, "What plot has been defeated, your granny! Which worthless life needs to be careful?" While Priest Yuling extended his hand, spat on it, and then rubbed his forehead trying to wipe away the word.

Zhu Qianqiu said, "Brother You, how did the eight of you get captured? Can you tell us?"

You Xun smiled slightly and said, "I'm ashamed to say it, but I was sleeping peacefully last night, and didn't know how it happened. But someone sealed my acupoints and hung me from the top of the tree. That thief was most likely using the 'Five Confusion Poison' to knock us out. Otherwise, how can these brothers' skills be of no use and fell into someone's plot? How can someone so wise and brave like Priest Yuling and Madam Zhang fall into this?"

Madam Zhang snorted and said, "That must be it." She didn't want to linger and talk too much so she hastily went in to wash her face. Priest Yuling and the

others also followed her in.

The crowd discussed about this and many of them were clicking their tongues feeling the incident was really strange. They all said, "You Xun's words aren't true."

Some people said, "There are dozens of people sleeping inside the hall. If they used confusion poison, then dozens of us would get it. How come only a few of them got it?"

Many people thought of the word 'Plot' from the phrase 'Plot Has Been Defeated', they didn't know what kind of plot it was pointing at so they came up with many guesses and couldn't decide which one was right. Someone said, "Which master hung these eight people on that tall tree?"

Someone laughingly answered, "Luckily the Peach Valley Six Weirdos aren't here today, otherwise it'll be so noisy here."

Another person replied, "How do you know it wasn't the Peach Valley Six Fairies who did this? Those six brothers are very eccentric. Most likely it was them who did this."

Zu Qianqiu shook his head. "No, no, it can't be."

One of the earlier person said, "Brother Zu, how do you know?"

Zu Qianqiu laughed. "Even though the Peach Valley Six Fairies' martial arts are high, their knowledge is very limited. I can guarantee you that they wouldn't even be able to write that word 'Plot'."

The crowd burst into laughter thinking what Zu Qianqiu said was right. Everyone was discussing this interesting matter and no one paid attention towards Linghu Chong who was disguised as a servant and was wearing a stupid expression. Linghu Chong thought in his heart, "What were these eight people trying to plot? It must be something harmful towards my Heng-Shan School."

After noon, on the same day, some people outside the courtyard shouted, "Weird, weird! Everyone, come have a look!" The crowd rushed out, while

Linghu Chong slowly followed behind them. On the right side of the Other Courtyard there were tens of people surrounding something. The crowd quickly sprinted to go there. Linghu Chong walked near and heard some people discussing about this. There were more than ten people who were sitting on the ground facing the cliff. It was apparent their acupoints had been sealed and they were unable to move. There were eight words written on the wall of the mountain and they were the same words as before, 'Plot Has Been Defeated, Be Careful Worthless Life'.

Some people turned those people sitting on the ground around and they saw the Bear Duo of the Northern Desert were amongst them. Ji Wushi walked up to the Bear Duo of the Northern Desert and released their mute acupoints, but not the other sealed acupoints leaving them unable to move. Ji Wushi said, "There's something I don't understand here that I'd like to ask you about. I'd like to ask the two of you what kind of secret plan are you involved in? Everyone here would like to know."

"Right, right! What plot? Tell us about it," the crowd demanded.

Black Bear scolded, "Damn their eighteen ancestors. What plot? Plot their turtle sons."

"Who sealed your acupoints? Can you tell us about it?" Zu Qianqiu queried.

White Bear said, "It's good if I know. I was just walking peacefully around the mountain when my back suddenly felt numb, ambushed by that bastard. If it's a hero then he would've fought me with real sabre, real spear. Sneaking an attack behind me, what kind of person is that?"

Zu Qianqiu said, "That's fine if the two of you don't want to say it. This matter is already known to the others but I see that there's nothing we can do about it. But I think you need to be really careful."

Someone said in a loud voice, "Brother Zu, they're not willing to disclose it, then let them stay here for three days and three nights."

Another person said, "Right, he who tied the bell on the tiger's neck is the only one to untie it*. If you release them, that master will definitely put the blame on

you, seal your acupoints, and hang you from a tree. It certainly won't be fun."

(*The meaning of this saying is: He who caused the dispute is the only one to resolve it.)

Ji Wushi said, "What you said isn't wrong. Brothers, I'm not sitting here on the side being a spectator, I'm actually a little bit afraid."

Black Bear and White Bear looked at each other, and they were both furious. But it was pointless to start scolding, and they also didn't dare to publicly scold Ji Wushi's ancestor. Otherwise, with them still being unable to move, they wouldn't be able to fight back if the opponent wanted to be rude towards them.

Ji Wushi laughed while cupping his hands to the crowd continuously. "Everyone, please." Then he turned his body around to walk away. The people crowding around them pointed and laughed, said a few words and they also slowly walked away. Linghu Chong turned around and walked slowly. When he reached the outside of the Other Courtyard, he heard people clamouring and giggling inside. He raised his head and saw two people had been hung on the Gongsun tree again. One of them was Monk Cannot Have No Commandment and the other one was Monk No Commandment.

Linghu Chong was greatly amazed as he thought, "Great Master No Commandment is little martial sister Yilin's father, while Tian Boguang is little martial sister's disciple. The two of them would never give Heng-Shan School any trouble. If Heng-Shan School has any problem, they would exert themselves to help. Why are they being hung on the tree?" He was really sure he knew what was going on before, but suddenly his whole idea had been turned upside down. He thought of one thing, "Great Master No Commandment is innocent like a child, he doesn't have any enmity with anyone. Why would anyone hang him from the tree? Someone must be playing a joke with him. No one here is strong enough to capture Great Master No Commandment, this must be Peach Valley Six Fairies' doing." But what Zu Qianqiu said before was very reasonable, the Peach Valley Six Fairies couldn't have written the word 'Plot'. He entered the courtyard slowly as his mind was occupied with doubts. As he entered, he saw there was a piece of yellow paper stuck to each of Monk No Commandment's

and Tian Boguang's bodies. There were words written on them.

The words written on Monk No Commandment's paper were: 'World's number one heartless, perverted and lascivious man.' While the words written on Tian Boguang's paper were: 'World's number one in unseemly behaviour, a person who does everything half heartedly.'

When Linghu Chong read this for the first time, he immediately thought, "These two papers are placed on the wrong persons. How come Monk No Commandment is 'a perverted and lascivious man'? This 'perverted and lascivious' words, they must surely belong to Tian Boguang. While the words 'unseemly behaviour', they must surely belong to Monk No Commandment. He's not sworn off from killing, eating meat, and he even dared to take a nun as his wife when he's a monk. These are unseemly behaviour. But this 'half heartedly' comment, where did it come from?"

But these two papers were stuck nicely to each of their necks, and it didn't look like someone had hastily stuck them wrongly. The crowd was pointing, laughing, and discussing what was going on. Many people also said, "Tian Boguang is perverted, this is very well known in the world. How can this big monk be more perverted than he is?"

Ji Wushi and Zu Qianqiu consulted each other quietly, and both of them sensed something was fishy. They knew Monk No Commandment and Linghu Chong were very good towards each other and they must help these two people down first before discussing it further. Ji Wushi quickly leapt up the tree and cut of the ropes binding their hands and feet and released their sealed acupoints. No Commandment and Tian Boguang were both looking very dejected, unlike Qiu Songnian and Bear Duo of the Northern Desert who started hurling abuses as soon as they were released.

Ji Wushi quietly asked, "Great Master, how did you also end up like that?" But Monk No Commandment just shook his head and slowly took off the piece of paper stuck to him. He stared at the words written on it for a long time and all of a sudden, he cried.

This change was totally out of everyone's expectation. The crowd abruptly turned deathly quiet and all of them were stupefied as they gaped at him. Both of his fists were clenched as they kept on hammering his own chest; he was becoming even sadder as he cried. Tian Boguang tried to comfort him, "Grand martial master, you don't need to be sad. We lost to someone's plot, but when we find this person, we'll break his corpse into thousands of pieces..." He had not finished yet when Monk No Commandment turned around and gave him a hard slap. The palm hit Tian Boguang, forcing him to back away for more than ten feet. He staggered and had nearly fallen down. Half of his cheek had now started to become swollen.

Monk No Commandment scolded, "Smelly bastard! We were hung up here because we deserved it. You... You... You're very daring. Wanting to kill other people!"

Tian Boguang was confused when he heard Grand Martial Master said this. The person who had captured them must be someone with an impressive background that even Grand Martial Master did not dare to offend him. So all Tian Boguang could do was agree to his Grand Martial Master. Monk No Commandment stared dumbly, and started to cry and beat on his chest again. Suddenly, he struck out again with his palm towards Tian Boguang. Tian Boguang was really fast so he quickly evaded the strike as he called out, "Grand Martial Master!"

Monk No Commandment did not chase after him even though his hit had missed. He took his hand back and with a slap, he hit a stone bench inside the courtyard, causing the crumbling stones to fly out everywhere. His left palm and his right palm struck out continuously as he started to cry again. More and more force was used with each strike. After more than ten strikes, both of his palms were covered with blood and the top of the stone bench had also crumbled to gravel. Then with a thunderous crack, the stone bench was split asunder into four pieces. The crowd was amazed and none of them dared to utter a single word. Every one of them was afraid to draw his anger onto them. Besides, whose head was stronger than that of the stone bench if Monk No

Commandment were to turn to them?

Zu Qianqiu, Old Man, and Ji Wushi looked at each other and none of them knew what was happening. Tian Boguang saw something was amiss so he said, "Everyone, please look after Grand Martial Master. I'll go look for Master."

Linghu Chong pondered, "Even though I'm already disguised, little martial sister Yilin is very careful, I should be careful not to let her discover my disguise."

He had disguised himself before as a general and a farmer, but both had been male. This time around, he had disguised himself as a woman and it was actually very uncomfortable. He was not feeling very confident in the disguise and he was afraid his disguise would be revealed. So he quickly took himself inside the firewood house at the back garden, and thought, "The acupoints of the Bear Duo of the Northern Desert and the others are still being sealed. Ji Wushi and Zu Qianqiu must be wanting to eavesdrop on what they'll be talking about at night. I should go to sleep now and wake up sometime at night to listen to what they're talking about." Linghu Chong drifted into sleep hearing Monk No Commandment's wailing. He was amazed at this but also found it funny.

When he woke up, the sky was already dark, and he went to the kitchen to look for some cold rice and tea to eat. After a long time, he heard no sound of anyone around. Thereupon, he slowly strolled around to the back of the mountain where the Bear Duo of the Northern Desert and the other people were. Linghu Chong crouched inside the underbrush far away and strained his ears to listen. Soon, he heard the breathing of people hiding in the underbrush all around him. There were at least around twenty people concealed in the underbrush. Linghu Chong found this hilarious. "Ji Wushi and the others must be wanting to eavesdrop as well. They've thought of the same thing. I guess there are many smart people here." He also thought, "Ji Wushi is good. He unsealed the mute acupoints of those two cannibals of the Bear Duo of the Northern Desert, but he didn't unseal the other people's mute acupoints. Otherwise, once the Bear Duo of the Northern Desert open their mouths, they'll be told to shut up by their more competent comrades."

Linghu Chong then heard White Bear swearing continuously, "Your granny, so many mosquitoes on this mountain side. They want to suck my blood dry before they're happy. I curse the eighteen generations of your mosquitoes' ancestors."

Black Bear laughed. "The mosquitoes are stinging you only, but not me. I wonder what the reason is."

White Bear cussed, "Your blood is smelly so the mosquitoes don't want to eat it."

Black Bear laughingly replied, "I'd rather have smelly blood instead of hundreds of mosquitoes stinging me."

White Bear replied with curses. After hurling abuses for a while, White Bear said, "After my acupoints are released, the first thing I'll do is to look for Night Cat and settle our business. I'll seal that bastard's acupoints and eat the flesh from his thigh bite by bite."

Black Bear laughingly replied, "But I'd rather eat those nuns. Their skins are so white and their meat would be more tender."

White Bear said, "Mr. Yue ordered us to take those nuns to Mount Huashan, not to eat them."

Black Bear laughingly said, "There are hundreds of nuns here, Mr. Yue wouldn't know if we eat three or four of them."

Linghu Chong was greatly startled. "Master ordered them? Why did he ask them to take the Heng-Shan School's disciples to Mount Huashan? This 'Plot' must've have been this thing. But how did they get my master's order?"

Suddenly, White Bear loudly shouted, "Bastards!"

Black Bear indignantly said, "If you don't want to eat nuns then don't eat. Why do you have to scold me for?"

"I'm scolding these mosquitoes, not you," White Bear said.

Linghu Chong's mind was full of thoughts when he suddenly heard footsteps

from the underbrush behind him. The footsteps slowly came near him. Linghu Chong thought, "This person had better not step on me." That person was walking straight at him and stopped right behind him before crouching down and lightly pulling on his sleeve. Linghu Chong was started and thought, "Who's this? Did he recognise me?" Then he turned his head around. Under the blurry moonlight, he saw a beautiful round face. It was Yilin. He was startled and happy at the same time, he thought, "So my disguise has been discovered by her. Of course I wouldn't look like a woman even if I'm disguised in one."

Yilin inclined her head to a side with her little mouth pouting, and she slowly stood up. She was still pulling on his sleeve showing that she wanted to talk to him someplace away from there. Linghu Chong followed behind her as she went towards the west. The two of them didn't say a single word as they walked. Yilin led them along a narrow strip of mountain road away from the Tong Yuan Valley. She suddenly said, "You don't listen to what other people said and come up to this troubling place again. That's very dangerous." These few words she said didn't seem to be directed to him, but it seemed like she was talking to herself.

Linghu Chong was startled and thought, "She said I don't listen to what other people said. What did she mean by that? Is she pretending, or she really doesn't recognise me?" He also thought that because Yilin had never jested with him, it was more likely that she didn't recognise him. Then he saw her turning north and gradually going towards the Porcelain Oven Pass. After going around a level area in the mountain, they arrived besides a small creek.

Yilin said, softly, "We always talk here. Are you sick of my voice?" She giggled gently and went on, "You never listen to what I say. Mute Granny, if you can really listen to what I say, I wouldn't talk to you anymore."

Yilin said this so sincerely that Linghu Chong knew she only recognised him as the Mute Granny living on the Hanging Temple. His childlike heart was roused as he thought, "I'll just play along and see what she has to say."

Yilin led him by his sleeve towards a big rock underneath a big willow tree, and sat down. Linghu Chong also sat down with his body leaning to the side and the moon behind him so Yilin couldn't take a look at his face. He thought, "Is my disguise really that good that even Yilin is fooled? It must be because it's night so it's not easy for her to recognise me. Yingying's appearance changing technique is pretty good."

Yilin gazed up at the moon and sighed. Linghu Chong desperately wanted to ask, "You're still so young, why do you have so much to worry about?" But at the end, he didn't say it out loud.

Yilin said gently, "Mute Granny, you're really good. I often pull you aside to tell you what I'm thinking, but you're never annoyed. You always listen patiently to what I have to say. I shouldn't have bothered you in the first place, but you treat me so nicely just like my own mother. I don't have a mother; if I do have a mother, would I dare to talk like this with her?"

Linghu Chong realized she was going to pour her heart out and thought it was inappropriate for him to hear it. He thought, "What kind of matter is she going to talk about? I'm deceiving her to reveal her innermost secret. I feel really apologetic to her. I should just quickly go." He immediately stood up.

Yilin pulled on his sleeve. "Mute Granny, you... you want to go?" Her voice sounded really disappointed. Linghu Chong took a glance at her and saw her face looking sad and her eyes looking like she was begging him to stay. His heart turned soft and he thought, "Little martial sister looks melancholy and she has a lot of things on her mind. If she had nowhere to vent them then they'll always be in her heart and she might become sick. I just need to listen to what she has to say and don't let her know that it's me; then she wouldn't be bashful." He slowly sat back down.

Yilin hugged his neck. "Mute Granny, how good of you to accompany me for a while. You don't know I have a lot of things in my mind."

Linghu Chong thought, "In my whole life, Linghu Chong is fated to cross paths with grannies. Earlier with Yingying, I mistakenly took her for a granny.

Now, Yilin mistakenly take me for a granny. I called someone else a granny for a few hundred times, now she's calling me granny. It can be said that a good person also gets a good repayment."

Yilin said, "Today, my father nearly hanged himself to death. Do you know that? He was hung on a tree and a paper was put up on him, saying that he's 'World's number one heartless, perverted and lascivious man'. In his whole life, my father only has my mother in his heart. So how can they say he's a pervert? That person must've been confused. He must've wanted to hang that paper on Tian Boguang's body but he wrongly hung it on my father. Actually, it's not a big deal that it's mistakenly hung; just swap them. There's no need to hang himself for that."

Linghu Chong was startled but he also found this funny. "How can she say Great Master No Commandment wanted to commit suicide? She said he was nearly hanged to death, so he obviously didn't die. The words written on those two papers aren't good words, so once they're taken down, why would you put them up on themselves again? This little martial sister is really naive, she really doesn't understand how things work in the real world."

Yilin continued, "Tian Boguang hurried up to Xianxing Peak wanting to speak to me, but he met martial sister Yihe instead. She said he came up Xianxing Peak without permission, so without asking, she attacked with her sword and he almost lost his life. That was really dangerous."

Linghu Chong thought, "I once said that the men from the Other Courtyard must not go up Xianxing Peak without my permission. Brother Tian's reputation isn't good and martial sister Yihe is quick to anger, so once she saw him there, of course she'll use her sword to attack. But, Brother Tian's martial art is much higher than her so Yihe was unable to kill him." He was just about to nod his head agreeing to her when he quickly thought, "No matter what she said, whether I agree or not, I mustn't nod or shake my head. That Mute Granny wouldn't have been able to hear to what she has to say."

Yilin went on, "When Tian Boguang finally told her everything, martial sister Yihe had slashed about seventeen to eighteen moves. Luckily she held back and

didn't really kill him. Once I received the news, I quickly went to Tong Yuan Valley. But I didn't see my father. I asked some people, but they all said he was inside the courtyard crying and making a lot of noise before. He was really in a fit of anger and no one dared to talk to him. They didn't see him after that. I went around the Tong Yuan Valley trying to look for him, and finally I found him at the back of the mountain hanging high from a tree. I was really worried and quickly took him down from the tree. I saw there was a rope around his neck and it was cutting off his airway. It was really a blessing from Buddha that I arrived there in time. I helped and roused him up, then he cried hugging me. I saw there was a paper hanging on his neck, there were words written on it saying something like 'World's number one heartless man'. I said to him: 'Dad, this person is really terrible. He hung you up before, and now he hanged you. He also put up the wrong paper and didn't swap it.' My father was half crying and half saying to me: 'No one hanged me, I hanged myself. I... I don't want to live anymore.' I told him: 'Dad, that person must've suddenly sneaked an attack on you so you fell into his trap; so there's no need to be sad. Let's find and talk to him. If what he said isn't right, then we'll hang him up on a tree and put this paper around his neck.' Dad said: 'This paper is mine. How can you hang it on other people? World's number one heartless, perverted and lascivious man, this is Monk No Commandment. How can other people exceed me in this? Child, you're speaking blindly.' Mute Granny, when I heard him said this, I found it really strange so I asked him: 'Dad, this paper wasn't wrongly hung?' Dad replied: 'Of course not. I... I wronged your mother, that's why I wanted to hang myself. You don't need to worry about me, I really don't want to live anymore.'"

Linghu Chong remembered Monk No Commandment had mentioned to him before that he loved Yilin's mother because she was a nun. So he became a monk because of her. Monk marrying a nun, it was really a rare and strange thing. He said that he had wronged Yilin's mother; it must be because he loved another woman later on and that was why he had admitted to being a 'heartless, perverted and depraved man'. As he thought till here, he slowly came to understand some of these things.

Yilin said, "When I saw dad cried miserably, I also cried. Dad then advised

me: 'Good child, don't cry, don't cry. If dad dies, you'll be all alone in this world. Who would take care of you?' When he said that, I cried even harder." She said until here when beads of tears dropped from her eyes. She looked really sad as she went on, "Dad said: 'Alright, alright! I won't die, but I'm really sorry about your mother.' I asked: 'How did you wrong Mother?' Dad sighed and said: 'Your mother was originally a nun, you already know about this. When I first saw your mother, I immediately fell in love with her and wanted to take her to be my wife, no matter what. Your mother said: 'Amituofo, thinking of this kind of thing, you're also not afraid of Buddha.' I said: 'If Buddha wants to blame someone, then he can blame me.' Your mother said: 'You're a lay person, it's natural for you to take a wife. My body has already been pledged to Buddhism, and I'm free from wordly desires. If I'm to be moved by worldly desires, Buddha will of course blame me. How can Buddha blame you?' I thought what she said wasn't wrong. It was me who has made up my mind to marry your mother, not your mother who wanted to marry me. How can I let Buddha blame her and put her in hell when she dies? How can I let that happen to her? That's why I went on to become a monk. Of course Buddha will blame me. If we're sent to hell then we'll go together as husband and wife.'"

Linghu Chong thought, "Great Master No Commandment is really the passionate type. He became a monk just to bear the Buddha's blame. Since he's so committed, I wonder how his heart could have changed?"

Yilin continued, "Then I asked dad: 'Did you marry mother afterwards?' Dad answered: 'Of course I did. If not, how did we get you? I shouldn't have done that, I shouldn't have. That day you were just three months old, and I was just carrying you outside the door for some sun.' I said: 'What's wrong with getting some sun?' Dad said: 'As luck would have it, at that time, there was a good looking madam riding past the door. She saw a big monk carrying a little baby and felt it was weird. After a few glances, she praised: 'What a beautiful baby!' I felt really happy and said: 'You're also very beautiful.' That madam stared at me and asked: 'Where did you steal this baby girl from?' I said: 'What do you mean steal? She's my own baby.' That madam suddenly threw a tantrum and scolded: 'I'm asking you nicely, but you keep on teasing me. Are you tired of living?' I

said: 'How did I tease you? Aren't monks people? Can't we have child? If you don't believe me, then let me give you a look.' Who could've thought that lady was so fierce, she took out the long sword slung at her back and stabbed it at me. Isn't that very unreasonable?'"

Linghu Chong thought, "Great Master No Commandment speaks frankly and everything he says are always the truth. But when other people hear it, his words become nonsense teasing. Since he's already taken a wife and gotten a baby, why didn't he turn back to be a secular man? It's neither fish nor fowl for a big monk to be carrying a little baby girl."

Yilin went on, "I said: 'This madam was too fierce. I was clearly yours, and you didn't deceive her. What was she doing stabbing a sword at you?' Dad said: 'Yes, at that time, I quickly dodged and said: 'What are you doing indiscriminately chopping your sword for? If this baby girl isn't mine, then is she yours?' That madam got even angrier and stabbed three times. She didn't manage to hit me with her sword so she thrust out even faster. Of course I wasn't afraid of her, but I was afraid she might hurt you. When she stabbed out for the eighth time, I kicked out at her and sent her somersaulting. She stopped and scolded me: 'What a shameless monk, disgraceful and nasty person, sexually harassing a lady.' It was at this time when your mother returned from the river bank after washing the clothes and she stood on the side to listen. That madam scolded me a few more times before she angrily got on her horse and rode away. She didn't even pick up the sword she dropped on the ground. I turned my head around to talk to your mother. She didn't even reply a single word I said, but she just stood there weeping. I asked her what's the matter but she just ignored me. The morning of the next day, your mother was gone. There was a paper on the table and there were five words written on it. Can you guess what they were? They were 'Heartless man, perverted and lascivious'. I carried you everywhere to look for her, but I didn't find her.'

I said: 'Mother heard what that madam said and she believed that you really sexually harassed her.' Dad said: 'You're right, wasn't that an injustice? But later on, I thought about it and believed not all of it was injustice. Because when I

saw that madam, my heart was thinking: 'This lady is good looking.' Think about it. I was already married to your mother, but my heart was still praising another woman to be pretty. Not only praising in my heart, my mouth was praising her too. Isn't that a heartless, perverted and lascivious man?'"

Linghu Chong thought, "So martial sister Yilin's mother was very jealous. Of course, this was a big misunderstanding, but wouldn't everything be alright after talking about it?"

Yilin continued, "I said: 'Did you find mother afterwards?' Dad said: 'I looked for her everywhere, but where can I find her? Your mother was a nun, so I thought she would go to a convent, so I looked in every convent. One day, I found the White Cloud Convent of Heng-Shan School. Your master Dingyi Shi Tai saw you to be very cute and she really liked you. You were also sick at that time so she told me to foster you to the Convent, so I didn't have to bring you running around and endanger your little life.'" At the mention of Dingyi Shi Tai, Yilin couldn't help crying and she said, "Since I was small, I've had no mother and Master raised me up, but Master was killed by someone, and the person who killed Master was Big Brother Linghu's Master. You see how difficult this is. Big Brother Linghu is just like me, he's had no mother since he was small and his Master raised him. But his life is even more bitter than me, not only mother, he doesn't have a father as well. So of course he respects and loves his Master. If I kill his Master then I'll get my revenge, but Big Brother Linghu will be very sad. My dad also said: after he fostered me at the White Cloud Convent, he looked in every convent in the world. Later on, he went to Mongolia, Tibet, the frontiers, the western region, he even looked around in the poorest area. But in all that time, he didn't hear a single word of my mother. Thinking about it, my mother must've blamed my mother for sexually harassing that lady, so she committed suicide the next day. Mute Granny, when my mother became a Buddhist, she swore an oath in front of Buddha that after she entered Buddhism, she would no longer be involved in worldly desires. But in the end, she relented to father and married him. She hadn't given birth to me for long when she saw him sexually harassing a woman and got himself scolded as a 'disgraceful and nasty person', so of course she got angry. Her personality was very strong so

what she believed was wrong, was wrong. So she was forced to commit suicide."

Yilin let out a long sigh and continued, "When my father explained these things, I then understood why when he saw those words 'World's number one heartless, perverted and lascivious man', he became really sad. I said: 'When mother wrote those words to scold you, did you give other people a look?' Dad said: 'Of course not! I didn't even tell anyone about it. Is it honourable to tell of these kinds of things? There's something fishy here, I think it must be your mother's ghost who has found me. She seeks revenge on me for blemishing her clean reputation and sexually harassing another woman. Otherwise, how come only these eight words were written on the paper and there was nothing else on it? I know she wants my life, very good, I'm going to go with her.'

"Dad also said: 'When I couldn't find your mother, I really wished to join her in the afterworld. It's a pity I was too heavy. The rope broke after I was hanging up there for some time. I tried a second time but the rope broke again. Then I thought of getting my sabre to cut my neck. I knew for certain that sabre was on my waist, but suddenly it wasn't there. It's really not easy to die.' I said: 'Dad, you're wrong. Buddha told us not to take our own lives, that's why the rope broke and you couldn't find your sabre. Otherwise, you would've been dead when I got here.' Dad said: 'That's also good, it's most likely that Buddha is punishing me to stay in this world to receive more bitterness and not letting me to go to the afterworld so quick to see your mother.' I said: 'I thought at first that the papers on Tian Boguang and you were wrongly hanged on each other, and that was the reason why you threw a tantrum.' Dad said: 'How can they be wrongly hanged? Cannot Have No Commandment was rude to you in the beginning, isn't that called 'unseemly behaviour'? I told him to be a matchmaker to make that Linghu Chong marry you, but he always failed, isn't that called 'doing things half heartedly'? Those eight words really suit him.' I said: 'Dad, if you tell Tian Boguang to do that nonsense again, I'm going to get angry. Big brother Linghu liked his little martial sister before, now he likes the young lady Ren from the Devil Sect. Even though he treats me well, he's never put me in his heart.'"

When Linghu Chong heard Yilin said this, he felt quite apologetic toward her. She treated him in such a sentimental manner, but he had never felt it in the beginning, and it was only recently that he gradually understood her feeling. But his real feeling was said clearly by her, he first loved little martial sister and now he loved Yingying with all his heart. During the time he travelled around Jianghu, he also rarely thought of Yilin.

Yilin said, "When dad heard me said this, he got angry and scolded big brother Linghu, he said: 'That Linghu Chong, he has eyes but he can't see, he's even worse than Cannot Have No Commandment. Cannot Have No Commandment can still see my daughter is beautiful, but Linghu Chong is the world's number one idiot.' He scolded him with so many vulgar words, they're really terrible to hear, and I also can't repeat them. He said: 'Who's the world's number one blind man? It's not Zuo Lengchan, it's Linghu Chong. Even when Zuo Lengchan's eyes are blinded, Linghu Chong is still blinder than he is.' Mute Granny, dad is very wrong to say these things, how can he scold big brother Linghu like that? I said: 'Dad, Miss Yue and young lady Ren are a hundred times more beautiful than me, how can I be better than them? Also, I've already entered Buddhism, but I still appreciate big brother Linghu risking his life to save me and helping my master. I still think about him sometimes. My mother was right, after you enter Buddhism, you should be free of wordly desires. If we're not free of those things then Buddha will punish us.'

"Dad said: 'Once you enter Buddhism, why aren't you allowed to marry? If all the women in the world entered Buddhism and they didn't marry, then there'll be no one in this world. Your mother is a nun, didn't she marry me, and didn't she give birth to you?' I said: 'Dad, let's not talk about this. I... I'd rather that mother didn't give birth to me.'" She said till here when her voice became choking. After some time, she again said, "Dad said, he's definitely going to find big brother Linghu and tell him to marry me. I was really worried, I said to him if he mentioned this to big brother Linghu, then I'll never talk to him ever again, and when he comes to Xianxing Peak, I won't see him. If Tian Boguang says this kind of nonsense thing to big brother Linghu, then I'll talk to martial sisters Yiqing and Yihe and not allow him to step foot on Mount Heng-Shan ever

again. Dad knows I can get what I said so he was dumbfounded for a time. Then he just sighed and walked away. Mute Granny, dad went just like that, I wonder when I can see him again? I also don't know whether he's going to commit suicide again? He's really making me worried. I found Tian Boguang after that and told him to go with dad and take care of him. After I finished speaking to him, I saw so many people sneaking around going outside of Tong Yuan Valley then hiding inside the underbrush. I don't know what they were doing. So I quietly followed them to have a look, but I saw you instead. Mute Granny, you don't know martial art and you also can't hear anything. It was very dangerous for you to hide in the underbrush, especially if someone sees you there. You should never go with other people to hide in the underbrush anymore. Did you think they were playing hide-and-seek?"

Linghu Chong was dangerously close to laughing, he thought, "This little martial sister is very childish, she even thinks other people are childish too."

Yilin said, "These days, martial sisters Yihe and Yiqing always supervise me practising sword. Little martial sister Qin Juan said to me, she once heard Yihe and Yiqing and a few other senior martial sisters talk with each other. They said, big brother Linghu won't agree to be Heng-Shan School's headmaster in the future. Yue Buqun is the person who killed our masters, so we naturally can't join the Five Mountains School and accept him as our headmaster. That's why everyone asked me to become the headmaster. Mute Granny, I don't believe this at all. But martial sister Qin swore on it and said that none of it is fake. She said, a few of the senior martial sisters said, from all the nuns of the Heng-Shan School's Yi generation, big brother Linghu treats me the best. If I become the headmaster, it will definitely fit the best with big brother Linghu's wish. So they decided to elect me because of big brother Linghu. They all hope I practise my swordplay well and kill Yue Buqun. Then I'll become Heng-Shan School's headmaster. No one objected to this. When she explained it like that, I believed her. But how can I become the headmaster of Heng-Shan School? My sword art wouldn't be as good as martial sisters Yihe and Yiqing even after I've practised it for ten more years. As for killing Yue Buqun, it's even more impossible. I was already confused in the beginning, so when I thought of this, my mind is in

even more chaos. Mute Granny, what do you think I should do?"

Linghu Chong had now understood. "So they supervise her practising sword from day to night hoping that she would take my position later on and become the Heng-Shan School's headmaster. This is very good for me since they've thought about this so thoroughly."

Yilin quietly said, "Mute Granny, I often tell you, I think of Big Brother Linghu during the day, and I also thought of Big Brother Linghu during the night. Even my dreams are of him. I dreamt of him saving me and not even caring for his own life; Dreamt of him after he was injured and I carried him to run away; Dreamt of him jesting to me wanting me to tell him some stories; Dreamt of him in Hengshan at that Jade House, I... I... slept on the same bed with him, sharing the same quilt. Mute Granny, I know you can't hear me, that's why I'm not shy to talk to you of these things. If I don't say these things and always keep them in my heart, I'll go mad. I talk to you of these things, and just lightly call out Big Brother Linghu's name, then my heart will be at peace for a few days." She stopped for a time, then lightly called out, "Big Brother Linghu, Big Brother Linghu!" These two cries contained the deep lovesick emotion she felt, Linghu Chong could not help tremble when he heard them. He already knew this little martial sister treated him very nicely, but he never thought she would have such a deep feeling towards him. He thought, "She treats me so passionately, how can Linghu Chong repay this to her in this life?"

Yilin lightly sighed. "Mute Granny, dad doesn't understand me. Martial Sister Yihe and Yiqing, they also don't understand me. I thought of Big Brother Linghu, only because I could not forget him. I know this is unseemly. I've already entered Buddhism and have become a nun, so how can I think of a man night and day? Moreover, he is our school's current headmaster. Everyday, I ask for Guanyin to help me, I ask Buddha to help me forget Big Brother Linghu. When I was reading scripture early this morning, I read of the Buddha's name who helped the people in the world so I asked the Buddha in my heart to protect Big Brother Linghu from harm, to turn trouble to luck, to bless him and young lady Ren to make a blessed match and keep each other company till they're old,

and to be happy for all their life. I suddenly thought, why did I make so many wishes to Buddha? When Buddha hear them, won't Buddha feel annoyed? So from today onwards, I'll only pray to Buddha to bless Big Brother Linghu's life with carefree. He loves to be carefree, with no restraint or control, but hoping that young lady Ren doesn't control him in the future." She was quiet for a little while before slowly continuing, "We believe in the Goddess of Mercy who helps the people around the world."

After reciting more than ten phrases, she raised her head and gazed at the moon, and said, "I must go back, you should go back too." From inside her bosom, she took out two buns and put them in Linghu Chong's hand. "Mute Granny, why didn't you look for me today? Are you sick?" After a time, looking that Linghu Chong was not answering, she spoke to herself, "You also can't hear, but I keep on asking you. I'm really foolish." She slowly turned around and went.

Linghu Chong, sitting on the rock, looked at her disappearing into the darkness. Every sentence that she just told him was still flowing around his mind, stirring his heart, making it difficult for him to think and he could not help feeling sentimental. After some time, he incidentally took a glance at the water in the creek and he was startled. He saw that there were two reflections sitting side by side on the rock. He thought it was just a trick his eyes were playing because of the way the water rippled. But after taking another look, there were really two reflections. All of a sudden, his back was covered in cold sweat and his whole body became stiff. How would he dare to turn his head around?

From looking at the reflection on the water, that person was sitting just two feet away behind his back and with only one hit, that person would have been able to take his life. But in his shock, he did not move forward. This person had silently come to his back without him feeling anything. It was very difficult to say how high exactly this person's martial art was. A thought flashed in his mind, "Ghost!" but thinking of ghost, his heart became even more frightened. After being stupefied for a long time, he took a look at the water again. The

creek water was flowing, and under the moonlight, he could not see clearly the reflection on the water. But he saw the two reflections were identical to each other, and both were wearing the wide gowns of women. Even the buns on top of their hair were the same. The other person was just like his own incarnation. Linghu Chong was even more frightened now that even his heart had seemed to skip a beat. Suddenly, without knowing where the courage came from, he abruptly turned his head around to face that 'ghost'. After looking clearly, he could not help drawing a breath of cold air. He saw a middle aged woman and recognised her to be the deaf and mute servant on that hanging temple. But it was really strange that he was unaware of her arriving behind him. As his fear subsided, his astonishment was not reduced in the slightest bit. He said, "Mute Granny, so... so it's you, you've... you've really scared me to death." But he heard his own voice was trembling and hoarse. He then saw the hairpin on the Mute Granny's bun, and the light gray gown she was wearing, they were all unexpectedly completely the same as to what he was wearing. He paused for a tick then laughed loudly and said, "Don't be offended. Young lady Ren remembered really well, she remembered what you were wearing and dressed me up like this. We're just like twin sisters."

He saw the wooden expression of Mute Granny. There was not a trace of anger or happiness. He did not know what she was thinking about, so he pondered, "This person is really weird. Since she already saw me disguising as herself, I shouldn't stay here any longer." He immediately stood up and folded his hands towards Mute Granny. "The night is late, so I'm going to take my leave." He turned around towards the road to go away. Just as he walked for only seven to eight steps, he saw the Mute Granny blocking the road in front of him. He did not know how she moved, but she had moved noiselessly without any trace or shadow in front of him. When he was fighting the lightning quick and unbelievably fast Dongfang Bubai, he was still able to see his shape and form. But this Mute Granny was just like she sprouted out of the ground. Even though her movement was not as quick as Dongfang Bubai, her noiseless movement was like that of ghosts.

Linghu Chong was greatly astonished as he knew that tonight he had met a

master. He had disguised himself as her without asking for her permission, so of course it was unavoidable that she would be angry. He again saluted her deeply and said, "Granny, I've offended you. I'll immediately change my clothing, then I'll come to the Hanging Temple to apologise." That Mute Granny still wore her wooden expression and was not showing the slightest sign of anger on her face.

"Oh, yes!" Linghu Chong exclaimed. "You can't hear what I'm saying."

He then stooped down to write on the ground: "I'm sorry, I won't do it again." When he stood back up, he saw she was still standing there expressionless without giving a glance at the words written on the ground. Linghu Chong pointed at the words written on the ground and in a loud voice said, "I'm sorry, I won't do it again!" That Mute Granny didn't even move a muscle. Linghu Chong bowed to her continuously with his hands folded. At the same time, he was undoing his clothing and his hair. But that granny stayed quiet without saying a single word for the whole time.

Linghu Chong did not know what to do anymore as he scratched his head. "You don't understand. I don't know what else to do." He leaned to one side as he tried to go around that granny. But as soon as his left foot moved, that granny moved slightly to block his way forward. Linghu Chong sucked in a breath and said, "Sorry for the offence!" as he strode to the right and all of a sudden, he stepped back and flew past from the left. Just as his left foot touched the ground, that granny was already in front of him blocking his way forward again. He tried to run away a few more times, and each time, he was getting faster and faster. But that granny kept up with him and blocked his way forward for the whole time. He was now feeling worried.

He extended his left hand out to push at her shoulder. That granny chopped down with her right palm, aiming at his right wrist. Linghu Chong hastily withdrew his hand. He knew that he was at a disadvantage so he didn't dare to fight with her. The only thing he hoped for was to get away as quickly as possible so he lowered his head to charge at a side of her body. But he had just shaped to move when he suddenly felt the wind from her palm strike. That granny had already sent her palm towards the top of his head.

Linghu Chong quickly dodged by slanting his body to one side. But this palm strike was very quick, and with a clap, his shoulder was hit. That granny also faltered as she hit him. This was because Linghu Chong's 'Art of Essence Absorbing' had reacted in response to the strike and it had actually absorbed the power in that palm strike. That granny hastily extended her left hand in a claw, which was looking thin and sharp, at his eyes.

Linghu Chong was greatly startled, and he quickly lowered his head to avoid it. A moment later, the clothes at his back was ripped. Fortunately, that granny was also afraid of his 'Art of Essence Absorbing' so she did not make use of that advantage to hit him. She bent her right arm, and in an uppercut, she again tried to dig his eyes out. It was obvious she had come up with a plan to attack his eyes only. Because no matter how formidable his 'Art of Essence Absorbing' was, once her fingers entered his eyes, he would still be blinded. Besides, the soft eyes would also not be able to absorb other people's internal power. Linghu Chong extended his arm to block the strike. That granny followed it by turning her palm around, and used her five fingers to grab at his left eye. Linghu Chong hastily extended his left hand to block, but that granny's right hand had flown out to grab at his right ear. He leapt away quickly. Each move was strange and peculiar, and they seemed like the movements that a farm woman might use to fight someone. But these movements were fiercer and faster. In the next few moves, Linghu Chong had been forced to retreat continuously. That granny's martial art was actually not that high. She was merely able to walk silently and did a sneak attack rapidly. In reality, her martial art was far inferior to Yue Buqun, Zuo Lengchan, and even Yingying's martial art was much higher than hers. But Linghu Chong's punching and kicking martial arts were very lacking. If it was not for the fact that the granny was protecting herself from his 'Art of Essence Absorbing', and did not dare to clash with his arms and legs, Linghu Chong would have been hit a long time ago.

After a few more moves, Linghu Chong knew it would be hard to escape if he did not draw his sword out. He immediately put his hand inside his bosom to take his short sword out. His right hand had just touched the handle of his sword when that granny executed her lightning quick attacks. In the subsequent

seven to eight attacks, Linghu Chong had to block with both of his hands and had no time to draw his sword out. That granny's attacks were getting fiercer and more violent. There was clearly no enmity or hatred between them, but it was obvious she really wanted to dig his eyes out. Linghu Chong gasped loudly. He used his left palm to cover up both of his eyes, while he again put his right hand into his bosom to take his sword out. Disregarding the hit he took from her palm and kick, he finally managed to grab his short sword.

At this moment, his head was hurting as his hair was grabbed and both his feet were lifted off the ground. The next moment, the sky was revolving and the ground was spinning as his body was being flung around in mid air. That granny had grabbed his hair in order to fling him away. So he was now being spun around quicker and quicker.

"Oi, oi," Linghu Chong worriedly called out. "What are you doing?"

He flung his arms around trying to grab her arms. Suddenly, his left and right armpits felt numb as the acupoints there were sealed by her. Next, the acupoints on his back, the back of his waist, chest, and neck were all sealed by her. His whole body now felt numb and he was completely immobilized. But that granny still did not stop whirling his body around. Now, Linghu Chong could only hear the whirring sound of the wind and he thought, "I've met with countless marvel in my life. But I've never been made into a big top for someone to play with before."

That granny spun him around until he was feeling very dizzy. She finally stopped and let him fall heavily on the ground.

Linghu Chong of course knew there was no enmity between him and that granny. But when at this time she toyed with him until he was half dead, he couldn't help feeling angry. He scolded, "Stinky granny! You don't know what's good for you. If I'd gotten my sword out, you'd have a body full of holes a long time ago!"

That granny looked at him with her cold eyes. Her face remained expressionless, with no trace of happiness or anger at all. Linghu Chong

thought, "I can't beat her. But if I don't scold her then my loss would be too great. But I've been subdued by her now, so if she knows I was scolding her, then she'll make things difficult for me."

He immediately thought of an idea to prevent the granny from knowing that he was scolding her. He started giggling and scolded, "Bastard granny, stinky granny, the gods know your heart is bad. That's why they made you deaf and mute, can't smile, can't get angry. You're just like an idiot. Might as well become a dog or a pig. They might even be better than you." His scold was becoming more and more malicious, while his face was grinning from ear to ear. At first, his smile was just fake to prevent the granny from knowing that he was scolding her. But at the end, after looking at the granny's expressionless face, he considered his plan had succeeded so he couldn't help feeling proud of himself. He was now laughing heartily.

That granny slowly walked up to his side, grabbed his hair, and dragged him along the ground. Her pace gradually became faster. Although Linghu Chong's acupoints had been sealed, he had not lost consciousness. His whole body was aching from the friction and the collision from the ground. His mouth was continuously scolding, but he could not laugh anymore now.

That granny was dragging him along the path going up the mountain. Linghu Chong took a look at the lay of the land from the corner of his eyes. He saw her turning westward and she was actually going to the Hanging Temple. At this time, Linghu Chong had already guessed that Monk No Commandment, Tian Boguang, Bear Duo of the Northern Desert, Qiu Songnian, and the rest of those people were most likely subdued by her. Besides her, there was no one else who could do those strange and sudden movements, which the gods doesn't know and the ghosts can't feel, to suddenly subdue people. But he had once gone to the Hanging Temple and had seen it with his own eyes that this mute and deaf granny had no senses, and could even be said to be slow-witted. Even masters like Great Master Fangzheng, Priest Chongxu, Yingying, and Shangguan Yun did not suspect her when they saw her. This mute granny was really very good in concealing her martial ability.

His thought continued, "If this granny hang me up high on the Gongsun tree at Tong Yuan Valley, then put a paper on me that says I'm the world's number one pervert, I'd lose a lot of face since I'm acting as the Heng-Shan School's headmaster and I'm also wearing a woman's gown. Lucky she's dragging me to the Hanging Temple instead. I guess it doesn't matter if she just hangs me here for some time and not out in the open." Even though he had suffered a bad luck tonight, he was not going to be hung high above the Heng-Shan Other Courtyard, so he still considered it to one lucky thing from this big disaster he was facing. He also thought, "I wonder if she knows my real identity. Would she give me a special treatment if she knows I'm the Headmaster of Heng-Shan?"

Along the road up, his body bumped against countless numbers of rocks causing a lot of injuries. Luckily, his face was facing up so there was no injury to his five senses. When they arrived at the Hanging Temple, that granny dragged him straight up to the highest chamber of the Spirit Turtle pavilion.

"Aiyo, this is bad!" Linghu Chong called out.

Outside the chamber of the Spirit Turtle was the flying bridge, which was looking down at a ten thousand feet deep abyss. He was afraid that granny was going to hang him there. This Hanging Temple was rarely visited by people. If this granny hanged him there, it would be unavoidable that he'd starve to death. This turn of event was far from good.

That granny released him in the middle of the chamber, then she went below. Linghu Chong was lying down on the floor thinking of the background of this despicable granny. He unexpectedly couldn't think of any clue regarding her origin at all, but he conjectured that she must be a famous senior of the Heng-Shan School, someone like Yu Sao who probably attended people like Dingjing and Dingxian Shi Tai back then. As he thought till here, he felt relieved: "Since I'm the Headmaster of Heng-Shan, whatever anger she has towards me, she won't give me too much difficulty." But as he mulled over it, he thought, "I've already disguised myself like this. I'm afraid she won't recognise me. If she thought I was in collusion with Madam Zhang, deliberately dressing up like her and sneaking around in Heng-Shan. She'll definitely give me something 'special',

and make me suffer even more. What a disaster."

He didn't hear the footsteps going up the stairs as that granny came back up. In her hand was a rope to tie Linghu Chong's hands and feet. She then took out a piece of yellow paper out of her bosom and stuck it on his neck. Linghu Chong was really curious to see what was written on that paper. But at this time, both of his eyes were blinded as a black cloth was put over them. Linghu Chong was thinking, "This granny is quite smart. She knows I'd want to look at that paper, but she's not giving me a look." He also thought, "Linghu Chong is a world's famous loafer so the words written on that paper must be something awful. I don't need to see them to know what they are."

He felt his wrists and ankles tightened as his body soared up high into the air. Now, he was hanging up high from the beam. This fuelled his anger even more and he started hurling abuses. He always loved to play around, but he was actually also very careful. His heart pondered, "I would never be able to escape no matter how much I swear at her. I must slowly move my inner energy to break through the acupoints, and wait till I get my sword then I'll stop her. Then I'll hang her up and hang a paper on her neck. Hmm, what should I write on that paper? World's number one evil granny! Not good calling her world's number one. She might get happy instead. I'll write 'World's number eighteen evil granny'. Let her rack her brain figuring out who those seventeen evil grannies in front of her are." He turned his head to a side to listen, but he couldn't hear any breathing at all. That granny had gone down the chamber.

After hanging up there for two hours, Linghu Chong became hungry and his stomach started growling in protest. But he was secretly happy as he had gradually broken through his blocked acupoints. Suddenly, his body swayed and he fell on the floor with a booming sound. It was that granny who had loosened the ropes tying him up, but he couldn't perceive at all when she had come back in. That granny pulled open his blindfold. However, he had not broken through the acupoint on his neck so he couldn't look down to see what was written on that paper. But he could see the last word written on that paper was the character 'granny'. He quietly called out, "This is bad!" In his heart, he

was thinking that this 'granny' character she had written must be because she thought he was a woman. If she had written that he was a pervert or a loafer, it did not matter. But to regard him as a woman, then it was a really big concern for him.

He saw that granny took a bowl from the table, and he thought, "Is she giving me soup or water to drink? It's best if she's giving me wine!"

All of a sudden, his whole head was warm and he cried out, "Aiyo!" That bowl was filled up with hot water, which was now dripping from his head. Linghu Chong scolded, "Stinking granny, what are you doing?" Linghu Chong was greatly startled when he saw her took out a razor from her bosom. The next moment, he heard scraping sound and his scalp hurt a little. That granny was actually shaving his head.

Linghu Chong was alarmed and angry, he didn't know what this crazy granny was up to. Not long after, the hair on his whole head was shaved clean and he thought, "Oh well, Linghu Chong will become a monk from today. Aiyo, that's not right, I'm wearing a woman's dress so I'm going to become a nun." His heart suddenly trembled and he thought, "Yingying was joking that I should disguise as a nun. If that prophecy becomes reality, then it'll be a big disaster. Maybe this evil granny already knows who I am, and she believes that a man becoming Heng-Shan School's headmaster is very inappropriate. She might not even just shave my head, she might even... even castrate me so I'll become just like Cannot Have No Commandment. That way I won't be able to dirty the sacred ground of Buddha. This woman is so insanely loyal to Heng-Shan School, she's even willing to do anything. Aiyo, today, Linghu Chong has met with a big misfortune. 'To dominate Wulin, scatter your sword and castrate yourself', it's still best if I don't learn that Evil Resisting Sword Art."

When that granny finished shaving his head, she swept the hair on the ground. Linghu Chong believed the situation was urgent so he hastily moved his inner energy to fiercely break through his sealed acupoints. He had just felt that a few of his acupoints was loosened when suddenly his back, waist, and shoulder's acupoints were again sealed by her. Linghu Chong let out a long sigh, and he

didn't even feel like swearing at that granny again.

That granny took down the paper on his neck and put it to the side. Linghu Chong took a look and saw that the words written on that paper were: "World's number one blind man, not male not female evil granny." He secretly cried out in misery, "So this granny is pretending to be deaf and mute. She actually heard everything. If not, how could she have known Monk No Commandment calling me world's number one blind man? She was probably eavesdropping when Monk No Commandment was talking to his daughter, or maybe when Yilin was talking to me. She might even be eavesdropping on both times." He cried out, "No need to pretend anymore, you're not deaf." But that granny was still not paying him any attention as she opened up his gown. Linghu Chong was startled and he called out, "What are you doing?" A ripping sound was heard. That granny had torn apart the female gown he was wearing into two and taken it down.

Linghu Chong called out in alarm, "If you injure a hair on my body, I'll make mince meat out of you." Then he thought, "She's only shaven my whole head, but how can she stop at only that?"

That granny took a small piece of grindstone, wet it, and sharpened her razor. She extended her finger to test out the razor's edge. Satisfied with its sharpness, she put it aside and took out a porcelain bottle from her bosom. On the bottle was written: 'Heavenly Connecting Glue'. When Linghu Chong was injured, he had used Heng-Shan School's medicine countless times. So he recognised the bottle without having to look at the writing on it. He also knew the other medicine called 'White Cloud Bear Gall Bladder Pill' which was used to treat internal injuries. Sure enough, that granny took out another porcelain bottle from her bosom and it was the 'White Cloud Bear Gall Bladder Pill'. That granny then took out some white cloths from inside her bosom, which were actually bandages. Linghu Chong's old wounds were already healed and he had no other new injuries. The way this granny had arranged everything, it seemed that she was going to make one or two new injuries on his body. He couldn't help sighing in misery.

Once that granny finished her preparation, she gazed at Linghu Chong. After a while, she lifted his body and put him on top of a table. Her expression was wooden once again. Linghu Chong had undergone many battles, and even when his body got injured heavily or when he was surrounded by powerful enemies, he was never afraid. But at this time, when facing an old granny, he actually felt unspeakable fear in his heart.

That granny slowly picked up the razor. Light glinted off the face of the razor. Linghu Chong's forehead was covered in cold perspiration which dripped down onto his gown. Suddenly, a thought flashed in his mind, and without thinking he blurted out, "You're Monk No Commandment's wife!"

That granny trembled and took a step back. "How -- Do -- You -- Know?" Her voice was dry and grating. She paused after every word, just like a kid who has just learnt to utter his first words.

When Linghu Chong said that, he had not thought of what he was saying. Now that she was asking him, he was asking himself how he knew.

"Hng," he coldly snorted. "Of course I know. I knew about it a long time ago." But in his heart, he was thinking quickly, "How did I know? How did I know? Oh, the paper she hanged on Monk No Commandment had the words: 'World's number one heartless, perverted and lascivious man'. This 'heartless' and 'perverted and lascivious' criticism, besides Monk No Commandment, the only other person who would know about it, would be his own wife." Then he loudly said, "You still care so much for that heartless, perverted, and lascivious man. Otherwise, when he hanged himself, why did you cut off the rope? When he wanted to cut his throat, why did you take away his sabre? With this kind of heartless, perverted, and lascivious man, isn't it better to just let him die?"

That granny coldly replied, "Let him -- Die -- So fast? How can -- It be -- That easy -- For him?"

"That's right," Linghu Chong replied. "Letting him worried for these last fifteen years. Searching for you from the pass all the way to Tibet, from the northern desert to the western region, searching for you in every single nunnery.

But you're actually hiding here enjoying life, that can be regarded as not easy for him!"

"He -- Deserves it," that granny answered. "He's already taken me as his wife. Why -- Did he flirt with other women?"

"Who said he was flirting?" Linghu Chong inquired. "She was looking at your daughter, and he was looking at her. What's wrong with that?"

"Once you're married, looking at other women is not permitted," the granny retorted.

Linghu Chong felt this woman was very unreasonable, so he argued, "You're already married, why are you looking at other men?"

"When did I look at other men?" that granny angrily replied. "Nonsense!"

"Aren't you looking at me now? Am I not a man?" Linghu Chong replied. "Monk No Commandment only looked at some women. But you actually shaved my head off and touched it. Let me tell you, we're not related but you actually touched my skin, and violated the rules and regulations. Luckily you only touched my head and didn't touch my face, otherwise, Guanyin will definitely not spare you." He was thinking this woman rarely went out to the real world so she wouldn't understand about worldly matters. So he was trying to scare her off to avoid being cut up by her.

"I don't need to touch you to cut off your arms, legs, and head," the granny replied.

"Want to behead me. By all means, do as you please."

That granny coldly laughed. "You want me to kill you? It's not as easy as that. You now have two choices in front of you, you can choose for yourself. The first choice is for you to quickly take Yilin as your wife and stop breaking her heart. If you don't agree then I'm going to castrate you and make you become not male not female weirdo. If you don't take Yilin as your wife, then you can't marry another shameless and bad woman." She had been pretending to be deaf and mute for more than ten years already, and had not spoken for a long time.

That was why her tongue wasn't fluid in the beginning, but after talking for some time, her speech was now fluent.

"Yilin is definitely a good lady, but does that make all the other ladies in this world to be a shameless and bad woman?" Linghu Chong inquired.

"Not far off, good is good no matter where they go. So do you agree or not? Quickly say it."

"Little martial sister Yilin is my good friend. If she finds out you're forcing me like this, she'll be angry."

"She'll be very happy once you've taken her as your wife," that granny said. "All her anger would be gone."

"She's a Buddhist and she's already sworn not to get married," Linghu Chong argued. "Once she's moved by worldly desires, she'll be blamed by Buddha."

"If you become a monk, Buddha won't blame her alone. Do you think I shaved your head for nothing?"

Linghu Chong couldn't help laughing out loud. "So you shaved my head wanting me to become a monk and take a nun as my wife. Your husband did this before, so you want me to learn from him."

"That's right," she answered.

"There are so many bald headed person in this world, " Linghu Chong laughingly said. "It doesn't mean you're a monk when your head is shaved."

"That can be easily fixed," that granny replied. "I'll just burn some incense marking on your head. A bald head doesn't mean you're a monk. But a bald head with some incense marking is definitely a monk." As she finished talking, she immediately wanted to take action.

"Slow down, slow down," Linghu Chong hastily interrupted. "To become a monk requires that person's willingness, how can it be forced?"

"You don't want to become a monk," that granny concluded. "Then be a eunuch."

Linghu Chong thought, "This granny is insane. She must get whatever she wants. I must delay her first." He said, "If I suddenly changed my mind to marry little martial sister Yilin after you made me a eunuch, what happens then? Wouldn't you have harmed the two of us then?"

"For us martial people, we do things openly and quickly," that granny angrily said. "Once you said what you want to do, how can you still be in two minds or change your mind? A monk then be a monk, a eunuch then be a eunuch! How can a gentleman be so loathsome?"

"Once I'm a eunuch, I'm not a gentleman anymore," Linghu Chong laughingly said.

"We're discussing a serious matter here," that granny angrily replied. "Who's joking around with you?"

Linghu Chong thought, "Little martial sister Yilin is beautiful and gentle, and she also has a deep feeling towards me. But my heart has belonged to Yingying a long time ago, so how can I just forget about that? This granny is so unreasonable. A gentleman would rather die than bend." So he said, "Granny, I want to ask you something. What do you think of a man who's not loyal to his lover and plays around with woman all the time?"

"Why do you even need to ask?" that granny questioned. "This sort of person is worse than a pig, a dog. A useless and selfish man."

"You're right," Linghu Chong agreed. "Little martial sister Yilin is beautiful and she treats me very nicely. But why didn't I take her as my wife? It's because I've already had a marriage agreement with another lady a long time ago. This lady treats me so kindly. Alright, Linghu Chong will just give you his body for you to chop up, but I won't disappoint her. If I disappoint her, won't I become the world's number one heartless, perverted and lascivious man? Then Linghu Chong would've taken Monk No Commandment's title of 'world's number one'."

"This lady, she's the devil sect's young lady Ren. She was the one who saved you when you were surrounded by the devil sect here on that day, is that right?" the granny asked.

"That's right," Linghu Chong answered. "You've seen this young lady Ren."

"That's very easy," the granny said. "I'll just ask young lady Ren to dump you, then you can say that she was heartless towards you, not you being heartless towards her. That's settled then."

"She would never dump me," Linghu Chong said. "She's willing to give her life for me, I'm also willing to give my life for her. I'll never be heartless towards her, and she'll never be heartless towards me either."

"I'm afraid matter has come to a head and it's not up to her," that granny said. "Heng-Shan Other Courtyard is full of those stinking men, she can pick any one of them and marry him."

"NONSENSE!" Linghu Chong angrily shouted.

"You're saying I can't do that?" that granny asked as she walked out the door. He heard the door to the next chamber opened, and that granny came back in again. She was carrying a woman with both her hands and legs tied. That woman was Yingying. Linghu Chong was greatly startled, he never expected that Yingying would also fall into this granny's hand. When he saw there was no injury on her body, he felt relieved.

"Yingying," Linghu Chong called out. "You've also come."

Yingying smiled and said, "I've heard everything. You said you'd never be heartless towards me, I'm very happy to hear it."

"In front of me, you're not allowed to say those shameless things!" the granny shouted. "Little miss, do you want a monk or a eunuch?"

Yingying blushed furiously and replied, "Your words are really not good to hear."

"I've thought of this carefully, I want this little kid Linghu Chong to abandon you and marry Yilin," that granny said. "But he has decided that he is not willing."

"Since the moment you open your mouth, this is the most reasonable thing I've heard," Linghu Chong loudly acclaimed.

"So I'll have to back off for a step and give in to this little kid Linghu Chong," that granny said. "I'm going to let him marry both of you. He can become a monk and marry both of you; If he were to become a eunuch, he won't be able to marry at all. But after you're married, you mustn't bully my daughter. Both of you can be on the same level, there's no need to decide who's going to be first or second. You're older by a few years only so Yilin can call you big sister."

"I..." Linghu Chong only managed to utter this word before that granny sealed his speech acupoint. That granny also sealed Yingying's speech acupoint, then she said, "I've already decided everything and I can't allow the two of you to make it go astray. I'm already letting you little monk to take two lovely and beautiful wives, what else is there to say? Hng, that bald No Commandment, how useless! Seeing his daughter getting lovesick but can't do anything. But when I get involved, everything's solved straight away." When she finished speaking, she flew out of the chamber.

Linghu Chong and Yingying were smiling bitterly at each other. They couldn't speak to each other and they also couldn't hold each other's hand. At this time, the morning sun was just beginning to ascend and its light shining in through the window. Linghu Chong squinted his eyes at her. The red candle on the table had not extinguished yet and its flame was still flickering, with its light smoke floating past Yingying's white as jade face, making her looking even more beautiful. He saw her eyes were looking at the razor on the ground, then they shifted towards the bottle and the bandages on the table, while her face was showing a mocking look. It was obvious she was teasing him: 'How dangerous, how dangerous!' But her expression quickly changed and she lowered her head with her whole face blushing red. He knew this kind of matter should not be said out loud, and it shouldn't even be thought of.

Linghu Chong saw her looking lovable and bashful, like she had just been caught red-handed doing something embarrassing. He couldn't help feeling moved and thinking, "If I were free, I'd have gone there and given her a hug and a kiss."

He then saw her slowly lifted her head up and their gazes met. She

immediately averted her eyes. The redness in her cheeks was just disappearing when her whole face and ears went crimson again. Linghu Chong thought, "My feelings toward Yingying are definitely firm and unwavering. That evil granny is forcing me to marry little martial sister Yilin so to save myself, I'm forced to go along with her for now. But wait until she release my acupoint and I have a sword in my hand, does she think I'll be afraid of her? Even though this evil granny's fist and kicking martial arts are good, she's still far below Zuo Lengchan and Chief Ren. Her swordplay is definitely not my match. She won only through her light hands and legs, going and leaving without any noise, and ambushing me. If it was a real fight, Yingying will surely beat her, and Great Master No Commandment will also be stronger her."

When he finished with his thought, he looked around and saw Yingying was again looking at him. This time, she didn't become shy. It was obvious she was not thinking of that eunuch matter anymore. He saw her eyes were looking up and the corner of her mouth was turned up smiling. She was smiling at his bald head, so she wasn't thinking of the eunuch matter anymore but now she was laughing at him becoming a monk. Linghu Chong laughed but no sound was coming out. But Yingying was becoming even happier with her smile getting bigger.

Suddenly, she rolled her eyes revealing a crafty expression on her face. Her left eye winked once, twice. Linghu Chong had not understand her meaning when she again winked twice. He thought, "She winked twice, what's her meaning? Ah, that's right, she's laughing at me for taking two wives." He immediately wiped out the smiling expression on his face. With a very solemn expression, he winked once with his left eye. His meaning was: 'I will only take you as wife, my heart is not divided in two.' Yingying slightly shook her head and her left eye winked twice again. Her meaning was: 'Marrying two then it'll be two wives!' Linghu Chong again shook his head and winked his left eye once. He had wanted to shake his head more vigorously to show his determination, but most of his body's acupoints were still sealed so he couldn't use any power. Now, his face was looking angry but he was actually very sincere. Yingying slightly nodded. But when her gaze caught the razor, she again

shook her head.

Linghu Chong gazed at her. Yingying's eyes slowly shifted and they were now locking eyes. The two of them were separated by more than ten feet but their four eyes were talking. All of a sudden, their hearts were intertwined and there was no need to speak, they both understood what was inside the other's heart. Whether he married Yilin or not was insignificant. Whether he became a monk or a eunuch was insignificant. Whether the two of them live or die did not matter. With their two hearts becoming one, they were both satisfied. This moment was theirs forever. Even if the sky collapsed or the ground split, this moment would never be taken away or forgotten.

The two of them gazed at each other. Without knowing how much time had passed, they suddenly heard footsteps coming up the stairs. They woke up from their intertwined feelings and unbounded emotion. The crisp and clear voice of a young lady was heard saying, "Mute granny, what are you taking me here?" It was Yilin's voice. They heard her coming in to the other chamber and sat down. That granny was obviously accompanying her but her footsteps could not be heard at all. After some time, they heard that granny slowly said, "Don't call me mute granny, I'm not mute."

Yilin shrieked in alarm. She was extremely confounded and tremblingly said, "You... you... you're not... not mute? You're alright?"

"I was never mute before," that granny said.

"Then... then you were never deaf before, you... you could hear... what I said?" Yilin inquired. She sounded really appalled.

"Child, what are you afraid of?" the granny asked. "Isn't it better that I can hear what you said?"

Linghu Chong heard her tone was gentle and intimate as she talked to her own daughter. At the end, her tender affection towards Yilin was evident.

But Yilin was still frightened as she tremblingly said, "No, no! I'm going now!"

"Sit for a while," that granny implored. "I have something important to talk to you."

"No, I... I don't want to listen," Yilin protested. "You tricked me. I've always thought you couldn't hear. I... I talked to you about those things. You tricked me." Her voice was choking, and she was so worried that she finally cried.

That granny lightly patted her shoulder and softly said, "Good child, don't worry. I wasn't tricking you. I was afraid you'll get sick from keeping all your feelings in, so I let you speak it out so your heart will lighten somewhat. When I arrived at Heng-Shan, I've always disguised myself as a deaf and a mute, and no one knows about it. I wasn't deliberately tricking you."

Yilin sobbed sadly. That granny softly continued, "I have something very good to talk to you, you'll be really happy when you hear it."

"Is it about my dad?" Yilin asked.

"Your dad? Hng, I don't care about him," the granny answered. "It's about your big brother Linghu."

"Don't you mention... mention him," Yilin pleaded. "I'll never mention him to you ever again. I'm going to read the scriptures!"

"No, wait a second and hear me first," the granny said. "Your big brother Linghu told me he loves you very much. He loves you ten times more compared to that young lady Ren from Devil Sect."

Linghu Chong and Yingying shared a look and they were scolding in their heart, "Stinky granny, telling such a huge lie!"

Yilin let out a long sigh and softly replied, "You don't need to deceive me. When I first know him, big brother Linghu only loved his little martial sister. He loved her with all his heart, and she was the only one in his heart. Later, his little martial sister ignored him and married another person. Then he only loves young lady Ren, and he also loves her with all his heart and young lady Ren is the only one in his heart." Linghu Chong and Yingying looked at each other and their hearts were filled with unbounded sweetness.

"Actually, he's always liked you in secret," that granny said. "But you're a Buddhist and he's the Heng-Shan School's headmaster, so he can't reveal his feeling to you. But now, he's determined and hopes to take you as his wife. That's why he's gone ahead and became a monk first."

Yilin cried out in alarm again and said, "No... No... That can't be, he can't, he mustn't! You... you tell him not to become a monk."

That granny sighed and said, "It's too late. He's already become a monk. He said, no matter what, he must take you as his wife. If he can't take you as his wife, then he'll castrate himself and become a eunuch."

"Become a eunuch?" Yilin asked. "My master once said that's a vulgar word, and us Buddhists aren't allowed to say it."

"Eunuch isn't a vulgar word," that granny said. "They're those lowly people who attend to the Emperor and Empress."

"Big brother Linghu is a most proud person and he's not willing to be controlled by others. How can he be willing to serve the Emperor and Empress?" Yilin questioned. "He wouldn't even be willing to become an Emperor, so there's no need to say that he'd be willing to attend to an Emperor. So he definitely won't become a eunuch."

"Becoming a eunuch isn't really becoming an attendant to the Emperor and the Empress, it's just an analogy," the granny said. "The person who becomes a eunuch is someone who can't get children."

"I don't believe you," Yilin said. "Big brother Linghu and young lady Ren will get married, then of course they'll give birth to several little babies. The two of them are so good-looking, their babies will definitely be cute too."

Linghu Chong took a look at Yingying. Both her cheeks were blushing, and she looked extremely happy while being bashful at the same time. That granny became angry and loudly said, "I said he can't get children then he can't get children. Don't say about getting children, he won't even be able to take a wife. He's already sworn an oath, he must take you as his wife."

"I know he only has young lady Ren in his heart," Yilin said.

"His young lady Ren will get married and you'll get married too. Do you get it now?" the granny asked. "He will take two wives. In this world, there are men who have three wives and four concubines, so don't mention of only two wives."

"That can't be," Yilin said. "When a person loves someone, he will only think of this person. Night or day, his mind will be on that person. When eating or sleeping, he'll still be thinking of that person. How can there still be a place for a second person? Just like my father. After my mother left, he went to the edge of the world to look for her. There are a lot of women in this world. If my dad can marry two women, then why didn't he marry another one?"

That granny was silent for a long time before she sighed and said, "He... he did something wrong before, so he felt remorse. Some are like that."

"I'm going," Yilin said. "Granny, if you mention to other people about big brother Linghu... wanting to marry me, I don't want to live anymore."

"Why?" the granny asked. "He said he must take you as his wife. Why aren't you happy about it?"

"No, no! I think about him all the time, and prayed to Buddha all the time wanting Buddha to bless and protect him, and make him happy. I wish for him to not meet with any bad luck or difficulty. I wish for him to get what he wants and for him to marry young lady Ren. Granny, I wish for him to be happy. I've never once wished for him to marry me," Yilin explained.

"But if he can't marry you, he won't be happy. This will make everyone not to be happy too," the granny argued.

"It's all my fault. If only you didn't hear what I said. I said so many things to you about big brother Linghu," Yilin said. "He's the world's big hero, while I'm only someone who doesn't know anything, a little nun who can't do anything. He said before, 'once I saw a nun, I lose all my bet'. Once he sees me, his luck will be bad, so how can I marry him? I'm a Buddhist, so I must take care to be clear like the water and I mustn't think of these things anymore. Granny, don't

mention about this again, I... I also won't see you again."

That granny was worried. "Silly girl, you're odd. Linghu Chong already became a monk for you and he said he must marry you. If Buddha blames anyone, then it'll be him."

Yilin sighed lightly and said, "He has the same thought as my dad? Surely not. My mother was intelligent and beautiful, her temper was reasonable, and she treated people very well. She was the world's nicest woman. So it's a given that my dad became a monk for her. Me... I'm not even half as good as my mother."

Linghu Chong was secretly laughing in his heart and he thought, "Your mother isn't necessarily intelligent or beautiful. But as for her temper being reasonable, there's nothing to say about that. Compared to you, it's your mother who's not half as good as you."

"What do you know?" the granny asked.

"Everytime dad sees me, he always talks about how good mother was," Yilin said. "He said she was soft and gentle, never scolded anyone, and never threw a tantrum. In her whole life, she had never even stepped on an ant before. Even if all the good women in this world are added together, they still wouldn't be better than my mother."

"He... He really said that? I'm afraid... afraid they're false," the granny stammered. When she said these two sentences, her voice was really small. It was obvious her heart was quite agitated.

"Of course they're true," Yingying argued. "I'm his daughter, why would dad trick me?"

All of a sudden, everything was quiet in the Spirit Turtle Pavilion. That granny seemed to have gotten caught up in her thought. Yilin said, "Mute granny, I'm going. I won't see big brother Linghu from today. I'll pray to Guanyin every day to bless and protect him." They could only hear her light footsteps as she went down the pavilion.

After a very long time, that granny seemed to wake up from her dream and

she quietly talked to herself, "He said I'm the world's best woman? He went to the edge of the world to look for me? Then, he's not a heartless, perverted and lascivious man?"

Suddenly, at the top of her voice, she screamed out, "Yilin, Yilin, where are you?" But Yilin had gone far. That granny again called out a couple more times. When she did not hear her reply, she quickly went down the pavilion. She hurriedly chased after Yilin, but her footsteps were still very light like that of a cat.

Chapter 38 Annihilation

Translated by: Pokit

Edited by: Hhaung



Even though Zuo Lengchan was blind, he still had a quick reaction and jumped back rapidly while swearing streams of abuses. Yingying bent down and picked up a long sword.

Linghu Chong and Yingying were looking at each other and in that moment, all sorts of feelings welled up in their hearts. The razor glinted under the sun shining through the window. Linghu Chong thought, "Never thought this

problem could be solved like that."

Suddenly, there were some voices from below the Hanging Temple but they couldn't hear them clearly as the voices moved farther away. After some time, they again heard people coming closer to the temple. Linghu Chong called out, "People!" When he heard his own cry, he realised his mute acupoint was already unsealed. From the acupoints on the body, the mute acupoint was sealed the lightest. As his internal energy was more abundant than Yingying, his mute acupoint was unsealed first. Yingying nodded. Linghu Chong wanted to extend his arms and legs, but he found out he still could not. He heard seven to eight people talking as they came inside the Hanging Temple and came up the Spirit Turtle Pavilion.

Someone with a coarse voice said, "There's not even a ghost in this Hanging Temple, so what are we looking for? We have to be really careful." This person was the mendicant monk Qiu Songnian.

"We have order from the top so we must do this well," Monk Xibao said.

Linghu Chong hastily moved his internal energy to break through the sealed acupoints. However, his internal energies were mainly from other people so even though they were abundant, he couldn't use them like they were his own. The more he forced it, the more difficult it became to unseal his acupoints. He heard Yan Sanxing said, "Mr. Yue said that after we succeeded, he'll give us the Evil Resisting Sword Art. I don’t think we can rely on his words. Right now at Mount Heng-Shan, we've done a great merit already but there are so many people working on this matter, and we have not done something big enough. So why would he give the sword art to us?" While he was talking, a few people came up the stairs. When the door to the chamber was pushed open, they suddenly saw Linghu Chong and Yingying hanging from the beam with their hands and legs tied up. They all gasped in surprise.

"How come young lady Ren is here?" ‘Slippery and Hard to Grip’ You Xun questioned. "Hey, there's also a monk."

"Who dares to be so rude to young lady Ren?" Madam Zhang asked as she

walked next to Yingying and released the ropes Yingying had been tied up with.

"Madam Zhang, wait, wait!" You Xun hastily interrupted.

"Why wait?" Madam Zhang queried.

"There's something strange here," You Xun argued.

"Yi, he's not a monk," Priest Yuling suddenly exclaimed. "He's... he's Headmaster Linghu, Linghu Chong."

They all turned their heads around and looked at Linghu Chong. It took them a while but they finally recognised him. These eight people were usually in awe of Yingying, and they were also afraid of Linghu Chong. They immediately looked at each other in blank dismay, not knowing what to do. Yan Sanxing and Qiu Songnian suddenly exclaimed at the same time, "What a great accomplishment!"

"That's right!" Priest Yuling agreed. "What's so rare about capturing a few nuns? But capturing the headmaster of Heng-Shan -- now that's a big accomplishment. Mr. Yue will definitely give us the Evil Resisting Sword Art now."

"So what should we do?" Madam Zhang asked.

All eight of them thought of the same thing, "If we release young lady Ren, we won't be able to capture Linghu Chong. We'll even lose our lives here. So what should we do?" But regarding Yingying’s authority and power, they did not dare to not release her.

You Xun giggled and said, "As the saying goes, if your heart is small you're not a nobleman, to be a gentleman you must be ruthless. It doesn't matter if we're not noblemen, but it's a pity if we're not gentlemen! Very pitiful!"

"You're saying we should take this opportunity to kill her and shut her mouth?" Priest Yuling asked.

"I didn't say it. You said it," You Xun replied.

"Sacred lady has treated us with kindness. Whoever dares to treat her with

disrespect, I'll be the first one to go against it," Madam Zhang said severely.

"Even if you release her now, do you think she can understand our situation?" Qiu Songnian argued. "How can she agree to let us capture Linghu Chong?"

"No matter what, we're already in Heng-Shan School," Madam Zhang said. "Betraying our headmaster is also treachery." After she finished speaking, she extended her hand to release the ropes binding Yingying.

"Stop!" Qiu Songnian shouted fiercely.

"Speaking so loudly, are you trying to intimidate me?" Madam Zhang angrily replied.

With a hiss, Qiu Songnian drew his jiedao* out. Madam Zhang moved quickly and drew out a short sabre from her bosom cutting the ropes binding Yingying's hands and legs. She was thinking Yingying's martial art was very high so once the ropes binding her were cut, there was nothing to be worried of even with those seven people attacking. With a flash, Qiu Songnian slashed his jiedao down. Madam Zhang's short sabre made 'chi, chi' sounds as she thrust three times and forced Qiu Songnian back a couple of steps.

The rest of the people saw Yingying became unbound and they were afraid. They quickly retreated outside the door wanting to be the first to go down from the pavilion. But when Yingying fell to the ground and did not jump up, they knew her acupoints were sealed. One by one, they slowly came back inside. You Xun giggled and said, "You know, we're all good friends here. Why are we fighting with sabres? Isn't that too dangerous?"

"When young lady Ren's acupoints become unsealed, would we still be able to keep our lives?" Qiu Songnian called out. He gripped his jiedao tightly as he again rushed at Madam Zhang. Jiedao versus short sabre, the fighting was very intense. Qiu Songnian had a big stature and his sabre was big. Moreover, jiedao was very heavy. But against Madam Zhang's close combat style, this mendicant monk actually didn't find the fight easy at all.

You Xun laughingly said, "Stop fighting, stop fighting, let's talk slowly." His hand was holding a folded fan as he approached them to mediate.

"Scram! Don't be in the way!" Qiu Songnian shouted.

"Yes, yes!" You Xun laughingly replied. He turned his body around and his right hand suddenly shot out. Madam Zhang cried out wretchedly. The steel fan in You Xun's hand had already entered her throat. You Xun laughingly said, "We're all friends here. I advised you not to fight but you didn't want to hear me. Isn't that a bit too treacherous?" When he pulled the fan out, blood sprayed out of Madam Zhang's throat.

This was outside everyone's expectation. Startled, Qiu Songnian took a step back and then he scolded, "Damn it! You son of a turtle were actually helping me."

You Xun laughed and said, "If I don't help you, who do I help then?" He turned around and said to Yingying, "Young lady Ren, you're Chief Ren's daughter. All of us gives way to you because of your father. But everyone of us respects and fears you only because you have the antidote for the 'Three Corpse Brain Divine Pill'. But once this antidote is in our hands, Sacred Lady, you'll be useless."

"Right, right," The six people all agreed. "Once we have taken her antidote, we can kill her to shut her up."

"Let's take an oath first," Priest Yuling said. "Whoever leaks this matter out, the 'Three Corpse Brain Divine Pill' in him will come out instantly." These people were thinking they must kill Yingying, but thinking of Ren Woxing, they were terrified. If this matter were to leak out, even though Jianghu was large, they still might not be able to find a shelter to hide in. The seven of them immediately said this oath.

Linghu Chong knew that once these people had finished saying their oaths, they would use their sabres to kill Yingying. So he hurriedly moved his inner energy to those acupoints which were still sealed, but he was still unable to unseal any of them. His heart was worried and he looked at Yingying. He saw she was also looking at him and there was no fear in her eyes at all. He was immediately relieved and thought, "In the end, we all must die. It would be very

good for us to die together."

Qiu Songnian said to You Xun, "Do it."

"Monk Qiu has always done things very quickly and you have the most heroic spirit. I'd like to ask Brother Qiu to do it," You Xun replied.

"If you don't do it, I'll butcher you first," Qiu Songnian scolded.

"Since Brother Qiu doesn't dare, then how about if Brother Yan do it?" You Xun laughingly said.

"Your granny, why don't I dare? I just don't feel like killing people today," Qiu Songnian angrily replied.

"It doesn't matter who does it. No one will ever reveal it," Priest Yuling interrupted.

"Since it doesn't matter, then Brother Priest, please do it," Monk Xibao said.

"Why is everyone refusing?" Yan Sanxing said. "Let's speak frankly here. No one here trusts anyone else. So let us all get our weapons out and kill young lady Ren at the same time." Even though these people were ferocious and evil, when the moment arrived to kill Yingying, they did not dare to insult her even slightly.

"Wait, let me get the medicine first before we do anything else," You Xun said.

"Why do you have to be the one to take it?" Qiu Songnian asked. "Once it's in your hands, you will coerce other people. Let me take it."

"If it's in your hands, who's to say that you won't coerce other people?" You Xun replied.

"Stop wasting time!" Priest Yuling bellowed. "If we waste time till her acupoints are unsealed then it'll be trouble. Let's kill her first, then we'll distribute the medicine!" With a hiss, he drew his long sword out. The others also took out their weapons and encircled Yingying. Yingying's eyes were wide open as she unwaveringly stared at Linghu Chong. She was thinking of the events in these last few days when they were sharing some sweet moments

together. The corners of her mouth were tenderly smiling.

Yan Sanxing called out, "I'm going to call one, two, three. We'll move at the same time. One, two, three!" When the word 'three' came out of his mouth, seven weapons chopped down on Yingying's body.

Who would have thought all seven weapons would stop by half a foot before they reach her body, as if they had a prior agreement to do this.

"Cowards, why didn't you kill her?" Qiu Songnian scolded. "You were thinking the person beside you would do it so the blame wouldn't fall on you!"

"You're more of a coward," Monk Xibao retorted. "You didn't even chop down with your jiedao!"

Each of them, in their own mind, wanted the person beside them to kill Yingying first so that their own weapons wouldn't need to be stained with blood. To kill someone they had always respected was actually not easy.

"Let's do it again!" Qiu Songnian urged. "This time, whoever stops their weapons will be a bastard son of a turtle, birthed by a prostitute, worse than a dog! I'm going to call out one, two, three. One ------- Two --------" The word 'three' had not left his mouth yet when Linghu Chong called out, "Evil Resisting Sword Art!"

The seven of them heard him and they immediately turned their heads around. Around four of them asked at the same time, "What?"

Yue Buqun had used the Evil Resisting Sword Art to blind Zuo Lengchan on top of the place of worship and this had spread throughout Wulin. These seven people were very jealous. These last few days, they had been thinking of this Evil Resisting sword manual day and night.

Linghu Chong recited, "Evil Resisting Sword Art, supreme swordsmanship, attain sword qi first, then learn the divine sword. Divine qi is the foundation, the essence of the sword art. How to develop the sword qi, how to borne the divine sword? Both secrets are contained in this." When the first sentence was uttered, the seven people moved towards him for half a step. After the sixth or seventh

sentence, all seven of them had left the side of Yingying and had gone beside Linghu Chong. When Linghu Chong stopped reciting, Qiu Songnian asked, "This... This is Evil Resisting sword manual?"

"If it's not Evil Resisting sword manual, then is it Resisting Evil sword manual?" Linghu Chong answered.

"Continue reciting it," Qiu Songnian persuaded.

Linghu Chong recited, "When practising the qi, mind must be sincere, clear your thoughts. Heart must be pure..." When he reached this point, he stopped reciting.

Monk Xibao urged, "Continue, continue." But Priest Yuling's mouth was muttering, trying to memorise those passages, "When practising the qi, mind must be sincere, clear your thoughts. Heart must be pure."

Actually, Linghu Chong had not seen the Evil Resisting sword manual yet. The lines he was reciting were actually Huashan sword art's formula, and he just changed the sentence 'Huashan's sword art, light and quick' to 'Evil Resisting Sword Art, supreme swordsmanship'. This was the root of Yue Buqun's 'Qi Branch' formula, where the sentence 'learn sword qi first, then learn the divine sword' existed. Linghu Chong didn't study much so his vocabulary was quite limited. In such a short time, how could he fluently invent those sentences just like a scholar?

But Qiu Songnian and the others had never heard Huashan sword art's formula before. Second, they had been thinking of the Evil Resisting Sword Art and they were very fascinated by it. So once they heard someone reciting the formula of the Evil Resisting Sword Art, each one of them became muddle headed. How could they still have time to think whether the sword manual was real or false?

Linghu Chong continued with his recitation "Flow smoothly, fill the sword qi, Evil Resisting Sword comes out, everything will be killed..." This sentence ‘everything will be killed’ was made up by him because Huashan sword formula definitely did not have this kind of formula. After reciting till here, he said,

"The, the... next sentence is something like 'if unable to kill, sword art is ineffective', but maybe not, I don't remember it that clearly."

Monk Xibao and the others asked, "Where's the sword manual?"

Linghu Chong replied, "This sword manual... is certainly not on me." At the same time he was saying this, he was also looking at his stomach. This sentence was really along the lines of 'there's no 300 taels here'[8]. Right after he said this, two hands promptly reached inside his clothes. One hand belonged to Monk Xibao, and the other to Qiu Songnian. All of a sudden, the two of them cried out miserably. Monk Xibao's head had split open, while there was a sword piercing from the back of Qiu Songnian's body all the way through to his chest. They had fallen victim to Yan Sanxing and Priest Yuling.

"We've worked so hard to get our hands on this Evil Resisting Sword Manual," Yan Sanxing laughingly said. "Once this sword manual appeared, these two bastards wanted it for themselves. How can things be that easy in this world?" He then kicked away the two people's corpses.

In the beginning, Linghu Chong pretended to recite the Evil Resisting Sword Manual because he saw Yingying's life was in grave danger. So he thought up of an idea quickly wanting to lead these people away from her and delay them, thinking that Yingying's and his acupoints might get unsealed soon. He never thought things would come to this point. Not only had he led these people away from her, they had even killed each other. Now, there were only five of them from the previous seven. Secretly, he felt really happy.

"No one has seen whether this sword manual is really on Linghu Chong's body," You Xun said. "But we've already killed each other first, that's really impatient..." He had not finished speaking but Yan Sanxing was already rolling his eyes and staring at him hatefully.

"You're saying we're impatient. You don't accept this, do you?" Yan Sanxing said. "I'm afraid you want to get this sword manual for yourself."

"I don't dare to get it for myself and end up like that big monk with my head split open," You Xun replied. "Where's the fun in that? But this sword manual is

very famous in the world. We all wanted to widen our scope and have always thought about it."

The Tung Cypress Whiz Duo said at the same time, "That's right. No one is allowed to get it for himself. If you want to look then look at it together."

Yan Sanxing said to You Xun, "Ok, then you get the sword manual out from this kid's chest."

You Xun shook his head and smiled. "I don't have this idea of taking it for myself. I also don't dare to see it first. Brother Yan, once you take it out, I'll be satisfied if you just give me a peep at it."

Yan Sanxing then said to Priest Yuling, "Then you go and take it out!"

"It's still best if Brother Yan takes it out," Priest Yuling replied.

Yan Sanxing looked at the Tung Cypress Whiz Duo, but the two of them were also shaking their heads. Yan Sanxing angrily said, "Do you think I don't understand what the four of you bastards are thinking? You want me to take that sword manual and then you're going to kill me. But this won't work on me." The five people were looking at each other. The situation was now deadlocked.

Linghu Chong was afraid they might again go and harm Yingying, so he said, "Don't get too worried, let me try to remember more. Hmmm, Evil Resisting Sword comes out, everything will be killed, if unable to kill, sword art is ineffective... Not right, not right, sword art is ineffective, how can that be? Terrible, terrible, this sword manual is too profound. I just can't remember it."

Those five people had been intently trying to get the sword manual. When they heard such vulgar and crude words from this sword manual, their heart itched even more to get it.

Yan Sanxing slashed his sabre and shouted, "It's not difficult if you want me to take the sword manual from this kid's chest. Four of you step back outside the door, so I don't have to worry about you sons of turtle attacking me from behind when I'm taking it."

The Tung Cypress Whiz Duo just backed out of the door without saying

anything. You Xun giggled but he also retreated outside. Priest Yuling hesitated before stepping back for a few steps. Yan Sanxing shouted, "Step outside of the door with both your legs!"

"What are you shouting for?" Priest Yuling replied. "If I want to go out then I'll go out, if not, then what do you care?" Even though he said this, he still went outside the door at the end. The four people watched Yan Sanxing, and were thinking on his possible escape routes from this Spirit Turtle Pavilion. The stair was definitely the only escape route Yan Sanxing could take since it wouldn't be possible for him to fly out from there.

Yan Sanxing turned around and his back was now facing Linghu Chong. He was gazing at the four people outside the door, afraid that they might suddenly sneak an attack on him. He reached back with his left hand to grope inside Linghu Chong's bosom, but he could not feel any book in there. He held his sabre in his mouth by biting on it and he used his left hand to grab Linghu Chong's chest while his right hand reached back to grope around. As he used strength on his left hand, he promptly felt his inner energy leaking out. He was startled and hastily tried to pull his hand back. But how could he have known that his hand would be stuck like it was glued to Linghu Chong's skin and he couldn't pull it back. He was even more startled now and hastily moved his internal energy to snatch his hand back. However, the more internal energy he used, the faster it leaked out. He struggled mightily as his inner energy was rushing out like the river torrent rushing down a dike.

Linghu Chong was in a desperate situation and suddenly there was an enemy's internal energy being injected into him. He felt really happy and he said, "Why are you stopping my heart meridian? How about if you let me recite the sword formula for you to listen to?" He randomly moved his lips like he was saying something.

When Priest Yuling and the others saw it from outside the door, they really thought he was reciting the sword manual. They didn't want to be disadvantaged since they couldn't hear it so they immediately rushed inside to be in front of Linghu Chong.

"That's it. That's the sword manual," Linghu Chong exclaimed. "Why don't you take it out and give everyone a look!" But Yan Sanxing's left hand was still glued to Linghu Chong's body so how could he take it out?

Priest Yuling thought Yan Sanxing had grabbed the sword manual but because he wanted to keep it for himself, he didn't want to take it out. He immediately extended his hand to Linghu Chong's bosom to grab it too. When his hand bumped Linghu Chong's skin, his inner energy leaked out and his hand was also glued to him.

"Hey, hey, don't fight you two! You might tear the sword manual; then no one can see it!" Linghu Chong called out.

The Tung Cypress Whiz Duo exchanged a glance. With a flash, two gold staffs smashed down. Yan Sanxing's and Priest Yuling's heads burst open and they died instantly. As soon as they died, their inner energy disappeared causing both their hands to be released from Linghu Chong's body and their corpses fell down on the floor. Linghu Chong had suddenly received two people's inner energies. These inner energies had come from outside the sealed acupoints and not from inside the sealed acupoints. With these inner energies rushing in, the sealed acupoints were unsealed quickly. His original inner energy was already abundant, with a little bit of power, the ropes binding his hands were broken straight away. Extending his hand inside his bosom to grab the handle of his short sword, he said, "The sword manual is here. Who wants it?"

The Tung Cypress Whiz Duo were slow witted and they didn't think the ropes breaking apart was something unusual. When they heard him wanting to hand over the sword manual, they were exulted and together they extended their hands forward.

'Pai, pai'

Both their right wrists were cut and their hands fell on the floor. They cried out wretchedly while jumping back at the same time. Linghu Chong broke apart the ropes binding his legs and flew down to position himself in front of Yingying. He then said to You Xun, "Sword art comes out, everything will be

killed! Brother You, do you want to look at the sword manual?"

The sly You Xun was the only one left unharmed. At this time, he was already very frightened that his face was ashen. He tremblingly said, "Thank you, I... I don't want to take a look."

"No need to be so polite. Have a look for a while, there's no harm to look at it," replied a smiling Linghu Chong. He extended his left hand to poke Yingying's back and waist to unseal her acupoints. You Xun's whole body was trembling incessantly as he said, "Master Linghu... Master... Linghu... Hero... Hero, you you... you..." Both his knees bent and he knelt on the ground. "Your lowly servant has offended you and deserves death. It's... it's useless to say anything more. Sacred Lady and Headmaster still have your lives, your lowly servant will go through fire, go through water..."

"To learn the Evil Resisting Sword Art, the first step is really fun. Why don't you do it!" Linghu Chong laughingly said.

You Xun kept on kowtowing, hitting his head on the floor as he said, "Sacred Lady and Headmaster are very broadminded. Everyone in Wulin knows this. Today, let your lowly servant atone for my sin. Your lowly servant will go to Jianghu and declare you two saints... no, no, no..." When he said 'saints', he remembered something and realised he had stumbled into another disaster in his fright. Yingying can get most angered when someone mentioned behind her back that Linghu Chong and she were related. So he wanted to hold back his tongue but it was too late.

Yingying saw the Tung Cypress Whiz Duo were standing side by side. Even though they had each lost a hand and blood was pouring out of their arms without pause, their faces still showed no fear. She asked, "Are you two husband and wife?" The man from Tung Cypress Whiz Duo was called Zhou Gutong, and the woman was called Wu Baiying.

"Today, we've fallen under your hands. Whether you want to kill or peel our flesh off, the two of us won't bat an eyelid. Why do you ask so much?" Zhou Gutong replied.

Yingying liked his haughtiness and coldly said, "I'm asking if the two of you are husband and wife."

"We're not husband and wife officially. But for the last twenty years, we're much better compared to other officially married husband and wife," Wu Baiying said.

"Between the two of you, only one is allowed to live. Both of you are lacking a hand, a leg, also lacking a ..." Yingying thought her own father was the same as these two people. They all lacked an eye, so she didn't say it out loud. After a pause, she continued, "Two of you can fight and kill each other. The one who survive can go!"

"Very good!" the Tung Cypress Whiz Duo replied at the same time. A gold flash was seen as the two of them wielded their gold staffs to hit their own foreheads.

"Wait!" Yingying shouted. With a long sword in her right hand and a short sword in her left hand, she rushed forward and deflected the two staffs upward. As she hit the two staffs, she felt her shoulders and arms went numb and both her swords were dangerously close to being disarmed. However, her left arm was weaker so Wu Baiying's staff still continued and hit her forehead. In an instant, blood was flowing down.

Zhou Gutong loudly shouted, "Once I kill myself, Sacred Lady's words are like the mountains, and she'll let you go. What's not good about that?"

"Of course I'll die and you'll live. What's there to fight about?" Wu Baiying replied.

Yingying nodded and said, "Very good, the two of you husband and wife are very loving. I really respect you for that. I won't kill either of you. Quickly wrap up your cut hand." The Cypress Whiz Duo were extremely happy. They tossed their staffs away, and rushed towards each other to wrap up their wounds.

"But there's one matter the two of you must do," Yingying said. Wu Baiying and Zhou Gutong acknowledged the order together. Yingying continued, "After you've gone down the mountain, you must pay respect to the heaven and get

married. Two of you travelling together, not becoming husband and wife, how... how..." She originally wanted to say 'how can you do that', but she immediately remembered about Linghu Chong and her being together also without being husband and wife. She couldn't help her face blushing red.

Wu Baiying and Zhou Gutong gave a glance and kowtowed their thanks together. You Xun said, "Sacred Lady is very kind and forgiving, not only did she spare your life, she even look after your lifelong matter. The two of you are really lucky. I've known for a long time that Sacred Lady treats her subordinates really well."

"Under whose order did you come to Heng-Shan this time?" Yingying asked. "What are you scheming about?"

"Your lowly servant was deceived by that dog Yue Buqun. He said he received Chief Ren's Black Command Wood and he wanted the nuns of Heng-Shan captured and brought to the Dark Wood Cliff. He said the order comes from Chief Ren," You Xun answered.

"Yue Buqun has the Black Command Wood in his hand?" Yingying asked.

"Yes, yes! Subordinate carefully looked at it. He really has the Sun Moon Sect's Black Command Wood. If not, why would I listen to that dog Yue Buqun's order when Subordinate has always been loyal to Chief and Sacred Lady?"

Yingying pondered, "How did Yue Buqun get my sect's Black Command Wood? Ah, that's it, he took the Three Corpse Brain Pill, so he was listening to dad's order and dad gave him the command wood." She then asked, "Yue Buqun also said: once you finished with the order, he'll give you the Evil Resisting Sword Art, didn't he?"

You Xun kowtowed continuously as he said, "That dog Yue Buqun can really deceive people. Everyone believes him."

"You were saying you've done a great merit in Heng-Shan this time around, what's that all about?" Yingying queried.

"There are some people who had gone to the mountaintop and put the confusion poison into the water spring, so all Heng-Shan's disciples got knocked out. There are also some people who didn't know anything inside the Other Courtyard who got knocked out by the confusion poison. At this time, they're already being sent to the Dark Wood Cliff," You Xun related.

"Did you kill anyone?" Linghu Chong worriedly asked.

"Killed around eight to nine people, they're all from the Other Courtyard. They didn't get knocked out by the confusion poison and resisted, so they were killed," You Xun replied.

"Who are they?"

"Your lowly servant doesn't know their names. Hero Linghu... your friends aren't one of them."

Linghu Chong nodded his head feeling relieved. Yingying said, "Let's go down."

"Alright," Linghu Chong acknowledged. He took the long sword that Monk Xibao left behind and laughingly said, "If I see that evil granny, I'm going to dispute this well with her."

"Thank you Sacred Lady and Headmaster Linghu for not killing me," You Xun said.

"Why are you being so polite for?" Yingying replied. She waved her left hand and her short sword shot out. With a 'pu' sound, it was embedded in You Xun's chest. This sly traitor ‘Slippery and Hard to Grip’ You Xun died instantly.

They went down the pavilion together. The mountain was lonesome and only chirpings of birds were heard. Yingying looked at Linghu Chong and couldn't help bursting into laughter. Linghu Chong let out a drawn out sigh and said, "Linghu Chong shaved his head to be a monk, from this time on, my body has entered Buddhism. Shizu, let's part ways."

Yingying knew he was joking, but her heart was still worried and she involuntarily shuddered. She grabbed his arm and said, "Brother Chong, don't...

don't say this kind of joke with me, I... I... " Just then when she threw her sword killing You Xun, she didn't even blink, but her voice sounded scared at this time. Linghu Chong's heart was moved, his left hand patted his bald head and he sighed, "But with such a pretty as a jade girl in this world, big monk here will just have to return to the secular world."

Yingying laughed captivatingly then said, "After I killed You Xun, I thought there wouldn't be anyone with an oily and slippery mouth in Wulin anymore, then we'll have some quiet and peace, didn't expect... hehe!"

"Try touching my shiny head, it's so slippery that your hand won't stay on it," Linghu Chong smilingly said.

Yingying blushed and spit. "We're talking about proper stuff here. Heng-Shan's disciples have been captured and taken to Dark Wood Cliff and we're going to save them. This is a big big problem. Moreover, it'll also harm our father and daughter relationship..."

"Also, it'll harm my father and son in law relationship," Linghu Chong added. Yingying glared at him, but she was enjoying the sweet feeling blooming in her heart. Linghu Chong continued, "We mustn't tarry, let's go catch up to them quickly. Cut them off and save them."

"When we catch up to them, kill them all and don't leave anyone alive. It's best if we don't let my dad know." She walked for a few steps before letting out a long sigh. Linghu Chong understood her heart. She wanted to conceal this big matter from Ren Woxing's ears and eyes, which was something easier said than done. But he himself was the headmaster of Heng-Shan School, so when Heng-Shan's people were taken prisoner, how could he not rescue them? She had decided to follow her own decision and she didn't care anymore even though it would violate her father's order. When he thought till here, he decided that it was time to make a decision. He extended his left hand to grab a hold of her right hand. Yingying struggled slightly, but seeing there was no one around, she let him held her hand.

"Yingying, I understand your heart. This matter implicates the harmony

between your father and daughter. I'm really very sorry," Linghu Chong said.

Yingying shook her head slightly and replied, "If daddy took my feeling into consideration, he wouldn't have taken any action against Heng-Shan School. But, I'm guessing he doesn't have any malice towards you either."

Linghu Chong immediately comprehended the situation. "That's right. Your father must have captured the Heng-Shan's disciples to force me to swear an oath to the Sun Moon Divine Sect."

"That's right. Daddy actually likes you a lot. Moreover, you're the only person who has inherited his divine martial art."

"I'm not willing to swear an oath to join the Divine Sect. What 'Long live to chief, unify the Jianghu', what 'Refined scholar, kind-hearted warrior, to the benefit of common people'! I want to vomit just hearing those disgusting talks."

"I know. That's why I've never persuaded you. If you enter the Divine Sect, you'll become Chief in the future. From day till night hearing those disgusting talks, then... then we wouldn't be like we are now. Ai, daddy is again on top of the Dark Wood Cliff, his temper has also changed really quickly."

"But we mustn't offend your father." He extended his right hand to grip her left hand. "Yingying, after we save Heng-Shan's people, you and I should go pay respect to heaven and earth to get married, we shouldn't worry about orders from parents or some words from some matchmakers. You and I should retreat from Wulin, seal our swords and retreat into seclusion. Then we can ignore outside matters and borne some children."

When Yingying first heard of him talking properly, her face turned red and her heart liked it a lot. But hearing the last sentence, she was startled and used some power to pull her hands away from his. Linghu Chong laughingly said, "After we've become husband and wife, we don't want to get some children?"

"You're talking nonsense again!" Yingying angrily replied. "I won't talk to you for three days!"

Linghu Chong knew she would do what she said. He stuck his tongue out and

said, "Ok, I'll say less jokes. Catching up is most important now. Let's go up Xianxing Peak to have a look."

The two of them used their qinggong to up the path towards Xianxing Peak. There wasn't a single soul in Wuse Convent or in the resident houses. Things and clothes were in disarray with sabres and swords scattered around the floor. Fortunately, there wasn't a trace of blood on the floor, seemed like no one was injured. They also went to the Other Courtyard to take a look, no one was there too. With the various wines and dishes displayed on the table, Linghu Chong's wine addiction was aroused. But how would he dare to drink these wines, he said, "I'm very hungry, let's go down the mountain quickly and grab something to eat and drink."

Yingying tore the outer garment of Linghu Chong's gown and wrapped it on his head. Linghu Chong laughed and said, "This is presentable. Else a big monk kidnapping a young girl from a respectable family, going places, it will be scandalous."

When they reached the foot of the mountain, it was already at the hour of Wei (1-3pm), so it was easy to find a little restaurant and they ate their fill. They recognised the road going to Dark Wood Cliff and took a deep breath before rushing to catch up. After rushing for a few hours, they suddenly heard a faint murmuring of shouting and curses coming from behind the mountain. They stopped and it seemed those voices belonged to the Peach Valley Six Fairies. They quickly rushed towards where the sound came from and they gradually could hear much clearer. Sure enough, they were the Peach Valley Six Fairies. Yingying quietly said, "I wonder who these six babies fighting with?"

The two of them went around the mountain and hid behind a tree. They saw the Peach Valley Six Fairies were shouting while they fought intensely and surrounded that person. That person hastily went here and there, the body moved extremely fast, and only a grey streak was seen going round in between those six brothers. That person was unexpectedly to be Yilin's mother, the one who was pretending to be the mute granny inside the Hanging Temple. Following a couple of slapping sound, Peachtree Root Fairy and Peachtree Fruit

Fairy cried out as their cheeks were slap.

Linghu Chong was happy and quietly said, "Sixth month's debt returns quickly. I'm going to shave her head too." His hand pressed on the sword's handle, waiting for the Peach Valley Six Fairies to defeat her before jumping out and taking his revenge. But then he heard a continuous 'pai, pai' sound, the six brothers were slapped on the cheeks many times by her. Peach Valley Six Fairies were furious. They wanted to just grab her arms and legs and tear her into four pieces. But that granny moved really fast, like a ghost like a demon. A few times she looked certain to be captured but they were always short by a few inches and she managed to escape which was followed by a few whacks to their cheeks. But this granny also saw these six people were formidable so she was afraid her strength might get depleted and after defeating one or two of them, the remaining ones would capture her. After another series of fighting, that granny knew it was difficult to win. She launched both palms and struck four people four times. Suddenly, she leaped back and turned around to run quickly. She ran fast as lightning, in just a moment, she was already dozens of feet away. The Peach Valley Six Fairies shouted together and went to chase after her.

Linghu Chong took his sword out and shouted, "Where are you running to?" The sword flashed and it was pointed at her throat. This attack was attacking to kill. That granny was startled and hastily withdrew her head to get away. Linghu Chong slantingly pierced his sword towards her right shoulder. There was no way for that granny to dodge it so she was forced to retreat for a couple of steps. Linghu Chong forced her to step back for one more step. With his long sword in hand, how could that granny be his match? With three thrusts, she had been forced to step back for five steps. If he wanted to take her life, that granny would have died a long time ago.

The Peach Valley Six Fairies cheered loudly as the point of Linghu Chong's long sword reached her chest. Peachtree Root Fairy and three of his brothers rushed forward, grabbed her limbs, and lifted her up.

"Don't harm her!" Linghu Chong quickly shouted. Peachtree Flower Fairy lifted his hand and gave her a slap.

"Hang her up there first," Linghu Chong commanded.

"Yes, get the rope, get the rope," Peachtree Root Fairy said. But these six people didn't have any rope with them and there was no where to find ropes in this wilderness as well. Despite this, Peachtree Flower Fairy and Peachtree Trunk Fairy still searched for ropes. Suddenly, their hold loosened and that granny escaped from their clutches. She rolled on the ground and was just about to fly out of there when she felt some tingling on her back.

"Please stay!" said a smiling Linghu Chong with the point of his long sword poking her on the back.

That granny was surprised and her face changed colour, all she could do now was stand there unable to move. Peach Valley Six Fairies ran up to her and with six simultaneous pokes sealed that granny's arms and legs acupoints. Peachtree Trunk Fairy rubbed his swollen cheek then extended his hand wishing to slap her cheek. Linghu Chong regarded Yilin so he wasn't willing to let her be embarrassed. "Wait, let's hang her up first before we do anything," Linghu Chong told them.

When the Peach Valley Six Fairies heard him, they wanted to hang her high up there so they were jubilant. They quickly gathered up some tree barks and rolled them to make ropes. Linghu Chong asked the six of them why they were fighting with her.

Peachtree Branch Fairy answered, "Six of us brothers were just here taking a dump, minding our own business. When suddenly, this granny went crazy and she asked: 'Hey, did you see a small nun?' Her tone was very rude and she also interrupted us taking a dump..." Yingying heard him talking something dirty, so she scowled and walked away.

"That's right, this granny is the most unreasonable person in the whole world," Linghu Chong smilingly said.

"Of course we ignored her and told her to go away. That granny just started hitting people so we fought back. Originally, we were of course fighting to win, but since we haven't finished taking a dump yet so it wasn't comfortable fighting

with her. Brother Linghu, if it weren't for your timely arrival, she would've escaped," Peachtree Leaf Fairy said.

"That's not necessarily true, we were letting her escape for a few steps first, then we'd have chased her down. To teach her what empty happiness is like," Peachtree Flower Fairy argued.

"Under the hands of the Peach Valley Six Fairies, we would definitely have recaptured a nobody who runs away from us," Peachtree Fruit Fairy said.

"This is the method cats use to catch mice. It will let them run for a few steps first then recapture them again," Peachtree Root Fairy added.

"Even one cat would be able to catch six mice, moreover six cats would definitely be able to catch one mouse. That's very easy," Linghu Chong laughingly said.

When Peach Valley Six Fairies heard Linghu Chong agreeing to what they were saying, they were all exulted. As they were talking, they finished rolling those tree barks into ropes. They tied that granny's hands and ankles behind her back and tied her high up on a tree.

Linghu Chong wielded his long sword to slash at the tree and cutting away pieces of barks from it. With the brushing of the sword, there were now five big letters on the tree trunk: 'World's Number One Vinegar Pot.'

"Brother Linghu, why is this granny the world's number one vinegar pot? Is she really that good in drinking vinegar?" Peachtree Root Fairy asked. "I don't believe it. Let's get her down and let me compete with her!"

"Vinegar pot is the word for cursing her," said a laughing Linghu Chong. "The Peach Valley Six Fairies are matchless heroes, your righteousness reaching the clouds in the sky, skilled in culture and martial art, favoured by the common people, so how can this evil granny be even close to you? So there's no need to compete."

The Peach Valley Six Fairies opened their mouths wide laughing, they all said, "Right, right, right!"

"So did you actually see little martial sister Yilin?" Linghu Chong asked.

"You're asking about that beautiful little nun from Heng-Shan School? We didn't see any little nun, but we saw two big monks," Peachtree Branch Fairy answered.

"One was the little nun's father, the other was the little nun's disciple," Peachtree Trunk Fairy added.

"Where?" Linghu Chong inquired.

"These people passed about two hours ago. We had an appointment to drink wine with them at the town just ahead. We said we'd catch up with them after taking a dump. But who could've guessed this evil granny would come and bother us?" Peachtree Leaf Fairy said.

Linghu Chong thought for a while before saying, "Ok, I'm going to the town first, you can follow when you're ready. The six of you are big heroes and would never hit someone being tied up. If you slap this evil granny's cheek, it would damage your heroes' reputation." The Peach Valley Six Fairies agreed to this. Linghu Chong immediately left quickly with Yingying. Yingying laughingly said, "You didn't shave her head, it must be because you're regarding little martial sister Yilin so you only took a little bit of revenge on her."

After going for more than ten li, they arrived at a big town. They searched till the second wine house before they saw Monk No Commandment and Tian Boguang sitting at a table. When they saw Linghu Chong and Yingying, they gasped in surprise and jumped up happily. No Commandment quickly ordered more wine and dishes. Linghu Chong asked whether there was something unusual happening. Tian Boguang answered, "I was made to look silly at Heng-Shan and I didn't have anymore face to stay there, so I asked grand martial master to quickly leave. We can't go back to that Tong Yuan Valley again."

Linghu Chong thought they still didn't know about the matter of the Heng-Shan School's disciples being taken captives, so he asked Monk No Commandment, "Great Master, can I ask you to do something for me?"

"You can, why not?" No Commandment replied.

"But this matter is a secret and your grand disciple can't get involved in this," Linghu Chong said.

"Isn't that easy? I'll just tell him to go far away and not hinder me in doing this matter," No Commandment said.

"Go towards the south east for about ten li. On top of a tall tree there, there's a person being tied high up there..." Linghu Chong described.

"Ah," No Commandment uttered with an odd expression on his face and his body slightly shuddered.

"That person is my friend. I'd like to ask you to help that person down," Linghu Chong explained.

"Isn't it easy to do? Why aren't you doing it yourself?" No Commandment asked.

"I'm not hiding anything, this person is a female," Linghu Chong said. He then gestured with his mouth towards Yingying and said, "Young lady Ren and I are together so it's not appropriate."

No Commandment laughed aloud and said, "I understand. You're afraid young lady Ren will get jealous." Yingying glared at the two of them.

Linghu Chong chuckled and said, "That lady's jealousy is even bigger. Back then, her husband saw a madam and praised her to be beautiful, so this lady just left without saying a word. This caused her husband to look for her till the end of the world for more than ten years."

As No Commandment heard him, his eyes were getting bigger and bigger. He said, "This... this... this..." His gasping was also getting noisier.

"I heard her husband didn't manage to find her when he was searching for her," Linghu Chong added. When he said till here, the Peach Valley Six Fairies walked up the stairs giggling. No Commandment looked like he didn't see them, both of his hands grabbed Linghu Chong's arms and stammered, "Re... really?"

"She told me, if her husband find her and kneel in front of her, she wouldn't change her mind at all. That's why once you release her, she will run straight

away. This lady's movement is really fast, you just have to blink and she'll be gone," Linghu Chong said.

"I won't blink at all, I won't blink at all," No Commandment said.

"I also asked her, why is it that she doesn't want to meet with her husband," Linghu Chong said. "She said her husband is the world's number one heartless, perverted and lascivious man, so she didn't want to meet him and that he's also in the wrong."

No Commandment cried out and turned around wishing to go. Linghu Chong grabbed a hold of his arm and whispered in his ear, "I'll teach you a secret, she won't run away again." No Commandment was startled but he was also happy. After being dumbfound for a little while, he suddenly kneeled down and, 'boom, boom, boom' he kowtowed three times. With a loud voice, he said, "Brother Linghu, no, Headmaster Linghu, ancestor Linghu, Master Linghu, quickly tell me the secret, I'll take you as my teacher."

Linghu Chong couldn't help laughing as he said, "I don't dare, I don't dare, please get up." Pulling him to get up and then whispered in his ear, "Help her down from the tree but don't release the ropes or unseal her acupoints, then carry her to an inn and get a room. Think about it, she's a woman and a Buddhist, how do you prevent her from running away from the inn?"

No Commandment scratched his head then he hesitated and answered, "I... I don't really get it."

"You take off her clothes first then unseal her acupoint. Since she's now naked, would she dare to run away from the inn?" Linghu Chong whispered.

No Commandment was very happy and he called out, "Good plan, good plan! Master Linghu, your benevolence..." He didn't finish his sentence before he shouted happily and went out through the window. Once he hit the ground, he immediately flew out.

"Yi, this monk is really weird, why did he go?" Peachtree Root Fairy was perplexed.

"He must've wanted to pee and can't wait anymore," Peachtree Branch Fairy answered.

"Then why did he kowtow to brother Linghu and started calling him Master? Could it be that he wants someone to teach him how to pee even though he's so old already?" Peachtree Leaf Fairy asked.

Yingying knew these six people most likely would speak some vulgar words as they went on, so she cast a glance at Linghu Chong and went down the stairs.

"Brothers, I've long heard the six of you have wine capacities like the ocean and you're matchless in this world, so drink slowly. My capacity is shallow so I'm going to take my leave first," Linghu Chong said.

When the Peach Valley Six Fairies heard him praising their wine capacities, they were all happy and all thought that if they didn't drink a few jars they might lose a bit of reputation, so they called out, "Bring out six jars of wine!" "Your wine capacity is of course much lower than ours." "You go first, if you wait for us to drink our fill, I'm afraid you'll have to wait till tomorrow."

Linghu Chong only had to say one sentence and he had managed to get away from these six people and went down the stairs. Yingying pursed her lips smiling and she said, "You reconciled a husband and wife, what a boundless benevolence. But this method you taught him, it's rather... rather..." When she said till here, her face became red and she turned away her head. Looking at her, Linghu Chong giggled but didn't say a word.

The two of them walked outside of the town. After walking for a stretch of the road, Linghu Chong was still smiling and was continuously looking at her. Yingying got angry and shouted, "What are you looking at? Never seen me before?"

"I was just thinking, this evil granny hanged both of us on the ceiling's beam, so we repaid her back by hanging her on a tree. She shaved my head, so I taught her husband how to take off her gown, this is also repaying her back," said a smiling Linghu Chong.

Yingying smiled and said, "This is also called repaying back?"

Linghu Chong laughed before replying, "I'm only hoping Great Master No Commandment isn't rash and that this husband and wife get together again."

Yingying giggled and said, "You should be careful, you're going to be in trouble when that evil granny see you next time."

"I helped her to reunite with her husband, so it won't be too late for her to thank me then," Linghu Chong smiled. After he said this, he again took glances at Yingying and laughed to himself with his expression looking odd.

"What are you laughing at now?" Yingying asked.

"I was just thinking Great Master No Commandment being reunited with his wife, I wonder what they'll be saying to each other," Linghu Chong replied.

"Then why do you keep looking at me for?" Yingying queried. Suddenly, she understood what Linghu Chong meant. This loafer was thinking of Great Master No Commandment in the inn taking off his wife's gown. His mind was thinking of this but his eyes kept looking at her, it could be imagined how hard he was holding himself in. All of a sudden, her cheeks were bright red and she wielded her hand to hit him.

Linghu Chong dodged it and laughed. "A woman hitting her husband is an evil wife!"

At this time, they suddenly heard light hissing sound from somewhere far. Yingying recognised this was her sect's whistling to summon people. She raised her left hand and put her fingers to her lip, her right hand made a movement and she whistled towards that direction.

They then went forward for dozens of feet before seeing a woman running from the west towards the east. The ground was spacious and vast and there was no where for them to hide. That person saw Yingying and was startled, then she quickly went up to them to pay her respect. "Divine Sect's Heaven Wind Hall's Fragrant Master Sang San Niang, paying my respect to Sacred Lady. Long live to Chief, unify the Jianghu."

Yingying nodded her head a few times. After that an old man came out from

the east and walked quickly towards Yingying. He bowed before Yingying to pay his respect. "Qin Weibang also pays my respect to Sacred Lady. Chief revives the sacred sect and benefits the common people."

"Elder Qin, you're also here," Yingying said.

"Yes!" Qin Weibang acknowledged. "Your lowly servant received Chief's order to find information in this area. Fragrant Master Sang, what news have you found out?"

"Reporting to Sacred Lady and Elder Qin, early morning today, subordinate was at Linfengyi[9] and I saw sixty to seventy people from Songshan School on their way to Huashan," Sang San Niang reported.

"Of course they're going to Huashan!" Qin Weibang said.

"Why are Songshan School's people going to Huashan for?" Yingying asked.

"Chief obtained the news that after Huashan School's Yue Buqun became the Five Mountains School's Headmaster, he didn't want to be in a disadvantageous position compared to our sacred sect. So later on he gathered all the disciples of the Five Mountains School to Huashan. It seems like he's going to attack the Dark Wood Cliff," Qin Weibang answered.

"Is this true?" Yingying inquired while she was thinking, "This old traitor Qin Weibang is really sly. The capture of the Heng-Shan School's people is most likely the order he received from dad. He's probably the one in charge but he's distancing himself from this matter. But the words of that Sang San Niang didn't seem to be made up. It seems there's something else going on here." She continued, "Master Linghu is the headmaster of Heng-Shan School. Why didn't he know of this matter? That's really strange."

"Subordinate already checked Taishan and Hengshan School, and they're already moving towards Huashan. Heng-Shan School is the only one which hasn't moved yet. Left Protector Xiang sent us an order. He said Elder Bao Dachu is leading some underlings to go to Heng-Shan's Other Courtyard to investigate their movements. He also ordered me to stay close to liaise with him. Subordinate is still waiting for the message from Elder Bao," Qin Weibang said.

Yingying and Linghu Chong looked at each other and they were both thinking, "Bao Dachu going to Heng-Shan's Other Courtyard is most likely true. This Qin Weibang isn't concealing anything, could it be he's telling the truth?"

Qin Weibang bowed towards Linghu Chong and said, "Your lowly servant is just following orders. I'm asking for Headmaster Linghu's forgiveness."

Linghu Chong cupped his fist returning the propriety. "Young lady Ren and I are going to get married within the next few days..." Yingying gasped in surprise and her whole face turned red, but she didn't deny it. Linghu Chong continued, "Elder Qin received the order from my wife's father, so we as juniors should carry the burden."

Qin Weibang and Sang San Niang turned happy and they happily said, "Congratulations!"

Yingying turned around and walked away.

"Left Protector Xiang urged Elder Bao and I repeatedly not to be rude towards the Heng-Shan School's people. We only have to find the information and we don't have to play rough. Subordinate has followed this order," Qin Weibang said.

Suddenly, there was a girl's voice behind him laughing and saying, "Master Linghu's sword art is matchless in this world. Left Protector Xiang told you not to resort to violence for your own good."

Linghu Chong lifted his head and saw a lady came out from among the trees. She was the Five Poison Sect Chief Blue Phoenix. He laughed and said, "Big sister, you're well."

"Big Brother, you're also well," Blue Phoenix said to Linghu Chong. She then turned her head towards Qin Weibang and said, "If you're saluting me then salute me, why do you need to wrinkle your eyebrows for?"

"I don't dare," Qin Weibang replied. He knew there were poisonous things all over her body and she was not to be trifled with. He rushed forward for a few steps and said to Yingying, "I'd like to ask Sacred Lady for what we should do

next."

"Carry on according to Chief's order," Yingying ordered.

Qin Weibang bowed and replied, "Yes." Then Sang San Niang and he gave their proprieties to the three people and left.

Blue Phoenix waited for those two people to walk far before saying, "The nuns from Heng-Shan School have all been captured, you're still not going to rescue them?"

"We just came from Heng-Shan trying to catch up to them, but we haven't seen any sign of them along the way," Linghu Chong replied.

"You're not going towards Huashan, so you're going the wrong way," Blue Phoenix told them.

"Going to Huashan? They've been captured and sent to Huashan? You saw them?" Linghu Chong questioned.

"Early yesterday morning at the Heng-Shan's Other Courtyard, I drank some tea when I tasted something strange but I didn't say anything. Next thing, I saw people falling down one by one so I pretended to be knocked out too," Blue Phoenix said.

"Using drugs against the Five-Sylph Sect's Chief Blue, isn't that just asking for trouble?" said a smiling Linghu Chong.

Blue Phoenix smiled captivatingly. "These bastards really don't know what's good or bad."

"You didn't offer them their poison back?" Linghu Chong asked.

"Why be so polite? There were two bastards who thought I've really been knocked out, so they came over to me and they died on the spot from my poison. The other people were frightened so they didn't dare to come over. They just said that I'm dead and my whole body is very poisonous," After she said this, she giggled and laughed.

"What happened after that?" Linghu Chong queried.

"I wanted to look what they were doing and have been pretending to be unconscious from the beginning. Later on, these bastards took many little nuns down from the Xianxing Peak. The one leading these people was none other than your master, Mr. Yue. Big brother, I see your master is very awful. You're the headmaster of Heng-Shan School, but he actually led people to capture your disciples, grand disciples, old nuns, and little nuns. Isn't this deliberately trying to shame you?" Linghu Chong was quiet. Blue Phoenix continued, "I could only look on in anger and was thinking of killing him with poison right there. But I kept thinking and wasn't sure what you would think. If I really wanted to poison and kill him, it would after all only take a moment."

"You took into consideration my feelings, thank you very much," Linghu Chong said.

"That's nothing. I heard them said that they were taking advantage of you not being at Heng-Shan so they quickly moved to avoid giving you time to return there. There were also people who said you were really lucky that you weren't at the mountain, or else they'd have captured you too and wouldn't they have less problems in the future? Hng, hng!" Blue Phoenix narrated.

"With big sister there, if they wanted to capture me, it won't be that easy," Linghu Chong said.

Blue Phoenix looked pleased and she laughingly said, "That's their good luck. If they dared to harm a single hair on your body, I can say my poison would've killed a hundred of them." She turned her head around towards Yingying and said, "Young lady Ren, don't be jealous. I'm just like his family."

Yingying's face turned red and smiled. "Master Linghu has also mentioned you often. He said you treat him well."

Blue Phoenix was happy. "That's excellent! I was afraid he didn't dare to mention my name in front of you."

"You pretended to be unconscious, so how did you get out?" Yingying asked.

"They were afraid there was poison on my body so none of them dared to touch me. Someone said it would be better to chop me to make sure I'm dead.

Some said to shoot projectiles at me. But even though they talked big, none dared to make a move. Then they just walked away. I followed them and saw them really going to Huashan. So once I got out, I went to look for big brother to tell you about this news," Blue Phoenix answered.

"We should really thank you for this or else we would've been chasing them to Dark Wood Cliff and found out there's nothing there. Then we would have to turn around and search for them again. Those old nuns, little nuns, not old not small middle aged nuns, all would've suffered a lot. It's not good to delay this matter, let's go to Huashan now," Linghu Chong said.

The three of them turned towards the west and travelled at double speed to catch up, but they unexpectedly didn't see a single clue on their way. Linghu Chong and Yingying were both very worried and they both thought, "With several hundred of people in their party, surely, there must be people who have seen them. There must also be traces of them in the restaurants and inns along the way. Could it be this isn't the road they took?"

On the third day at a small restaurant, they saw four people from the Hengshan School. At this time, Linghu Chong had changed his appearance and those people had not recognised him yet. Linghu Chong waited to eavesdrop on them and found out they really were going to Huashan. They were looking jubilant, looking like there were gold and treasure on top of the mountain waiting for them. One of them said, "Luckily Martial Brother Huang was friendly enough to tell us the news, and we were also lucky to be in Shanxi so we could come here quickly. I hope we arrive in time. Our martial brothers in Hengshan have really missed a good opportunity."

Another person said, "It's best if we arrive as early as possible. This kind of matter changes with time."

Linghu Chong wanted to know why they were hurrying to go to Mount Huashan, what kind of scheme was afoot, but these four people did not mention anything along the way at all.

"Do you want to poison then interrogate them?" Blue Phoenix asked.

Linghu Chong remembered how Mr. Mo Da treated him so generously so he didn't want to bully these people. "We'll arrive at Huashan soon enough. We'll know when we get there so we mustn't disturb the grass and startle the snake."

A few days later, at dusk, the three of them arrived at the foot of Mount Huashan. Linghu Chong had grown up at Huashan so he was very familiar with the area. He said, "We'll go up from a small path behind the mountain, we won't meet anyone there."

Between the five mountains, Mount Huashan was the most rugged. The small path behind the mountain was actually a steep cliff and there was no passable path. It was good that the three people's martial arts were very high and they were able to go up the rugged cliff. With this method, they arrived at Mount Huashan's mountaintop at around two in the morning. Linghu Chong led the other two towards the Hall of Qi Principle. They saw the place was dark with not a single candle to be seen. They hid underneath a window to listen but there was also no sound to be heard. Then they went to the disciples' residence but there wasn't a single soul to be found there as well. Linghu Chong pushed open a window, went in, and lit a candle to have a look. Inside the house was empty, the top of the table and the floor was all covered with dust. After going to a few other houses, they found all the houses were in the same condition. It was obvious the disciples of Huashan had not returned to the mountain yet.

Blue Phoenix felt something was amiss. "Where are those bastards who went up the mountain? They said they were coming to Mount Huashan, did they go somewhere else?"

Linghu Chong was surprised and hesitant as he remembered the day when he attacked Shaolin Temple. The temple was also empty and they repeatedly met with dangers afterwards. Could Yue Buqun be using the same tactic again? But at this time, there were only three of them. Even if they were surrounded, it would be easy to get away. He was just afraid that the Heng-Shan's disciples were being imprisoned in a very secretive place and they had been tarrying for the last few days, so they might not be able to find them anymore. The three of them strained their ears to listen but all they heard was the rustling of the pines

and the whole mountain was strangely calm.

"Let's split up to look for them. After two hours, we'll meet here again," Blue Phoenix suggested.

"Ok!" Linghu Chong replied. He believed that Blue Phoenix's skill in using poison was very high and there would be no one who would dare to harm her. But he still advised, "You don't need to fear other people. But if you come across my master, his sword is really fast, you must be really careful!"

Blue Phoenix saw him speaking earnestly. Under the yellow flame, his concern was seen on his face. Her heart was moved on seeing this. "Big brother, I'll definitely pay attention to your advice." She then pushed the door to go out.

Linghu Chong took Yingying to investigate everywhere around there. They had even gone to Tianqin Gorge where the Yue Buqun's husband and wife resided in, but they still had not seen anyone yet.

"This is really fishy. During the past, our Huashan School's disciples were all over the mountain, there are always people left behind here to sweep the ground. But why isn't there anyone here right now?" Linghu Chong said.

At the end, they had finally arrived at Yue Lingshan's room. That room was on the side of Tianqin Gorge, and it was situated very close to the Yue Buqun couple's room. As Linghu Chong got to the front of the room, he remembered of the past days when he frequently came here to take his little martial sister to go out and play or to practice sword. But today, there was nothing to see and he couldn't refrain from shedding his tears. He extended his hand to push the door open but the planks were latched, in that moment he hesitated not knowing what to do. Yingying leapt over the wall, unlatched the planks and open the door. They went inside and lit the candle. The bed and table inside were covered by a layer of dust, and there was nothing on the wall. Even the common objects for girls like comb and dresses were not there.

Linghu Chong thought, "After Little martial sister and Martial Brother Lin got married, they must've moved to another new house and don't live here anymore. All her everyday items have all been taken with her." He then opened up the

drawers and saw some small bamboo baskets, stone marbles, cloth dolls, little wooden horse and many other toys. Each of these things was not made by Linghu Chong, but they were the items the two of them had played with in the old days. She had neatly kept everything here. Linghu Chong felt sad and he couldn't bear it anymore, tears flowed and dripped down from his cheeks. Yingying quietly went out and slowly closed the door. Linghu Chong was reluctant to leave Yue Lingshan's room for a long time. Finally, he suppressed his feelings and blew the candle off and walked out of the room.

"Brother Chong, there's one place in Mount Huashan which has a great connection to you. Take me there," Yingying said.

"Ah, you're talking about the Cliff of Repentance. Alright, let's go have a look." He was slightly lost in thought, then he said, "But I'm not sure whether grand martial uncle Feng is there or not?"

He then led the way towards the Cliff of Repentance. Linghu Chong was very familiar with the path. Even though the place wasn't close, they got there very quick. On top of the cliff, Linghu Chong said, "I was inside the cave..." Suddenly they heard two noise of weapons clashing from inside the cave. Both of them were startled and they quickly walked nearer. Someone suddenly cried out, seemingly having been injured. Linghu Chong took out his long sword and rushed forward first. He saw the sealed front entrance to the cave with sword moves engraving had been opened up and there was flickering of flame coming from the inside. Linghu Chong and Yingying entered the cave and their hearts skipped a beat.

There were dozens of torches inside the cave and there were at least two hundred people in there. They were all concentrating on looking at the sword moves engraving on the cave wall. Every single one of them was so absorbed that there wasn't a sound heard. When Linghu Chong and Yingying heard that miserable cry, they were expecting that inside the cave would either be pitch black or there would be fierce fighting with blood spraying all over the place. But how could they have known that the back of the cave would be bright as

day and it would also be filled with people. The back of the cave was quite spacious, so even though there were two hundred people there, they weren't too crowded. But with so many people being noiseless, just like corpses, they were really surprised to suddenly see this strange scene.

Yingying slightly leaned on Linghu Chong's left shoulder. Linghu Chong turned around and saw her face was snow white and there was fear in her eyes. So he extended his hand to softly embrace her waist. Then he saw each of these people had different clothes. After looking for a while, he realised they were the disciples from Songshan, Taishan, and Hengshan Schools. Among them, there were some middle aged people with grey hair, there were also some old people with long white beards. It was clear that many seniors from those three schools were also here. However, the people from Huashan and Heng-Shan Schools were not seen among them. The people from these three schools gathered in their own groups and did not mix with each other. The Songshan School's people were observing the wall where the Songshan School's sword moves were, while the Taishan and Hengshan Schools' people were also absorbing the part of the walls where their own sword moves were. Linghu Chong remembered that they had met with four Hengshan's disciples along the way. They mentioned they had gotten news and they were hurrying towards Huashan. That it was of the greatest luck. So it was all because they would have the opportunity to see the wonderful sword moves engraved on the wall at this cave. After some time, he saw among the Hengshan School's people was a lonesome person with white hair looking at the stone wall with no expression on his face. This person was Mr. Mo Da. Linghu Chong didn't know what to, whether he should go up to pay his respect to him or not.

Suddenly, a person from the Songshan School group angrily shouted, "You're not Songshan's disciple, why are you looking at the drawings?" The one who said this was an old person wearing a dust-yellow gown. He angrily glared at a middle aged person with a tall and strong stature, while the long sword in his hand was pointed at his chest.

That middle aged person snorted and said, "When did I look at the drawings?"

The old person from Songshan School angrily shouted, "You're still thinking of denying it? Which school are you from? If you want to steal Songshan's sword art then I don't care, but what are you doing looking at those moves to break the Songshan's sword art for?" At the same time that he shouted, four to five Songshan's people immediately surrounded that middle aged person and pulled their weapons out.

"I know nothing of your honourable school's sword art, so what's the use of looking at those breaking moves for?" the middle aged person argued.

"You must be harbouring some malicious intentions to be peering at Songshan School's sword moves," the old person from Songshan School replied.

That middle aged person put his hand on his sword handle. He said, "Five Mountains School's headmaster, Mr. Yue, is very kind and he's allowed us to come and have a look at the sword moves on the wall. But he didn't limit us to which moves we can look and which ones we can't."

That old person from Songshan School said, "You're thinking of harming my Songshan School, we won't allow you to."

"Five schools have become one. At this time, there's only Five Mountains School. How can there be Songshan School? If not for five schools becoming one, Mr. Yue would never have permitted you to look at the sword moves in this cave at Huashan," that middle aged person said and that old man was unable to reply back. A disciple of Songshan pushed the back of that middle aged person's shoulder and shouted, "You're very good in turning things over." That middle aged person reached back with his hand and flinged that person's hand away. That Songshan's disciple staggered and fell on the ground.

At this time, a person from the Taishan School suddenly shouted, "Who are you? Wearing our Taishan School's uniform and mixing with us trying to steal the Taishan School's sword art." A youngster wearing the Taishan School's uniform hurriedly rushed out. A person nearest to the exit immediately moved and shouted, "Stop, who are you making trouble here?"

That youngster stabbed out with his sword as he rushed forward. The person

blocking the exit sent his left palm out towards his eye. That youngster quickly retreated a step. The person blocking the exit shot his right hand out like the wind, again stabbing at his eye. The youngster's long sword was on the outside so it was difficult for him to block and he was forced to step back again. The person blocking the exit swept his leg, the youngster leapt up to avoid it. Then with a 'peng' sound, his chest had been hit by a palm and he had fallen down on the ground. From behind, two Taishan School's disciples went up to detain him.

At this time, the four Songshan School's people surrounding that middle aged person had attacked with their long swords. That middle aged person swiftly and fiercely fought back, but his sword art didn't belong to the five mountains sword schools. A few Songshan's disciples watching on the side cried out, "This chap isn't from the five mountains sword schools. He's a traitor mixing in with us."

With two fights going on, the quiet mountain cave had turned chaotic. Linghu Chong thought, "My master told these people to come here, it's not because he has a good intention. I'm going to tell Martial uncle Mo and ask him to lead his people out of here. I'll tell him about the Hengshan School's sword art once we got out of the cave." He immediately leaned on the wall to stay in the shadow as he walked near to Mr. Mo Da. He had only gone for a few dozens feet when suddenly a big rumbling sound was heard. It was as if the mountain had cracked.

People were crying out in alarm. Linghu Chong quickly turned around and saw dirt and dust falling around the cave's entrance. He didn't care about finding Mr. Mo Da anymore and was just wishing to go to Yingying, but with lots of people chaotically running away, swords brandished everywhere, dirt falling down around the cave, he couldn't see where Yingying was. He flew out from the cluster of people towards the cave’s entrance while dodging swords slashed at him. He shouted desperately but he saw a massive rock which was around tens of thousands of catty heavy dropping on the cave's entrance, firmly shutting the cave in. In panic, he took a glance and it seemed there was no crack to get out.

"Yingying, Yingying!" Linghu Chong shouted. Yingying answered but it sounded like she was somewhere deep inside the cave. But with two hundred people shouting in confusion, he couldn't hear her clearly. He thought, "How come Yingying is inside?" He thought for a while and he understood, "Oh, yes. When that big rock fell down, Yingying was standing on the cave's entrance and she wasn't willing to run by herself, but she was thinking of me. I rushed back to the entrance to look for her, but she was rushing inside to find me." He immediately turned around to rush inside.

Originally, there were dozens of torches inside the cave. But when the big rock fell down and with the confusion going on, there were some who threw their torches away. Thus, most of the torches had been extinguished. The whole cave was filled with dust and all he could see was fuzzy yellow. He heard people shouting in alarm, "The cave's entrance has been sealed up! The cave's entrance has been sealed up!" There were also people who angrily shouted, "It's that traitor Yue Buqun's plot!" Another person shouted, "That's right. That traitor deceived us to see his ***** sword art..."

Dozens of people tried to push the big rock. But this big rock was just like a small mountain, even though dozens of people were forcefully pushing it, how could they even move it for an inch? There was also someone who shouted, "Quick, quickly leave from the tunnel." A few people had thought of this earlier. Around twenty of them were pushing each other crowding the entrance to that tunnel. That tunnel was the one dug by the Devil Sect's elders years ago with hatchets and only one person could go through it at a time. So with twenty people crowding together, how could they manage to go in? With this confusion, ten more torches were extinguished.

Two big men from the crowd used their strength to push the people away as they rushed towards the tunnel's entrance. The tunnel's entrance was very narrow and they hit each other, preventing each other from going in. The person on the right hand side swiped his left hand and the big man on the left cried out, a dagger was sticking out of his chest. The big man on the right hand side pushed him away and entered the tunnel. The rest of the crowd pushed and

shoved, all of them wanting to enter. Linghu Chong had not seen Yingying yet and he was feeling very worried. He also thought, "The Devil Sect's ten elders had very high martial arts. But because of this plot, they were all buried in here. Today, I'm not sure if Yingying and I can get out of this difficulty. This would be very dangerous if my master is the one who arranged all this."

He saw the crowd was at the tunnel's entrance pushing and shoving. They were all anxious and frightened. Suddenly, a murderous intention popped into his head, "These chaps are blocking me, I must kill them all then Yingying and I can escape from here." He lifted his long sword wanting to start killing people. But he saw a youngster crouching on the ground with both his hand clutching his hair and his whole body shuddering. His face was ashen. It was obvious he was scared to death. Linghu Chong took pity on him and he pondered, "He and I are friends in difficulty and we've both fallen in this trap. We should cross the river in a boat together, why should I kill him in anger for?" He pulled back his long sword and put it across in front of his chest.

Then he heard the twenty odd people at the tunnel's entrance shouted, "Quickly go in!" "Why aren't you moving?" "Not crawling in?" "Drag him out!" That big man's two feet were still outside and it seemed the tunnel was blocked, but he wasn't willing to crawl back out. Two people stooped down to grab that big man's feet and pulled him out. Suddenly, dozens of people called out in alarm because they had pulled out a headless corpse. The neck was covered with blood. This big man's head had unexpectedly been cut off by someone in the tunnel.

At this time, Linghu Chong saw a person sitting in the corner of the cave, and under the dusky flame, he recognised that person to be Yingying. He was jubilant and quickly rushed there. But after only taking two steps, seven to eight people blocked his way. Currently, the cave was in chaos and everyone looked like they had lost their reasoning just like headless flies flying all over the place. There were some who crazily slashed their swords at random, some were beating their chests crying, some were wrestling each other, and there were some who were crawling on the ground going here and there.

Linghu Chong had squeezed out a few steps when he suddenly felt both of his legs being firmly embraced. He powerfully hit the top of that person's head causing that person to cry out but he still didn't let go. Linghu Chong shouted, "If you don't let go, I'll kill you." Suddenly, the top of his calf hurt as he had unexpectedly been bitten. Linghu Chong was angry and surprised. He saw everyone was acting like they were crazy, and the torches inside the cave were getting less and less. Now, only two torches were still burning but they were already fallen on the ground. Linghu Chong called out, "Pick up the torches, pick up the torches."

A fat Taoist laughed and stepped on a torch extinguishing it. Linghu Chong lifted his long sword and beheaded that person biting on his calf. Suddenly, everything was dark and nothing could be seen. The last torch had been extinguished.

With the torches extinguished, everyone in the cave suddenly became quiet as they were stunned by this change in situation. But after a short moment had passed, the mad shouting began again. Linghu Chong thought, "We have no chance of getting out of here alive today. It's lucky that I can die here together with Yingying." Thinking up to this point, he felt happy instead of afraid and started going towards where Yingying was. After walking for a few steps, someone suddenly came towards him and powerfully hit him. This person had high inner energy and the hit was swift and fierce. Linghu Chong staggered back for a couple of steps after being hit and turned around for half a circle. He quickly turned back and slowly continued on his way to where Yingying was sitting at. With his ears straining to listen, he heard crying and shouting and dozens of weapons colliding. In the dark, with so many people frightened, most of them were like half crazy and everyone was afraid so they were slashing their weapons about to protect themselves. Some of them had a lot of experience or high internal energy, and they originally remained calm, but with the people besides them randomly swiping their weapons and the mountain cave so crowded, also with no place to dodge in the darkness, besides wielding their own weapons, there was no other way. He heard weapons clashing, people crying out in pain around them, also injured people moaning and cursing.

Linghu Chong could only hear the weapons splitting the wind all around him. Even though his sword art was high, there was no way for him to use it properly as he could be hit from any direction at any moment. He was feeling really worried so he immediately swiped his long sword to protect his upper body. Step by step, he moved towards the cave wall. Once he reached the wall, he could lean on it while walking and avoid a lot of dangers, just like that person resembling Yingying leaning on the wall while sitting down. With that method of walking, he would be able to meet her soon. From where he was standing, he was still dozens of feet away from the cave wall. But the blades were like the forest and the swords were like the rain, every inch was fraud by danger and every step was fraud with death.

Linghu Chong thought, "If I die under the hand of a master then it would be sweet. But in this situation, I can just get killed anytime by something mysterious. And the one who killed me is probably some idiot who knows a bit of martial art only. Even if Hero Dugu lived again and met with this kind of situation, I'm afraid he probably also can't find a way out." As he thought of Dugu Qiubai, he was enlightened, "That's right, in today's situation, if I don't kill someone mysteriously then I'll be the one killed mysteriously. When I kill one, that'll be one less person to kill me." His long sword trembled out using the 'Arrow Breaking Stance' of the 'Dugu Nine Sword', his sword stabbed out to the front, back, left, and right. Once he used the sword stance, a few people around him cried out miserably and dropped to the ground. He felt his sword entered the flesh of someone and he heard that person cried out lightly. It was the voice of a girl. Linghu Chong was greatly startled and his hand became weak and he nearly dropped his long sword. His heart was thumping, "Was that Yingying? Did I just kill Yingying!" He shouted desperately, "Yingying, Yingying, is that you?"

But there was no sound coming from that girl. He was very familiar with Yingying's voice and that light cry was not actually from her and very easily distinguishable. But with many voices mixed inside the cave, the lightness of this girl's cry, his worried heart, and his chaotic mind, he felt that it was Yingying but at the same time also felt that it wasn't her. He called out again for a

few times but there was still no answer so he stooped down to feel around the ground. Suddenly, a kick came flying in and kicked him squarely on his butt. Linghu Chong flew up and while his body was in mid air, his left leg hurt as someone gave it a whip. He quickly used his left hand to cover his head, and with a 'bang', his arm along with his head had hit the top of the cave. As he was dropping back down, he felt his head, his arm, legs, and butt were all covered in pain, like his whole body was about to be shattered into pieces. He calmed himself down and called out "Yingying" again for a couple more times. Hearing his own voice, he sounded hoarse like he was crying. His heart was feeling miserable and desperate as he shouted, "I've killed Yingying, I've killed Yingying!" With his long sword slashing left and right, he rushed forward and killed a few people.

In this clamour, he suddenly heard two 'zheng, zheng' sound. This was the sound of a yaoqin. Even though the sound of this qin was light, in Linghu Chong's ears they were just like thunder startling him. He was rapt and quickly called out, "Yingying, Yingying!"

Right at this time, he wanted to go to where the sound of that qin was coming from. But as he thought about it, the sound of that qin came from some distance away. This one hundred feet distance was a hundred times more dangerous when compared to walking in Jianghu for a hundred thousand li. To be able to walk this one hundred feet distance without dying was actually very difficult. This sound of qin was of course from Yingying and since she's alright, then he mustn't just throw his life away. If the two of them couldn't die together hand in hand then they would suffer endless regret in the nine fountain. He retreated back for a couple of steps and leaned his back on the cave wall. He thought, "This is much safer." Suddenly he felt a strong wind of someone slashing his weapon rushing at him. Linghu Chong thrust his sword out, but just as he moved his long sword, he immediately knew things were far from good.

The essence of 'Dugu Nine Sword' was at looking at the flaw of the opponent's movements and attacking that point. Thrust later but arriving first, one move to take victory. But in this dark cave, he couldn't even see his enemy

or his enemy's movement, so how could he see the flaw in the movement? At this situation, 'Dugu Nine Sword' was completely useless. The long sword in Linghu Chong's hand had only thrust out for a foot when he hastily dodged to the left. Then he heard a breaking sound followed by a crashing sound and lastly a miserable cry. He guessed that person's weapon must have first struck against the wall and broke, and the broken weapon then had stabbed his own body.

Linghu Chong heard that person had gone quiet and guessed he must have died. He pondered, "Although my sword art is high, it is just like any other ordinary person in this dark cave. I just have to bear with it patiently and wait for a chance to meet up with Yingying." But he heard the sound of fighting and the shouting had lessened because at this time many people had been injured or killed. He quickly brandished his long sword in front of his body to form a sword net in case someone suddenly attacked him. The sound of the yaoqin was intermittent like the string was plucked one by one, and it was not making up any tune. Linghu Chong was again worried, "Is Yingying injured? Or maybe she's not the one playing the qin? But if it's not her, how can there be another person who also has a qin?" After a long time, the shouting finally stopped. There were many people moaning and groaning on the ground. Occasionally, there was a sound of weapon clashing coming from around the wall. Linghu Chong thought, "The people who aren't dead are around the wall. These people must be masters in Wulin and their thoughts are sharp." He shouted repeatedly, "Yingying, where are you?" The qin sounded a few times as if answering him.

Linghu Chong flew forward. When his left foot landed, he felt something soft. He had landed on someone's body and at the same time he felt the wind whistling as a weapon was slashing upwards. Because his internal energy was abundant, even though he couldn't see the enemy's weapon coming, he was still aware of it. He quickly used strength on his left foot and leapt back to the cave wall. He pondered, "The ground is full of people lying down and some are injured. I can't go across." Then he heard the wind whistling caused by the people leaning their backs on the cave wall slashing their weapons about to protect themselves; in this moment of time, a few more people were either

injured or killed.

Suddenly, an elder spoke, "Friends, we've fallen into Yue Buqun's trap. We must work together to get out of here. We can't just swing our weapons around and kill one another."

"That's right, that's right!" many people replied together.

When Linghu Chong heard their voices, he gathered there were around sixty to seventy of them. All these people had their backs to the wall and they were standing motionless. One was because they had calmed down. Secondly, because temporarily they weren't worried about their lives so they were able to calmly think things through.

That elder said, "I'm Taishan School's Yuzhongzi. Everyone, please sheathe your weapon. Everyone is in the dark, so when you bump into someone, you mustn’t hurt anyone. Friends, do you agree?"

"That should be the way," those people boomed their replies and the sound of weapons slashing lessened. Some people who were still brandishing their weapons also stopped after a while.

"I'd also like everyone to swear an oath. If anyone here hurt anyone else, then he'll be buried here and won't get to see the sky again. I, Taishan's Yuzhongzi, swear to this oath first," Yuzhongzi said.

The rest of the people swore this oath while thinking in their hearts, "This Priest Yuzhongzi is very experienced. If we all work together, there's still a chance that we'd get out of here. Otherwise, we'll be randomly chopping each other just like before."

"Very good! Please say your name," Yuzhongzi requested.

At that time, people started saying, "I'm Hengshan's so and so." "I'm Taishan's so and so." I'm Songshan's so and so." But Mr. Mo Da's name was never heard.

After these people had finished speaking, Linghu Chong announced himself, "I'm Heng-Shan School's Linghu Chong." The crowd gasped in surprised and they said, "Heng-Shan's Headmaster, Hero Linghu, is here. That's very good."

Their tone of voice was happy.

Linghu Chong thought, "I'm just a waste, what's so good about me?" He of course understood. These people knew his martial art was very high. So with him around, their hope of escaping had gone up by many notches.

"I'd like to ask Headmaster Linghu something. Why did your honourable school only send headmaster here all by yourself?" Yuzhongzi queried. This person was experienced and very careful so he was suspicious that Linghu Chong was hiding something that might be harmful towards them. When Linghu Chong came out of Huashan, he did so as Yue Buqun's disciple. Everyone knew about this. But as they were trapped inside this mountain cave, from amongst the hundreds of disciples from Huashan and Heng-Shan, he was the only person there who belonged to either. It was unavoidable that people would suspect him.

"I have another companion..." Linghu Chong replied and he couldn't help calling out again, "Ying..." But he had only managed to call out 'Ying' before a thought flashed in his mind, "Yingying is the Sun Moon Sect's Chief's only daughter and both the righteous and demonical are like fire and water. I mustn't put this thing on top of what's happening already." So he immediately shut his mouth.

"Who has a torch beside him? Please light it up first," Yuzhongzi requested.

The crowd cheered loudly, "Very good, very good!" "We're all so muddle headed, why didn't we think of that?" "Quickly light up the torches!" Actually, in the middle of the chaos before, everyone was only thinking of protecting himself so how could they think of lighting up a torch? Besides, as soon as a torch was lighted, that person would be killed instantly by the person next to him. But now he heard many rattling sound as some people took out their flint and steel to make fire. Soon after, many dots of flames were seen and it felt very bright in the darkness. The people inside the mountain cave started cheering.

Linghu Chong took a glance and saw the surrounding cave wall was full of people. Their bodies and faces were splashed with blood. There were also some who still slowly swiping their swords and sabres in front of their bodies. These

people were extremely careful, even though they had heard everyone swearing an oath, they still didn't believe the person next to them. Linghu Chong took a step to go to the opposite wall wanting to find Yingying. Suddenly, from among the cluster of people, someone shouted, "Move!" Seven to eight people came out of the tunnel brandishing their long swords and started killing people.

"Who are you?" the crowd shouted and one by one they drew their own weapons to defend. After some time, the torches had again been extinguished. Linghu Chong shot forward and leapt towards the opposite wall. He felt a weapon hacking from his right hand side and in the darkness he didn't know how to block it. He rushed at the ground and heard a 'dang' sound. A sabre had clashed with the wall. He thought, "This person doesn't necessarily want to kill me. He might just be wanting to defend himself in the darkness." He stayed down on the ground quietly. After that person hacked at empty space for a few more times, he stopped.

Someone shouted, "Kill all these dogs, don't leave any behind!" More than ten people acknowledged this order. This was followed by six to seven people shouting, "It's Zuo Lengchan! Zuo Lengchan!" Then some people shouted, "Master, disciple's here!"

Linghu Chong heard the person barking the order was really Zuo Lengchan, he pondered, "Why is he here? This trap was set up by this bastard, it wasn't my Master after all." Even though Yue Buqun had tried to kill him several times already, the master-disciple and father-son relationship between them had stretched for more than twenty years and they were deep-rooted in his heart. He simply couldn't forget them. Once he thought that the traitor setting this up wasn't Yue Buqun, he couldn't help feeling happy. He was a hundred times happier to die under Zuo Lengchan's hand than to die under his Master's hand.

He only heard Zuo Lengchan gloomily said, "You still have the face to call me master? You didn't report to me before you went to Huashan. This is deceiving your master and betraying your school. How can our school have such despicable disciples like you?"

"Master," A booming voice replied. "Disciple got the message that a cave in the

Cliff of Contemplation at Huashan has our own school's wonderful sword art. I was afraid I'd be wasting time going back and forth and telling master about this first, and the sword moves on the wall would be destroyed by someone. So I quickly came here. After I look at the sword art, I'd of course go back to the mountain immediately and tell master all these sword arts."

"You're taking advantage of my blindness," Zuo Lengchan said. "I know you all considered me useless since long ago. Once you learned these wonderful sword art, would you still recognise me as your master? Yue Buqun wanted all of you to pledge your loyalties to him before he'd let you come into this cave to look at the sword moves. Didn't this happen?"

"Yes, dis... disciple should die," that Songshan disciple answered. "But this is just a temporary measure. Our five mountain sword schools have merged into one and he's the headmaster. So we should... should also listen to his order. But I never thought this traitor would behave so violently and trapped all of us down here."

Another person said, "Master, please lead us to escape from here. We'll then go find that traitor Yue Buqun to settle our debt."

Zuo Lengchan snorted. "What a wishful thinking you have there." He paused for a while then continued, "Linghu Chong, you're also here, what are you doing here?"

"This is my old place, if I want to come then I just come!" Linghu Chong replied. "What are you doing here?"

Zuo Lengchan laughed coldly and replied, "Death is imminent and you're still so rude towards your senior."

"You plotted secretly and caused the harm of the world's heroes," Linghu Chong said. "Everyone wants to punish you for this, and you still consider yourself to be a senior?"

"Pingzhi," Zuo Lengchan said. "Kill him!"

"Yes!" someone answered in the dark. It was Lin Pingzhi's voice.

Linghu Chong was startled and he thought, "So Lin Pingzhi is also here. Both Zuo Lengchan and him are blind, so these days they must be familiar on how to use the sword blind. Using their ears to replace their eyes, their technique on listening to the wind to distinguish attacks must be good now. In this darkness, the situation is turned, it is me who is blind while they're the ones who aren't blind. But why are they the enemy?" But his back was covered in cold sweat.

Then he heard Lin Pingzhi said, "Linghu Chong, you're very glorious and your name is very famous in Jianghu. But today you're going to die under my hands, haha, haha!" His laughter was full of gloom. Step by step he came over.

Just then when Linghu Chong and Zuo Lengchan were talking, Lin Pingzhi had heard him clearly and his position had been given away. The whole cave was quiet and only Lin Pingzhi's footsteps were heard. With each step of his, Linghu Chong knew he was one step closer to the death's door. Suddenly, someone shouted, "Wait! This Linghu Chong blinded my eyes and caused me to be unable to see the daylight from then on. Let me kill this bastard." More than ten people echoed what he said and they quickly walked over. Linghu Chong was startled. He knew they were the fifteen people who he had blinded on that night outside the abandoned temple. That day on his way towards Songshan for the merger of the five schools, he met these people on the way. These people had been blinded for a long time, and their abilities to use their ears to replace their eyes must be high. He already couldn't defend against one Lin Pingzhi, now with the addition of these fifteen people, he was totally outclassed.

He heard their footsteps while he quietly slid for a few steps towards the left. Then he heard a few 'ta, ta, ta' noise as a few longs sword were stabbed at the wall where he was standing at previously. Luckily, these ten or so people attacked at the same time causing the noise to blend with the footsteps sound concealing his footsteps. No one knew where he had gone to. Linghu Chong stooped down and felt a sword on the ground. He tossed it, and with a clanking sound, it hit the wall. Those ten or so blind men rushed over with their weapons raised, and they started fighting with some people. Shouting erupted and in a few moment six to seven people were killed. These people didn't have weak

martial arts, but they couldn't see a thing in this darkness, so they weren't the match of these blind men.

Linghu Chong took advantage of this shouting to slide a few more steps to the left. He groped around to feel there was no one around the wall before he quietly crouched down and pondered, "Zuo Lengchan brought Lin Pingzhi and those blind men here to do battle in the dark. They're going to annihilate all of us here. But how does he know there's this kind of cave here?" As soon as he thought about it, he was enlightened, "Yes! That day little martial sister was on top of the place of worship, she fought using the moves engraved on the wall here. She defeated the masters from Taishan and Hengshan. She also used Songshan sword art in front of Zuo Lengchan and used the Heng-Shan sword art to fight against me. Since she came here before, Lin Pingzhi of course knows about it too." As he thought of little martial sister, his heart ached.

He heard Lin Pingzhi shouted, "Linghu Chong, you don't dare to reveal yourself, pulling in your head and tail. What kind of hero is that?"

Linghu Chong was angered and he wanted to get out to fight to the death with him, but he restrained himself. He thought, "A gentleman can bend and straighten. How can I get so irritated over him? I haven't found Yingying yet, I can't die so easily just like that." He also thought, "I once promised little martial sister to tend to Lin Pingzhi. If I come out and fight with him then got killed by him, that would be unworthy. But it's also not right if I kill him."

"There are turncoats in this cave, traitors who need to be killed," Zuo Lengchan shouted. "Even if you forgive Linghu Chong, there's nowhere he can go to!"

A short time later, clashing of weapons and shouting erupted. Linghu Chong squatted on the ground. After a short while, still no one attacked him. He strained to listen to Yingying's voice while pondering, "Yingying is far more careful and cleverer than me. In the middle of this ambush, she'd definitely not play her qin. I only hope no sword is being thrust at her." He heard the fighting between the crowd and those blind men was really fierce, they were fighting fiercely while also hurling curses. The curse 'scram your granny' was even

heard. This 'scram your granny' was really grating to the ears. When common people uses this swear words, they always say 'go to your mum', or 'hold your granny', sometimes people also use 'scram your mother bastard', but it was rare to hear someone uses 'scram your granny'. Linghu Chong pondered, "Is this a swear word special to their provinces?" After listening for a while, he found that this swear word 'scram your granny' was used quite often by a few people. Once this swear word was uttered by both people fighting, the fighting would stop immediately. But if only one person uttered this swear word, then the fighting between them would continue. He immediately understood, "So this is the code for those blind men to distinguish each other." In that darkness, randomly slashing and killing, it was hard to determine friends or foes. Those blind men had determined a code beforehand and when they started fighting they would first called out this swear word 'scram your granny'. When two people cursed the same swear word, they were friends. Otherwise, they would kill their opponents. No one uses this swear word, so this code word was something that the enemy wouldn't use to curse someone with.

Once he understood this, he immediately stood up and put his sword in front of his chest. The swearing of 'scram your granny' was getting more frequent, while the clashing of weapons and the shouting were gradually dying. It seemed the people from Taishan, Hengshan, and Songshan Schools had been massacred. Linghu Chong had not heard of Yingying's voice. He was worried that Yingying had been killed earlier, but he was also happy that she didn't suffer under the hands of these blind men. He also thought, "The disciples of Songshan must've found out the cave in Huashan contained their own school's wonderful sword art so they quickly came here to take a look. This behaviour is quite common in people. But they didn't have time to report, so Zuo Lengchan just decided to kill them all and doesn't hold back at all. He must be thinking of killing me, but since he can't distinguish anyone, he even killed all his disciples who had only done a little bit of wrong." After some time, the sound of fighting ceased.

"Everyone," Zuo Lengchan shouted. "Go around the cave and give them another chop."

The blind men acknowledged his order, then the sound of sword slashing was heard going here and there. Two swords were chopping down in front of Linghu Chong, and he lifted his sword to block. Two hoarse voices shouting 'scram your granny' were heard and unexpectedly nobody realised what had happened. After some time, besides those blind men cursing and the clashing of weapons, there was no other noise. But Linghu Chong was still worried and he nearly cried, wanting to cry out, "Yingying, Yingying, where are you?"

"Stop!" Zuo Lengchan commanded.

Those blind men sheathed their swords and stood still. Zuo Lengchan laughed happily and said, "Those traitors have all been eliminated. These shameless people, just because they wanted to learn some sword moves, they actually swore loyalty to that bastard Yue Buqun. That little bastard Linghu Chong must've died under your swords! Haha! Haha! Linghu Chong, Linghu Chong, are you dead yet?" Linghu Chong held his breath and didn't reply.

"Pingzhi," Zuo Lengchan said. "Today, you've killed the person you hate the most. You must be satisfied."

"The whole battle was thought of by Brother Zuo," Lin Pingzhi replied. "It was wonderfully set up."

Linghu Chong thought, "Zuo Lengchan and him are praising each other. In order to get his Evil Resisting Sword Art, Zuo Lengchan is being very polite to him."

"If you didn't know of another secret path into this tunnel," Zuo Lengchan said. "It would've been hard for us to get our revenge."

"But it's a pity," Lin Pingzhi. "In all that confusion I didn't get the chance to kill that little bastard Linghu Chong myself."

Linghu Chong thought, "I've never offended him before. Why does he detest me so much?"

"It doesn't matter who killed him, it's all the same," Zuo Lengchan replied in whisper. "Let's go out quickly. I think Yue Buqun should be guarding outside of

the cave now. We should take advantage of the darkness to rush out."

"Yes!" Lin Pingzhi acknowledged. The sound of footsteps was heard as their party entered the tunnel. Sound of footsteps gradually got farther away, and after a while, it was all quiet.

"Yingying," Linghu Chong whispered. "Where are you?" His voice sounded like he was weeping.

Suddenly, someone from above his head whispered, "I'm here. Don't make any noise!"

Linghu Chong was happy and both his knees became soft as he sat down on the ground. When those blind men randomly slashed their swords around, the safest place to be was up there. A place where no weapon can reach. This was a very obvious and simple point, but when faced with death, everyone's mind was in chaos and didn't think of this.

Yingying leapt down. Linghu Chong jumped up and tossed his sword away before embracing her tightly. They were both sobbing happily. Linghu Chong lightly kissed her forehead and whispered, "You really frightened me to death just before."

In the darkness, Yingying didn't avoid it and she lightly replied, "You were cursing people 'scram your granny'. Nevertheless, I heard it was your voice."

Linghu Chong couldn't help smiling as he asked, "You're not injured at all?"

"No."

"I heard the qin's sound before and wasn't worried anymore. But then I felt that I've stabbed a girl and the qin's sound became broken, not making up a tune, so I thought I've wounded you. Later on, there was no sound at all and I didn't know what had happened."

Yingying smiled. "I've jumped up there early on. I was afraid someone might find out so I couldn't call out to you. So I had to toss coins down to strike that yaoqin to let you know."

Linghu Chong sighed and said, "That's how it is. I never knew. I deserve to be

hit, deserve to be hit!" He took her hand and lightly hit his own cheeks. "You're marrying such a stupid man," Linghu Chong chuckled. "This can be considered to be Young Lady Ren's bad luck. I felt it was really odd. If you were the one playing the yaoqin, why weren't you playing the 'Song of Peace and Serenity' or maybe the 'Smiling Proud Wanderer'?"

Yingying let him hugged her. "If I could toss coins in the darkness to make the yaoqin play out a tune, then I'll be a deity."

Linghu Chong laughingly said, "You are a deity."

When Yingying heard his words were teasing her, she struggled wanting to get away from his embrace. Linghu Chong tightly held on to her and asked, "Later on, why did you stop throwing the coins to strike the qin?"

"I'm poor," Yingying laughingly replied. "I don't have that much money on me. After throwing a few of them, I ran out."

Linghu Chong sighed. "It's a pity there's no money farm in this cave, there's also no store here. Young lady Ren has no money to use and there's no place to borrow money."

Yingying also laughed and said, "After that, I even used my hairpin and earrings. But when those blind men started killing, I didn't dare to throw things anymore because their hearings are very acute."

Suddenly, there was a gloomy cold laugh coming from the tunnel's entrance. Linghu Chong and Yingying gasped in surprise. Linghu Chong's left arm embraced Yingying while his right hand grabbed the long sword on the ground. He shouted, "Who's there?"

That person coldly replied, "Hero Linghu, it's me!" The voice was Lin Pingzhi's. Then they heard footsteps coming from the tunnel, the blind men had returned.

Linghu Chong scolded himself for being so careless. Zuo Lengchan was an old bastard and he was also very cunning, so how could he just go like that? They must've stayed in the tunnel listening to the noises inside the cave. If he

was by himself, he would've wasted some time before trying to escape. But with Yingying and him worrying over each other and delighted over their reunion, he didn't think the enemy could've stayed not far from there and was watching them from the outside. Yingying put her hand underneath Linghu Chong's armpit and whispered, "Go up!" The two of them jumped up.

Yingying had earlier rested on the rock jutting out of the wall so she knew where it was. In the darkness, she applied the right amount of force to go up and steadily landed on it. But Linghu Chong missed and he instead landed back down. Yingying grabbed his arm and pulled him back up. This rock only jutted out for around three to four feet. Both of them were crowded and it wasn't easy for them to steadily stand there. Linghu Chong thought, "Yingying thinks very fast. Both of us are on top looking down, so it won't be easy for those blind men to attack us."

"Those two little ghosts jumped up," Zuo Lengchan said.

"Yes!" Lin Pingzhi acknowledged.

"Linghu Chong," Zuo Lengchan said. "Are you going to hide up there for the rest of your life?"

Linghu Chong didn't reply. He was thinking if he uttered a single noise then his hiding place would be discovered. His right hand held his sword while his left hand was wrapped around Yingying's waist. Yingying's left hand was holding a short sword and her right hand was also wrapped around his waist. They felt comforted to be able to be together, they had no regret even if they had to die right now.

"Who blinded your eyes?" Zuo Lengchan shouted. "Have you forgotten it?"

More than ten blind men roared and jumped up while randomly thrusting. Linghu Chong and Yingying still didn't make any sound, and those blind men stabbed at empty spaces. The second time they leapt up, one of the blind men was only around a foot beyond the jutting rock. Linghu Chong heard the wind around him as he jumped up, he thrust his sword forward and pierced the blind man's chest. That blind man cried out and fell on the ground. With that

happened, the others discovered their hiding place. Six to seven people leapt up at the same time slashing and thrusting their swords. Even though Linghu Chong and Yingying couldn't see those blind men, the distance between the jutting rock and the ground was around twenty feet. The people jumping up produced a lot of wind noise so they were easy to distinguish. They thrust their swords out and killed two people. The rest of the blind men looked up and hurled abuses at them. For a while, they didn't dare to leap up and attack.

A short time later, the sound of wind was heard and two people had jumped up from the left and right. Linghu Chong and Yingying lifted their swords to block.

'Zheng, zheng'. Four swords collided.

Linghu Chong's right hand ached and his long sword was nearly knocked out of his hand. He knew the person who had attacked was Zuo Lengchan himself. Yingying cried out in pain as her shoulder was hit by a sword and she swayed. Linghu Chong quickly pulled her in with his left hand. Those two people jumped up again to attack. Linghu Chong thrust his long sword towards the person attacking Yingying. Both swords collided, and that person's long sword changed quickly into a slash. Linghu Chong knew this enemy was Lin Pingzhi. There was no time to block the incoming sword so he quickly lowered his head and stooped his body. He felt the cold wind as Lin Pingzhi slashed at Yingying. His body was in mid air but he unexpectedly was able to do three moves. This Evil Resisting Sword Art was truly formidable.

Linghu Chong was afraid he might injure Yingying so he hugged her and leapt down with her. With his back leaning on the cave wall, he started to slash his sword around. Suddenly he heard Zuo Lengchan's long laugh. A sword attacked and with a clashing sound, both swords had again collided. Linghu Chong was shaken and he felt a little internal energy coming from the sword. His whole body involuntarily shook. Suddenly he remembered of the day when Ren Woxing was at Shaolin Temple using his 'Art of Essence Absorbing' to suck Zuo Lengchan's internal energy. Who could've known that Zuo Lengchan's internal energy would be so formidable that in just a short time, Ren Woxing was frozen.

This time he was doing the same strategy again and to avoid falling into his trap, Linghu Chong quickly pushed the internal energy out but suddenly he felt a tremendous energy coming back, and his fingers involuntarily loosened and his sword flew out of his hand. Linghu Chong's whole skill depended on a long sword, so he quickly stooped down and felt around the ground for another sword. More than two hundred people had died inside that cave and the ground was filled with weapons so he could just pick a sabre up and hold up momentarily. Yingying and he had turned blind in this cave while being attacked by these ten or so blind men who had turned not blind. It was no luck that they had survived so far, but no matter what, they were unwilling to just give up their lives so easily. After feeling around for a while, he touched the face of a dead person. It was cold and sticky, he hastily hugged Yingying and retreated for a couple of steps.

'Zheng, zheng!' Yingying brandished her short sword to block the incoming thrust from the two swords. This was followed by a cry as the short sword in Yingying's hand was knocked flying off. Linghu Chong was worried, he stooped down again and found something that felt like a short stick. In this critical situation, he didn't have time to think when he felt a strong wind rushing from his front. Another sword had slashed at him. He immediately put the stick up to block. With a cracking sound, that short stick was cut off by the sword.

Linghu Chong lowered his head to let the long sword go pass. Suddenly, he saw some light dots in front of him. These light dots were very weak, but inside this dark cave, they were just like a star coming out of the horizon. The enemies' bodies and their swords could be distinguished faintly. Linghu Chong and Yingying gasped at the same time as they saw Zuo Lengchan thrust his sword again. Linghu Chong lifted his short stick to stab it at Zuo Lengchan's throat, which was exactly the flaw in his sword move. Unexpectedly, even though Zuo Lengchan was blind, his response was still very fast as he used the move 'Carp Leaping Over the Dragon Gate' to leap back while his mouth was cursing loudly. Yingying stooped down, picked up a long sword, took the short stick from Linghu Chong's hand, and at the same time gave the long sword to him. She brandished the short stick causing glimmering around the cave.

Linghu Chong's spirit was greatly roused. As this was a matter of life and death, he didn't hold back. With a curse 'scram your granny', he killed a blind man. The sword coming out of his hand was much faster than the cursing coming out of his mouth. After swearing six of these 'scram your granny', the twelve blind men in the cave had all been killed. Moreover, some of these blind men were slow witted, so hearing him screaming 'scram your granny', they thought he was one of their own, so why would they need to fight? They had not realised anything when the sword had already pierced their throats and they were on their way to death's door to see their grannies.

Zuo Lengchan and Lin Pingzhi didn't understand what was going on, they both asked, "Is there a torch?" Their voices were frightened.

"That's right!" Linghu Chong shouted as he attacked Zuo Lengchan three times. Zuo Lengchan distinguished the incoming attack from the wind and managed to block the three attacks, but Linghu Chong felt his arm was aching. It was the cold energy coming from the sword again. After a tick, everything was still as he held his sword motionless. Zuo Lengchan couldn't hear the wind from his sword and he was getting anxious. He vigorously slashed his sword to protect the fatal points around his body.

Linghu Chong relied on the faint light coming out of the short stick in Yingying's hand as he slowly sent his sword forward, and slowly aimed it at Lin Pingzhi's right arm. Inch by inch, it crept forward. Lin Pingzhi was straining his ear trying to listen to his sword path, but Linghu Chong's sword was slowly going inch by inch, so how could he hear anything? The point of the sword was now only half a foot away from his right arm. With a jerk, it shot forward and hit Lin Pingzhi's right arm's bone and flesh. Lin Pingzhi cried out and dropped his long sword, while his body flew upwards. Linghu Chong stabbed twice and got both of his legs. Lin Pingzhi fell down on the ground cursing and swearing loudly. Linghu Chong turned around and saw Zuo Lengchan. Under the faint light, he saw him gritting his teeth and his expression terrifying while he was slashing his long sword around. Even though the sword moves he was using were very wonderful, but under 'Dugu Nine Sword', there was no place that was

flawless.

Linghu Chong thought, "This person is the one who incited the disturbance in Wulin. I can't go easy on him!"

With a roar, he brandished his long sword. Zuo Lengchan was stabbed between the eyes, throat, and chest. Linghu Chong leapt back for two steps and pulled Yingying's hand. He saw Zuo Lengchan standing there for a long time before falling on the ground. His long sword turned over and stabbed his own stomach until it penetrated all the way through. Both of them calmed themselves down. They looked at the short stick in Yingying's hand but the light was too dim so they couldn't see it clearly. They had no torch on their bodies and Linghu Chong was afraid Lin Pingzhi might attack them again so he cut off the tendons in his left arm. Then he went to the dead people's body to fish out some flint and steel, after feeling out the second person, that person's bosom was also empty. He thought for a while then shouted, "Scram your granny, of course these blind men aren't bringing any flint and steel." When he felt the fifth person, he finally found flint and steel and light up a paper.

The two of them shouted in surprise.

The stick in Yingying's hand was unexpectedly a bone with one of its ends cut off to a sharp point! Yingying was stupified and she threw that bone on the ground. She then laughingly cursed, "Scram your..." She only uttered these two words when she felt they were not elegant so she immediately pursed her lips up.

Linghu Chong suddenly understood. "Yingying, both our lives were saved by this divine sect's senior."

"Divine sect's senior?" Yingying queried.

"Back then, ten elders from the divine sect attacked Huashan. They were all imprisoned in this cave without any way of escaping, and they all died with unsatisfied regret. All they left behind were ten sets of bones. This thigh bone, I don't know which elder it belonged to. I accidentally picked that one up and Zuo Lengchan luckily cut a section off it. This bone has this phosphorus light that

the two of us can use to see," Linghu Chong explained.

Yingying let out a long sigh then bowed towards that bone and said, "So it's our sect's elder, sorry for the offence."

Linghu Chong took a few more paper and lighted them up. Then he found two torches and lighted them up also. "I wonder what happened to Martial Uncle Mo?" Then he shouted, "Martial Uncle Mo, Martial Uncle Mo!" But there was still no sound. Linghu Chong felt in his heart that Martial Uncle Mo cared for him. So he was feeling sad that he had died in this cave today. He glanced around the ground looking at the corpses, but it was very difficult to search for Mr. Mo Da's corpse. He thought, "We haven't escaped from danger yet, we can't linger around here. I'll come back later to look for Martial Uncle Mo's corpse then I'll bury him properly."

Linghu Chong turned around and pulled on Lin Pingzhi's chest as he went towards the tunnel. Yingying knew he had promised Yue Lingshan to tend to Lin Pingzhi. So without saying anything, she picked up that yaoqin which had holes in a few places and followed behind him. They used the narrow tunnel that had been dug by those elders to go out step by step.

Linghu Chong lifted his sword up to be prepared. He was thinking Zuo Lengchan was very calculating and since the cave's entrance had been sealed, then he surely would have dispatched people to guard the narrow tunnel. He had to be careful of the guard trying to stop him inside the cave. But after walking all the way through the tunnel, he still saw no one. Linghu Chong softly opened the stone covering up the entrance, and he felt the light dazzling his eyes. The ferocious fight inside the cave had gone on for so long that he didn't feel how much time had actually passed, and the sky had actually turned bright. He saw there was no one outside the cave and he immediately pulled Lin Pingzhi out, and Yingying followed him out. There was a sword in Linghu Chong's hand, enough light for him to see, he was at a spacious place, they had really gone out of danger. He sucked in a breath of fresh air and felt unspeakable comfort.

"When your master punished you before, was it at this cave?" Yingying asked.

"That's right. What do you think?" Linghu Chong laughingly replied.

Yingying smiled. "I think you weren't here meditating, but your..." She was thinking of saying 'your little martial sister', but why would she mention Yue Lingshan to make him sad? So she quickly stopped.

"Grand martial uncle Feng lives somewhere nearby. I wonder if he's doing fine. I've always thought of this. He first said, he doesn't want to meet anyone from Huashan School, but I'm no longer in Huashan School," Linghu Chong said.

"Yes. Let's go meet him," Yingying said.

Linghu Chong sheathed his sword and let go of Lin Pingzhi. He pulled on Yingying's hand and went out of the cave.

Chapter 39 No Treaty

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The earthshaking chanting of "Thousands of years, rule the Martial World" went on and on by cult members kneeling down. Sunshine covered Ren Woxing's face and his entire body. The majestic looking Chief of the Sun-Moon Cult looked like a god.

They walked out of the cave and suddenly saw a black shape moving on top of their heads. It looked like something had fallen down on them. Linghu Chong and Yingying simultaneously dodged it, but who could've thought the

object dropping was a large fish net and it trapped the two of them in there. Startled, they quickly drew their swords to cut the net, but after slashing for a few times, the net was unexpectedly untouched. At this time, another fish net was thrown from above covering both of them. The person above the cave leapt down with a rope in his hand tightening the net.

"Master!" the word escaped from Linghu Chong's mouth. That person really was Yue Buqun. The net got tighter and tighter as Yue Buqun pulled on the rope. Linghu Chong and Yingying were just like a couple of big fishes being entangled inside a net. They were able to struggle in the beginning, but at the end, they couldn't even move. Frightened, Yingying didn't know what to do. She took a glance and saw Linghu Chong was smiling, looking very relaxed. She thought, "Has he thought of a way to escape?"

Yue Buqun had a fierce looking smile on his face. "Little traitor, you were complacent coming out of the cave. Didn't expect trouble out here, did you?"

"It's not trouble. When someone's going to die, dying with his wife is the happiest thing," Linghu Chong replied nonchalantly.

Yingying understood. His face was looking happy because he would be able to die together with her. Her fear dissappeared, replaced with a wave of happiness.

Linghu Chong continued, "If you kill both of us like this, then you wouldn't be able to separate us."

"Little traitor," Yue Buqun indignantly said. "Death is imminent and you're still boasting!"

He then wrapped the rope around them for a few times, bunching them up tightly.

"This fish net of yours, you got it from Old Man, didn't you?" Linghu Chong said. "You treat me really well, you know that we don't want to be apart so you wrapped the two of us husband and wife very tightly just like this. You raised me since I was little and you know my heart really well. In this world, you're my only friend Mr. Yue." He was saying all these smart-aleck comments hoping to drag the time out while looking for some way to get out of this situation.

Another hope of his was that Feng Qingyang would suddenly appear to rescue them.

Yue Buqun sneered. "Little traitor, you love to talk nonsense since you were little, and your temperament still haven't changed till now. I should cut off your tongue first to save you from losing your tongue in hell when you die." His left leg flew up and kicked Linghu Chong on his waist, sealing his mute accupoint and shutting Linghu Chong up.

"Young lady Ren," Yue Buqun continued. "Who do you want me to kill first? Him or you?"

"What's the difference?" Yingying replied. "I only have three medicines for the Divine Three Brain Corpse Pill on my body."

Yue Buqun's face changed colour when he heard this. Ever since he was forced by Yingying to swallow the 'Divine Three Brain Corpse' pill, he had been thinking day and night on how to obtain the medicine. He had been waiting for a long time for this opportunity. The two of them had just escaped danger, happily going out of the cave, without taking care to protect themselves when suddenly this metal fish net trapped them. His original idea was to kill Linghu Chong and Yingying first before searching her body for the medicine. But when he heard her saying there was only three medicines on her body, he realised he would only be able to live for three more years after killing them. Moreover, after three years had passed, the insect would enter his brain and make him insane and die in unbearable pain. This matter was really difficult for him to settle. Even though his inner energy and martial art were marvelous, he couldn't stop both of his hands from trembling.

"Alright, let's make a deal," Yue Buqun said. "Tell me how to make the medicine, and I'll spare both your lives."

Yingying laughed and indifferently said, "Even though I'm still young, I know Gentleman Sword Mr. Yue's personality. If your words are to be believed, then your nickname wouldn't be Gentleman Sword."

"You've learned nothing by being with Linghu Chong," Yue Buqun said. "All

you've learned is how to talk a lot. You're not willing to say how to make the medicine?"

"Of course not," Yingying answered. "In three years time, Chong-lang and I will be waiting at death's door to welcome you. At that time, you won't have your five senses anymore and your whole face will be ruined, I wonder if we'll still be able to recognise you."

Yue Buqun felt a wave of coldness at his back. He understood her meaning of 'won't have your five senses and your whole face will be ruined' was a reference to the time when the poison would come out. If his whole body weren't rotten by that time, then he would destroy his own face through madness. His whole body shivered thinking about it.

"Even if my whole face will be ruined, yours will be ruined three years earlier than mine," Yue Buqun indignantly said. "I won't kill you too, I'll only cut off your ears and nose. And on your lovely white snow face, I'm going to give you seventeen eighteen slashes. We'll see then how much love, how much affection, your Chong-lang has. Whether he'll still love a freak ugly weirdo."

With a hiss, he drew his long sword out. Yingying gasped in surprise. She wasn't afraid of death, but if Yue Buqun were to ruin her face to make it look like a demon and let Linghu Chong look at her, it was even worse than death. Even though Linghu Chong's mute acupoint was sealed, he was still able to move his hands and feet. He knew what Yingying was thinking so he bumped her with his elbow, extended two fingers from his right hand and pierced them towards his eyes. Yingying again cried out and she hurriedly called out, "Brother Chong, don't!"

Yue Buqun didn't really mean to ruin Yingying's face. He was only threatening her to make her tell him the prescription for the medicine. If Linghu Chong destroyed both his eyes, then his plan would be useless. His left hand shot out unbelievably quick and grabbed Linghu Chong's right wrist through the fist net.

"Stop!" Yue Buqun shouted.

As their skins connected, Yue Buqun immediately felt his internal energy

flowing out.

"Aiyo!" Yue Buqun called out. In a hurry, he tried to get away but it was like his palm was glued to Linghu Chong's wrist. Linghu Chong turned his hand around grabbing Yue Buqun's palm. Yue Buqun now felt his inner energy rushing out even faster. He was greatly startled. With the long sword in his right hand, he quickly chopped it at Linghu Chong's body. Linghu Chong's hand shook and dragged his body back causing the sword to slash at the ground. Yue Buqun's inner energy was still flowing out. As he tried to slash his sword a second time, he felt weak and powerless that he practically couldn't even lift his own arm. Exhorting his energy, he tried to lift his sword. With the sword aiming at the point between Linghu Chong's eyes and his arm and the long sword unceasingly quivering, he slowly pierced it forward.

Yingying was alarmed and she wanted to use her finger to flick Yue Buqun's sword away. But both her arms were pressed under Linghu Chong's body and the fish net was tightly wrapped around her body. She exerted her strength to struggle, but she couldn't free her hands. Linghu Chong's left arm was also being trapped under Yingying's body so he also couldn't use it. He saw the sword point slowly stabbing forward. He thought, "I killed Zuo Lengchan and injured Lin Pingzhi with this kind of slow sword. This time, master is also going to use this method to kill me. What a really quick retribution."

Yue Buqun felt his inner energy was quickly running out, but the sword point was only a few inches away from Linghu Chong's eyebrow. He was both happy and anxious.

"You... What are you doing?" a sharp female voice cried out from behind. "Take your sword away!"

Sound of footsteps was heard as someone drew near. Yue Buqun saw his sword only had to go a few more inches then he'd be able to kill Linghu Chong. At this time, his life was hanging by a thread so how could he agree to just give up? Staking all his remaining energy, his sword finally reached Linghu Chong's forehead.

It was at this time when he suddenly felt something cold at the back of his body. A long sword had been pierced from his back all the way through to the front of his chest.

"Big brother Linghu, are you alright?" a female voice cried out. She was Yilin.

The blood in Linghu Chong's chest was bubbling up and he couldn't reply her.

"Little martial sister, Big Brother Linghu is alright," Yingying told her.

"That's very good!" Yilin happily said. She was suddenly startled and frightenedly cried, "It's Mr. Yue! I... I killed him!"

"That's right," Yingying said. "Congratulations for taking revenge on your master's murderer. Can you untie the fish net please? Let me get out."

"Yes, yes!" Yilin replied. She saw Yue Buqun was prostrated on the ground with blood spouting out from the sword wound. Her whole body turned to jelly and in a quivering voice, she asked, "I... I killed him?" She wanted to grab the rope to release it but both her hands were trembling and she had no power in them. She was unable to release them.

"Little nun," a voice suddenly called out from the left. "You killed the honourable chief. I'll teach you today that you can't run away from justice!"

An old man wearing a yellow gown came forward carrying a naked sword. This person was Lao Denuo.

"Aiyo!" Linghu Chong cried out.

"Little martial sister, quickly use your sword to fight," Yingying shouted.

Yilin was stupefied for a moment before she drew the sword out of Yue Buqun's body. Lao Denuo attacked with three quick strokes and Yilin blocked all three attacks. The third attack flitted near her left shoulder and drew blood. Lao Denuo's sword was getting faster and faster with some of the movements from the Evil Resisting Sword Art. But since he had not learned it too deeply, he only had the movement while his speed was way below that of Lin Pingzhi. Originally, Lao Denuo was already experienced and his sword art came from Songshan and Huashan Schools. It was only recently that he learned the Evil

Resisting Sword Art. So Yilin was originally not his match.

However, as Yihe and Yiqing was hoping that Yilin would become Heng-Shan's headmaster in the future, they had been supervising her practising the Heng-Shan sword art that Linghu Chong gave them. So her martial art had improved. Also, because Lao Denuo's Evil Resisting Sword Art was not yet perfected and he wanted to try it out, their movements came out in between the Songshan and Huashan Schools' sword art that he was using. His sword movements became mixed and caused his original sword art to be weaker.

In the beginning, when Yilin saw the fast sword art from his enemy, she panicked and the third attack injured her left shoulder. But she thought if she lost then Linghu Chong and Yingying would not escape from danger as well and they were bound to meet disaster as well. She was thinking that if he was going to kill Big brother Linghu, then it was better if she was killed first. Without any fear of dying, she didn't think of preserving herself and just kept on attacking with all her moves.

When Lao Denuo was confronted with her staking-life fighting method, he couldn't win against her for the moment. He swore, "Little nun, you **** your mother real good!"

Yingying saw Yilin's spirit was raised and she was fighting with all her might. But after a long time, she was still bound to lose. She rolled on the ground freeing her left arm and unsealing Linghu Chong's acupoint. She put her hand inside her bosom and took out her short sword.

"Lao Denuo," Linghu Chong cried out. "What's that behind you?"

Lao Denuo was an experienced person and he wouldn't fall for Linghu Chong's trick by turning around to have a look and give his enemy an opportunity to attack him. He ignored Linghu Chong and increased the ferocity of his attack. Yingying held her short sword wanting to toss it out from the fish net, but Yilin was fighting very closely with Lao Denuo. If her toss was slightly off then it might hit her. She hesitated and didn't throw her sword out.

Suddenly, Yilin cried out. Her left shoulder had again been hit. The first time

she got hit, the injury was very light, but this time the wound was a few inches deep. The grass around the area was splashed with her blood.

"Monkey, monkey, ah, this is sixth brother's monkey," Linghu Chong called out. "Good monkey, quickly bite him. This is the traitor who killed your master."

In order to steal Yue Buqun's 'Violet Twilight Secret Manual', Lao Denuo killed Lu Dayou who was the sixth disciple of Huashan School. Lu Dayou had a small monkey which usually sits on his shoulder. After he died, this monkey had gone somewhere. At this time, he suddenly heard Linghu Chong's shout and couldn't help feeling scared. "If this animal jump on me and bite me then my movements will be restricted." So he leaned to one side and turned around to slash his sword. But how could there be a monkey behind his back? At this time, Yingying tossed her sword towards the back of his neck. Lao Denuo stooped down and the short sword flew above his neck. Suddenly, he felt a rope tightened around his left ankle. The rope was tugged backwards and he fell face forward.

When Linghu Chong saw Lao Denuo stooped down to avoid the sword, it presented a very good opportunity. He quickly undid the rope tying the fish net and sent the rope out coiling around his left ankle and pulled it.

"Kill him, kill him!" Linghu Chong and Yingying called out.

Yilin chopped her sword down on Lao Denuo's neck. But she was a compassionate person and she was also timid. When she first killed Yue Buqun, she did it to save Linghu Chong. With her being anxious, she quickly wielded her sword and didn't realise she was actually going to kill a person. When her sword was about to slash Lao Denuo's neck, her heart became soft. Her sword leaned to a side and slashed his right shoulder instead. Lao Denuo's collarbone was broken and his sword dropped from his hand. He was afraid Yilin's second sword would slash down again so he endured the pain to get up and struggled to be free of the rope. He then escaped down from the cliff.

Suddenly, two people came up from around the mountain. The female

shouted, "Hey, was it you who scolded my daughter just then?" She was Yilin's mother who was at the Hanging Temple pretending to be the mute granny. Lao Denuo did a flying kick to kick her away. That granny leaned to one side to avoid it and gave him a mighty slap on the cheek.

"You scolded her 'you **** your mother real good'," she shouted. "I'm her mother! You dare to scold me?"

"Stop him, stop him!" Linghu Chong cried out. "Don't let him get away!"

That granny originally wanted to hit down on Lao Denuo's head, but hearing Linghu Chong's shouting. She shouted, "Little rascal, I'm going to let him go!" She leaned to one side and gave Lao Denuo a kick on his buttock. Lao Denuo felt like he had received a pardon from heaven as he sprinted down the cliff.

There was a person behind that granny, who was actually Monk No Commandment. He chuckled and said, "What are you playing at? Why are you playing inside the net?"

"Dad," Yilin said. "Undo the fish net, let Big brother Linghu and Young lady Ren out."

"I haven't settled my debt with this little bastard yet," that granny said with a calm face. "You can't let him go!"

Linghu Chong laughed loudly then shouted, "Once the couple gets together, you throw the matchmaker out. You husband and wife already has a reunion now, why aren't you thanking the matchmaker?"

That granny gave him a kick and shouted, "I thank you with a kick!"

"Peach Valley Six Fairies," Linghu Chong laughingly called out. "Quickly help me!"

That granny was very afraid of the Peach Valley Six Fairies so she quickly turned her head around. Linghu Chong hastily extended his hand out of the fish net and undid the knot and let Yingying out. But he had not managed to go out yet when that granny shouted, "You can't go out!"

"If I can't get out then I'll stay in here," Linghu Chong laughingly replied.

"Inside this fish net, there's no difference between heaven and earth. A gentleman can bend and straighten. Bend to enter the net and straighten to get out of the net. What to do? I, Linghu Chong, ..." As he was spouting nonsense, his eyes caught sight of Yue Buqun's body prostrated on the ground. The smile on his face disappeared and it was suddenly replaced with tears in his eyes. His tears flowed down his cheeks.

That granny was still angry as she shouted, "Little bastard! If I don't beat you up till you're black and blue then I won't be satisfied!" Her left palm shot out wanting to slap Linghu Chong's right cheek.

"Mom!" Yilin cried out. "Don't... don't..."

Linghu Chong raised his right hand and he was already holding a long sword. Actually, when he was lost in thought looking at Yue Buqun's corpse, Yingying put the sword in his hand. He pointed his sword and stabbed it at that granny's right shoulder's acupoint forcing her to retreat a step. That granny got even angrier. Her body moved like the wind, her palm hacking, her elbow striking, her leg sweeping. In just a short time, she had attacked with seven to eight moves. Linghu Chong was still inside the fish net and he just pointed his sword as he wished. Each stab was aimed at that granny's fatal acupoint. But every time the sword point was about to reach her body, he immediately withdrew it. This 'Dugu Nine Sword' was unmatched in this world. If Linghu Chong wasn't giving way then that granny would've died seven to eight times already. After several more moves, that granny knew his martial art was much too high compared to hers. With a long sigh, she stopped attacking and she looked very upset.

"Dear," Monk No Commandment pleaded. "We're all good friends, why do you need to be angry for?"

"Who asked you to speak?" that granny angrily replied. There was no one to vent her anger to so she turned to him.

Linghu Chong put his sword down and came out of the fish net. "You want to hit me to vent your anger, I'll let you do it!" Linghu Chong laughingly said.

That granny raised her palm and slapped him heavily. Linghu Chong cried out

as he didn't dodge the hit.

"Why didn't you dodge?" that granny angrily asked.

"I can't dodge it," Linghu Chong replied. "How do I do that?"

That granny spat. She knew in her heart he was considering Yilin so he let her hit him. Her left palm was already raised but she didn't hit him.

Yingying pulled on Yilin's hand and said, "Little martial sister, lucky you came here to rescue us. How did you come here?"

"I was with the other martial sister," Yilin narrated. "We were all (she pointed at Yue Buqun's corpse) .... captured by his people. Me and three other martial sisters were being locked up in a cave. Just then, dad and mom rescued me. Dad, mom and I, also Cannot Have No Commandment and three martial sisters, we all separately went around rescuing the other martial sisters. I was walking below the cliff when I heard people talking on top. The voice sounded like Big brother Linghu's so I quickly went up to have a look."

"He and I went around everywhere but we didn't find anyone," Yingying said. "So you were actually being held inside a cave."

"Just then that old bastard wearing the yellow gown is a bad person," Linghu Chong said. "You let him go but I can't accept that." He picked up a long sword from the ground and said, "Let's chase after him."

The party of five went down the Cliff of Repentance. They had not walked for too long when they saw Tian Boguang with seven Heng-Shan disciples climbing out of a valley. Yiqing was one of them. They were really happy to meet each other.

Linghu Chong thought, "There's no one in this world who knows the surroundings in Huashan better than me. I didn't know there was another cave below that valley, but Tian Boguang is an outsider and he knows of it. How strange?" He pulled on Tian Boguang's sleeve and the two of them walked behind the party.

"Brother Tian," Linghu Chong said. "There's another cave below that valley. I

didn't know about it before but you knew about it. I really admire you."

Tian Boguang smiled. "There's nothing strange about it."

"Ah, that's right," Linghu Chong said. "You must've captured a Huashan disciple and interrogated him."

"I didn't," Tian Boguang replied.

"Then how did you find out? Can you tell me?" Linghu Chong asked.

Tian Boguang blushed and smiled. "This matter is not comfortable to talk about. It's better not to speak of it."

Linghu Chong was even more curious and he just had to ask about it. "You and I are loafers in Jianghu, what's there that's so uncomfortable to talk about?" Linghu Chong said. "Quickly say it."

"After I say it," Tian Boguang pleaded. "Headmaster Linghu, please don't blame me."

"You've rescued many martial sisters from Heng-Shan School and I haven't thanked you for this yet," Linghu Chong replied. "So how can I blame you?"

Tian Boguang lowered his voice and said, "I'll tell you. Before I had a really bad temperament and you already know about this. Ever since Grand martial master shaved my head and made me take the Buddhist name 'Cannot Have No Commandment', I cannot do that again..."

Linghu Chong thought the way Monk No Commandment reprimanded him was really weird and his mouth showed a slight smile. Tian Boguang knew what he was thinking of and his face turned red. He continued, "But I've never forgotten the skills I've learned from earlier. No matter how far I'm separated by, as long as there are women there, I... I can feel them."

Linghu Chong was perplexed, he asked, "How do you do that?"

"I also don't know," Tian Boguang replied. "I think I can smell women, they're different than men's smell."

Linghu Chong laughed aloud. "It's said that some reverend monks can have

divine eyes or divine ears. Brother Tian unexpectedly has this 'divine nose'."

"I'm ashamed, ashamed!"

"Brother Tian's skill was originally used to do bad things," Linghu Chong said. "After undergoing some experience, I never thought that today you'd use this skill to save my Heng-Shan School's disciples."

Yingying turned her head around to ask what was so funny. But looking at Tian Boguang's face, she guessed it was something inappropriate and she quickly shut her mouth.

Tian Boguang suddenly stopped. "There seems to be some Heng-Shan School's disciples on the left." He sniffed around a few times then went towards the underbrush below the hill. Lowering his head, he searched around for a while. He exclaimed happily and pointed to the ground. "Here!" he cried out. There was a pile of more than ten big rocks on the place that he had pointed out. Each of these rocks were around two to three hundred catties. He immediately removed a rock away.

No Commandment and Linghu Chong went over to help. After a while they had removed more than ten big rocks, and there was a green slab underneath. The three of them worked together to lift the slab up. It revealed a cave underneath and there were a few nuns lying underneath. They were all disciples of Heng-Shan School. Yiqing and Yimin quickly jumped down the cave and helped their martial sisters to go up. After helping a few to go up, there were still more inside, each one was gasping for air. They quickly pulled the imprisoned Heng-Shan disciple up. Yihe, Zheng E, and Qin Juan were among them. There were more than thirty people inside this cave. If they weren't rescued in the next one or two days, they would have all died.

Linghu Chong thought how his master was so violent, he couldn't help being disappointed with him.

"Brother Tian, this skill of yours isn't a small thing," Linghu Chong praised him. "These martial sisters were deeply buried underneath but you can still smell them out. Really admirable."

"There's nothing strange about it," Tian Boguan replied. "Luckily, there are many martial uncles from the secular world in there..."

"Martial uncles? Ah, that's right, you're Yilin's disciple."

"If the ones imprisoned here were all Buddhist martial uncles, then I wouldn't have been able to find them," Tian Boguang continued.

"There's a difference between secular and Buddhist people?"

"Of course. Secular female would have this powder fragrance on them," Tian Boguang explained. Linghu Chong was enlightened.

They quickly tried to rescue them. Yiqing and Yilin were using their caps to scoop water in them to give them drink. Luckily, there was a crack in that cave that allowed air to go in and Heng-Shan School's disciples all had learned inner energy. Even though they were extremely distressed, they still had their lives. Yihe had the deepest inner energy so after drinking some water, she was the first one to recover.

"We've only rescued less than a third," Linghu Chong said. "Brother Tian, I have to ask you to use your divine power to help us search for them."

That granny stared at Tian Boguang, her face looked really suspicious. "How did you know they were imprisoned here?" she asked. "You were probably here when they were being imprisoned, am I right?"

"No, no!" Tian Boguang quickly replied. "I've been following grand martial master. I've never left his side."

That granny's face sunk as she shouted, "You've always been with him?"

Tian Boguang mumbled indistinctly. He knew they just had a reunion after a long break up. Along the way they had been crying, laughing, fighting, being romantic, and he had heard all of these. This grand master-wife of his could turn angry from shyness and if that happened, it would be very troublesome. He quickly said, "For the last half a year, I've been following grand martial master. About ten days ago, we parted ways. We just met again today at Huashan."

That granny was half believing and half doubting him. She asked, "Then how

did you know these nuns were being locked up inside this cave?"

"This... this..." Tian Boguang mumbled. He didn't know how to phrase it nicely and was feeling very embarrassed. After some time, they suddenly heard the sound of more than ten horns coming from the mountainside, followed by the sound of drums. It sounded like an army of ten thousand soldiers and a thousand horses had come.

They were all startled. Yingying whispered on Linghu Chong's ear, "It's my dad!"

"Oh!" Linghu Chong realised and he wanted to say, "So it's my father-in-law." But he felt it was inappropriate so he didn't say it out loud. The drums thundered for a while, then the horns rang again.

"Has an army come?" that granny asked.

Suddenly, both the drums and horns stopped. Seven to eight people shouted, "Sun Moon Divine Sect's cultured and esteemed martial artist, benefactors of the common people, Chief Ren has arrived!" These seven to eight people had very deep internal energies so their shout reverberated throughout the mountain and echoes could be heard, "Chief Ren has arrived! Chief Ren has arrived!"

The power of these cries intimidated them and the colour on Monk No Comandment's face and the others changed. The echoes had not finished yet when they heard countless number of voices crying out, "Long live to Chief, unify the Jianghu! Chief Ren flourishes the Divine Sect, long live to Chief!"

Hearing their voices, there were at least two to three thousands of them. The echo was again heard from everywhere, "Chief Ren flourishes the Divine Sect, long live to Chief! Chief Ren flourishes the Divine Sect, long live to Chief!" After some time, the whole place became quiet. Then someone with a clear voice said, "Sun Moon Divine Sect's cultured and esteemed martial artist, benefactors of the common people, Chief Ren has an order: Five mountains sword schools' headmasters and all the disciples in the schools hear this: Everyone will meet at the steps of the Peak of Morning Sun."

He spoke three times in his clear voice. After stopping for a while, he

continued, "Fragrant masters and their deputies of the twelve halls, lead the sect's disciples to check all the hills and guard the important paths! Don't let people walk around! Anyone who doesn't obey this order will be killed!" Around twenty to thirty people immediately acknowledged this order.

Linghu Chong and Yingying shared a look and they understood what was going on. That person said to check all the hills and to guard the important paths to force the disciples of the five mountains sword schools to go towards the Peak of Morning Sun to meet with Chief Ren. Linghu Chong thought, "He's Yingying's father. I'm going to marry Yingying soon so I should go see Chief Ren."

He told Yihe and the rest of the people, "We still have a lot of martial sisters who are still imprisoned. Brother Tian, please lead the way to save them as soon as possible. Chief Ren is young lady Ren's father so he wouldn't give us any trouble. Young lady Ren and I are going to the east peak first. Martial sisters, you can follow later and we'll meet up there on the east peak." Yihe, Yiqing, Yilin and the others acknowledged the order and followed Tian Boguang to save their martial sisters.

"What is he relying on barking orders here?" that granny angrily said. "I'm not going to see him. I want to see how this Ren is going to kill me."

Linghu Chong knew she was very stubborn and was hard to persuade. If she were to meet Ren Woxing, her speech would most likely offend him and things would turn out really bad. He immediately took his leave from Monk No Commandment and his wife, then went to the east peak with Yingying.

"The three highest peaks in Huashan are the east peak, south peak, and west peak. The east and west peaks are particularly tall," Linghu Chong said. "The real name of the east peak is the Peak of Morning Sun. Your father chose this peak to meet with the disciples of the Five Mountains Sword School to make it look like that we are coming to pay respect to an imperial court. Your father said all the people of the Five Mountains Sword School to go to the Peak of Morning Sun. Could it be that all the people from all the schools are at Huashan?"

"In the five mountains sword schools, Mr. Yue, Zuo Lengchan, and Mr. Mo Da have all passed away today. I don't know who Taishan School has appointed as their headmaster. In this alliance of five big sword schools, you're the only headmaster left," Yingying said.

"Besides Heng-Shan School, most of the heroes from the five schools have all died inside the cave on that Cliff of Contemplation. Besides, the disciples of Heng-Shan Schools have all been captured and are in distress, I'm afraid..."

"You're afraid my father will take advantage of this to eliminate the five mountains sword schools?"

Linghu Chong nodded his head and let out a sigh. "Actually, he doesn't need to do anything. There's not many people left in the five mountains sword schools."

Yingying also let out a sigh. "Mr. Yue deceived the masters from the five mountains sword schools. He enticed them to look at the sword moves engraved at Huashan with the intention of wiping out all the warriors with good martial art. That way his position as the headmaster of the Five Mountains School would be safe and no one from each of the schools would be able to go against him. This move was originally very clever, but Zuo Lengchan unexpectedly got a whiff of this and took those blind men to kill him inside that dark cave."

"You're saying Zuo Lengchan wanted to kill my master?" Linghu Chong queried. "He wasn't trying to kill me?"

"He didn't know you were going to come," Yingying answered. "Your swordplay is brilliant and you already knew of the moves engraved on the cave wall a long time ago, so you wouldn't have gone inside to take a look at those sword moves. When we went in there, it was just a coincidence."

"What you said is right," Linghu Chong agreed. "Actually, Zuo Lengchan and I had no enmity. Both of his eyes were blinded by my master, and the headmaster position of the Five Mountains School was also snatched by him. Those things would be really cutting to him."

"Zuo Lengchan probably had a strategy prepared," Yingying said. "He'd tempt

Mr. Yue to go inside the cave and then take advantage of the darkness to kill him. I don't know how, but this plan was discovered by Mr. Yue and instead of going in, he guarded the cave's entrance and captured people using the fish net. This is really the mantis seizing the cicada not knowing the oriole was just behind[10]. Now, Zuo Lengchan and your master have both died while the reason for all these would never be known."

Linghu Chong mournfully nodded his head.

"Mr. Yue deceived the masters of the five mountains sword schools to come here," Yingying continued. "There must've been a foreshadowing of this matter a long time ago. That day at Songshan during the fight for the leadership, your little martial sister used Taishan, Hengshan, Songshan, and Heng-Shan brilliant sword moves. The masters from all four schools witnessed all these and their hearts would itch in getting to know them. Only the disciples from Heng-Shan School had been taught the sword moves from the cave wall by you, so they wouldn't find them extraordinary. While the disciples from Taishan, Hengshan, and Songshan Schools would of course be asking where Miss Yue got these sword moves from. Mr. Yue secretly spread the rumour and decided on a date that the cave would be open to them. The masters from these three schools, wouldn't they rush to be here?"

"For people who study martial art like us," Linghu Chong said. "Once we hear of a place to learn some brilliant martial art, then we'd definitely brave danger and death to go there. Especially when those martial arts are from our own school, we wouldn't rest until we've seen them. That's why people like martial uncle Mo Da and other master-hands all died inside that cave."

"Mr. Yue anticipated that your Heng-Shan School wouldn't come, so he prepared another plan," Yingying said. "He used the confusion poison to knock everyone out and took them up to Huashan."

"I don't understand why master would spend such a big effort to bring my disciples up to Huashan?" Linghu Chong questioned. "This matter would be easily discovered since they have to go through such a long journey. Why didn't he just kill all of them at Heng-Shan? Wouldn't this be easier?" He stopped for a

tick then continued, "Ah, I understand. If he killed all the Heng-Shan disciples then there'll be one less mountain from the Five Mountains School. Master wants to be the headmaster of the Five Mountains School, but without Heng-Shan School, he couldn't be the headmaster of the Five Mountains School. The name simply wouldn't be right."

"That's one reason," Yingying said. "But I think, there's still one more reason."

"What's that?"

"The best thing would of course be to capture you," Yingying explained. "Then he'd trade with something of mine."

Linghu Chong was enlightened and he excitedly hit his thigh. "That's right. My master wanted the medicine for the Three Corpse Brain Pill."

"After Mr. Yue was forced to take this pill, he would've been restless day and night wanting to get a medicine for it," Yingying said. "One day he wouldn't accept it and the next he'd be worried to death. He knew that he could only get the medicine by getting you."

"Of course, I'm your darling," Linghu Chong agreed. "Only by using me that he can exchange the medicine from you."

Yingying pursed her lip. "If he was going to use you to trade for the medicine then I wouldn't trade. The materials for the medicine are so hard to get and making them isn't easy either. So they're priceless treasure. How could I trade them so easily?"

"The common saying goes: It's easy to find priceless treasure, hard to find a lover."

Yingying's whole cheeks turned bright red immediately. In a whisper, she said, "Like a mouse getting on a scale, scaling and praising himself. Know no shame."

As they talked, they arrived at a narrow path. This mountain path was perfectly straight as it went up and it was also very steep. They couldn't walk side by side through this path.

"You go first," Yingying said.

"You go first," Linghu Chong said. "If you fall down then I'll grab you."

"No, you go first, but you're not allowed to turn your head back to look at me. You must listen to what granny tells you to do." She laughed when she finished talking.

"Fine, I go first," Linghu Chong relented. "If I fall down, you can grab me."

"That won't do, that won't do!" Yingying hastily replied. She was afraid he would pretend to misstep to play around with her. So she quickly went up the mountain path first.

Even though Yingying saw him making a joke, his expression was still melancholic. After he laughed, he turned mournful again. She knew it was difficult for him to forget about Yue Buqun's death. Along the way she'd tried to make him say some jokes to make him forget about his worries. After a few turns, they arrived at the top of the Jade Maiden Peak. Linghu Chong pointed out to her which one was the Jade Maiden's face washing basin and which one was the Jade Maiden's dressing table. Yingying knew this Jade Maiden Peak was the place he used to play around with Yue Lingshan back then, and she was afraid that he might get even more upset, so she just took a quick glance without asking anything.

After going down a slope, they went up a little path towards the Peak of Morning Sun. They saw guards everywhere around the mountain. The Sun Moon Sect's men were dressed in seven different gown colour and they were very discipline in following the flag going back and forth. Compared to the last time he visited the Dark Wood Cliff, there was a different feeling of dread.

Linghu Chong secretly praised, "Chief Ren is a very learned man. That day when I led thousands of men to attack Shaolin Temple, it was a mess, everything was chaotic. How can it be compared to the Sun Moon Sect's army which resembles a body using its arms, like when an arm wants to point at something, with thousands of people resembling one person? Dongfang Bubai is also one great person. It was only later that he made a mistake and gave the handling of sect's matter to Yang Lianting. That's when the Dark Wood Cliff

withered and its power diminished."

The people of Sun Moon Sect respectfully bowed their bodies when they saw Yingying. They were also very respectful towards Linghu Chong. The bannermen roared one by one from the bottom of the peak all the way to the peak, announcing to Ren Woxing their arrivals. Linghu Chong saw all the important places between the bottom of the peak to the peak were all packed with people from the sect. There were at least two thousands guards around those places. It seemed that this time the Sun Moon Sect had gathered many warriors from the unorthodox path to help them in carrying out this massive operation. If all the headmasters from the five mountains sword schools were still alive, and all the master-hands from the five schools were at Huashan, and they had also been deployed before hand to meet this attack, it was still likely that they would lose. At this time with the number of talented fighter close to zero, it was impossible for them to fight back.

Looking at the situation now, it was certain that Ren Woxing had a harmful idea towards the five mountains sword schools. Since things had come to this, there was nothing he could've done and now everything was up to the Heaven's will. He could only take things step by step. If Ren Woxing wanted to annihilate the five mountains sword schools, then he couldn't just stay on the side preserving his own life. He would have to fight to the death and Heng-Shan School's disciples would all be killed on top of this Peak of Morning Sun.

Although he was clever, he wasn't that experienced and didn't have a plan in mind to face this calamity. When he saw all the disciples of Heng-Shan School fell into the trap, he also didn't know how to free them and everything was just left to fate and circumstances. He was also thinking that Yingying and Chief Ren were related by flesh and blood so the most she would do would be not to help both sides. So there was no chance she would help him by thinking of a plan to go against her own father. At this time, facing the sect's disciples at the Peak of Morning Sun with bows drawn and sabres unsheathed, he didn't even look at them and he instead told Yingying some jokes.

But Yingying was already tied in knots in worry, so she couldn't be like

Linghu Chong who was unworried. Along the way, she'd been churning her brain thinking on what to do. She pondered, "Chong-lang is a fearless person. Even if the sky collapsed, he'd only notice it when it's right on top of him. I've always thought of a way for him to do." Thinking that her father had led such a big operation here, it couldn't be anything good. When the situation turned dangerous, then all she could do would be to adapt since there was no other good option.

The two of them slowly went up to the peak. When they reached the summit, they were suddenly assaulted with horns blaring followed by sound of music from drums and pipes. This was unexpectedly the welcoming of honoured guests.

Linghu Chong whispered, "Father-in-law is welcoming the son-in-law back home!"

Yingying blankly stared at him and she felt really anxious. She thought, "This person really doesn't worry about anything. At this time, he can still joke around."

Then she heard a person laughed loudly and in a clear voice said, "Young lady, Brother Linghu, Chief's been waiting for you for a long time."

A slim elder wearing a purple gown took a step forward and gripped both of Linghu Chong's hands. His face was full of happiness. He was Xiang Wentian. When Linghu Chong saw him, he was also very happy. "Brother Xiang," Linghu Chong called out. "You're well, I've thought of you often."

"At Dark Wood Cliff, I keep hearing news of your prestige soaring in Wulin," Xiang Wentian laughingly replied. "I drank to you from far away, I've at least drunk more than ten big pots of wine. Quickly go see Chief." Taking his hand, he went towards a stone structure several stories high.

That stone structure was on top of the east peak. It was extremely big and tall, just like it had been naturally formed. To the east of that structure was Peak of the Morning Sun's highest place which was called Deity's Palm. That Deity's Palm had five big pillars rising to the sky with the central pillar being the

highest. They saw a big chair placed underneath the central pillar, and a person sat in it. This person was Ren Woxing.

Yingying walked to the front of the palm, looked up and called out, "Daddy!"

Linghu Chong bowed and said, "Junior Linghu Chong pays my respect to Chief."

Ren Woxing laughed aloud. "Little brother, you come at the right time. We're all family, there's no need to be so formal. Today, our sect will meet with the world's heroes so we shall talk business first before talking about family matter. My worthy... worthy brother, sit beside me."

Linghu Chong heard him paused after saying this word 'worthy' seemingly like he wanted to say 'worthy son-in-law'. But since it had not been decided yet, he corrected himself from calling him 'worthy son-in-law'. It looked like he had already approved of the marriage between Yingying and him. He also said 'We're all family' and 'we shall talk business first before talking about family matter', it was obvious Ren Woxing had regarded him as family. He felt happy and straighten his body up.

Suddenly, a cold energy rushed up from this 'Dantian' region and he felt like he had entered an icehouse. His body trembled and continuously shook. Yingying was started and quickly went up to him. "What's wrong?"

"I... I..." Linghu Chong stammered out but he unexpectedly couldn't utter another word.

Even though Ren Woxing was high up there, his eyesight was still sharp. "Did you clash palms with Zuo Lengchan?"

Linghu Chong nodded.

Ren Woxing smiled. "It's nothing. You sucked his polar ice energy, once you scatter it out, it'll be alright. Why isn't Zuo Lengchan coming here?"

"Zuo Lengchan secretly set up a violent plan to kill Big Brother Linghu and me," Yingying told him. "Big Brother Linghu killed him."

"Oh!" Ren Woxing uttered. He was sitting very high up so they couldn't see his

face. But in this voice, there was an air of disappointment.

Yingying understood her father's heart. Today, he had come in a grand manner to intimidate the five mountains sword schools and to suppress the people of the five schools. Zuo Lengchan was his big enemy and now he wouldn't be able to see him bend his knee and lower his head in front of him so it was unavoidable that he would feel regret. She extended her left hand to hold Linghu Chong's right hand to help him disperse the cold energy. Linghu Chong's left hand was being held by Xiang Wentian. Together, they moved their energy. Linghu Chong gradually felt the coldness in his body disappeared.

That day, when Ren Woxing and Zuo Lengchan fought at the Shaolin Temple, he absorbed his polar ice energy and turned into snowman in the middle of the snow field along with Linghu Chong, Xiang Wentian, and Yingying. But this time, Linghu Chong had only clashed swords with him and was only exposed to Zuo Lengchan's cold energy for a short time. Moreover, he didn't try to absorb it himself so only a little amount of cold energy was absorbed by him. A short time later, he wasn't trembling anymore.

"I'm alright, thank you!" Linghu Chong said.

"Little brother," Ren Woxing said. "You heard my call and came up the peak to see me. Very good, very good!" He then turned his head towards Xiang Wentian and said, "Why haven’t the people from the other four schools arrived yet?"

"Subordinate will call them again!" Xiang Wentian replied. He waved his left hand, and eight old men in yellow gown lined up immediately in front of the peak. They called out together, "Sun Moon Divine Sect's cultured and esteemed martial artist, benefactors of the common people, Chief Ren has an order: Taishan, Hengshan, Huashan, and Songshan Schools, everyone must quickly come to Peak of the Morning Sun for a meeting. Each hall's fragrant master, ask them to come up quickly and not to delay."

These eight old men were all masters with deep internal energies. When they combined their voices together, they went very far and were able to be heard from all the peaks. Then they heard from all four directions, there were people

answering, "As ordered. Long live to Chief, unify the Jianghu!" These were the replies from the Sun Moon Sect's fragrant masters.

"Headmaster Linghu, please take a seat beside me," a smiling Ren Woxing said.

Linghu Chong saw five chairs arranged on the west side of the deity's palm. Each chair was draped with a brocade of the colours black, white, blue-green, red, and yellow. While a mountain peak was embroidered on each brocade. North Heng-Shan was black, and on the black satin was Xianxing Peak embroidered with white thread. He saw the embroidering was attractive and with only a layer of it covering the chair, it had shown how meticulous the Sun Moon Sect had arranged this.

In the five mountains schools, Songshan was the leader while north Heng-Shan was last in standing. But in this seat arrangement, the order had been reversed. The seat of Heng-Shan's headmaster was at the head, followed by west mountain Huashan, while Songshan School was last. It was Ren Woxing who had lifted his position to intentionally humiliate Zuo Lengchan. But since Zuo Lengchan, Yue Buqun, Mr. Mo Da, and Priest Tianmen had all passed away, Linghu Chong didn't try to decline. He bowed and said, "I'll take a seat!" and went to sit on the chair with the black satin draped on it.

The people at the Peak of the Morning Sun were silently waiting. After a long time, Xiang Wentian again commanded those eight old men to call out again but they still didn't see anyone coming up.

"These people don’t know how to appreciate favours," Xiang Wentian said. "They're so late in meeting Chief. Call our people to come up first!"

The eight yellow gowned old men called out, "Five lakes four oceans, every island, every cave, every clan, every stronghold, every mountain, every hall, Brothers, come up to the Peak of Morning Sun to meet Chief!"

When the word 'Chief' had just been uttered, the mountain peak was drowned by people crying out, "As ordered!" Their cries shook the valley. Linghu Chong couldn't help being startled. Hearing this voice, there were at least two to three

hundred of them. These people secretly hid themselves and had guessed Ren Woxing's intention. He had wanted to wait for the people of the five mountains sword schools to arrive first before these thousands of people called out in order to startle and intimidate the five mountains sword schools so they wouldn't dare to resist. All of a sudden, people from all directions came out around the Peak of Morning Sun. Although there were a lot of them, they didn't make any noise at all. Every person stood separately at their places. It seemed that they had practised this before hand.

There were around two to three thousands people who had come up the peak. They were all people from the unorthodox path. The rest of the sect's subordinate were still waiting around the side of the peak.

Linghu Chong swept his eyes and saw Blue Phoenix, Zu Qianqiu, Old Man, and Ji Wushi among them. These people had perhaps been controlled by the Sun Moon Sect, or perhaps they had always been communicating. That day when Linghu Chong led the heroes to attack Shaolin Temple, these people also took part. They looked at Linghu Chong and were all smiling, but none of them called out. Besides the sound of footsteps shuffling, no other sound was heard from these thousands of people on top of this peak. Xiang Wentian raised his right hand and drew a circle in the air. The thousands of people simultaneously kneeled down and simultaneously said, "Jianghu's juniors pay our respect to Sun Moon Sect's cultured and esteemed martial artist, benefactors of the common people, Sacred Chief! Long live to Sacred Chief, unify the Jianghu!"

These people were all warriors with high martial arts and they were using their energy to call out. One person was like ten people's voices. When they said 'Long live to Sacred Chief, unify the Jianghu', all the Sun Moon Sect's people around the mountain also joined in. The sound was really shaking the sky and earth.

Ren Woxing majestically sat without moving. He waited for the cries to finish before he lifted his hand. "Everyone has worked hard. Rise!"

"Thank you, Sacred Chief!" the thousands of people said together and they stood up at the same time.

Linghu Chong thought, "That time when I went up the Dark Wood Cliff, I saw the people in the sect shamelessly flattering Dongfang Bubai that I wanted to vomit just observing them. I never thought when Ren Woxing became chief, the situation becomes even worse. They've now added that 'Sacred' word in front of his title making him Sacred Chief. I don't think even the hundreds of scholars and warrior officials would debase themselves in such a fashion when they go to see the current emperor and praise him with 'Long live to Emperor'. I'm a person who studies martial art. If I acted like this insultingly towards other heroes and people, can I still be called a man, a gentleman?" When he thought till here, his qi suddenly rushed up. Suddenly, he felt pain in his 'Dantian' region, his vision darkened, and he felt dizzy.

Both of his hands gripped the chair's arms tightly. His teeth bit on his lower lip until blood seeped out. He knew that after he learned the 'Art of Essence Absorbing', he had sworn off never to use it. But when he was trapped by Yue Buqun inside that fish net outside the cave, his life was hanging by a thread and he was forced to use this demonical method to absorb Yue Buqun's inner energy. By doing this, he had actually done great harm to himself.

He forcefully restrained himself to not groan aloud. But his body was trembling and his whole face was full of perspiration and distorted. The pain he was in was shown clearly in his expression. Everyone was able to see this clearly. Zu Qianqiu and the others were all looking at him, feeling very concerned.

Yingying walked behind him and whispered, "Brother Chong, I'm here."

Under the watchful eyes of thousands of people, she could only say this before her face turned bright red. Linghu Chong turned his head around to take a look at her, and he felt somewhat better. He immediately thought of the words Ren Woxing said that day at Hangzhou. Ren Woxing said after he had learned this 'Art of Essence Absorbing', he'd get different types of internal energy inside his body and there would come a day when he had to scatter them out. Once he had scattered them, the fierceness would increase by one fold. All those years ago, Ren Woxing gave up his position of chief to Dongfang Bubai also because

of these different types of internal energies inside his own body. He always thought on how to solve this problem that he couldn't think of anything else and was taken advantage of by Dongfang Bubai. Ren Woxing was then imprisoned under the West Lake for more than ten years where he finally discovered how to solve this problem. But he wanted Linghu Chong to join the Sun Moon Sect first before he would teach him this method.

At that time, Linghu Chong was unyielding in his thinking that had been ingrained in his mind since he was small. That the demonical and the orthodox couldn't co-exist and that he could never join the Devil Sect. Later on, he saw Zuo Lengchan who was a big master of the orthodox path being deceitful and violent, and his action not differing too much when compared to the Devil Sect. Thus, the line between the orthodox and demonical wasn't that clear anymore. Sometimes, he also thought that if Ren Woxing was determined to make him join the sect then only if he agreed to marry Yingying off to him would he just join the sect without care. His nature was easygoing and he didn't take anything seriously. It didn't worry him whether he joined the sect or not, it wasn't a big deal for him. But that day on the Dark Wood Cliff, when he saw the heroes being so humble towards Dongfang Bubai and Ren Woxing and with them speaking so flatteringly and insincerely, he couldn't help feeling a strong dislike against the sect instead. He was thinking that if he joined the sect, then he must also spend his days like a slave and he'd become a useless person. Every person has his own fate in living and dying, if he was required to beg to keep his life then Linghu Chong would never do it.

Now, he had further seen Ren Woxing abused his power and arranged everything like he was better than an emperor. He thought of the day when Ren Woxing was back in the dark prison underneath the West Lake, how there was no scenery in there at all. But today, he insulted the world's heroes like they were not people at all. At this time, he suddenly heard someone said in a clear voice, "Reporting to Sacred Chief, Heng-Shan School's disciples have arrived."

Linghu Chong was startled. He saw Yihe, Yiqing, Yilin, and the rest of the Heng-Shan disciples helping each other to go up the peak. Monk No

Commandment, his wife, and Tian Boguang were walking behind them.

"Friends," Bao Dachu said in a loud voice. "Please go and see Sacred Chief."

Yiqing and the rest of the disciples saw Linghu Chong sitting on the side. They knew Ren Woxing was his father-in-law, so even though they felt the orthodox and demonical shouldn't be together, on account of their headmaster, they paid their respects as juniors. Walking to the front of the Deity's Palm, they bowed to pay their respect. "Heng-Shan School's junior disciples pay our respects to Chief Ren!"

"Kneel and kowtow!" Bao Dachu ordered.

"We're Buddhist," Yiqing replied in a loud voice. "We worship Buddha, worship Boddhisatva, worship master, we don't worship ordinary people!"

"Sacred Chief isn't an ordinary person," Bao Dachu shouted. "He's a divine deity just like Buddha and Boddhisatva!"

Yiqing turned her head to look at Linghu Chong. Linghu Chong shook his head.

"If you want to kill us then kill us!" Yiqing replied. "Disciples of Heng-Shan do not worship ordinary people!"

"Well said, well said!" Monk No Commandment said as he laughed aloud.

"Which school are you from?" Xiang Wentian indignantly questioned. "Where do you come from?"

He saw Heng-Shan School's disciples weren't willing to kowtow to Ren Woxing and the situation was now at a deadlock. If they troubled the female disciples then it wouldn't be good in front of Linghu Chong. So he immediately turned to Monk No Commandment to divide Ren Woxing's attention and make him forget of the kowtow incident.

"Big temples don't want to take me in, while little temples don't want such a wild monk, so I have no family or school," Monk No Commandment laughingly replied. "I heard there'll be lots of people gathering here so I came here to take a look and join in the revelry."

"Today, the Divine Sun Moon Sect is here to meet the five mountains sword schools," Xiang Wentian said. "Other people aren't allowed to be here. Go down the mountain!"

Xiang Wentian said this politely because he was taking into account Linghu Chong's face. He saw Monk No Commandment had come up together with the Heng-Shan School's female disciples so he expected him to be related to the Heng-Shan School. Thus, he didn't want to make things to difficult for him.

"This Mount Huashan doesn't belong to your Devil Sect," said a smiling No Commandment. "If I want to be here then I'll be here, if I want to go then I'll go. Besides the Huashan School's disciples, who dares to tell me what to do?"

These words 'Devil Sect' were a very big taboo in the Sun Moon Sect. Even though the people in Wulin often used the word 'Devil Sect' behind their backs, they'd never blatantly speak these words to their faces. Monk No Commandment was a very frank person who spoke his mind and there was nothing he was afraid of saying. When he heard Xiang Wentian telling him to go down the mountain, he was displeased and didn't even care how many people the enemy had, and unexpectedly didn't show any fear.

Xiang Wentian turned to Linghu Chong and said, "Brother Linghu, what's the relationship between your honourable school and this crazy monk?"

Linghu Chong's chest and stomach were in great pain so he tremblingly replied, "This... this is Great Master No Commandment..."

Ren Woxing was extremely angry to have heard No Commandment addressed them as the 'Devil Sect'. He was afraid Linghu Chong might say that this monk was deeply connected to him and then they wouldn't be able to kill him. Without waiting for Linghu Chong to finish, he immediately shouted, "Kill this crazy monk!"

"As ordered!" eight elders in yellow gown acknowledged. They cupped their fists and attacked No Commandment immediately after.

"You're relying on many people?" No Commandment shouted. He only said a few words and the attacks from these eight elders had arrived.

"How shameless!" that granny scolded.

She leapt in the crowd, got behind Monk No Commandment's back, and used her palms to fight with the enemies. These eight elders were Sun Moon Sect's number one experts, and their martial arts were about similar to that of No Commandment and that granny. Moreover, with eight against two, they soon got the upper hand. Tian Boguang pulled out his knife and Yilin raised her long sword to enter the fight. Both of their martial arts were far below theirs, and two of the eight elders separated to fight them. Tian Boguang fought with his fast knife chops and he was able to hold up. But Yilin was already pressed by her enemy until she was gasping for air. If it wasn't for the fact that the elder saw her wearing Heng-Shan School's uniform, and that he was giving way to her on Linghu Chong's account, she would've been killed.

Linghu Chong stooped down and pressed his left hand to his stomach. His right hand pulled his long sword out and called out, "Stop... stop!" Rushing into the fight with his long sword trembling, he executed eight moves to force four elders to move back. He turned around and executed another eight moves. These sixteen moves were from the 'Dugu Nine Sword Art' and each move was aimed at an elder's fatal point. The eight elders were forced back and they didn't dare to fight with him for real so they all stepped back.

Linghu Chong crouched on the ground and said, "Chief... Chief Ren, on my account, please... please let them..." But he couldn't utter the last word 'go'.

Ren Woxing saw his situation and guessed that the different types of internal energy inside his body were coming out. He knew that his daughter wanted to marry him and he himself liked his personality. Also, as he never had a son, he was hoping that he would someday be the divine sect's chief. So he immediately nodded his head and said, "Since Headmaster Linghu requested this, I'll be lenient today."

Xiang Wentian moved in a flash with both his hands striking out to seal the acupoints on No Commandment and his wife, Tian Boguang and Yilin. He struck out really fast and mysteriously. Even though that granny had fast as lightning movement, she unexpectedly couldn't escape from his strike.

"Xiang... Xiang..." Linghu Chong was alarmed.

"Don't worry," Xiang Wentian laughed. "Sacred Chief already said he's going to be lenient." He turned his head and called out, "Eight guards, step out!"

Eight people wearing blue-green gowns came out and bowed. "We're ready to receive Left Protector Xiang's order!"

"Four males and four females," Xiang Wentian said.

Four males immediately stepped back and replaced by four females.

"These four people spoke improperly and ought to have been killed," Xiang Wentian said. "But Sacred Chief is lenient and tolerant and on account of Headmaster Linghu, he granted them leniency. Take them down the mountain and unseal their acupoints."

The eight respectfully bowed and acknowledged the order.

Xiang Wentian lowered his voice and relayed more order, "They're Headmaster Linghu's friends. Don't be rude to them."

"Yes!" the eight people answered. Taking these four people behind their backs, they went down from the peak.

Linghu Chong and Yingying saw No Commandment and the other three people had escaped with their lives so they let out a long sigh of relief.

"Thank... Thank you!" Linghu Chong said in trembling voice from his crouching position on the ground as he couldn't stand back up. Just then when he executed the sixteen moves, he forced the eight elders to retreat. However, each of these elders had excellent martial arts and his sword moves wouldn't have been able to injure them. Although he used these sixteen moves in the blink of an eye, he had consumed a large amount of energy to do so. Now, his chest and stomach felt even more painful.

Xiang Wentian was secretly worried but his face wasn't showing it. He laughingly said, "Brother Linghu, are you unwell?"

Back then, Linghu Chong and he combined together to fight against numerous

heroes and became sword brothers. Even though they had rarely met, their friendship would never change through life and death. He took Linghu Chong's hand and supported him to sit back on his chair while secretly giving Linghu Chong his inner energy to help him fight against the turmoil in his internal energy. Linghu Chong thought that since he had the 'Art of Essence Absorbing' so with Xiang Wentian doing this, he might inadvertently absorb Xiang Wentian's martial art. Thus, he quickly struggled to break free from Xiang Wentian's grip. "Big Brother Xiang, don't! I'm... I'm ok now."

"From among the five mountains sword schools, only Heng-Shan School came to this meeting," Ren Woxing said. "The disciples from the remaining four schools are unexpectedly afraid to come up to this peak. We won't be polite anymore then."

At this time, Shangguan Yun quickly walked up to the peak and arrived at the front of the Deity's Palm. He bowed and said, "Reporting to Sacred Chief: Inside the cave on the Cliff of Contemplation, I found hundreds of corpses. Songshan School's Headmaster Zuo Lengchan is amongst the dead. There are also countless Songshan's, Hengshan's, and Taishan's master-hands. It seems they had killed each other."

"Ah!" Ren Woxing gasped. "Hengshan's Headmaster Mo Da is among them?"

"Subordinate carefully examined the corpses," Shangguan Yun reported. "I didn't find Mo Da among them. I also didn't find his traces anywhere in Huashan."

Linghu Chong and Yingying felt happy and surprised at the same time. They looked at each other and both thought, "Mr. Mo Da can mysteriously appear and disappear, and he actually managed to escape from danger. I'm guessing he might have pretended to be dead amongst the corpses until everything was safe before coming out."

Then they heard Shangguan Yun continuing, "Taishan School's Yuqingzi and Yuyinzi are both dead."

Ren Woxing was very displeased to hear this. "What... What else?"

"Outside that cave," Shangguan Yun continued. "There's another corpse."

"Who is it?" Ren Woxing asked hastily.

"Subordinate checked and he was Huashan School's Headmaster," Shangguan Yun reported. "He's the newly appointed headmaster of the Five Mountains School, the Gentleman Sword Yue Buqun."

He knew Linghu Chong would inevitably be the sect's chief in the future, and that Yue Buqun was his master, so that was why he spoke so respectfully about him.

When Ren Woxing heard Yue Buqun had also died, he couldn't help feeling disappointed. He asked, "Who... Who else has died?"

"When subordinate was inside the cave on the Cliff of Contemplation checking things out, I heard there was sound of fighting behind the cave," Shangguan Yun said. "I came out to take a look and saw a group of Huashan School's people and Taishan School's priests fighting each other. They were saying that the other group had killed their master. Both parties fought violently and many died. I've brought them here to receive Sacred Chief's punishment."

Ren Woxing hummed and said, "Yue Buqun was killed by Taishan School? Who in Taishan School has the ability to do that?"

From the Heng-Shan School, Yiqing said in a clear voice, "No! Yue Buqun was killed by a sister from the Heng-Shan School."

"Who?" Ren Woxing demanded.

"The one who just went down the peak, little martial sister Yilin," Yiqing answered. "Yue Buqun killed our Abbess Master and Martial Uncle Dingyi. Everyone in our school hates him to the bone. Today, with the blessing of Buddha, Abbess Master and Martial Uncle Dingyi borrowed little martial sister's hand to punish this evildoer."

"Hmm," Ren Woxing hummed. "That's how it is! That can be said the heaven's net is great and no one can escape." His disappointment was evident in his speech.

Xiang Wentian and the elders were looking at each other, and were all feeling dejected. This time, the Sun Moon Sect had come to Huashan and had planned everything meticulously. Not only had all the master-hands from the sect came out, they had also gathered all the subordinates from each clan, each stronghold, each cave, and each island to force the five mountains sword schools to submit to them. If the five schools didn't want to submit, then they would immediately be annihilated. Then Ren Woxing and Sun Moon Sect would control the world. They would continue with Shaolin and Wudang Schools, and none from among the orthodox path would be able to resist. The business of long live the chief and unifying the Jianghu was to be settled today on the Peak of Morning Sun at Mount Huashan. Unexpectedly, Zuo Lengchan, Yue Buqun, and the masters from Taishan School had killed each other, and the whereabouts of Mr. Mo Da was unknown. There also weren't many left of the juniors from the four schools. The meticulous planning and preparation that had been done by Ren Woxing had all been useless.

Ren Woxing got angrier as he thought more. He shouted, "Bring those dogs from the five sword schools up here!"

"Yes!" Shangguan Yun replied. He turned around to go down the peak to get them.

The different types of internal energies that were disturbed in Linghu Chong's body gradually calmed down. When he heard Ren Woxing said 'Bring those dogs from the five sword schools up here', he still felt unhappy because even though Ren Woxing wasn't scolding himself, Heng-Shan School was still part of the five mountains sword schools.

After some time, shouting were heard as two elders from the Sun Moon Sect led a group of sect's people herding thirty three disciples from the Songshan, Taishan, Hengshan, and Huashan School up to the peak. Originally, Huashan School didn't have that many disciples, but most of the master-hands from Songshan, Taishan, and Hengshan Schools who came to Mount Huashan had died. These thirty three disciples were not only nameless, each one of them were also injured. If not for the Sun Moon Sect's people helping them to walk, they

wouldn't have been able to get up the peak. Ren Woxing was furious when he saw them. Without waiting for them to come closer, he shouted, "Why do I want these dogs to come up here for? Take them down, take them all down!"

"As ordered by Sacred Chief," those two elders replied and brought those thirty disciples down from the peak.

Ren Woxing swore a few times before he suddenly laughed aloud. "The actions of the five mountains sword schools can be said to be unforgivable by heaven. We don't have to do anything and they're already killing each other. From now on, they no longer exist in Jianghu."

Xiang Wentian along with ten elders bowed and said, "This is Sacred Chief's great fortune. All those little bandits died by themselves."

Xiang Wentian also said, "Within the five mountains sword schools, Heng-Shan School is the only one left. This is all because of Headmaster Linghu's leadership. From now on, Heng-Shan School and our divine sect will have the same root different branches. We're going to be prosperous and glorious. Congratulations Sacred Chief to obtain a young hero with no equal in this world to be your vice."

"That's right!" Ren Woxing said. "Left Protector Xiang said it well. Little brother Linghu, from today onwards, you can disband your Heng-Shan School. All the Shi Tai and the female disciples in your school are all welcome to come to our Dark Wood Cliff. Otherwise, it won't be appropriate to stay at Mount Heng-Shan. Then you can take this Heng-Shan's remnants as your Vice-Chief's personal army, haha, haha!" He looked up at the sky and let out a loud laugh that shook the valley.

When they heard the words 'Vice-Chief', all of them were stupefied. A moment later, they all cheered and cries from all directions were heard, "Hero Linghu be our sect's Vice-Chief! It's very good!" "Congratulations Sacred Chief getting an excellent deputy!" "Congratulations Sacred Chief, congratulations Vice-Chief!" "Long live to Sacred Chief, Long live to Vice-Chief!" All the people from the sect had long regarded Linghu Chong as their Chief's son-in-

law, and as he was also appointed as Vice-Chief, it was natural that he would inherit the chief position in the future. They knew he was an easygoing person and when he ascends into power, they most likely wouldn't have to be so anxious like the current time, when they were forever in fear. The rest of the Jianghu heroes here had most likely followed Linghu Chong in attacking the Shaolin Temple and had gone through trials and tribulations with him. Or perhaps, they had received Yingying's kindness in getting the medicine. They all supported him from the bottom of their hearts.

"Congratulations Vice-Chief," Xiang Wentian happily said. "Let's drink your celebratory wine to welcome you to the sect first. Then we'll drink your celebratory wine for your marriage to young lady. What a double happiness, happiness on top of happiness."

But Linghu Chong was at a loss. He knew this matter should not happen but he also didn't know how to decline it. Another thought was if he declined this then his wish to marry Yingying would not happen. Also, once Ren Woxing was angered, he might even be killed. He didn't regret dying, but he was afraid all the disciples of Heng-Shan School might all be killed right here. Should he decline it immediately, or should he agree for the time being to let the Heng-Shan's disciples to go down the mountain safely? He slowly turned his head around to look at the Heng-Shan's disciples. Some of them were looking angry, some had their heads lowered looking sad, some were looking apprehensive; none of them knew what to do.

Then he heard Shangguan Yun said in a clear and loud voice, "Under the leadership of Sacred Chief and the help of Vice-Chief, let's burn Shaolin, destroy Wudang, Kunlun, and Emei. Then we'll also annihilate the Beggar Clan. This will be done easily. Long live to Sacred Chief, unify the Jianghu! Long live Vice-Chief, your benevolent is endless!"

Linghu Chong was hesitating in making a decision. But hearing Shangguan Yun giving him an ode 'Long live Vice-Chief, your benevolent is endless', even though it was still not as much as what Ren Woxing received, if he really became the Vice-Chief then this ode would forever follow him. Thinking till

here, he felt it was very comical and couldn't help uttering a laugh. This laughter seemed like a ridicule and when they heard it, the whole Peak of Morning Sun became quiet all of a sudden.

"Headmaster Linghu," Xiang Wentian addressed him. "Sacred Chief gives you this Vice-Chief position. This means among everyone in Wulin, there's only one person above you and you have tens of thousands of people below you. Quickly thank Sacred Chief."

Suddenly, Linghu Chong was enlightened. Without preparation, he stood up and spoke towards the Deity's Palm, "Chief Ren, junior has two big matters that I'd like to discuss with Chief."

"You might as well say it," said a smiling Ren Woxing.

"The first matter," Linghu Chong said. "Junior was entrusted the position of Heng-Shan School's headmaster by Dingxian Shi Tai and I took up the position. Even if I can't improve the prestige of Heng-Shan School, I mustn’t take the Heng-Shan School into the Sun Moon Divine Sect either. Otherwise, later under the Nine Fountains, how would I have the face to meet Dingxian Shi Tai? That's the first matter. The second matter is personal, I'm asking Chief to let your daughter be my wife."

When the crowd heard him mentioned the first matter, they felt things would go bad. But hearing him following it up with a public marriage proposal, they looked at each other smiling.

Ren Woxing laughed loudly and said, "The first matter is easily solved. Just give the headmaster position of Heng-Shan School to a Shi Tai here. After you swear the oath to join our divine sect, we can then discuss if Heng-Shan School still needs to join the sect or not. The second matter, Yingying and you are perfectly suited to each other and the whole world already knows. Of course I agree to her marrying you. Why need to be so worry for? Haha, haha!"

Everyone shouted their agreements and was calling out happily.

Linghu Chong turned his head around and took a glance at Yingying. Both her cheeks were crimson and her face showing her delight. He waited until the

laughter from the crowd died down before he said in a clear voice, "Because of Chief's kindness, junior has been invited to join the honourable sect and I was also given a high position. But junior is a plain person who doesn't follow custom, so if I join the honourable sect, I'll definitely ruin Chief's big matter. After careful consideration, I'm hoping Chief withdraw the offer."

Ren Woxing was angered and he coldly said, "You're saying you don't want to join the divine sect?"

"That's right!" Linghu Chong replied.

Those two words were said determinedly and it left no doubt. In that moment, everyone on the Peak of Morning Sun lost the colours on their faces.

"The different types of internal energies you've accumulated in your body manifested today," Ren Woxing said. "Half a year from now, give or take three months, they'll manifest again. Then each time it does, it'll be even worse. As for the method to harmonize them, I'm the only one in the whole world to know how to do it."

"That day in the Hangzhou Plum Manor and also at the foot of Mount Shaoshi in the middle of the snow field, Chief already told me about this," Linghu Chong said. "Junior just tasted the feeling of these different types of inner energies manifesting. It's like my body was going through a thousand deaths. But a gentleman will walk through Jianghu without caring about being death or alive, sad or happy."

Ren Woxing snorted. "You can still talk so bravely. Today, your Heng-Shan School is all in my grasp. I won't let a single one of you to go down the mountain alive. I can do that as easy as turning my hand over."

"Although Heng-Shan School is mostly women, we have no fear," Linghu Chong said. "If Chief wants to kill us then we pledge to fight to the death."

Yiqing waved a hand and all the disciples of Heng-Shan School stood behind Linghu Chong.

"We as disciples of Heng-Shan School follow the headmaster's order, we're

not afraid of dying," Yiqing shouted.

"We're not afraid of dying!" the rest of the disciples shouted together.

"The enemies are many, we're few," Zheng E said. "We've also fallen into a trap. Later, heroes in Jianghu will find out how our Heng-Shan School fight to the death."

Ren Woxing was furious. He looked up to the sky and laughed aloud. "If I kill you today, they're going to say I setup this ambush to harm you. Linghu Chong, bring your disciples back to Mount Heng-Shan. One month from now, I'm going to personally go to Xianxing Peak. If by that time a dog or a bird can remain alive on Mount Heng-Shan, then you can regard me as gutless."

The sect's people cried out, "Long live to Sacred Chief, unify the Jianghu! Slaughter on Mount Heng-Shan, dogs and bird won't be spared!"

According to Sun Moon Sect's cries, going up Xianxing Peak to annihilate the Heng-Shan School was only one climb away. Regardless of how Heng-Shan School prepared their defences once they went back, Sun Moon Sect was certain to slaughter them. Previously when the five mountains sword schools became enemy with the Sun Moon Sect, the five schools supported each other. If one school had a difficulty, the other four schools would come to help. Over the last one hundred years, this had kept the situation unchanged with no side winning or losing. Now, with only one school remaining from the five mountains sword school alliance, of course there would be no way for them to resist. This point was understood by everyone in Heng-Shan School.

When Ren Woxing said he wanted to slaughter the Heng-Shan School without sparing any bird or dog, it wasn't just big talk. Actually in Ren Woxing's mind, he was thinking of another thing. Even though Linghu Chong's sword art was excellent, he would be unable to do it alone and Heng-Shan School by itself wouldn't be able to avert disaster. What was actually tugging at his mind was Shaolin and Wudang Schools. He was thinking that when Linghu Chong went back and suddenly asked for help from Shaolin and Wudang, these two schools would definitely dispatch their master-hands to Xianxing Peak to help. Then

instead of attacking Heng-Shan, he'd attack Wudang and set up a three way ambush between Mount Shaoshi and Mount Wudang. Since Mount Wudang and Shaolin Temple were only hundreds of li apart, Wudang would certainly notify Shaolin when they were in trouble. By that time, a large number of experts from Shaolin Temple would have gone to Heng-Shan, while the rest would definitely come out of their nest to help Wudang. Then Sun Moon Sect would attack Shaolin Temple and burn it down first. By that time, the ambush would be sprung and it would annihilate the Shaolin monks en route to Wudang. Once that was accomplished, they'd go surround Mount Wudang but not attack immediately. They would wait for the masters from Shaolin and Wudang who had gone to Heng-Shan to hear of the news first. These master-hands would rush thousands of li to be back at Wudang, while Sun Moon Divine Sect would leisurely wait for them and ambushed them midway and things would go well.

After that, attacking Wudang and annihilating Heng-Shan would be as easy as turning his palm over. At this instant, he had decided on the plan to do away with Shaolin and Wudang, and he had been repeating it over and over in his head guessing that it would most likely succeed. Even though Linghu Chong had insulted him by not willing to enter the sect, it was only by his act that Sun Moon Divine Sect would succeed in uniting Jianghu. The happiness in Ren Woxing's heart was indescribable.

Linghu Chong turned to Yingying and said, "Yingying, you can't go with me?"

Yingying's eyes were already full of tears a long time ago. She couldn't endure it anymore and tears flowed down her cheeks. "If I follow you to Heng-Shan, that won't be filial; If I lose you, it's also not right. It's hard to fulfil both filialness and comradeship. Brother Chong, Brother Chong, don't think about me anymore. In any case, you ..."

"What?"

"In any case, you won't live for much longer. I also wouldn't live one day longer than you."

"Your father already agreed to marry you to me," said a smiling Linghu

Chong. "He's a Chief with long life, a Sacred Chief who unifies Jianghu, how can his words not be believed? How about if we pay respect to heaven and earth right here and become husband and wife?"

Yingying was startled. Although she knew Linghu Chong was a rash and unruly person, she didn't expect he would say such a thing. Her face couldn't help turning bright red. "How... How can we do that?"

Linghu Chong laughed aloud and said, "We'll part here then." He knew Yingying's heart. She was waiting for Ren Woxing to lead the sect to attack Heng-Shan, and once he died, she would also commit suicide. This was inevitable and there was nothing to stop it. If at this time she could do away with custom and agree to marry him on this Peak of Morning Sun and go back together to Mount Heng-Shan, then they could've enjoyed a few days as newlyweds and died together later on. There would've been no regret.

But this act was just too shocking, it didn't matter when Linghu Chong who lived like a beggar did it. But for Young lady Ren, who was shy and proper, she definitely couldn't do it. Moreover, if she did this, then it would also make her not filial. So after he laughed, he cupped his fists towards Ren Woxing, Xiang Wentian, and the elders around there.

"Linghu Chong will respectfully wait for you all at Xianxing Peak!" Linghu Chong said. Once he finished, he turned around to go.

"Wait!" Xiang Wentian quickly interrupted. "Bring the wine over! Brother Linghu, if we don't get drunk today, we won't have the chance later on."

Linghu Chong laughed heartily. "Wonderful, wonderful! Brother Xiang really knows me."

When the Sun Moon Sect came to Mount Huashan, they had planned everything meticulously. When Xiang Wentian shouted 'bring the wine over', subordinates carrying jugs of wine immediately came over, broke open the cover, and poured the wine. Xiang Wentian and Linghu Chong each drank a bowl.

From the crowd, a short and stout person walked out. That person was Old

Man and he said, "Master Linghu, I will always remember your benevolence. I salute you with a bowl today." As he finished saying this, he heaved a bowl and gulped it down. He was only a nobody who was under the jurisdiction of the Sun Moon Sect and his position was nowhere near that of Xiang Wentian. When Linghu Chong wasn't willing to join the sect, he had publicly insulted Ren Woxing. So a small fry like Old Man daring to come forward to toast Linghu Chong would probably meet with death soon. He put comradeship above his own life and didn't think of the dangers facing him in the future. When the crowd saw him so daring, they secretly admired him.

Zu Qianqiu, Ji Wushi, Blue Phoenix, Huang Boliu, and other people came forward one by one and toasted him. Linghu Chong drank his bowl of wines and saw the people coming up to toast him were unending. He thought, "So many friends regard me and Linghu Chong hasn't lived in vain. But why do I have to kill them?" He lifted his bowl and said, "Friends, Linghu Chong can't drink anymore so let's stop drinking for today. When you come to attack Heng-Shan, I'll prepare wine at the bottom at the mountain and we'll get drunk before we fight!" He gulped down a bowl when he finished saying his speech

The crowd said together, "Headmaster Linghu, a straight talk from a straightforward person!"

There were also people who said, "After we get drunk, we'll fight a drunken fight. It'll be interesting."

Linghu Chong tossed his wine bowl on the ground and drunkenly walked down the peak. Yiqing, Yihe, and the other Heng-Shan's disciples followed him down the peak.

When the crowd was sharing a drink with Linghu Chong, Ren Woxing was smiling and didn't utter a word. But his heart was thinking on how to prepare the three way ambush between Shaolin and Wudang; How to pretend to attack Heng-Shan to lead the experts from Shaolin and Wudang Schools to go and help; How to open one side of Wudang during the attack to let someone escape through to get help from Shaolin Temple; Also, how to do this in a manner that the strategists in the opponent camp do not figure out the plan. When Linghu

Chong went down the mountain, all the plans on destroying Wudang and subduing Shaolin had more or less been formed in his heart. He also thought, "These chaps actually dared to toast that little kid in front of me. This debt will be settled slowly. I'm going to use them for now and not do anything for now. Wait until Shaolin, Wudang, and Heng-Shan Schools are destroyed, then everyone who toasted Linghu Chong today won't have a good fate."

Suddenly he heard Xiang Wentian said, "Everyone hear me: Sacred Chief knows Linghu Chong is stubborn and doesn't take *** kissing (I can't think of a better word) but he still tried to persuade him with nice words. Even though Sacred Chief is a broad-minded person and loves a talented person, he has a deeper meaning in doing this that Linghu Chong couldn't grasp. Today, we could've easily destroyed Songshan, Taishan, Huashan, and Hengshan Schools. Sun Moon Divine Sect, glory to the sect!"

The sect's disciples cried out, "Long live to Sacred Chief, unify the Jianghu!"

Xiang Wentian waited until their voices died down before he continued, "There's still Shaolin and Wudang Schools in Wulin. They're our sect's biggest dangers. Sacred Chief wanted to use Linghu Chong to set up his plan in destroying Shaolin and annihilating Wudang. Sacred Chief's plan is foolproof and he had the whole idea in his mind already. He had already anticipated that Linghu Chong wouldn't agree to join the sect and sure enough, he didn't agree to join the sect. So we toasted Linghu Chong before just as ordered by Sacred Chief!"

When the sect's disciples heard this, they all thought, "So that's how it is!" Then they all shouted, "Long live to Sacred Chief, unify the Jianghu."

Xiang Wentian had followed Ren Woxing for so many years and knew what his personality was like. When the feeling of comradeship was roused in his heart, he toasted Linghu Chong. He knew this would make Ren Woxing unhappy, but it didn't matter for him. But when the remaining people also toasted him, it was unavoidable that they would be killed later. So he quickly composed a speech in order to save Ren Woxing's face and to also save Old Man, Ji Wushi, and those people's lives. In saying this, when the people toasted

Linghu Chong, they had not ruin Ren Woxing's authority and instead appeared to make him look to have foresighted it. When Ren Woxing heard Xiang Wentian related it in such a way, he felt really happy and secretly thought, "Left Protector Xiang has after all followed me for many years so he knows what I'm thinking. But, even though he knows I want to destroy Shaolin and annihilate Wudang, he still couldn't guess the method on how I'm going to do that. The strategy for this will be revealed step by step, even he wouldn't know of the whole plan before hand."

"Sacred Chief is so knowledgeable. Everything in this world is already calculated by him," Shangguan Yun shouted. "What Sacred Chief wants us to do then we'll do it, we won't go wrong."

"Wherever Sacred Chief points us to, we'll go," Bao Dachu said. "We'll go through water and fire, we won't balk a tens of thousands of deaths."

"For Sacred Chief, dying a hundred thousands times is better than living without purpose," Qin Weibang cried out.

Another person said, "Brothers, you've all said it. These last few days had been the most interesting days in our lives, we'd been able to see Sacred Chief everyday. Seeing Sacred Chief once gives us strength and refreshes our minds, just like we've practiced inner energy for ten years."

Another person said, "Sacred Chief illuminates the world making our Sun Moon Sect favoured by the common people, also like the rain coming down after a long drought. Everyone's happy and they're giving thanks."

Another person said, "Heroes from ancient times till now, the grand heroes, holy saints, none of them is able to reach Sacred Chief. How can Confucius' martial art be as good as Sacred Chief? Marquis Guan is the measure of braveness, but how can he measure up against Sacred Chief's wisdom? Even though Zhuge's stratagem is high, how would he fare with a sword against our Sacred Chief?"

The sect's disciples cheered loudly and they called out, "Confucius, Marquis Guan, Zhuge Liang, who can compare with our Sacred Chief!"

"After our divine sect unites the Jianghu, we'll get all the statues of Confucius out of the culture temple and all the Guan Yu's statues out of the martial temple" Bao Dachu said. "We'll erect Sacred Chief's statues in their places!"

"Long live to Sacred Chief, long live!" Shangguan Yun shouted. "Our child and grandchildren, eighteen generations of our descendants, all of them will follow Sacred Chief."

The crowd called out at the same time, "Long live to Sacred Chief, unify the Jianghu! Long live, unify the Jianghu!"

Ren Woxing heard his subordinates flattering him endlessly. Although some of these praises were rather fantastical, he thought he could use some of them. He thought, "Some of these talks aren't wrong. Zhuge Liang's martial art is definitely not my match, and when he conducted the six campaigns out of Mount Qi, he wasn't successful at all. So talking of wisdom and knowledge, is he any better than me? Guan Yu crossed five passes and slayed six generals, this is brave. But if he were to fight me alone, how could withstand against my 'Art of Essence Absorbing'? Confucius only had no more than three thousands disciples, while my subordinates number in the thirty thousands. He led three thousands disciples running here and there, and ran out of food and couldn't do anything. I led tens of thousands of people to across the world and go whereever I wish without any problem. Confucius' ability and wisdom when compared to Ren Woxing's aren't that far apart."

Hearing the cries of 'Long live, unify the Jianghu! Long live, unify the Jianghu!' shaking the ground, the people around the mountain also started to call out. The echoes resounded throughout the mountain. Ren Woxing smugly stood up.

When the sect's disciples saw him stood up, they all paid their respects by prostrating on the ground. All of a sudden, Peak of Morning Sun became quiet and there wasn't the slightest noise heard. Sunshine covered Ren Woxing's face and his entire body. The majestic looking Chief of the Sun Moon Sect looked like a god. Ren Woxing laughed aloud and said, "If only I could live forever like to..." When he spoke till here, he was suddenly mute. He moved his energy to

say the word 'today', but he felt his chest contracting and the word couldn't come out from his mouth. He pressed his chest using his right hand wanting to press down the blood bubbling up on his throat but he felt dizzy and the sunshine dazzled him.

Chapter 40 Harmony

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Edited by: Hhaung.



The slipcover for the chair was embroidered with nine golden dragons surrounding a rising son from the ocean. On the edges, it was studded with many pearls, diamonds, and gems.

Linghu Chong went down the mountain in a drunken state and it wasn't until midnight that he finally woke up. When he woke up, he discovered he was lying in the wilderness with the Heng-Shan's disciples sitting far away to guard him

and that he was also having a splitting headache. He was thinking that he wouldn't be able to see Yingying ever again and his heart ache thinking about it. When their party finally arrived at Xianxing Peak on Mount Heng-Shan, they first went to Dingxian, Dingjing, and Dingyi Shi Tai's altar to report they had taken their revenge.

They anticipated Sun Moon Sect would attack anytime whether it was dawn or dusk. After the fighting finished, Heng-Shan School would definitely be destroyed. They already foresaw this defeat a long time ago and instead of worrying, they instead felt relief. Monk No Commandment and his wife, along with Yilin and Tian Boguang, already met with them at the foot of Mount Huashan and they went back together to Mount Heng-Shan. Everyone was thinking that if they diligently practised their martial art, they still wouldn't be able to kill that many more people from the Sun Moon Sect. So thinking that it was of no benefit to them, they simply didn't practice their sword art at all. Some people would read the scripture diligently every day, while the rest would play around the mountain. Heng-Shan School originally had very strict commandments and they had lessons day and night without any idle time. But these days, they were very relaxed.

A few days had passed when they suddenly saw ten monks walking up towards the Xianxing Peak. They were headed by the Shaolin Temple's Abbott, Great Master Fangzheng. Linghu Chong was in his living hut drinking wine and singing songs when he suddenly heard Great Master Fangzheng was coming. He couldn't help feeling startled and happy at the same time, and he quickly came out to welcome him. Great Master Fangzheng saw both his feet were bare, and he didn't even have time to put on his shoes. He smiled and said, "When the ancient people were in a hurry to welcome guests, they still had time to wear shoes. But Headmaster Linghu doesn't wear shoes to welcome us. Your sincerity is even more than those ancient people."

Linghu Chong bowed to give his propriety. "When Great Master Fangzheng comes, Linghu Chong has never welcomed you from far. So I'm actually very afraid. Great Master Fangsheng has also come."

Fangsheng smiled.

Linghu Chong saw the remaining eight monks all had white beards floating on their chins. When he inquired their names, he found out they were all reverend monks of the 'Fang' generation. Linghu Chong welcomed all the reverend monks to enter his living hut and they sat on the putuan. This living hut was originally Dingxian Shi Tai's place and it had no dust around. But when Linghu Chong lived here, the whole place was filled with jugs of wine, wine bowls, and everywhere was a mess. Linghu Chong's face turned red and he said, "It's messy, please don't blame me."

"I came today to pay respect to the mountain then to discuss an important matter," said a smiling Fangzheng. “Headmaster Linghu, you don’t need to be so polite.” He waited for a tick before continuing, “I heard Headmaster Linghu didn’t accept the Vice Chief position in Sun Moon Sect in order to protect Heng-Shan School. You’ve also disregarded your own life by doing this and you were also willing to abandon Young Lady Ren, who’s such a good companion to you. Everyone from the orthodox path admires you very much for this."

Linghu Chong was startled and he thought, “I wasn’t willing because of Heng-Shan School as well as not to implicate all of Wulin. I didn’t allow the school’s disciples to leak this matter out to prevent Shaolin and Wudang Schools from coming to help and getting involved in the big fight and increasing the number of deaths and injuries. I didn’t expect Great Master Fangzheng to still manage to get the news.” He then said, “Great Master absurdly praised me, making me very ashamed. Junior and Sun Moon Sect’s Chief Ren have a lot of grudges and disputes between us. I also lost Young Lady Ren’s love. There’s nothing I can do about this. Great Master, don’t wrongly praise me, I don’t deserve it.”

"Chief Ren wants to lead his men to give your honourable school trouble," Great Master Fangzheng said. "Right now, Songshan, Taishan, Hengshan, and Huashan Schools have all deteriorated and Heng-Shan School is standing by itself without asking for help from outside. Headmaster Linghu, you didn't send anyone to my humble temple to ask anyone to come. Could it be that all the monks in my Shaolin School are afraid of dying and want to preserve their

lives? And they also don't care about justice and righteousness in Wulin?"

Linghu Chong stood up and replied, "I don't dare to assume that. In the past, Junior didn't check myself and got to know many people from the Sun Moon Sect. Then all sorts of difficult matters came up because of this. Junior thinks a man must take responsibilities for what he has done. My heart is already restless since I've implicated the whole Heng-Shan School in this. How can I dare to startle Great Master and Priest Chongxu? If Shaolin and Wudang Schools came to help and lost a lot of people, then it'll be Junior's fault that even ten thousands death wouldn't be able to repay."

"Headmaster Linghu, what you said was wrong," said a smiling Fangzheng. "The Devil Sect has wanted to destroy our Shaolin, Wudang, and five mountains sword schools since a hundred years ago. At that time, I wasn't even born, so how does that have to do with Headmaster Linghu?"

Linghu Chong nodded. "My deceased master often taught me that the demonical and the orthodox can't stand together. The Devil Sect and our orthodox schools have been fighting for years and the enmity between both is very deep. Junior's understanding of this was shallow and I thought both parties were able to yield a step and change for the better. Junior never knew that even though Chief Ren and I have a deep origin, at the end, we must still bear arms at each other."

"You said both parties yielding a step and change for the better. What you said is right," Fangzheng said. "Sun Moon Sect and our orthodox schools have been fighting for years. Actually, the reason for this wasn't something so great that we want them to all die or they want us to all die. The only reason was because the leaders of both parties want to control Wulin by himself and wished the other party to be destroyed because of it. That day, when Priest Chongxu, Headmaster Linghu, and I talked at the Hanging Temple, we were there because of the worry that Songshan's Headmaster Zuo wanted to merge the five mountains sword schools into one. We were afraid of his wild ambition in ruling Wulin by himself." He let out a long sigh when he spoke till here. He then continued, "I heard Sun Moon Sect's Chief has a motto, something like 'Long live to Chief,

unify the Jianghu'. Since this is already in his heart, how can Wulin have a day of peace? In Jianghu, each clan and each school has its own purpose and they're all very different. Unify the Jianghu, this will never happen."

Linghu Chong agreed with this and nodded. "Great Master Abbott said it right."

"Chief Ren said that within a month he won't spare a dog or a bird on Mount Heng-Shan," Fangzheng said. "His words are like the mountain and they couldn't be altered. Right now, the master-hands from Shaolin, Wudang, Kunlun, Emei, and Kongtong Schools are already assembled at the foot of Mount Heng-Shan."

"Ah!" Linghu Chong was startled and he jumped up. "Really? All the schools' seniors have come to help, Junior didn't know. I really should be punished."

Since Heng-Shan School knew that the Devil Sect would one day attack, no one there was feeling lucky so they had not bothered putting up sentries and guards around the place. So much so that the sentries at the foot of the mountain had even been withdrawn.

Linghu Chong continued, "Reverend monks, please rest up here. Junior will lead my school's disciples down the mountain to welcome them."

Fangzheng shook his head. "All the schools are on the same boat in this and are helping each other to fight the enemy. There's no need for small talk, we've arranged everything."

"Yes," Linghu Chong acknowledged, and he asked, "When did Great Master Abbott find out that Sun Moon Sect wants to attack Heng-Shan School?"

"I received a letter from a senior and found out everything," Fangzheng replied.

"Senior?" Linghu Chong was thinking that Great Master Fangzheng's position in Wulin was already very high, so how could there be someone even more senior than him?

Fangzheng smiled and answered, "This senior is a famous elder from Huashan School. He once taught sword art to Headmaster Linghu."

"Grand martial uncle Feng!" Linghu Chong excitedly said.

"It is Senior Feng," Fangzheng confirmed. "Senior Feng dispatched six friends to Shaolin Temple to reveal what Headmaster Linghu said on top of the Peak of Morning Sun. These six friends speak in somewhat a roundabout manner and aren't very clear, so it's a little troublesome, and they also like to dispute what each other say. But after talking to them for a few hours and patiently listening to them, I finally understood." When he said till here, he couldn't help smiling.

"They're the Peach Valley Six Fairies?" a smiling Linghu Chong asked.

Fangzheng smiled. "They are the Peach Valley Six Fairies."

"When Junior arrived at Huashan, I wanted to pay my respect to Grand martial uncle Feng," Linghu Chong happily told Fangzheng. "But many things kept coming up until I finally went down the mountain. From beginning to the end, I didn't manage to see him to kowtow. I never thought he'd know everything."

"Senior Feng's conduct is like a divine dragon, you can see his head but not his tail," Fangzheng replied. "He already conceals himself living in Huashan, and when the Sun Moon Sect was at Huashan going around without any fear, how could he just not care? Peach Valley Six Fairies were at Huashan to play around and they were captured by Senior Feng and locked up for several days. Later, he ordered them to go to Shaolin Temple to deliver the letter."

Linghu Chong thought, "Peach Valley Six Fairies were captured by Grand martial uncle Feng. They would definitely hide this matter and won't talk about it. But if I just talk at random about things, they'll finally reveal this." Then he said, "What does Grand martial uncle Feng want us to do?"

"Senior Feng was very modest in his words, he only said that he heard something unusual that needs to be told to me," Fangzheng told him. "He also said Headmaster Linghu is his beloved disciple and how you resisted the Devil Sect's invitation on top of the Peak of Morning Sun. He really liked what he saw and wanted me to take care of you. Actually, Headmaster Linghu's martial art is far above mine. This word 'take care', he was too serious."

Linghu Chong felt appreciative and he bowed before saying, "Great Master

Abbott has been taking care of Junior more than once."

"You flatter me," Fangzheng replied. "When I found out about this, don't mention that Senior Feng ordered this, I would've done it myself solely relying on the deep origin between your honourable school and my school. Also, I couldn't just put my hands in my sleeve on account of our friendship. Moreover, this matter concerns each school's survival. Once the Devil Sect destroyed Heng-Shan, do you think he'd let go of Shaolin and Wudang Schools? That's why I immediately sent out an epistle notifying each school to assemble at Heng-Shan and fight to the death together against the Devil Sect."

When Linghu Chong came down from the Peak of Morning Sun that day, he was already feeling dejected. He saw the Sun Moon Sect and felt that Heng-Shan School couldn't match them. So he was only waiting for the day that Ren Woxing would attack them, then everyone from Heng-Shan School would exert themselves in resisting and fight to the death. Even though there were people who offered the idea to ask for help from Shaolin and Wudang Schools, Linghu Chong asked them, "Even if Shaolin and Wudang Schools come to help, can they stop the Devil Sect?" That person immediately shut up. Linghu Chong also said, "Since there's no way to help Heng-Shan, why should we implicate Shaolin's and Wudang's disciples and make a lot of them lose their lives here?" In his heart, he actually didn't want to fight with Ren Woxing and Xiang Wentian. Also, when his hope of marrying Yingying disappeared, he unwittingly tortured himself and felt his life in this world was no longer useful, and that it was better if he died first.

At this time, when he saw Fangzheng received Feng Qingyang's trust and came here to help, his spirit was roused. But he still had no interest to really fight to the death against those people from the Sun Moon Sect.

Fangzheng also said, "Headmaster Linghu, Buddhists have mercy in their heart and I'm not a brave person who would fight violently. If this matter can be settled in a friendly manner, then of course it's the best. But if we yield a step then Ren Woxing would advance a step. We can't yield in this matter at all or Chief Ren will annihilate each school from the orthodox path. Only if each of us

kowtow to him and praise him with 'Long live to Sacred Chief, unify the Jianghu! Amituofo!'"

In his 'Long live to Sacred Chief, unify the Jianghu', he added the word 'Amituofo'. It was really comical and Linghu Chong couldn't refrain from smiling. "That's right. Junior only has to hear of that 'Sacred Chief', that 'Long live to Chief, unify the Jianghu', and I had goose bumps all over my body. Junior doesn't get drunk after drinking thirty bowls of wine but to hear a lot of this 'Long live to Chief, unify the Jianghu', I couldn't help feeling dizzy and become drunk on the spot."

Fangzheng smiled. "Their Sun Moon Sect's incantation is definitely very formidable." He paused for a tick before continuing, "When Senior Feng was at the Peak of Morning Sun, he saw Headmaster Linghu getting dizzy. So he especially ordered the Peach Valley Six Fairies to bring over a secret formula for an internal energy technique, and he wanted me to give this to Headmaster Linghu. The Peach Valley Six Fairies don't speak clearly, but when it came to telling me the inner energy technique, they became clear. It was really rare. I think Senior Feng must've forced them to memorise this until they're very familiar with it. Headmaster Linghu, please lead the way to the inner hall so I can impart you this technique."

Linghu Chong respectfully led Great Master Fangzheng into a quiet room. This was the formula that Feng Qingyang had asked Fangzheng to impart to him so it was as if he had come personally to impart it to him. He immediately knelt in front of Fangzheng and said, "Grand martial uncle Feng treats disciple with so much kindness."

Fangzheng didn't decline his modesty and received his respect. "Senior Feng has a lot of expectation on Headmaster Linghu. He hopes you can practise diligently according to this technique."

"Yes," Linghu Chong replied. "Disciple will do as ordered."

Fangzheng slowly read aloud the formula for the technique while Linghu Chong tried to memorise it. The formula wasn't that long, from beginning to the

end, there were only around one thousands words. When Fangzheng finished reciting it, he wanted Linghu Chong to remember it. After some time, he recited it again. In total, he recited it five times. Linghu Chong was able to memorise it and recited it from the beginning to the end without mistake.

"Even though there's only around a thousand words in this internal energy formula that Senior Feng is passing on, it is actually very profound and it's not a small matter," Fangzheng said. "We're good friends, please forgive me for speaking frankly. Headmaster Linghu's sword art is profound, but it seems you're not good at internal energy technique."

"Junior only knows some trivial things about internal energy," Linghu Chong replied. "If Great Master doesn't mind, I'd still like to ask for some pointers."

Fangzheng nodded. "Senior Feng's inner energy technique and Shaolin School's inner energy technique are quite different. But all martial arts in this world have the same goal but use different approaches. The basic essence doesn't differ by too much. If Headmaster Linghu doesn't mind me being meddlesome then I'll try to explain it."

Linghu Chong knew he was the current Wulin's number one or two master. Obtaining his advice was no different than getting Grand Martial Uncle Feng's advice. That was why Grand Martial Uncle Feng had imparted him this technique so his internal energy could also be profound. Linghu Chong quickly bowed and said, "Junior will respectfully listen to Great Master's instructions."

"You flatter me!" Fangzheng replied. Then he immediately started to analyze the inner energy technique sentence by sentence, and he also told him all kinds of different things like breathing, energy movement, tuna(a breathing method), and the method to move the energy. Linghu Chong had learned the formula by heart and he originally remembered it very well. But when Great Master Fangzheng was analyzing the formula, only then did he realise how each sentence contained numerous refined principles.

Linghu Chong had a high level of comprehension, but each sentence of this refined inner energy technique took him a long time to understand. It was good

that Great Master Fangzheng was there to explain it to him in detail that he was able to take a peek into the marvellous realm of martial art study that he had never experienced before. He let out a long sigh and said, "Great Master Fangzheng, Junior has been fearlessly going around Jianghu for the last few years, it was because I didn't know how shallow my knowledge is. I'm really ashamed when thinking about it. Junior doesn't have much longer to live and unable to practise the wonderful inner energy technique passed down by Grand Martial Uncle Feng. But people in the old days had a saying, it's something like hear the right way in the morning, then dying at night won't be too serious. Is that saying right?"

"If a man in the morning hears the right way, he may die in the evening without regret!" Fangzheng corrected him.

"That's right, that's the saying," Linghu Chong said. "I once heard master said it. Hearing Great Master's advice today, it's really like a blind man being able to see. Even if I don't have any more time to practise it, I'm already happy."

"Our orthodox schools have all assembled near Mount Heng-Shan, and they're protecting all the important places," Fangzheng said. "When the Devil Sect comes to attack, we'll all work together and we won't lose. Headmaster Linghu, why are you being so pessimistic? This inner energy technique requires a few years to finish practising it, but if you practise it for a day then you'll get one day's benefit, and if you practise it for a little bit then you'll get a little bit's benefit. These next few days, there's no harm for Headmaster Linghu to start learning it. Take advantage of me disturbing your honourable mountain and we can also study it together."

"Junior appreciates Great Master's kindness."

"Brother Chongxu should be arriving any moment now. Should we go out and take a look?"

Linghu Chong quickly stood up and said, "I've neglected Priest Chongxu and the others."

He returned to the outside hall with Great Master Fangzheng, the hall was

already lighted with candles. When the two of them were discussing martial art, more than six hours had passed and the sky had turned dark a long time ago. They saw three Taoist sitting on putuans talking with Great Master Fangsheng. One of these people was Priest Chongxu. When the three Taoist saw Fangzheng and Linghu Chong came out, they stood up together.

Linghu Chong paid his respects and said, "Heng-Shan is in trouble and we've received priests' help. Everyone from my humble school really doesn't know how to repay this."

Priest Chongxu quickly helped him up and smilingly replied, "I arrived here some time ago. I learned that Great Master Abbott and little brother are inside studying inner energy technique so I didn't dare to disturb you. Little brother has learned a wonderful inner energy technique, once you've learned how to use it then when Ren Woxing comes here, you can try it out on him and teach him a lesson."

"This inner energy technique is very refined," Linghu Chong said. "How can Junior learn it in just a few days? I heard the seniors from Emei, Kunlun, and Kongtong Schools have all arrived. I should invite them up and discuss our plan. What do seniors think of this?"

Chongxu replied, "They're hiding in secret to guard against that demon Ren from finding out. If you ask everyone to come up the mountain, then I'm afraid the information will be leaked out. When we came up the mountain, we also disguised ourselves. Otherwise, why didn't the disciples of my humble school announce us first?"

The moment when he first met Priest Chongxu appeared in Linghu Chong's mind. At that time, Priest Chongxu disguised himself as an old man riding a donkey, and there were two other men following him. They were all actually masters from Wudang School. Right now, as he observed the other priests, he recognised them to be the other two elders who competed sword with him on the Hubei road.

Linghu Chong bowed and smilingly said, "Priests, your face changing

technique is very good. If Priest Chongxu didn't mention it, Junior wouldn't have figured it out."

Those two priests disguised themselves as farmers at that time, one was carrying firewood and the other carrying vegetables. Both were gasping for breath, seemed like they were sick. At this time, they looked very healthy and only their eyes could be recognised. Priest Chongxu pointed to the elder who carried the firewood, "This is martial brother Qingxu." Then he pointed to the elder who carried the vegetable, "This is my martial nephew, his Taoist name is Chenggao." The four of them smiled at each other.

Qingxu and Chenggao both said, "Headmaster Linghu's sword art is very high."

Linghu Chong replied, modestly, "I apologize for the offence!"

"My martial brother's and martial nephew's sword art aren't very refined, but when they were young, they lived for more than ten years in the western region and learned one special skill," Chongxu said. "One is an expert in hidden traps and the other is an expert in bombs."

"Those skills are very rare," Linghu Chong commented.

"Brother Linghu," Chongxu said. "I brought them here because I have another purpose. I'm hoping they can help us in doing one big thing."

Linghu Chong didn't understand and blurted out, "To do one big thing?"

"I took the liberty to take one thing to your honourable mountain," Chongxu answered. "Brother Linghu, please take a look." He had a free and easy personality so he wasn't as restrained as Fangzheng. That was why one called him 'Brother Linghu', and the other called him 'Headmaster Linghu'. Linghu Chong felt it was quite odd and wanted to see what he took out from his bosom. Chongxu smiled and said, "This item is actually not small, it doesn't fit in my bosom. Martial brother Qingxu, ask them to come in."

Qingxu acknowledged the order and went out. Not long after, he led four farmer-looking men to come in. Each person was barefooted and each was

carrying vegetables.

Qingxu said, "This is Headmaster Linghu and Shaolin Temple's Abbott." The four people bowed to give their respects.

Linghu Chong knew they must have high positions in Wudang. He quickly returned their propriety.

"Take it out and install it!" Qingxu ordered.

The four men took some wrapped bundles from inside the vegetables they were carrying. They opened the bundles revealing many wooden strips, ironware, nails, and springs. These four people worked really fast and they put those items together. A short time later, they finished making a grand chair. Linghu Chong was even more perplexed, pondering, "This grand chair has so many springs. I wonder what it's used for? Could it be for practising internal energy?"

After installing the chair, the four men took out two more wrapped bundles. These bundles contained the chair cushion and the chair cover which they put on the grand chair. Inside the quiet hall, glitters from the yellow brocade of the chair cover suddenly dazzled their eyes. Nine golden dragons had been embroidered into the brocade with the sun in the middle rising from the ocean. On the left, writings of 'Glory to Sacred Chief, To the Benefit of Common People' were seen. On the right was the writing 'Long Live the Chief, Unify the Jianghu'. Those nine dragons had their claws brandished and teeth snarling, looking very much alive. The caligraphy on the writings was strong and very pleasing to the eyes. Chains of pearls, diamonds, and all sorts of other precious stones surrounded the letters. This humble and plain hall was covered by the lights from the jewels.

Linghu Chong clapped to cheer as he thought of Chongxu saying that Qingxu was once in the western region learning to make hidden traps. He said, "When Chief Ren sees this precious chair, he'll definitely sit in it. Then the traps in the chair will be sprung and take his life. Am I right?"

Chongxu whispered back, "Ren Woxing can respond really fast and his

movement is like lightning. Even if the chair has a trap, he'll feel something's not right and jump up immediately. We won't be able to injure him then. This bottom of this chair has been installed with a fuse and a pack of explosives."

Once he said this, the faces of Linghu Chong and all the monks from Shaolin changed colour. Fangzheng prayed, "Amituofo!"

"The benefit of this trap is that anyone can sit on it without anything happening," Chongxu explained. "You need to sit for a while before the fuse is triggered. That Ren Woxing is a sceptical person and he's also very careful. When he sees this kind of chair on the Xianxing Peak, he definitely won't sit in it straight away and will get one of his subordinate to sit on it first. The covering on this chair has those gold dragons around the sun, there's also those 'Long Live the Chief, Unify the Jianghu' words, so anyone from the Devil Sect won't sit on it for too long. But once Ren Woxing sit on it, he won't give it up."

"Priest has considered this very thoroughly," Linghu Chong commented.

"Martial brother Qingxu has also prepared something else," Chongxu said. "If Ren Woxing doesn't sit and told people to take the cover and cushion off, and even tear the chair apart to have a look then the fuse will still be triggered. Martial nephew Chenggao has brought twenty thousands catties of explosives to this precious mountain. It seems we won't be able to avoid ruining the scenery on this precious mountain."

Linghu Chong felt dread in his heart, he thought, "Twenty thousands catties of explosives! So much gunpowder exploding, even jade will burn. If Chief Ren is blown up, Yingying and Brother Xiang will be too."

Chongxu saw his face looked unusual. "The Devil Sect is saying they want to kill your honourable school. Once they've annihilated Heng-Shan School, they'll attack Shaolin and Wudang. We'll be ashes and this big disaster will be hard to fix. We've setup this treacherous plan to repay Ren Woxing. Although it's very dangerous, we'll get to do away with this head demon and get to save tens of thousands of lives in Wulin."

Great Master Fangzheng joined both his palms together. "Amituofo! Our

merciful Buddha must also defeat demons and slay devils to save our lives. Killing a man to save thousands of lives is path of compassion and sorrow." When he said these words, he looked stately. All the monks and taoists there stood up and joined their palms together while lowering their heads. They said in unison, "Great Master Fangzheng is right."

Linghu Chong also knew what Fangzheng said was very reasonable. Sun Moon Sect wanted to annihilate the Heng-Shan School that even dogs and birds wouldn't be spared, while the schools from the orthodox path had planned to fry Ren Woxing to death. This was a matter of justice and righteousness and no one could say that it wasn't, but his heart was quite unwilling to kill Ren Woxing. As to killing Xiang Wentian, he would rather die first; As to the life and death of Yingying, he wasn't worried. He had always regarded their lives intertwined together and they will both die and live together so there was nothing to worry about. He saw all of them were looking at him. He hummed for a little while and said, "Since things have come to this, Sun Moon Sect has forced us with no other option. I think Priest Chongxu's strategy will hurt the least people."

"Brother Linghu said it right," Chongxu praised. "'It hurts the least people, it's exactly what I was looking for."

"Junior is young and my knowledge is shallow," Linghu Chong replied. "The matter on Heng-Shan today, I'd like to ask Great Master Fangzheng and Priest Chongxu to preside over this big operation. Junior will lead my school's disciples and follow the plan."

Chongxu laughed. "I don't deserve it. You're the master on Heng-Shan. How can Brother Abbott and I, as guests, snatch the host position?"

"This is not Junior modestly stepping back," Linghu Chong explained. "I honestly like the two of you to handle it."

"Headmaster Linghu is very modest," Fangzheng said. "Brother Priest, you don't need to decline it either. The three of us will lead this big operation, but we'll let Brother Priest to issue the order."

Chongxu said a few more modest words before finally agreeing. "We've

hidden people on all the passages going up Mount Heng-Shan. When the Devil Sect comes to attack the mountain, we'll definitely hear of something. That day when Brother LInghu led people to attack Shaolin Temple, we followed Zuo Lengchan's plan and left an empty city..."

Linghu Chong's face turned slightly red. "Junior made a big disturbance. I'm still terrified by it."

Chongxu laughed. "I never thought enemy from the past would become today's friend. We can't use that empty city plan again as it will raise Ren Woxing's suspicion. From my humble view, the whole Heng-Shan School should defend on top of the mountain with dozens of people from Shaolin and Wudang Schools. You must understand that when Devil Sect attacks, and if they can't see anyone from Shaolin and Wudang Schools coming to help, then it would go against reason. This bastard Ren Woxing would be able to guess something is up."

"That's right," Fangzheng and Linghu Chong replied in unison.

"The rest of the schools like Kunlun, Emei, and Kongtong don't need to reveal themselves," Chongxu went on. "They will hide inside the mountain caves. When Devil Sect comes to attack, Heng-Shan, Shaolin, and Wudang Schools will fight back and the fight must look real. The people we send out must all be first class fighters and the more we kill the better while trying not to get harmed ourselves."

Fangzheng sighed. "The master-hands from Devil Sect are like the cloud and they must have been preparing for this. This coming fight will have a lot of deaths and injuries from both sides."

"We'll look for some cliffs and prepare ropes. When we see we're no longer their match, we'll use the ropes to go down to the valley and make it hard for the enemy to chase us," Chongxu said. "After Ren Woxing had gained his victory, then he'll see this precious chair. Of course he'll be complacent and sit on it. When the explosives is triggered, that old demon Ren will find it impossible to escape without wings. We'll follow this with exploding the thirty two landmines

along the eight routes going up Mount Heng-Shan. The Devil Sect will find no way to go down the mountain then."

"Thirty two landmines?" Linghu Chong queried.

"That's right," Chongxu answered. "Martial nephew Chenggao will go early tomorrow morning and go to the important spots of the routes going up Mount Heng-Shan. At each route, he's going to pick the four most important spots and bury the landmines there. When the landmines go off, there'll be no route going up and down the mountain. There'll be around ten thousands people from the Devil Sect going up Mount Heng-Shan, and all ten thousands of them will die of starvation; If twenty thousands go up the mountain then twenty thousands will die of starvation. We've learned Zuo Lengchan's old plan, but this time we won't let them escape from a tunnel."

"That time we were really lucky to escape Shaolin Temple," Linghu Chong chimed in. Then as he thought about it, he uttered an 'oh'.

"Brother Linghu, now that you've learned of this plan, is there anything not right?" Chongxu asked.

"Junior thinks that when Chief Ren comes up Mount Heng-Shan and sees that precious chair, he'll definitely be happy but he'll be sure to suspect it," Linghu Chong replied. "Why would Heng-Shan School make this kind of chair and embroider the words 'Long Live the Chief, Unify the Jianghu'? If this matter isn't made clear, then I think he probably won't sit down on it."

"I've also thought of this point," Chongxu answered. "Actually, whether that demon head Ren sit or not on that chair isn't crucial. The other fuse we've hidden on that chair will blow it also. When he's being proud of himself, taking all the praises of long live the chief, unify the Jianghu, then this disaster will struck. Later on, this will only become a conversation topic in Wulin."

Linghu Chong nodded his head. "Yes."

"Martial Uncle," Priest Chenggao interrupted. "Disciple has an idea, I'm not sure if it's feasible?"

"Say it out," Chongxu said, smiling. "Ask Great Master Abbott and Headmaster Linghu for their advice."

"I heard Headmaster Linghu and Chief Ren's daughter had a marriage agreement, but because the orthodox and the demonical can't be on the same road, the marriage was hindered," Chenggao said. "If Headmaster Linghu sends two Heng-Shan disciples to meet Chief Ren and says that on account of young lady Ren, you seek an especially skillful craftsman to make the precious chair for Chief Ren to sit on, and that you're hoping the two parties would have a truce to discuss peace. It doesn't matter if Chief Ren agrees or not, but once he comes up Mount Heng-Shan, he'll see this precious chair and won't suspect it anymore."

Chongxu clapped excitedly and said, "This plan is wonderful. One..."

"No!" Linghu Chong shook his head.

Chongxu was startled and knew he had been embarrassed, so he asked, "What's Brother Linghu's opinion?"

"Chief Ren wants to kill my Heng-Shan School, and I'll do my best to fight back and use wisdom to fight a strong enemy, everything can be done," Linghu Chong replied. "He's coming to kill us and we're going to explode him, but I'll never say false words to deceive him."

"Good!" Chongxu praised. "Brother Linghu is frank, very admirable. Whatever we do, whether that demon head Ren suspects it or not, he only has the intention of harming people to come up Mount Heng-Shan, so we're going to make him suffer."

After that, they discussed the details on how to defend, how to fight, how to cover up their ambush, how to retreat, and how to blow up the landmines. Each of these points was decided on. Chongxu was very meticulous and he was afraid they might have underestimated the enemy, so he dispatched another person to back up the person responsible for blowing up the landmines.

On dawn the next day, Linghu Chong guided them to look at the lay of the land. Qingxu and Chenggao selected the places to bury the landmines, prepared

the fuses, and hid sentries to guard these places. Chongxu and Linghu Chong chose four rugged spots to make their retreats. Fangzheng, Chongxu, Linghu Chong, and Fangsheng would each guard one spot and they wouldn't let any enemy come near them. When the defenders were exhausted, they would be let down by ropes towards the valley down below. The last people to get to the valley below would use their swords to cut the ropes and not let the enemies to chase after them.

On the same day that afternoon, ten people from the Wudang School disguised themselves as farmers and wood gatherers. Under Qingxu's and Chenggao's directions, they planted the explosives. Heng-Shan School's disciples guarded each entrance to the mountain to prevent idler from going up the mountain, to protect against Sun Moon Sect from scouting the area and finding out all the secrets. After three busy days, everything was ready and they were now just waiting for Sun Moon Sect to come and attack. Counting the days, it had nearly been one month since they left Ren Woxing on the Peak of the Morning Sun. What that person said was certain to be fulfilled and there would be no error in his decided time. In these last few days, Chongxu, Chenggao and the other people had been busy, while Linghu Chong had been idle instead. Every day he silently went through the inner energy technique Fangzheng had imparted to him and practised it. Every time he met something he didn't understand, he'd consult with Fangzheng about it.

On the afternoon of that day, Yihe, Yiqing, Yilin, Zheng E, Qin Juan, and other female disciples were practising sword at the sword training hall, while Linghu Chong was at side giving advices. He saw that even though Qin Juan was still young, she quite understood the essence of the sword art. He praised, "Martial sister Qin is very bright. You already have the knack for this move, but..." He hadn't finished saying the words when he suddenly felt a wave of pain in his dantian region and immediately sat down. The disciples were all startled and they quickly rushed forward to help him up, they said in unison, "What happened?"

Linghu Chong knew the different types of internal energies in his bodies were

coming out again, and the pain was so unbearable that he couldn't even speak. The disciples were in confusion when suddenly a flapping sound and two pigeons came flying in from the window.

"Aiyo!" they cried out in unison.

Heng-Shan School kept many letter pigeon. When Dingjing Shi Tai was at Fujian and when Dingxian and Dingjing Shi Tai were surrounded at the Dragon Spring Sword-Forging Valley, they had dispatched these letter pigeon to ask for help. Now, the two letter pigeons flying through the window were from the school's disciples who were guarding at the bottom of the mountain, and there were red paint daubed at their backs. With a glance, they knew the assault from the Sun Moon Sect had arrived. Since Great Master Fangzheng and Priest Chongxu arrived at Mount Heng-Shan, the disciples had seen strong helpers had arrived and everything was already prepared, and they were relieved. But unexpectedly during this urgent time, Linghu Chong had fallen sick.

Yiqing called out, "Yizhi, Yiwen, martial sisters, go report to Great Master Fangzheng and Priest Chongxu."

Both of them acknowledged the order and went.

Yiqing also said, "Martial sister Yihe, please ring the bell." Yihe nodded her heads a few times before flying out of the hall to go towards the bell tower.

Sounds of 'tang, tang, tang', 'tang, tang', 'tang, tang, tang', 'tang, tang' was heard. Three long ringing followed by two short ringing was heard coming from the bell tower, the sound traversing throughout the peak. Shortly after that, the bells from Tong Yuan Valley, Hanging Temple, Black Dragon Pass, and other big bells from the other temples were also heard. Great Master Fangzheng had left an order before hand on the method to alert the coming of the enemy, the bell was supposed to be rung with three long ringing followed by two short ringing. But the ringing of the bell must be slow and leisurely, and must not appear panicked and frightened. However, with Yihe being completely worried, and even though there's the word 'peace[11]' in her Buddhist name, her behaviour was anything but peaceful and the sound of the bell still showed her worry and

impatient.

Heng-Shan School, Shaolin School, and Wudang School quickly moved according to the pre-arranged plan. Each of them moved to their spots to prepare in welcoming the enemy. In order to lower the casualties, no guard was placed in the passages between the foot of the mountain and the top of the Xianxing Peak, and the gate was opened wide to let the enemy come through. Once the enemy arrived at the top of the peak then the fighting will be joined.

After the bell sounds stopped, the chirpings of birds had become quiet around the peak. The experts from Kunlun, Emei, and Kongtong Schools all hid below the peak waiting for the Devil Sect people to all go up the peak. Once they received the order, they will cut off the retreat of the Devil Sect. To protect the secret plan, Chongxu didn't tell everyone of the landmines buried on the mountain passages. Devil Sect had a vast influence and for them to have spies within the disciples of Kunlun or the other schools would not be too surprising.

Linghu Chong heard the bells and he knew the Sun Moon Sect had come to attack them, but his stomach was like being slashed and stabbed by millions of sabres. The pain was enveloping his belly and it was churning underneath. Yilin and Qin Juan were frightened till their faces were colourless, and they didn't know what to do.

"We'll help Headmaster to go to Wuse Convent," Yiqing ordered. "Then we'll carry out Shaolin Abbott's and Priest Chongxu's plan."

Yu Sao and another old nun put their hands underneath him. Half supporting half lifting, they carried him to Wuse Convent.

They had just arrived at the convent's door when they heard the thundering sound of firecrackers going off, followed by the cries of the horns, and the booming of the drums. As expected, Sun Moon Sect had grandly carried out the operation to attack the mountain.

Fangzheng and Chongxu had found out of Linghu Chong's illness and they rushed out of the convent.

Chongxu said, "Brother Linghu, don't worry. I've already ordered Martial

brother Qingxu to cover Wudang School's retreat. I'll be covering your honourable school's retreat."

Linghu Chong nodded his thanks.

Fangzheng said, "Headmaster Linghu, retreat down the valley first to avoid any negligence."

"No... Absolutely not!" Linghu Chong hastily replied. "Bring.. Bring my sword!"

Chongxu advised him further but Linghu Chong was unmoved. Suddenly, the sound of drums and horns ceased, followed by thundering voices calling out, "Long Live the Sacred Chief, Unify the Jianghu!" From this sound, it can be gathered there was at least four to five thousands people. Fangzheng, Chongxu, and Linghu Chong looked at each other and smiled.

Qin Juan brought Linghu Chong's sword over to him and presented it. Linghu Chong extended his hand wishing to take it but his right hand was continuously shaking and he couldn't hold it. Qin Juan hung the sword on his waist.

Suddenly they heard a very pleasing suona sound rose up[12], it was definitely not the sound of battle.

In unison, a few people said in bright clear voices, "Sun Moon Sect's Sacred Chief wishes to go up Xianxing Peak to meet Heng-Shan School's Headmaster Linghu." These words had been spoken by the Sun Moon Sect's elders.

"Sun Moon Sect is giving their propriety first before fighting," Fangzheng said. "We also can't be too petty. Headmaster Linghu, what do you think of letting them come up to the peak?"

Linghu Chong nodded his head a few times. At this time, a wave of pain had again assaulted his stomach. Fangzheng saw his face full of cold perspiration, he said, "Headmaster Linghu, the pain in your dantian is already excruciating, there's no harm in using the inner energy method that Senior Feng imparted. Add it and revolve it, see what happens."

The different types of inner energies in Linghu Chong's body were conflicting

and clashing about, if he add more to it and revolve it, that would be no different than using a sabre to injure himself. It would be like adding pain on top of pain, but the pain was already to the extreme and there was no thought of the consequence of doing this. He moved the energy according to the method and revolved it. As expected the energies clashed and the pain was even more excruciating than before, but after revolving it for a few times, those inner energies were back flowing like before. They flowed and converged like there was a track to flow. Even though the pain was like the old time, it wasn't clashing and striking chaotically anymore. He knew the place where the clashes happened now.

Fangzheng said slowly, "Heng-Shan School Headmaster Linghu, Wudang School Headmaster Priest Chongxu, Shaolin School Headmaster Fangzheng, we await respectfully for the Sun Moon Sect honourable Chief Ren's arrival." His voice wasn't loud and it was said slowly, but it still travelled very far.

Linghu Chong was effective in moving his inner energy. He now sat cross-legged, eyes observing the nose, the nose observing the heart, his left hand touched his chest, his right hand embraced his stomach, following the method that Fangzheng had imparted to him which he had practiced earlier. He had only learned this technique for a few days only, and even though Fangzheng had spoken to him everyday in details about it, his practice of it was still very shallow. But under the guidance of this method right now, these different inner energies were unexpectedly able to gradually merge. He didn't dare to be negligent, so with rapt attention, he revolved his inner energy. In the beginning, he was still able to hear the sound of drums and horns, but at the end, he couldn't even hear anything.

Fangzheng smiled seeing Linghu Chong was concentrating on practising martial art. He heard the drums were thundering, and the Sun Moon Sect people shouted, "Sun Moon Sect cultured and kind warrior, benefiting the common people, the honourable Sacred Chief is going up Heng-Shan!" After some time, the sound of drums gradually got nearer.

The path coming up to Xianxing Peak was very long and although the Sun

Moon Sect people walked really fast, after some time, the sound of drums had only arrived at the middle of the mountain. The orthodox sect warriors hiding around the Mount Heng-Shan were all secretly scolding, "Rotten honourable chief, still not dead yet, what the heck are you doing making lots of noise around here?"

The people who were to welcome the enemy all had their hearts bouncing wildly. Each of them had originally predicted the Devil Sect people would kill their way up and they would immediately engage in a fierce battle. After killing a score of the sect's people, and waiting for more enemies to arrive on top and becoming even stronger, they would then escape down the valley. But they never expected Ren Woxing to act like an emperor going on a tour and making a lot of noise as he came up to the peak. It was inappropriate for them to start their operation, but they had to detain their hearts harder from doing so.

After a long time, Linghu Chong felt the various inner energies in his dantian region had slowly been pushed down and the pain was gradually decreasing. His heart calmed and he immediately thought, "Chief Ren wants to come up to the peak?"

"Ah!" Linghu Chong gasped, and he jumped up.

"Feeling better?" Fangzheng asked, smiling.

"Fighting yet?" Linghu Chong queried.

"Not yet!"

"Very good!" Linghu Chong said. With a hiss, he drew his sword.

But he saw Fangzheng and Chongxu were not holding any weapons. While Yihe, Yiqing, and the other disciples were lining up in rows in front of Wuse Convent quietly in Heng-Shan school formation, with their swords still sheathed and hanging on their waists. He guessed that Ren Woxing hadn't arrived on the mountain top yet and that he had been too anxious, so he laughed aloud and put his sword back in the scabbard. He then heard sounds of suona and drums ceased, and the sounds of flute and huqin rose up. He thought, "Chief Ren is so pretentious, coming up the mountain personally accompanied with live music."

The more pretentious he was, the funnier Linghu Chong thought it was.

As the music played on, two lines of Sun Moon Sect people were seen coming up the peak pair by pair. Their eyes were dazzled seeing the sect's people wearing brand new dark green full-bodied gowns and white belts around their waists. The forty people in front were each carrying a tray with a satin cloth on top which held something. Unexpectedly, these forty people weren't carrying any sabre or sword on their waists. Once these forty people reached the peak, they stopped far away. They were followed by a group of two hundred people musicians who were also wearing full-bodied gowns and continuously playing their flutes. The ones coming up after them were trumpeters, drummers, big and small gongs, cymbals and bells, and all other types of musicians. Linghu Chong found this interesting and he thought, "When we fight, there'll be gongs and drums to accompany us. Isn't this just like fighting on a stage play?"

The music continued to play as groups after groups of Sun Moon Sect people came up. These people seemed to be arranged according to the halls they belonged to, with the different coloured gowns that they were wearing. Yellow gown, green gown, blue gown, black gown, white gown, each group was beautifully dressed like they were competing in a show. Their gowns were still new and each person was wearing a white belt tied to their waists. The people who had come up to the peak numbered at around three to four thousands.

Chongxu thought, "They're not organised yet, we can take advantage of this and start killing them. This will be to our advantage. But they're playing trick, wanting to give propriety first before fighting. If we move now, we will be very rude." He then saw Linghu Chong was chuckling without care and Fangzheng was staring but not looking and maintaining his composure, he thought, "If I seem frightened, it's because my meditation isn't enough."

After the sect's people stood at their places, ten elders came up. With five to each side, they stood to the left and right. The music suddenly stopped and the ten elders said in unison, "Sun Moon Sect cultured and kind warrior, benefiting the common people, the Sacred Chief has arrived!"

A big blue sedan chair was carried up the peak. This sedan chair was being

carried by sixteen porters, its movement fast and steady. The whole sedan chair looked like as if it was a master of qinggong as it floated up to the peak, and the sixteen porters carrying it didn't look weak in martial arts. Linghu Chong took a look and saw Zu Qianqiu, Huang Boliu, and Ji Wushi were among the porters. He was thinking if it wasn't for the fact that Old Man was too short then he would've been carrying the sedan chair with Zu Qianqiu and be one of the porters. Linghu Chong's anger surged up and he thought, "Zu Qianqiu is a hero from this generation, but Chief Ren forced him to do such a lowly thing. Treating the world's heroes like slaves, of course people will be angry."

There was a person on the left and right sides of the blue sedan chair. On the left side was Xiang Wentian, while on the right was an old man. This old man looked very familiar. Linghu Chong started as he recognised that person to be the elder who taught him how to play qin in Luoyang City, he was Elder Bamboo-Green. This person called Yingying as 'auntie', causing him to mistakenly take Yingying to be an old granny. After he left Luoyang, he hadn't seen him again, but today he was following Ren Woxing up Xianxing Peak. His heart was thumping as he thought, "Why don't I see Yingying?" Suddenly he thought of something and saw the white belts tied around the Sun Moon Sect people like they were in mourning. Could Yingying have seen her father leading his men to attack Heng-Shan and after painstakingly admonished him not to do so, finally killed herself? Linghu Chong felt blood rushing up in his chest and his dantian felt painful. All he wanted to do right now was to rush forward and ask Xiang Wentian. But thinking of Ren Woxing inside the sedan chair, he stopped.

Even though there were thousands of people gathered on Xianxing Peak, there was no noise from the birds. That sedan chair finally stopped and everyone shot a look at it waiting for Ren Woxing to come out. All of a sudden they heard laughter coming from inside Wuse Convent. A person in a big voice said, "Quickly make way, give me a sit!" Another person said, "Don't fight, from biggest to smallest, we'll take turns in sitting on this nine dragons chair!" They were the Peachtree Flower Fairy's and Peachtree Branch Fairy's voices.

Fangzheng, Chongxu, and Linghu Chong were startled till their faces changed colour. They didn't know when the Peach Valley Six Fairies broke into Wuse Convent, and they were now fighting to sit on the nine dragon chair. If they sit for too long, the fuse would be triggered and wouldn't that be very bad? Chongxu quickly rushed into the convent.

"Quickly get up!" Chongxu shouted. "This precious chair belongs to Sun Moon Sect's Sacred Chief Ren! You can't sit on it!"

Peach Valley Six Fairies' voices bellowed out from inside the convent, "Why can't we sit on it? We want to sit!" "Quickly get up, let me sit!" "This chair is very comfortable, very soft, it's like sitting on a fatso's buttocks!" "You've sit on a fatso's buttocks before?"

Linghu Chong knew the Peach Valley Six Fairies were fighting to sit on the nine dragon precious chair. One sat for a while, then another one would sit for a while. At the end, they would trigger the fuse and explode the tens of thousands catties of explosives buried underneath Wuse Convent. Then the Sun Moon Sect people, Shaolin, Wudang, and Heng-Shan School heroes on the Xianxing Peak would all be burnt.

In the beginning, he wanted to rush inside to put a stop to them, but he didn't know how to do it and it seemed his heart was hoping that the explosives would explode. Since Yingying had died, he didn't want to live anymore. If everyone could die in a wink of an eye, how could it not be a clean death? With a glance, he suddenly saw Yilin's pair of smart eyes were looking at him. But as soon as their eyes connected, she immediately avoided her gaze. Linghu Chong thought, "Little martial sister Yilin is still so young, but she'll also be burnt to dust. Wouldn't that be a pity? But in this world, who doesn't die? Even if everyone today is being peaceful and has no enmity with each other, wouldn't everyone here still turn to bones a hundred years from now?"

Then he heard Peach Valley Six Fairies were still quarrelling continuously, "You've already sit twice, I haven't even sit once on it yet." "The first time I sat on it, I was pulled down so it doesn't count." "I have an idea, we'll all sit on it. See if it fits or not?" "Wonderful, wonderful! Crowd together, haha!" "You sit

first!" "You sit first, I'll sit on top." "The oldest sit on the top, the youngest sit at the bottom!" "No, the oldest sit first! The younger you are, the higher you should sit!"

Great Master Fangzheng saw the crisis was going to happen soon, but he also couldn't say anything that would reveal the trap. He quickly walked inside the hall and loudly said, "Honourable guests are outside, don't quarrel, be quiet!" These two words 'be quiet' were said with the backing of Shaolin School's paramount internal energy martial art called 'Roar of the Iron Lion', and it was aimed at the Peach Valley Six Fairies. Priest Chongxu felt dizzy and was dangerously close to falling down. The Peach Valley Six Fairies lost consciousness at the same time. Chongxu was happy and his hands moved like the wind to lift the two people sitting on the chair. This was followed by sealing the acupoints of those six people and throwing them beneath the Guanyin's offering table. He then stooped down besides the chair and heard no unusual noise. His hands and legs felt weak, and his head was perspiring heavily. If Fangzheng had come in just a bit later, then the fuse would've been triggered and everyone would have died.

Chongxu and Fangzheng walked back out shoulder to shoulder, and said, "Chief Ren, please come in for some tea!"

But the screen on that sedan chair remained motionless and there was no movement from inside the sedan chair as well. Chongxu was indignant as he thought, "This old demon head thinks himself so highly! Great Master Fangzheng, Headmaster Linghu, and I currently have the highest positions in Wulin. We're standing here waiting but you don't even pay attention to us!" If not for that nine dragon chair having a trap in it, he would have unsheathed his sword, opened up the sedan chair's curtain, and fought with Ren Woxing. He said it again one more time, but there was still no answer coming from inside the sedan chair.

Xiang Wentian bent his waist and put his ear beside the sedan chair. He nodded a few times listening to the directions from the person inside the sedan chair. Standing back up, he said, "My humble sect Chief Ren said, Shaolin

Temple Great Master Fangzheng and Wudang Priest Chongxu are seniors in Wulin, and that he doesn't deserve for the two seniors to be waiting here for him. Later, he will personally go to Shaolin and Wudang to express his thanks and apology."

Xiang Wentian also said, "Chief Ren said he has come to Mount Heng-Shan today especially to meet Headmaster Linghu. He'd like to ask only Headmaster Linghu to be in the convent to meet him." When he finished speaking, he gestured with his hand and the sixteen porters carried the sedan chair into the convent and put it down inside the Guanyin Hall. Xiang Wentian and Elder Bamboo Green accompanied the sedan chair inside, but they came back out with the porters, leaving the sedan chair alone inside the convent.

Chongxu thought, "Something's up here, I wonder what kind of trap is inside that sedan chair." He looked at Fangzheng and Linghu Chong. Fangzheng wasn't sure what to do and his face was looking bewildered.

"Since Chief Ren only wants to meet Junior alone, then please wait here," Linghu Chong said.

Chongxu whispered, "Be careful."

Linghu Chong nodded and strode inside the convent. That Wuse Convent was just a little room and if someone spoke loudly in the Guanyin Hall then people outside would be able to hear them clearly.

"Junior Linghu Chong pays my respect to Chief Ren," Linghu Chong greeted, but he didn't hear Ren Woxing saying anything. Linghu Chong suddenly gasped in surprise.

Chongxu was startled as he was afraid Linghu Chong had fallen under Ren Woxing's violent hands. He took a step wanting to enter the convent and help, but he thought, "Brother Linghu's sword art is excellent and unmatched in this world. He entered the convent with a sword so that demon head Ren couldn't have possibly killed him with a stab. If he had really fallen under his violent hands, I would still be too late coming in to help. If that old demon head Ren hasn't killed Brother Linghu, that'll be best. But if Brother Linghu has fallen

under his violent hands, then this demon head will be alone inside the Guanyin Hall and he'll definitely sit on that nine dragon chair, and if I go inside then I'd ruin everything." In that moment, he felt agitated and pondered, "That old demon head Ren might be sitting on that chair right now. In just a moment, the fuse will be triggered and this Xianxing Peak will be destroyed. If I quickly run away at this time like a coward, Xiang Wentian will see it and will immediately alert him, then we'll be defeated. But if it explodes now, no matter how fast I move, I still won't be able to escape. So what should I do?" He had originally calculated everything in detail. When the Sun Moon Sect came up the peak to attack, how they would fight, how to retreat, everything had been predicted that when Ren Woxing sit down on the nine dragons chair, everyone from Shaolin, Wudang, and Heng-Shan Schools would've retreated down to the valley. They never expected the Sun Moon Sect would come up without fighting and instead give their propriety first before fighting. Moreover, Ren Woxing wanted to meet Linghu Chong alone inside the convent. Everything that he had predicted had now changed. Even though he was very smart, he was at a lost for ideas at the moment.

Great Master Fangzheng also knew the situation was urgent, and he was also worried for Linghu Chong's safety. But his cultivation was already very deep and his mind was very clear. He felt life and death, glory and disgrace, bad and good luck, victory and defeat were not that big a thing. People strive to do things but whether it succeeds or not, it is all decided by heaven. Whatever the conclusion would be, it all depends on each person's fate and can't be forced.

That was why even though his heart didn't feel right, he looked indifferent. If the explosives really exploded and his bone was to turn to dust, only this leather sack would be lost, so what was there to be afraid of? The explosives buried underneath the nine dragons chair was a secret. Besides Fangzheng, Chongxu, and Linghu Chong, the people who buried the explosives like Qingxu and Chenggao were all at the waist of the mountain waiting for the explosives at the peak to explode before they explode the landmines. No one else on the Xianxing Peak knew of the situation. Shaolin, Wudang, and Heng-Shan Schools were all waiting for Ren Woxing and Linghu Chong inside Wuse Convent to finish

speaking before they would move and fight against the people from the Sun Moon Sect.

Chongxu abided his time. He saw no movement inside the convent, and there was no noise coming out from there as well. Moving his internal energy, he tried listening to any noise. Indistinctly, he heard like Linghu Chong was whispering something. He felt happy and thought, "So Brother Linghu is safe and sound." As his mind was divided, his internal energy wasn't as pure anymore and he couldn't hear anything temporarily. But he was worried what he heard was just his own wishful thinking and that his ears had heard what he wanted to hear, and that the voice wasn't necessarily Linghu Chong's. Otherwise, why couldn't he hear what Linghu Chong was saying?

After some more time had passed, he heard Linghu Chong calling out, "Brother Xiang, please come in and accompany Chief Ren to exit the convent."

"Yes!" Xiang Wentian answered. With Elder Bamboo Green, they led the sixteens porters going into Wuse Convent and carried that blue sedan chair out of there. The Sun Moon Sect people standing outside the convent bowed, and said, "Respectfully welcoming the honourable Sacred Chief." That sedan chair was brought to its previous stopping place and was put down.

"Presenting Sacred Chief's gift to Shaolin Temple's Abbott," Xiang Wentian said.

Two men carrying trays walked up to Fangzheng, and bowed to him presenting the trays. Fangzheng saw the first tray contained a very old and fragrant strand of prayer beads, while the other tray contained a handwritten ancient scripture which had sanskrit written on the cover. The sanskrit written was 'Jingang Scripture'. Fangzheng couldn't help feeling rapt. In his research on Buddhism, there was more knowledge to gain from the 'Jingang Scripture'. The 'Jingang Scripture' he had studied was from the Eastern Jin where a reverend monk translated it into chinese. But there were some places in the scripture where it was difficult to understand and he had always wanted to see the original sanskrit scripture to verify, but there was nowhere to find it. When he saw the scripture right now, he was enraptured. He joined his palms and said,

"Amituofo, to receive this precious scripture, my appreciation is boundless!" He extended both of his hands respectfully and lifted that 'Jingang Scripture', then he lifted the prayer beads and said, "Thank you Chief Ren for your generous gift. I don't know how I can ever repay this."

"My humble sect's chief said that my humble sect has treated the world's heroes rudely," Xiang Wentian replied. "We are deeply ashamed of this. Great Master Fangzheng, don't add more blames on us and my humble sect will appreciate it very much." He leaned his head to a side and continued, "Presenting Chief Ren's gift to Wudang School's Headmaster Priest."

Two men from the sect acknowledged the order and walked up to Priest Chongxu. They bowed offering the trays. Those two people hadn't come close yet but Chongxu could already see one tray was holding a long sword. When those two people came near him, he saw the long sword's scabbard was multi-coloured greenish copper. On the copper was inlaid two characters: 'Zhen Wu'. Chongxu gasped in surprise. When Wudang School was first created by the Grandmaster Zhang Sanfeng, he was using a sword called 'Zhen Wu Sword' which had always been a treasure of the Wudang School. More than eighty years ago, a few elders from the Sun Moon Sect raided Mount Wudang at night and stole the precious sword along with Zhang Sanfeng's handwritten book of 'Taiji Manuscript'. Then a ferocious fight followed, in which three first class masters of Wudang died. Even though they also managed to kill four Sun Moon Sect elders, they couldn't snatch back the manuscript and sword. This was Wudang School's biggest shame, and over the last eighty years, before each headmaster passed away, their last instructions would be to snatch the sword and manuscript back. But Dark Wood Cliff was heavily fortified and Wudang School had tried a few times to snatch them back, but they had always failed and had instead lost a few lives on top of Dark Wood Cliff. Unexpectedly, this sword had appeared on Xianxing Peak. When he took a look at the other tray, it contained a handwritten book with its pages turned yellow a long time ago. On the cover was written 'Taiji Manuscript'. Priest Chongxu had seen plenty of Zhang Sanfeng's handwritten book on Mount Wudang, so once he saw this 'Taiji Manuscript', he knew it was genuine.

Both his hands trembled as he took the long sword. His right hand gripped the handle of the sword and lightly drew it out halfway. He felt a rush of cold air coming from the sword. He knew Grandmaster Sanfeng had a godly sword art in his late years and he could easily not use a sword to fight, but if he was forced to fight with someone then he usually used an iron sword or a wooden sword. This 'Zhen Wu Sword' was the sword he used during his middle age to annihilate the demonical and shake the Jianghu. It was a very sharp instrument. Chongxu was afraid he might be fooled by Ren Woxing so he flipped open the 'Taiji Manuscript' to take a look. It really was Grandmaster Sanfeng's book. He returned the manuscript onto the tray and kneeled on the ground, then he kowtowed eight times towards the manuscript and the sword.

Standing back up, he said, "Chief Ren has a very broad mind for returning the remnants of Wudang Grandmaster back to Zhen Wu Monastery. Even if my body is reduced to dust, it will be hard to repay your benevolence." Once he had taken the manuscript and sword, his heart was so excited that both his hands couldn't stop shaking.

"My humble sect's Chief said my humble sect had offended Wudang School in the past and we're very ashamed," Xiang Wentian said. "Today, everything is settled, and we hope that Wudang School will forgive us."

"Chief Ren is being too polite," Chongxu replied.

Xiang Wentian then said, "Prensenting Sacred Chief's gift to Heng-Shan School's Headmaster Linghu."

Fangzheng and Chongxu both thought, "I wonder what he's going to give Headmaster Linghu. What kind of precious gifts are they going to be?" They now saw twenty men coming up, and each of them was carrying a tray as they walked up to Linghu Chong. On the trays were only gown, hat, shoes, wine pot, wine cup, tea cup, and many other everyday items. Even though each of them was fine, they were clearly not some magnificent items. Only one tray held a jade flute and another tray held an ancient qin, which were clearly treasures. But compared to the presents given to Fangzheng and Chongxu, they were not even close in value.

Linghu Chong folded his hands in salute and said, "Many thanks." He then ordered Yu Sao and the others to receive the gifts.

"My humble sect's Chief said that we've been inappropriate to come to Mount Heng-Shan this time and cause a big disturbance," Xiang Wentian said. "For all the Shi Tai from the Heng-Shan School, we're giving them each a set of gowns and a long sword. For all the secular martial sisters, we're giving them each a set of jewelries and a long sword. Please kindly accept them. My humble sect has also purchased five hundred acres of farm at the foot of Mount Heng-Shan to give to Wuse Convent. We'll take our leave now."

After he said this, he folded his hands in salute to Fangzheng, Chongxu, and Linghu Chong, then turned around to walk away.

"Mr. Xiang!" Chongxu called out.

Xiang Wentian turned around and said, smiling, "What's Priest's order?"

"We're indebted to your noble sect Chief's generosity and have received rewards without doing anything. So we don't feel comfortable," Chongxu said. "I don't know... don't know..." He just said these words when he couldn't say anymore. He wanted to ask 'I don't know what's the idea behind this?', but at the end, he couldn't say it out loud.

Xiang Wentian laughed and folded his hands. "The items have returned to their original owners, this is naturally right. Why's Priest feeling uncomfortable about it?" He turned around and shouted, "Chief is going!"

The sound of music rose up and ten elders opened up the way, while the sixteen porters lifted the big blue sedan chair and started going down the peak. They were followed by the group of horn players and drum players. At the end of the line was the sect people from the different halls. They went down the peak in a line.

Chongxu and Fangzheng looked at Linghu Chong and both thought, "Why did Chief Ren change his mind? Only you know his reasons." They couldn't gather anything from looking at Linghu Chong, but he seemed to be happy and also a little sad. After they heard the Sun Moon Sect walking down for a while and the

music sound had ceased, the cries of 'Long Live the Chief, Unify the Jianghu' had also stopped. With bluffs and bluster they came, and now everything was quiet.

Chongxu couldn't hold back any longer and he asked, "Brother Linghu, Chief Ren suddenly became generous, this must be because of your enormous reputation. I'm not sure... not sure..." He wanted to ask 'I'm not sure what you said', but he thought that if Linghu Chong was willing to say it then he'd of course tell them. But if he didn't want to say it, then asking too much would be inappropriate. That's why after saying 'not sure', he stopped himself.

"Please forgive me seniors," Linghu Chong replied. "Junior has promised Chief Ren. The reason for this is unsuitable to be let out for the moment, but there's no big secrets among the reasons. Seniors will know of the reasons yourself in days gone by."

Fangzheng laughed aloud and replied, "A big disaster has disappeared, this is really the good fortune of Wulin. Looking at Chief Ren today, he doesn't have any enmity towards our orhodox sects and schools and has changed his murderous way. This is very encouraging and a happy moment."

Not knowing the reason made Chongxu's heart itched. Hearing what Fangzheng said, he also felt that it was reasonable. "I'm not being overly anxious, but Sun Moon Sect is very sly and crafty. We should still be very careful. Maybe Chief Ren found out that we're prepared and he's afraid of being blown up, so he pretended to be nice today. Then when we're not on our guard, he'd do a sneak attack. According to the two of you, can this happen?"

"This... person is hard to predict," Fangzheng hesitated. "We must be on our guard."

Linghu Chong shook his head. "No, it won't happen."

"Headmaster Linghu firmly believes this won't happen, that's very good then," Chongxu said, but he was actually thinking otherwise in his heart.

After some time, reports from below the mountain came. The Sun Moon Sect party had gone past the waist of the mountain, and the people guarding the road

didn't receive the signal so they didn't fight or explode the landmines. Chongxu ordered someone to inform Qingxu, Chenggao, and the people responsible for the nine dragons chair and the landmines to cut the fuses.

Linghu Chong asked Fangzheng and Chongxu to enter Wuse Convent and rest inside Guanyin Hall. Fangzheng perused the sanskrit 'Jingang Manuscript'. Chongxu touched the 'Zhen Wu Sword' and studied the 'Taiji Manuscript', his joy was undescribably and gradually all his doubts and worries were forgotten.

All of a sudden, someone from underneath the offering table said, "Ah, Yingying, it's you!"

Another person said, "Brother Chong, You... you... you..." They were the voices of the Peach Valley Six Fairies.

Linghu Chong gasped in surprise and jumped up from his chair.

But then he heard voices kept coming from underneath the offering table, "Brother Chong, my dad, he's... he's passed away."

"What happened?"

"That day on Mount Huashan's Peak of the Morning Sun, not long after you went down the mountain, my dad suddenly fell down from the Deity's Palm. Brother Xiang and I caught him, not long after, he stopped breathing."

"Then... then... someone plotted against him!"

"No. Brother Xiang said, he's already old and had been suffering for many years under the West Lake. For the past few years, he had been completely engrossed in suppressing the various internal energies in his body, and it has actually taken a lot of energies out of him. This time, in order to destroy the five mountains sword schools, his mind has been occupied by this. His time is up."

"I never thought this would happen."

"That day on the Peak of the Morning Sun, Brother Xiang and ten elders discussed this and they unanimously elected me to be the Sun Moon Sect's Chief."

"So Chief Ren is actually Young lady Ren, not Mr. Ren."

Just then when the Peach Valley Six Fairies were fighting to sit on the nine dragons chair, Fangzheng used the 'Lion Roar' backed by unsurpassed internal energy to shake them up. Chongxu was afraid they might let out the secret so he sealed their acupoints and put them under the offering altar. Unexpectedly, these six people's inner energies were quite deep that they woke up not long after and heard the dialogue between Linghu Chong and 'Chief Ren'. Now, they had revealed the words that were supposed to be kept secret.

When Fangzheng and Chongxu heard Ren Woxing had died and Yingying had taken up the Chief position, they were startled but happy at the same time. Yingying had given both of them precious gifts but she had given Linghu Chong some gown and shoes to wear, which were actually the wedding presents for their marriage. They still heard the Peach Valley Six Fairies talking one after another: "Brother Chong, I've come to Mount Heng-Shan today to see you. If the people from the orthodox path find out, they'll jest about it."

"Why's that important? You can only become bashful."

"No, I don't want others to know."

"Alright, I promise you not to say anything."

"I ordered them to called out those cultured and kind warrior, benefiting the common people, what long live the chief, unify the Jianghu, so other people wouldn't find out. I wasn't being rude to your Heng-Shan School and Great Master Fangzheng and Priest Chongxu."

"Don't worry about that, Great Master and Priest won't find out."

"Also, Sun Moon Sect and Heng-Shan School, Shaolin School, Wudang School are turning from enemies into friends. I also don't want others to say that it's my idea. In Jianghu, people will definitely say that it's because me... and you... and you is the reason, also the big fight was not fought, so I'll be really embarassed."

"Hehe, I'm not afraid."

"Your skin is thick, so of course you're not afraid. The news of dad passing away has been kept a secret by the Sun Moon Sect. Other people will only know my dad has come to Mount Heng-Shan and talked to you and reconciled with each other. This way my dad's reputation will be increased. When I get back to Dark Wood Cliff, I'll announce the death."

"Right, then as son-in-law I'll come to kowtow to him."

"You can come, that'll be best. That day at Mount Huashan on the Peak of the Morning Sun, my dad has personally agreed to our marriage, but... but after I agree....."

Linghu Chong heard the six of them were gradually revealing Yingying and his wedding arrangement so he quickly shouted, "Peach Valley Six Fairies, you're still not coming out, talking nonsense under there. I'm going to peel your skin and strip your flesh."

But he still heard Peachtree Trunk Fairy sighed quietly and mimicking Yingying's speech, "But I'm still worried about you. Dad hasn't given you the method on how to harmonize the different internal energies. Actually, even if he had imparted it to you, it's no use. Dad himself, sigh!" Peachtree Trunk Fairy pinched his throat and he sounded grieved. When Fangzheng, Chongxu, and Linghu Chong heard him, they couldn't help becoming sad too. Ren Woxing was a strange warrior of this era, and even though he had done bad things all his life, it was still very sad for his life to have ended this way.

Linghu Chong's feelings towards Ren Woxing was particularly strange. Even though he detested the way Ren Woxing handled his power and his overbearing behaviour, he still couldn't help admiring his ability, especially his unscrupulous and independent nature which was quite like his own. The only difference was that he didn't have the ambition of 'unifying the Jianghu'.

At that moment, in the three people's hearts, they all thought, "From time past, all the emperors, ministers, warriors, even bandits and murderers, they all die at the end."

Peachtree Fruit Fairy squeezed his throat and said, "Brother Chong, I'm... "

Chongxu felt that if they continued to talk then Linghu Chong would be embarassed. He laughed and said, "Peach Valley six brothers, sorry for the offence before. But enough with your talking, if you provoke Headmaster Linghu, he'll seal your 'lifelong mute acupoint'. I don't think it'll be worthwhile."

Peach Valley Six Fairies were greatly startled. They asked in unison, "What's a 'lifelong mute acupoint'?"

"Once that 'lifelong mute acupoint' is sealed, you'll be mute for the rest of your life and can't speak anymore," Chongxu answered. "But you'll still be able to eat and drink."

The Peach Valley Six Fairies shouted together, "Speaking is number one, eating and drinking are number two."

"The words you said just before, you mustn't say them again," Chongxu advised. "Headmaster Linghu, on accord of Great Master Fangzheng and I, please don't seal their 'lifelong mute acupoint'. Great Master Fangzheng and I will vouch for them. The conversation between you and Young lady Ren that the six of them eavesdropped from underneath the offering altar, they won't reveal a single word of it."

Peachtree Flower Fairy said, "Injustice, injustice! We weren't eavesdropping, the sound entered our ears so what can we do?"

"You've already heard it, no one cares about anything else," Chongxu said. "But talking about it after hearing them, that you can't do."

Peach Valley Six Fairies said in unison, "Ok, ok! We won't say it, we won't say it."

Peachtree Root Fairy said, "But Sun Moon Sect Sacred Chief, those two sentences that were changed, can we say it?"

"You can't say it, definitely not!" Linghu Chong shouted.

Peachtree Branch Fairy mumbled, "Can't say it then can't say it. Only you and young lady Ren can say it, we can't say it."

Chongxu pondered, "Two sentences that were changed by Sun Moon Sect?

Those sentences must be 'Long live the Chief, unify the Jianghu'. Young lady Ren is the chief now, and she doesn't want to unify Jianghu. But I wonder what they've been changed to?"

Three years later, at the Plum Manor on Mount Gu at the West Lake of Hangzhou, bright lanterns were hung and there was a gathering of beautifully dressed people. This day was the day Linghu Chong and Yingying were to be married. At this time, Linghu Chong had already given the Heng-Shan School's headmaster position to Yiqing. Yiqing made every effort to give it to Yilin, saying Yilin had avenged Heng-Shan's big enmity. For avenging their masters, she should get the headmaster position. But Yilin said she would never agree and cried. When all is said and done, they followed Linghu Chong's idea and Yiqing was handed the headmaster position.

Yingying also resigned from being the Sun Moon Sect's chief and gave it to Xiang Wentian. Even though Xiang Wentian was a stubborn person, he didn't have any ambition to annex the orthodox sects. So over the last few years, Jianghu was peaceful.

Today, many Jianghu warriors had come to Plum Manor to congratulate them. After going through the ritual and finishing the banquet, it was time to have fun in the newlywed's house. The crowd wanted the bride and groom to perform a swordplay. In this world, everyone knew Linghu Chong's sword art was wonderful, and there were a lot of guests there who had not seen it yet.

Linghu Chong said, smiling, "Today, it'll ruin the atmosphere if we use sabres and swords. The bride and I will play a song, how about that?"

The crowd cheered.

Linghu Chong took a yaoqin and gave Yingying a jade flute. Yingying didn't lift her red cover, and extended her delicate hand to take the jade flute. She started playing a song with Linghu Chong. The tune they were playing was the 'Smiling Proud Wanderer'. In these three years, Linghu Chong was under Yingying's guidance in studying the qin and he was already quite good in playing this tune. Linghu Chong remembered of that day outside of Hengshan

City out in the wilderness, he listened to Hengshan School Liu Zhengfeng and Sun Moon Sect elder Qu Yang playing this tune. The two of them were very friendly even though they were from different sects and both of them were finally killed. Today, he himself had married Yingying and no sect could stop them. Compared to the people who composed this tune, he was more fortunate. He also thought when Liu and Qu composed this tune together, they must've been doing it because of their sects' separation and to erase the years of enmity between the sects. This time, the tune was being played by husband and wife, at last their wishes had been fulfilled. As he thought till here, the qin and flute became even more harmonious.

Most of the people in the crowd didn't understand music, but they were very pleased to hear it. When the song was finished, they all clapped and cheered, and happily led the married couple to the newlywed room. Once the couple were in the room, they closed the door to the room.

Suddenly, a sad huqin sound rose from outside the wall. Linghu Chong happily said, "Martial uncle Mo Da..."

"Don't make any noise," Yingying whispered.

They heard the huqin sound playing the tune 'Courtship[13]' softly, but the mournful air of the song could be felt from start to finish. Linghu Chong were feeling very happy as he thought, "Martial uncle Mo Da really didn't die. Today, he's come to play this tune to congratulate Yingying and I getting married."

The huqin sound gradually went far until finally it couldn't be heard anymore.

Linghu Chong turned around and gently lifted up Yingying's red face cover. Yingying smiled captivatingly, with the red candles shining on her face, she looked beautiful as jade. She suddenly shouted, "Come out!"

Linghu Chong was perplexed. He thought, "What come out?"

Yingying laughed and shouted, "Still not coming out, I'm going to drench you!"

From under the bed, six people came out. They were the Peach Valley Six

Fairies. They were hiding underneath the bed to hear to the newlywed's conversation. Then they'd go back to the hall and relate to the crowd what the newlyweds were talking about. Linghu Chong's mind was already drunk so he didn't realise anything. Yingying was still careful and she was able to hear their breathing under the bed.

Linghu Chong laughed aloud and said, "Six Peach brothers, I almost got trapped by your ambush!"

Peach Valley Six Fairies walked out of the room and started shouting, "Long Live, husband and wife forever! Long Live, husband and wife forever!"

Chongxu was at the Flower Hall chatting to Fangzheng. When he heard the cries of the Peach Valley Six Fairies, he couldn't help smiling. They had been keeping this a secret for three years and it was finally revealed now. This was the oath that Linghu Chong and Yingying had sword to that day in the Guanyin Hall. The oath that came from changing the two sentences of the Sun Moon Sect.

Four months later, it was evening during springtime. Grass was long and flowers were blossoming. Linghu Chong and Yingying were newlyweds, holding hands as they went to Mount Huashan. Linghu Chong wanted to bring his wife pay his respect to Grand martial uncle Feng Qingyang, and to kowtow to him for teaching him the sword art. But they had been going around Mount Huashan's five peaks and three mountain ranges, searched every dell, but they didn't find a single trace of Feng Qingyang's track.

Linghu Chong was displeased.

"Grand martial uncle is a highly skillful person who's out of this world, like a divine dragon that we can only see its head but unable to see its tail, so we don't know where he's gone to," Yingying said.

Linghu Chong sighed. "Grand martial uncle definitely has a godly sword art. His internal energy cultivation can also be regarded as unmatched in this world. In the last three and a half years, I've been practising the inner energy he imparted to me. Those different types of energies are almost all gone."

"Then we can thank Shaolin Temple Great Master Fangzheng," Yingying replied. "Since we can't find Grand martial uncle Feng, we'll go to Shaolin Temple tomorrow and kowtow to Great Master Fangzheng to thank him."

"Great Master Fangzheng brought the divine martial art and guided me in learning it, so he's like a half master to me. We should give thanks to him."

Yingying pursed her lips smiling. "Brother Chong, you still don't understand. That skill you learned, it's Shaolin School's 'Tendon Altering Sutra' inner energy."

"Ah!" Linghu Chong gasped and jumped up. "It's... it's 'Tendon Altering Sutra'? How do you know?"

"That day I heard you said that the inner energy was given orally by Grand Martial uncle Feng to Peach Valley Six Fairies for them to bring to Great Master Fangzheng," Yingying explained. "I had my doubts on this. That internal energy method is so profound and mysterious that when you're practising it, nothing can go wrong in the slightest. If something goes wrong then you'll fire deviate and lose your life. How is it possible to ask the Peach Valley Six Fairies to bring this and pass it on orally? The Peach Valley Six Fairies speak in a tangle, and how can they also talk clearly? Even though Great Master Fangzheng said it and it's likely that grand martial uncle Feng forced them to memorise it, it's still very dangerous. Later on, I asked these six brothers and they all said it's true. But when I told them to recite a few sentences, one said they've forgotten it long ago, one said they can only tell Monk Fangzheng and can't tell other people. The six of them said a few more words, but their words don't match head to tail, and there were hundreds of discrepancies. Later, they revealed this by denying it, they said in order for Great Master Fangzheng to save your life, he didn't want you to know and pretended Grand martial uncle Feng was the one who imparted this martial art. If you ask them about it, he asked them to keep it a secret."

Linghu Chong's mouth gaped wide open and he didn't make any noise for a long time. Yingying continued, "But Grand martial uncle Feng calling them was true. But he called them to tell Great Master Fangzheng that the Sun Moon Sect was going to attack Heng-Shan, and he asked Shaolin and Wudang Schools to

help."

"You're so bad," Linghu Chong complained. "You knew about this a long time ago but you only said about this today."

Yingying smiled. "That day in Shaolin Temple, you were very stubborn. Great Master Fangzheng wanted you to join Shaolin and make him your master, then he'd impart you with the 'Tendon Altering Sutra', but you said you wouldn't agree. You brushed him away and walked out the door. If Great Master Fangzheng again mentioned this matter of imparting you with 'Tendon Altering Sutra', then he's afraid your old stubborness would come out again, rather dying then learning it. Wouldn't that be a waste? That's why he was forced to use Grand martial uncle Feng's name to make you think it was Huashan School's inner energy method, and you'd learn it willingly."

"Ah," Linghu Chong understood now. "I know, you didn't want to tell me this because you're also afraid I'll become stubborn and suddenly stop learning it? Since now you know the various inner energies is my body are almost gone, you told me everything."

Yingying again pursed her lips smiling. "Your stubborness, everyone knows it mustn't be provoked."

Linghu Chong let out a long sigh and pulled on her hand. "Yingying, back then you gave up your life at Shaolin Temple so Great Master Fangzheng would impart me with 'Tendon Altering Sutra'. Even though you didn't die, Great Master Fangzheng had already agreed to you to do this. He's a senior in Wulin and his words carry a lot of weight, so finally he gave me this divine martial art. This was the martial art that you used your life to trade with, even if I don't care whether I live or die, how can I... how can I not care about you and stop practising?"

Yingying whispered, "I also thought of this before, but I was still afraid."

"We'll go down the mountain tomorrow and go to Shaolin Temple. Since I've already learned the 'Tendon Altering Sutra', it's best if I go to Shaolin Temple and become a monk."

Yingying knew he was joking. "A wild monk like you, the big temples won't accept and the little temples don't want you. Shaolin Temple's rules and commandments are very strict, a monk who drinks wine and eats meat like you, they'll drive out of there within half a day."

They walked hand in hand, chatting leisurely. Linghu Chong saw Yingying was continuously looking left and right, looking like she was looking for something.

"What are you looking for?" Linghu Chong asked.

"Not telling, you'll know when we find it. This time coming to Mount Huashan, we didn't manage to pay our respects to grand martial uncle Feng and it's a regret. But if we also can't see that person, it'll be a pity."

Linghu Chong was confused. "We're seeing another person? Who is it?"

Yingying smiled and didn't answer. She said, "You locked Lin Pingzhi up in that jail underneath Plum Manor. It's actually a brilliant idea. You promised your little martial sister to take care of Lin Pingzhi for the rest of his life. While he's inside that jail, he has food to eat, clothes to wear, and no one can harm him. It's really looking after him for the rest of his life. I've also given your other friend a special treatment."

Linghu Chong was even more perplexed, he thought, "My other friend? Who's he?" He knew his wife's behaviour was often outside people's expectation. Since she wasn't willing to say it then there was no use asking. That night, they stayed in Linghu Chong's old room and drank wine. Even though Linghu Chong was looking at his lovable wife, he still thought of many past events and couldn't help feeling sad. After drinking more than ten cups of wine, he was rather intoxicated. Yingying suddenly looked happy and put down the wine cup. She whispered, "I think he's coming, let's have a look."

Linghu Chong heard sound of monkey's cries coming from the mountain in front. He didn't know who Yingying was talking about but he followed her out of the room.

Yingying followed the monkey's cry and walked quickly towards the

mountainside in front. Linghu Chong followed behind her. Under the moonlight, he saw seven to eight monkeys gathered. There were a lot of monkeys on Mount Huashan. Linghu Chong didn't know what was going on but surprisingly he saw a person surroundeded by those monkeys. Squinting his eyes, he saw that person was Lao Denuo. Delight and anger mixed together inside him, he turned around wanting to take a sword from inside the room. Yingying pulled his arm and whispered, "We'll go closer and see clearer."

They went a hundred feet closer and saw Lao Denuo was held between two enormous monkeys, and was being dragged around here and there by them. He wasn't in control of his body at all. The martial art he had learned was all useless to resist against these two big monkeys.

Linghu Chong was perplexed. "What happened to him?"

"Have a look, I'll tell you slowly," said a smiling Yingying.

The monkeys were impatient, jumping up and down, and there wasn't a moment of respite at all. Lao Denuo was being pulled to the left and right, and he occasionally let out a roar which prompted the two monkeys to scratch his face. At this time, Linghu Chong had finally understood what was going on. Lao Denuo's right hand and right side were linked to the monkey on the left, while his left hand and left side were linked to the monkey on the right. It was obvious he had been shackled with iron manacles.

He had understood most of it as he asked, "You did this?"

"What do you think?" Yingying asked.

"You destroyed Lao Denuo's martial art?"

"No, he did it himself to atone for his sin."

When the monkeys heard the sound of people speaking, they became noisy and took Lao Denuo away with them to go back into the mountain. Linghu Chong wanted to kill Lao Denuo in the beginning to take revenge for Lu Dayou, but seeing him suffering so much, to behead him with a sword was natural, but his heart felt it would be too fast. So he thought, "This traitor has been very sly

and his evil is much higher than martial brother Lin. I should let him suffer more." Then he said, "So these last few days, you've been looking for him to give me a look."

"That day when my father came to the Peak of the Morning Sun, that bastard came offering his flattery. He said he'd obtained the sword manual for the 'Evil Resisting Sword Art', and that he'd come to present it to daddy. Dad asked him what for and he said he wanted to become one of the elders for the Sun Moon Sect. Dad didn't have any free time to talk to him so he told someone to look after him. Later, dad passed away and everyone was busy so no one cared about him and we just took him to the Dark Wood Cliff. After around ten days, I thought about this again and told him to come to ask him some questions. I found out he learned the 'Evil Resisting Sword Art' himself and accidentally crippled his martial art instead. This person is your sixth martial brother's murderer, and since your sixth martial brother loved monkeys, I told people to find two big monkeys and lock him up with them and set him free on Mount Huashan."

When she said till there, she gripped Linghu Chong's wrist and continued, "Never thought that I, Ren Yingying, would also finally be locked up with a big monkey, and never part ever again." She smiled tenderly, her smile soft and loving.

The End

Notes

[←1]

In the third edition, the castration part was not mentioned to Linghu Chong and Yingying anymore. This is to fix the later chapters when Linghu Chong and Yingying somehow forget about this.

[←2]

Emperors in ancient times prayed to the heaven and earth when they took up their thrones also

[←3]

Here's the definition of calyx: the whorl of sepals of a flower collectively forming the outer floral envelope or layer of the perianth enclosing and supporting the developing bud; usually green.

[←4]

Daizong is the old name of Mount Taishan

[←5]

Three legged cat is phrase that means a person who can do many things but specializes in nothing.

[←6]

To call someone 'lang' has romantic connotation.

[←7]

Se is similar to zither. Se has 25 strings while zither has 7 strings.

[←8]

This means clearly admitting that the sword manual is there.

[←9]

Linfengyi is some kind of transit depot for exchanging horses

[←10]

'The mantis seizing the cicada not knowing the oriole was just behind' means 'to covet gains ahead without knowing the danger behind'

[←11]

Yihe - 'he' means peace

[←12]

Suona is a Chinese wind instrument.

[←13]

The Chinese characters literally mean 'Male Phoenix seeking female Phoenix'.