

Foxs' Wuxia

Wuxia Fan Translation

SDXL Chapter 2



Chapter 2 – A Friend's Son

Translated by Noodles



Suddenly a flash of yellow went over to Wu San Tong, Li Mo Chou had landed on the tree branch that Wu San Tong was holding, and swept her fly whisk at him forcing him to drop it. Wu San Tong jumped, and hurriedly picked up the branch from the ground. After ten moves or so, when Wu San Tong tried to sweep her with the branch, she flew onto the top of a willow tree. She let him attack with the tree trunk.

These past ten years he has never shown a touch of concern towards her, so she was delighted when she heard this, and replied, "I'm over here."

Wu Santong leapt in front of her, the Lu couple carried in each hand. He said, “Quickly follow me,” and went on his way. Ke Zhen'E and Madam Wu followed behind him.

Wu Santong swerved east and twisted west for a few miles, and led the two to an old, broken kiln. It was a large old kiln used for making wine bottles. Madam Wu entered, and saw her two sons, Xiuwen and Dunru were safe and sound. She let out a sigh of relief. The Wu brothers were sitting on the ground playing with stones with Cheng Ying and Lu Wushuang. When Cheng Ying and Lu Wushuang saw the Lu couple, they threw themselves onto them, shouting and crying.

Ke Zhen'E heard Lu Wushuang cry out mother and father he immediately said, “Oh no, we've lured the ghost out, that witch is going to be here soon!”

Madam Wu's heart was afraid. She asked, “How?”

Ke Zhen'E replied, “That witch wants the Lu girls, but doesn't know where they are.”

Madam Wu suddenly realized what he meant and swallowed. “Yes, she purposely let us go so she could secretly follow us.”

Wu Santong shouted out, “If the Scarlet Witch is following, then I'll go and face her.” He turned around and stood at the opening of the kiln.

Lu Liding's skull had been severely injured but he had one last wish so he strained out a breath and called out to Cheng Ying.

“Ah Ying, take out the handkerchief that I've got on my chest.”

Cheng Ying, her eyes full of tears, stretched out her hand and took out the handkerchief. It was a white satin handkerchief, in the four corners were sewn a red flower. The red flower looked withered and by it was a jade green leaf. The white satin was old and had become yellow, the embroidery of the flower and leaf were beautiful, almost like the real thing. Lu Liding said, “Ah Ying, tie the handkerchief around your neck, you mustn't untie it, you understand?” Cheng Ying didn't know what her uncle meant, but did as she was told and nodded.

Mistress Lu was severely hurt but when she heard her husband's words, she forced her eyes open and said, “Why aren't you giving it to Shuang'er? Give it to Shuang'er” Mistress Lu quickly added, “You haven't got a heart. Are you not worried about your own daughter's safety?” As she said this her eyes went white, her voice faded. Lu

Wushuang didn't know what her parents were arguing about and she cried out, "Father...Mother!" Lu Liding softly said, "Dear wife, you love Shuang'er very much, so why don't we let her follow us?"

Originally, the red flower and green leaf handkerchief was a lover's gift from Li Mochou to Lu Zhenyuan. The red flower was the famous Man Tuo Luo flower from Dali. Li Mochou figured that Lu sounds like green, the green leaf representing her beloved, and thought "Red Flower Green Leaf, will always be together." Before He Yuanjun died, she knew that on the ten-year deadline, Mo Chou and Wu Santong would come and cause trouble. She had a plan to deal with the two, but didn't expect the sudden illness of Lu Zhenyuan. She knew Lu Liding's kung fu was average, and wouldn't be able to escape when the time came, so she gave him the handkerchief, and made him understand, if it was Wu Santong who came to seek revenge, to act normal and restrain from attacking as he does not intend to take any lives. But Li Mochou had become infamous in Jianghu in recent years with her cruel and vindictive methods, meeting her would be your bad luck. If it was her, then tie the handkerchief around your neck, this will stir up any old memories that witch would have of your brother and hopefully she will let you go. But Lu Liding was a proud man, and would not beg Li Mochou for his life.

Cheng Ying was the daughter of his brother. Before he died, he requested that Lu Liding bring up his daughter like his own. He was obligated by the request of a good friend, but in the danger that they are now in, he would not be able to fulfill this request and so gave the life saving handkerchief to Cheng Ying. Mistress Lu had realized what he was doing and saw that he was sacrificing his own daughter. Under the strain she suffered severe pain and left the world.

Cheng Ying saw that the handkerchief was the cause of her aunt's troubles, took off the handkerchief, and gave it to her cousin saying, "Aunt said to give this to you, take it!"

Lu Liding said, "Shuang'er, it's your cousin's, don't take it."

Madam Wu was standing to the side when she heard all this and said, "I am going to tear the handkerchief in half, half to each, is that a good idea?"

Lu Liding had not the strength to reply anymore, and just nodded. Madam Wu tore the handkerchief in half, and gave each half to the cousins.

Wu Santong was standing by the entrance when he heard all the commotion, and went inside to see what all the fuss was about. He saw his wife's face and on the left cheek

was a black patch. Startled, he pointed to his wife's face and asked, "Why is your face like that?"

Madam Wu reached out and touched her face and said, "Like what?" only to feel no sensation in her left cheek, her heart jumped and realized it was where Li Mochou had touched her. Can it be that when she touched her face gently she used the chance to emit poison?

Wu Santong was inside asking questions when a voice from the entrance said, "The two little girls are inside, aren't they? They can't live so just give them to me. If you don't, I'll burn you all in this kiln. The voice was clear and gentle.

Wu Santong jumped out of the kiln, and saw Li Mochou standing at the entrance, and thought in wonder, "It has been ten years, yet she still looks like she did then."

He had recognized that she had now become a priestess, but he couldn't change his way of greeting her, and greeted her as he had before as Miss Li. Within these past ten years, no had called her "Miss Li"; now when she heard those words, her heart moved, her memories and feelings as a young girl rushed to her chest. But then she remembered she could have spent her life with the person she loved, but there existed a He Yuanjun who caused her to lose her loved one. She was resigned to being alone forever. As she thought about this her emotions came over her again and she was unable to resist the pain.

Wu Santong is another one who had his love rejected; even though their love was a different sort, it is still love. When he was searching for Lu Zhanyuan, he saw with his own eyes Li Mochou kill He Lao Quanshi's family, a total of twenty men, women, old and young without remorse or feeling. To think about it made him shiver. He Lao Quanshi and she had never met; they had no feuds and no relations to He Yuanjun. But because they shared the same surname, it provoked her hate and fury and she killed every last member of the He family. Even before he died, he didn't know the reason for his death. At the time Wu Santong didn't intervene, as he didn't know the background to the matter. Only after he heard that it was for this simple reason, he swore to himself that he would treat her with the utmost hate and disgust. He saw that she had a gentle, kindly smile but she could change that to a cold and evil smile immediately. He was extremely worried about the safety of the two girls.

Li Mochou said, "I only printed nine palms on the Lu's wall, I must kill those two girls. Wu Santong, please step aside."

Wu Santong replied, “Lu Zhenyuan and his wife are dead now, his brother and wife died under your hands, its only two girls, you can just leave them.”

Li Mochou grinned and shook her head, gently saying “Wu Santong, please step aside.”

Wu Santong gripped tighter to his chestnut tree and said, “Miss Li, the reason for your hatred is Ah Yuan.”

When the two words ‘Ah Yuan’ was said, Li Mochou’s face changed and she said, “I once swore that whoever mentioned that slut’s name in front of me will be killed by me or I would perish trying. I once destroyed sixty-three families in their boats on the river Yuan simply because they shared the name of that slut. Surely you’ve heard of this? Master Wu, it is your fault, so don’t blame me.” While she said this she swung her weapon at Wu Santong’s neck.

Though she seemed to have swung her fly whisk lightly, the stroke was fierce and quick, causing Wu Santong to fly right and left above her to avoid the strokes. She knew that Wu Santong is a high disciple of Reverend Yideng, although he is in a state of confusion, his kung fu was still solid; when the need arose he could still kill. Wu Santong’s left hand straightened, the tree trunk came out with great force, and swept across. Li Mochou saw the power in this, and immediately floated away, avoiding getting struck by the trunk. She didn’t wait for him to use the trunk again and flew in front attacking, trying to break inside. Wu Santong saw that she was heading into the kiln, and raised his right hand, and pointed a finger at one of her pressure points, and unleashed “Solitary Yang Finger” at her.

Though his “Solitary Yang Finger” wasn’t fast enough to hit a pressure point, the move had many changes, and had to be avoided. Li Mochou used “Strike the Golden Clock” and immediately jumped back ten feet. Wu Santong saw her moving forwards and backwards, in a flash she had advanced and retreated so many times, his heart secretly quivered. When she was retreating he used his strength and used the tree trunk again to force her back. But as soon as he did this, she advanced right in front of him, if it wasn’t for the “Solitary Yang Finger”, he would have been out matched long ago. The tree trunk was heavy, and every time he moved it, he would exert a lot of strength, Li Mochou had noticed this, and tried to wear him out using this method.

Suddenly a flash of yellow went over to Wu Santong, Li Mochou had landed on the tree branch that Wu Santong was holding, and swept her fly whisk at him forcing him to drop it. Wu Santong jumped, and hurriedly picked up the branch from the ground. Li Mochou laughed, as she hurriedly went over to the tree trunk and stepped on it. Wu

Santong turned around and extended a finger. She moved again, heading back towards the tree branch. After ten moves or so, when Wu Santong tried to sweep her with the branch, she flew onto the top of a willow tree. She let him attack with the tree trunk. This way, Wu Santong would use even more strength. Although she was fairly light she added to the weight of the tree that she was standing on, the trunk would not be able to knock her off. This position also allowed her to attack the kiln. She was in a position where she could not lose. Wu Santong glanced at her, and knew he must be patient; he wasn't too concerned about his own life, but if the kiln full of old and young fell into her hands it would be terrible. At that time the tree trunk was flying wilder and quicker, fiercely colliding with the tree trying to shake Li Mochou out of it.

After a moment he heard Ke Zhen'E shout, "Fu'er, you have arrived, quickly, get the eagles to get rid of that evil woman." Following this a girl's whistle could be heard, in the sky were two white images in formation descending. It was the two large eagles, attacking Li Mochou from the left and right. Guo Fu had arrived with the eagles. Li Mochou saw the two eagles coming at her so she held on to the tree tightly with her left foot. The eagles' attack wasn't successful and they headed back to the sky. The girl whistled again a few times. The two eagles came in for a second attack, and aimed at the underside of the tree.

Li Mochou had heard Peach Blossom Island's Guo Jing and Huang Rong had a pair of giant eagles, who were almost telepathic with each other. At the time the eagles were coming together for an attack. She wasn't worried about the eagles, but the fact they belonged to the Guo couple meant that the Guo couple must be nearby. This would complicate matters. Li Mochou dodged a few times, and then launched her own attack on the eagles, injuring one of the eagles' left wing; the eagle screeched and fell to the ground. When Guo Fu saw that her eagle was hurt, she shouted out, "Eagle don't be scared, keep attacking that evil woman." Li Mochou looked at the girl who said this, and saw a little girl that seemed to have come from a beautiful painting and thought, "I've heard that heroine Huang was one of the most beautiful women in the world. I wonder how she compares with me? Is this girl her daughter?"

While she was being distracted, her moves slowed. Wu Santong saw that although the eagles were helping, they could still not force Li Mochou from the tree. Amid the chirping and screeching he fiercely hit the ground with his two hands, and caused Li Mochou to fly off the tree. Li Mochou could not predict that he would unleash such an unusual move, and was forced tens of feet into the air. When the eagles saw that she was in the air, they went in for another attack from above. When she had a secure grip, the eagles could not really harm her but now that she is in the air, how could she compete with them? In this desperate situation, she waved her fly whisk in front of her face

to protect her head, and withdrew three “Soul Freezing Silver Needles”, and shot them out hurriedly. Two were aimed at the eagles, the other one at Wu Santong’s chest. The eagles saw the needles coming and quickly flew higher to evade them, but the needles were traveling at such a high speed, and after a second, the male eagle was hit in a claw. Wu Santong was looking up when he saw the incoming needle, and leapt out of the way in a rush, but was still hit in his left leg. Wu Santong got up after a roll. He knew he had been hit in his left leg but didn’t call out. Left kneeling, he circulated his inner strength to allow him to support himself. His leg was now swollen and numb. He stooped down, and used his hands to try to support himself; but he could not and eventually fell down on to the ground motionless.

Guo Fu shouted, “Eagles, eagles come here quickly.” But the two eagles had flown far away, and didn’t turn back.

Li Mochou said, “Little girl, is your name Guo?”

Guo Fu saw that the woman standing in front of her was beautiful, she had a friendly disposition and did not look like an ‘evil woman’ and replied, “Yes, my name is Guo. What is yours?” Li Mochou laughed and said, “Come, I’ll take you to play,” while slowly walking towards her, with the intention to grab her.

Ke Zhen’E, supporting himself with his iron staff, rushed out of the kiln and shouted, “Fu’er, run quickly!” Li Mochou laughed and said, “Scared I’m going to eat her up?”

At that time, a young boy in ragged garments holding a chicken in his left hand, and singing a folk song, rushed over and saw the people in the kiln and said, “Hey, what are you people doing in my home?” He went over to where Li Mochou and Guo Fu were and laughed and said, “He-he, old beauty you’re pretty, little beauty you are cute, are you two here to find me? However this person named Yang hasn’t got any beauties for friends.” His face carried a smirk and his attitude was sly.

Guo Fu sneered and said, “Who wants to look for you?”

The boy replied, “If you are not looking for me, why are you at my home?” and pointed to the kiln, indicating it was his home.

“Huh, who wants to go to that unsightly place?”

Madam Wu saw that her husband was on the ground, and didn’t know whether he was dead or alive. She came rushing out of the kiln to his side and said, “Brother San, are

you okay?” Wu Santong gave out a moan and struggled to get up, but in the end he could not stand up. Gou Fu gazed afar but still couldn't see the two eagles, and shouted, “Eagles, eagles, come back here!”

Li Mochou thought, “If I wait for the Guo couple to arrive, it'll be hard for me to escape.” She laughed evilly and headed for the kiln. Madam Wu rushed to cut her off, and waved her sword saying, “You can't enter!”

Li Mochou smiled and replied, “This is the little brother's home, how can you be in charge here?” Her left palm was facing the sword's tip, and headed straight for it, wanting to touch the blade, her palm twisted; her three fingers now holding the sword's sides, she flipped the sword tip towards Madam Wu. It was pointing towards Madam Wu's forehead, there was a sound and her forehead had been cut. Li Mochou laughed and said, “Sorry for the offence!” She placed her fly whisk in her belt, and headed into the kiln. She grabbed Lu Wushuang and Cheng Ying in each hand, and without turning her back, she flipped herself over and headed out of the kiln, avoiding Ke Zhen'E's iron staff.

The ragged young boy saw Li Mochou had hurt Madam Wu and snatch the two girls so didn't dare to step out of line again. But when he heard the cousin's cries, he jumped onto Li Mochou shouting, “Hey old beauty, you've hurt and snatched people, you haven't even greeted the owner, you are too rude, let the girls go.”

Li Mochou was carrying the girls in both her arms, and had no way to stop the young boy from grabbing onto her. Her heart shivered, as there was a pair of arms holding onto the side of her body, her whole body softened involuntary. At the time she charged her palms, and flung the two girls away, and immediately grabbed the boy. Within these last ten years a man has never touched her, and though she had lived for thirty years she is still a virgin. In the past when Lu Zhanyuan was infatuated with her, he still treated her with respect. A lot of young heroes in Jianghu had seen her beauty but dare not show their feelings as they knew that they will die a violent death from the “Scarlet Serpent Deity's” palm. But today, a young boy is holding onto her; she grabbed him and intended to charge her palm and shatter the boy's heart, but then thought about how he praised her beauty sincerely, in her heart she was pleased. When those words came from the mouths of men, she loathed it but from the mouth of a thirteen or fourteen year old, the words felt different. In a moment of weakness she did not lower her palm onto him.

Suddenly she heard the cries of the eagles; they had come back for another raid. Li Mochou gathered two “Soul Freezing Silver Needles” and immediately shot them out.

The pair of eagles had previously suffered from this concealed weapon, and rushed to fly higher, but the silver needles were coming at them at a fast pace. The eagles could fly fast, but the needles were faster and eagles cried out in fright. Li Mochou saw that the eagles had retreated once again, and was extremely pleased. Suddenly she heard two shouts, two small objects rapidly appeared in the sky and after a loud noise the two small objects knocked the needles out of the air in a flash. Whoever threw the objects, their power must be extremely high. She gulped and dropped the young man, and went over to see. It was two small stones. She thought, “The person who shot out the stones must be extremely skilled, I’m not his match, I better evade him first and think about this later.”

She turned around and stretched out her palm, facing Cheng Ying. She wanted to hurt the two cousins first and then escape. As her palm was about to reach her chest, Li Mochou saw there was a satin handkerchief tied around her neck, the embroidery on it was of a red flower and green leaf, it was the handkerchief that she had personally sewn and had given it to her lover. She didn’t move and lowered her palm, her heart was turning over with memories of before, and thought, “Although he married the He slut, he could not forget me and kept this handkerchief. He wants me to spare his heirs, should I spare them or not?” She could not decide, and decided to kill Lu Wushuang and discuss this later. She took out her fly whisk, the silver thread end facing Lu Wushuang, and as she headed for her chest, she saw another handkerchief tied around Lu Wushuang’s neck. She thought, “How come there are two handkerchiefs? One of them must be a fake.” She curled up her whisk, and held Lu Wushuang’s neck as she shook and moved her around.

At this time, a sound cutting through the air was heard; a small stone was flying towards her chest. Li Mochou took out her fly whisk and immediately struck out, knocking the stone out of the air. She shouted out in pain as her palm heated up, her body shaking. Just a small stone with so much power, whoever threw must be extremely skilled. She couldn’t stay here anymore, and grabbed Lu Wushuang, and used her lightness kung fu. She swept over the ground like a gust of wind and in a flash there was no trace of her.

Cheng Ying saw that her cousin had been taken away and shouted, “Cousin! Cousin!” and tried to follow. Li Mochou’s steps were extremely rapid, how could she catch them?

Jiangnan is a wet area and full of rivers, and after a while Cheng Ying had come upon a river blocking her way, with no way to proceed. She followed along the bank, and suddenly saw a yellow image on the left side, a person crossing the bridge alone. Cheng Ying waited a while and saw that Li Mochou was on her own, Lu Wushuang wasn’t to

be seen anywhere. Cheng Ying saw her turn around and though extremely frightened, dared to ask, “Where’s my cousin?” Li Mochou saw her white skin and handsome smile and coldly laughed, “You two look the same, she has many days in front of her, don’t worry about her. You should worry about yourself. Why didn’t you die early, the world would have less trouble.” She raised her fly whisk, and hit out. She saw that the stroke she was going to use to strike the chest had become slow and light. With the fly whisk behind her back, she was going to attack in front of her but as she sped up, something was holding onto the whisk’s tail and she was unable to fling it. She swallowed and turned around to look, and saw the ground was raised over her about ten feet in the air and collapsing. It was an extraordinary situation. She protected her chest with her left palm and channeled energy through her fly whisk and pierced through the dirt. How can it be that there was no one behind it, just empty space? She had fought hundreds of battles throughout her life, but had never encountered a situation like this, her brain flicking through many scenarios, “A monster... a demon?” She used a stance of “First Mixing Form”, the fly whisk forming a circular boundary shielding her before she turned around again.

She saw, standing by Cheng Ying, a tall, lean strange man dressed in a blue jade gown, with no expression on his face. Who was he, and as she looked at him she couldn’t think of anything to say. She took two steps back and in this short space of time she could not think who in Jianghu this powerful person might be. As she was about to inquire who he was, she heard the man speak to Cheng Ying.

“Little girl, that woman is really evil, and you went to fight her.” Cheng Ying raised her hand and head and replied, “I wouldn’t dare.” The man said, “What are you afraid of? Go ahead.” Cheng Ying didn’t dare to. The man grabbed her and pushed her towards Li Mochou.

In this situation, Li Mochou didn’t know how to react. She planned to use her fly whisk; she stretched out her left hand to reach it, aiming to hit Cheng Ying on the waist. Suddenly a chi sound was produced; her arm was numb and sore, and she was unable to pick up her weapon. Cheng Ying approached her with her palm out, and after a clashing sound, Li Mochou was struck in the chest with a palm. Li Mochou had never suffered such an insult in her life, and in a rage, forgot her worries and reached out for her weapon and struck out in fury. Her whisk flew out of her hand, causing her to shake; the man had shot out another pebble, knocking her weapon to the ground. Cheng Ying was standing there steadily.

Li Mochou knew that she had met trouble today; if she didn’t escape now her life would be in danger. She laughed lightly and turned around and hurried away. After she was

many steps away she waved her hands behind her. A glimmer of silver appeared, ten plus “Soul Freezing Silver Needles” were shot out towards the man in light green. She shot her concealed weapons without turning back, but every single needle was heading towards the man. The man was caught off guard, not knowing that her needle throwing skill was so deadly. He immediately flew backwards to evade the needles. The needles were coming at him at a fast pace, but his leaps were quicker. Only after he had heard all the needles hit something did he stop and return to ground. Li Mochou knew that she wouldn’t be able to hit him, the ten or so needles were meant to distract him, when she heard the wind sounds caused by him retreating backwards, her hand waved again, a lone needle was shot out at Cheng Ying. She knew that the needle must hit the target; afraid of exchanging blows with the man she didn’t look back and increased her efforts in escaping, her body disappearing into the mulberry forest. The man in the blue green gown said, “Ah!” and picked up Cheng Ying and saw a needle had hit her shoulder, her face had changed colour and she gave out a quiet moan. Carrying her he hurriedly headed west.

The kidnapping of Lu Wushuang had startled Ke Zhen’E. The ragged young man said, “I’ll take a look.”

Guo Fu replied, “What is there to look at? That evil woman is going to kick you to death.”

The young man smiled and replied, “You kick me to death? I wouldn’t want to see that.” As he said this he headed in the direction of Li Mochou.

Guo Fu said, “Idiot! I didn’t say I was going to kick you.” Guo Fu didn’t realize that boy made a play on the words and said she was the evil woman.

The boy hurried as fast as he could for a while when he suddenly heard the calls of Cheng Ying shouting out, “Cousin, cousin!” He followed the sound of the calls. He ran over a great distance following the calls and he eventually arrived at where the calls seemingly came from. But when he got there was no trace of the two girls in any direction. He turned his head and on the ground glimmering were ten or so silver needles, the needles forming a pattern. He stooped down and picked up a needle, holding it in his left hand. By the needles there was a large centipede with its underside facing up, dead. He thought this was strange, and took a close look and saw a large number of ants were dead, but a few steps away were many ants rushing and moving. He picked up a needle and poked at them a few times, and some of the ants rolled over a few times before facing up. The same happened with a few other insects.

The young boy was happy, thinking this would be great to use on mosquitoes and flies, but suddenly felt that his left hand was not responding as normal. A fierce voice from behind said, "The needles have poison on them! You are holding it in your left hand how can it not be dangerous?" He opened his left palm and abandoned the needle. There is a black mark already forming in the place where the needle was held, and his two fingers were also turning black. He was extremely frightened, and stretched out his hand and rubbed it on his leg fiercely. The numbness on his left hand slowly increased, and within minutes the numbness had reached his joints. He was once bitten by a poisonous snake, and almost lost his life; at the time, the place where he was bitten became numb. He was in danger and he eventually cried out due to the pain. A voice from behind said, "Little baby, you know how powerful it is now huh?" The sound was like the clanging of metals piercing his ear, as if it was coming from the ground. He turned around and gulped as he saw a man standing upside down. The boy retreated a few steps and asked, "Who...who...who are you?"

The man's hands were on the ground supporting himself, his body upright and with a jump; he traveled thirty feet to face the boy.

"Who am I? It would be great to know who I am."

The boy was startled and started to run away, only to hear a 'du' 'du' 'du' noise behind him. He turned around and was so scared that his soul jumped out of his body. The man is using his hands as his feet, each hand held a stone, and although he was walking upside down his speed was faster than walking on two feet, and was just a few meters behind him. He ran even faster scared for his life only to hear a sound as the man jumped over his head and landed in front of him. The boy shouted out, "Mother!" and turned around to escape but wherever he went the strange man would jump in front of him. He had two feet, but he wasn't a match for a person using his hands to walk. He turned around a few times but the man was getting closer so he stretched out his palm wanting to push him; his hand was numb and he had lost control over it long ago. His head was covered with sweat and now didn't know what to do, his legs went limp and he sat down on the ground.

The strange man said, "The more you run and move about, the quicker the poison will spread." The boy worried for his life, got down on his knees and said, "I beg old grandpa to save my life."

The strange man shook his head and said, "It's difficult, it's difficult."

The boy replied, "Your have so much skill, you can save me."

After the old man heard these words of praise, he was pleased and grinned, “How do you know that I’m so skilled?” The young boy heard his tone had become friendly and replied, “You run so fast while upside down. No one on earth can compete with you.” The boy had added the phrase “No one on earth can compete with you” knowing that words of praise would please the old man. The old man laughed loudly, his laugh shaking the trees in the forest and said, “Flip upside down, let me take a look.”

The boy was bright, and immediately flipped upside down by himself, he couldn’t tell if the man was sincere but he did as he was told and flipped his body upside down so that his head was on the ground. His right hand still had feeling in it and managed to support himself firmly. The strange man glanced at him a few times, his brows lowered and wrinkled. The boy was upside down but still managed to take a clear look at the man; he had a tall nose and deep set eyes, his face covered in a short white beard, his limbs like metal, he talked to himself in strange phrases which was hard on the ear. The young boy was scared that the man wasn’t going to save him and said, “Good Grandpa, please save me.” The man saw he was a strapping boy and was pleased by his flip and replied, “Fine, saving you is not hard, but you got to promise one thing.”

“Whatever you say, I’ll listen. What do you want me to promise you?”

The strange man smiled and said, “I only want you to promise me one thing. Whatever I say, you must obey.”

The boy thought, “I must obey everything you say? I’ve got to listen even when you tell me to be a dog or eat feces?”

The man saw that he was hesitant and slow to reply said, “Fine, you can die!” As he said this he got onto his hands and leapt away several meters.

The boy was afraid that the man had gone too far, and wanted to chase him to ask for help but he forgot that he could not walk upside down like the man, so he got back up-right and chased a few steps and called out, “Grandpa, I agree. Whatever you say, I will obey.”

The man turned around and said, “Fine, you’ve to swear it.” The boy’s left hand was becoming increasingly numb, and he was becoming increasingly concerned about his life so he could do nothing but swear an oath.

“If grandpa saves me by ridding my body of the poison, I will listen to whatever he says. If I don’t, then let the poison return to my body.” He thought, “If I never pick up

any more silver needles then how will the poison return? I wonder if the strange man will accept this oath?”

He looked at the old man, and saw his expression had changed and he seemed pleased, and he in turn became pleased as well as he thought, “The old man believes me.”

The old man nodded and went upright. He grabbed hold of the boy’s arm, and pushed it a few times and said, “Good, good, you are a good boy.” When the boy was pushed in the arm, he felt the numbness had lightened, and shouted out, “Grandpa, push me a few more times!” The strange man frowned and said, “Don’t call me grandpa; call me father!”

The little boy replied, “My father’s dead, I don’t have a father.”

The man shouted at him, “The first thing I ask and you don’t even listen, what use have I with a son like you.”

The boy thought, “Oh, the man wants me to be his son.” He had never seen his father before, and heard from his mother that his father had died before he was born. Whenever he saw other children with their father he would envy them. Now he sees this strange man in front of him, acting weird and crazy. He didn’t want to accept this old man as his stepfather.

The strange man shouted at him, “You don’t agree to call me father, fine. There are other people who are willing, I won’t agree to my promise.” The boy tried to think of another way to deceive him into saving him. The man suddenly bellowed out a strange noise, and said a curse and started to walk away. The boy quickly said, “Father, father where are you going?” The man gave out a great laugh and said, “Good boy, come, I’ll teach you a method to rid your body of poison.” The boy walked over to him. The strange man said, “You have contracted Li Mochou’s “Soul Freezing Silver Needles” poison, it is quite difficult to cure this poison.”

He then passed on the words of circulating air and the method to practice it, the head must be below the legs, so the blood will flow the opposite direction, the poison will eventually flow out from within the body. Since he is a beginner, he can only remove a few drops of poison every day, but within a month, all the poison would be removed from his body. The boy was extremely clever, and he absorbed everything and memorized it. He then followed the method and indeed, the numbness decreased. After a little while, small drops of black blood seeped from his fingers. The strange man was pleased and said, “Good! You don’t have to practice anymore today, I’ll teach you some-

thing new tomorrow. Follow me.” The boy was startled, and said, “Go where?” The strange man replied, “I am your father, wherever a father goes, the son of course follows.”

As he said this, the air was filled with the sound of eagle calls; the two large eagles were approaching. The strange man looked at the eagles, and hit his head as he frowned, searching for something in his mind. Suddenly, he seemed to have found what he was looking for, his face changed and shouted out, “I won’t see them, I won’t see them!” As he said this he took a stride; the stride was extremely large, and by the second stride he had moved over ten feet. After a few more strides he disappeared into the mulberry forest. The boy shouted out, “Father, father!” and tried to follow.

He eventually wound up at a willow tree and suddenly he felt a gust of wind behind him, as the eagles flew over from behind him and started to descend. From behind the willow tree out came two people, a male and female, the eagles stopped behind the two. The male had dense brows and large eyes, a broad chest and waist, he was about thirty years of age, and his top lip had the beginnings of a moustache. The woman was about twenty six or twenty seven years of age, she had a beautiful face, her eyes sparkled, and looked at the boy a few times and said to the man, “Who do you think that boy looks like?” The man turned around to the boy and replied, “You say he looks like somebody?” as he said these words he stopped.

The two people were Guo Jing and Huang Rong. That day they were at a restaurant searching for news of Huang Yaoshi, when they suddenly saw flames far away and after a while, a person in the street hurriedly said, “The Lu’s mansion is on fire!” Huang Rong shivered as she remembered that Jiaxing’s Lu’s mansion belonged to Lu Zhanyuan, a fairly famous person in the wuxia world, and although they had never met, she had admired the name. In Jianghu many people had mentioned that Jiangnan has two Lu mansions. There are countless Lu mansions in Jiangnan, the two that the Wuxia members mentioned were the Lu mansion by the Tai Lake and Jiaxing’s Lu mansion. For Lu Zhanyuan to be mentioned in the same breath as Lu Chengfeng, he was surely not an ordinary person. After asking a few questions, it turned out it was Lu Zhanyuan’s mansion that was being burned. The two hurried for the site but once they got there, the fire had died down, the mansion had been burnt down to the ground, a few bodies were found at the scene but they were burned beyond recognition.

Huang Rong said, “Something strange may have occurred.”

Guo Jing asked, “What?”

Huang Rong replied, “Lu Zhanyuan is a fairly famous name in Jianghu, his wife Yuanjun is also a heroine of this generation. If the mansion caught fire, how come no one managed to escape? The only explanation is that an enemy of theirs had come to take their revenge.”

Guo Jing thought this must be the reason and replied, “Yes, let us think, who the suspect can be?”

The two examined the site but found no traces of any evidence. Huang Rong suddenly saw something on one of the remaining walls and shouted, “Look, what’s that?”

Guo Jing looked up and saw a few blood handprints on the wall; after being burned, the blood prints became more prominent. The wall collapsed and on the lower section were two prints. Guo Jing gathered himself and suddenly spurted out, “The Scarlet Serpent Deity!”

Huang Rong replied, “It must be her.”

They had long heard of Li Mochou, the “Scarlet Serpent Deity”. Her kung fu was high, and no one can compare with her poisonous ways. She was comparable to the one called ‘Western Poison’. She was in Jiangnan and it was a chance to track her down.

Guo Jing nodded his head, “People in Wulin have said she is extremely difficult to deal with, if we can find your father it would be good.”

Huang Rong laughed and said, “The older they get, the less we have to worry.”

Guo Jing said, “You’re right. The more someone practices martial arts, the less work they have to do.”

Huang Rong laughed and said, “You are modest Master Guo! I find the more I practice the worse I get.”

The two laughed and joked, but secretly they were on the guard as well. They looked around, and by a pond they saw two “Soul Freezing Silver Needles”. One of the needles was half submerged in the pond, the ponds eighty or so gold fishes’ white bellies were facing up. It was the deed of the poison of the needle. Huang Rong stuck out her tongue and broke off two pieces of twig from a tree and used it to fish the needle out, and then placed it in her gown sack. The two searched everywhere, and then saw the two eagles and eventually met the boy.

Guo Jing thought that the boy looked familiar, but at the time could not think of who he looks like. His nose suddenly picked up a strange scent, and sniffed a few more times and felt his brain start to smother. Huang Rong had already noticed this, and knew the origin was nearby. She turned around to search for the source and saw the male eagle had a wound on its left claw, and after a closer examination, the source of the scent was indeed from the wound. The two gulped, and carefully examined the wound, the skin was broken only slightly yet the leg had swollen to more than twice its size, the skin and flesh had started to rot. Guo Jing thought, “What caused this wound, why is it so severe?” He suddenly saw the boy’s hand was black and asked, “You’ve been poisoned as well?”

Huang Rong went over and took his hand and looked at this palm; she pulled up his sleeve and took out a knife and slit the boy’s wrist to draw out the poison blood. Only to see that the blood flowing out was red. She thought this was strange and thought, “His palm’s black and definitely has poison so why doesn’t his blood have it? She didn’t know that when the strange man had bestowed his skills to the boy, the poisoned blood had already flowed out of his fingertips, and the poison did not rise back. From her bag, she took out a “Nine Flower Jade Dew” pill, and said, “Swallow this.” The boy took the pill, smelt it first and noticed a nice scent, and put it into his mouth. He felt a fragrance fill his mouth, the sweetness was incomparable. A cool clear air filled his “dan tian”. Huang Rong took out another two pills and fed it to the two eagles.

Guo Jing was immersed in thought, but he still managed to whistle a tune. The boy heard his high tune and knew it wasn’t easy; this gave him a surprise. Suddenly, a whistling sound came from afar, flocks of birds in the forest flew in all directions, and the branches of a nearby willow tree were shaking incessantly. As soon as the first song was finished, a second one followed, the sound of the two combined resonated and folded, herd of horses galloped hurriedly far away. Huang Rong knew that it was her father sending an invitation to Li Mochou for a battle. As the third whistle came, she filled her “dan tian” line, and followed the whistle with her own, Guo Jing’s whistle was loud and spacious, and Huang Rong’s was high and soaring. The two’s whistles combined together was like a large fabulous bird and a small bird in a competition to see who can fly higher, as they flew the higher they got, the little bird not settling for being behind the large bird. When the two were on Peach Blossom Island they refined and cultivated their internal strength, their internal energy had reached new levels. Right now, their sounds soared and resonated for many miles.

When the whistles reached the strange man, he quickened his steps, as he hurried to escape. When it reached the blue green-gowned man who was carrying Cheng Ying, he

laughed and said, “You’ve finally arrived, this old man had better run to avoid getting caught.”

Li Mochou was carrying Lu Wushuang by her side, hurrying in her escape when she suddenly heard the whistles; she halted in her tracks, and waved her fly whisk. She turned around and laughed coldly, “Hero Guo’s name shakes through Wulin, and I must take a look to see if he lives up to his name.” She then heard a clear, crisp whistle follow the last one, the two sounds superimposed on each other produced a sharp yet soft sound, the power of it was increased further. Li Mochou’s heart shivered, she knew she had met a formidable foe; she thought about how the Guo couple swept Wulin, supporting each other, yet she was alone, her thoughts became grey, and sighed as she carried Lu Wushuang across her chest and ran away.

At that moment, Madam Wu supported her husband, taking her two children with her preparing to leave along with Ke Zhen’E. After the battle with Li Mochou, Ke Zhen’E was afraid that she would come back and harm Guo Fu; he wanted to take her to a safe place and hide for a while. When he heard the calls by the Guo couple he was glad and relieved. Guo Fu shouted out, “Father, mother!” and ran out. One old, one young followed the sounds of the whistles and hurriedly rushed to the Guo couple. Guo Fu threw herself onto Huang Rong and smiled as she said, “Mother, grandpa fought off an evil woman, his skills were unbelievable.” Huang Rong knew she was lying but could only smile. Guo Jing reprimanded her “Young children should always tell the truth.” Guo Fu stuck out her tongue as she said, “Grandpa’s skills are not good? How can he be your master?” Afraid that her father will scold her again, she ran on ahead and pointed to the boy saying, “You go pick some flowers for me and arrange it into a crown for me to wear!” The boy followed her. Guo Fu saw that his palm was black and said, “Your hand is disgusting, take the flowers you pick and cover your smell with it.”

The boy calmly said, “Who wants to play with you?” and took large steps as he walked away.

Guo Jing said, “Little brother, don’t run. The poison in your body has not fully been removed; when it reacts again it will be painful.”

The little boy wished that he would mind his own business, and after being spoken to like that by Guo Fu, he carried on walking ahead, ignoring the man’s words. Guo Jing walked in front of him and said, “Why have you contracted poison? Let me cure it for you first, it won’t be long.”

The boy replied, "I don't recognize you, what had this got to do with you." He increased his speed and wanted to walk past Guo Jing. Guo Jing saw that the boy's face seemed to carry a noble air, his face looking like someone he has met before, his feelings were aroused and asked the boy, "What's your surname?" The boy gave him a glance and walked around him, still wanting to get away. Guo Jing caught his wrist. The boy couldn't shake himself free, and formed a fist with his left hand punching Guo Jing in the stomach. Guo Jing just smiled, and took no notice of the punch. The boy wanted pull back his fist, but his fist seemed to be held within the man's stomach, unable to move. His face became red, and pulled back with all his strength until his arm ached, but he couldn't over come the pull of the man's stomach. The man smiled and said, "If you tell me what your name is, then I'll let you go."

The boy replied, "My surname is Ni, first names Laozi, now let me go." Guo Jing was disappointed with the answer and relaxed his abdomen, he didn't realize that the boy had tricked him and called himself, "I'm your father". The boy's hand was now free and thought, "You've got great ability, your father can't compare to his good son." Huang Rong saw the boy had a devious expression on his face, and still felt that he looked like someone from the past so tested him again.

She smiled and said, "Little brother, if you are my husband's father that means you are mine too." She stretched out her hand and held the boy's neck from behind. The boy felt the hold came from an extremely strong force, and tried desperately to pull away. Huang Rong loosened her grip, the boy got a glimpse of the sky before falling over. Guo Fu clapped and laughed. The boy hid his embarrassment and got up, and took a few steps back, and swore at her. Huang Rong was already standing in front of him, she held his shoulder and looked him in the eye and gently said, "Your surname is Yang, first name Guo. Your mother's surname is Mu, isn't that correct?" The boy was indeed named Yang Guo, and somehow Huang Rong had called it out, the shock was too much for him, he felt pain in his chest, the poison in his hand had returned, his brain started to get blurry and he fainted.

Huang Rong managed to hold onto him. Guo Jing pushed him a few times using his internal energy, but his eyes did not open, his teeth had bitten his tongue, his mouth full of red blood, and he didn't wake up. Guo Jing was happy and worried at the same time and said, "He, he is brother Yang Kang's son." Huang Rong saw that Yang Guo's poison was serious and gently said, "Let's first get to an inn, then we'll mix up some medicine for him."

Huang Rong had seen that the boy looked extremely like Yang Kang, and remembered that she had met Mu Nianci in an inn. When she held the back of Mu's neck, instead of

pushing forward, Mu pushed backward. This was a secret skill of Hong Qigong's. It was part of his circulating air and practicing energy method. If the boy was Mu Nianci's son, then their kung fu would be the same. Huang Rong was a disciple of Hong Qigong's and knew the arts of her master well, so she tested him, and indeed he was who she thought he was.

Guo Jing carried the boy, and along with Ke Zhen'E, Huang Rong, Guo Fu and the pair of eagles returned to the inn. Huang Rong wrote out an herb list, and gave it to the inn's waiter to go to the medicine shop and pick them out. However the herbs she picked out were all rare, even in a place like Jiaying the shops did not have them. Guo Jing saw that Yang Guo was still unconscious and was extremely worried about him. Huang Rong knew that after Yang Kang had died, her husband had felt responsible, and now he had found his son, he would be ecstatic. But now the boy had contracted a lethal poison, his life in the balance, and said, "We will go and gather the herbs ourselves."

Guo Jing knew that if there is a glimmer of hope to cure the poison, she would try to reassure him but he saw her expression was one of worry. He ordered Guo Fu that she mustn't run around as she pleased, and the couple went off to gather the herbs and grasses.

Yang Guo slept quietly without waking until it was night. Ke Zhen'E checked up on him a few times, using his hands to feel him. The poison on his darts could not compare to that of the "Soul Freezing Silver Needles" and so could not use the antidote that he had. He was afraid that Guo Fu would slip away, so he made sure she was asleep.

Yang Guo was unconscious for a long time when suddenly someone placed a palm on his chest and used their internal strength to wake him up. He slowly woke up, and opened his eyes. He saw a flash of black, as someone escaped out of the window. His strength slowly returned as he supported himself on a table by the window so he could have a look. He saw a man on the roof overhang of the room and the man was upside down. It was the strange man who earlier wanted him to call him father. He was moving about, and could drop down to the room when he pleased.

Yang Guo was surprised and said, "It's you."

The strange man replied, "Why aren't you calling me father?"

Yang Guo said, "Father!" but thought, "You are my son, I'll just turn the roles around and call you father for now."

The man was very pleased and said, “Come up here.” Yang Guo climbed out of the window and leapt onto the roof. But his body was weak due to the poison, he wasn’t at full strength and his fingers weren’t able to grab the roof edge. As he was falling he called out, “Ah!”

The man stretched out his hand and grabbed the boy’s back and gently placed him on the rooftop. He turned upright, and was about to say something when he heard someone from a room to the west blow out a candle. He felt that someone had discovered him and so he carried Yang Guo and hurriedly escaped. Ke Zhen’E had leapt on the roof, but there wasn’t a trace of anyone.

The strange man carried Yang Guo outside the small town and reached a piece of uncultivated land and put him down. He said, “Use the method I taught you to force some of the poison out.” Yang Guo got into position, and after a short while, a few drops of poisoned blood came out, his chest became relaxed and more comfortable.

The strange man said, “You are a clever boy, and can use it straight away just after one lesson. You are even better than my real son.” “Ai...Son...ah!” He thought about his deceased son, his eyes became watery as he stroked Yang Guo’s head, and let out a sigh.

Yang Guo had never had a father in his life and his mother passed away due to illness when he was eleven years old. Before she died, she told him that his father died in Jiaxing’s Iron Spear monastery, and instructed him to cremate her and bury her outside the monastery. After he had taken care of his mother’s burial, he wandered around Jiaxing and lived in the old kiln, in poverty. Mu Nianci had taught Yang Guo some of her family’s kung fu but her skills weren’t great, and Yang Guo at the time was young and so couldn’t learn much. Within these few years, Yang Guo had made trouble and enemies, and although he had never met the strange man before, the man had treated him well and the feelings were real. He was touched and leapt up and grabbed the man around his neck and called out, “Father, father!” Ever since he was three years old, he always wished he had a loving father. Sometimes in his dreams he would see a heroic and loving father but when he woke up his father was gone and because of this he would cry for a while. His wish for many years had come true, and buried within the calls of ‘father’ were real feelings of joy and respect, not the calls of lies and deceit.

Yang Guo was very emotional right now; the strange man was even more happy and emotional inside. When they first met, Yang Guo was forced to call him father to save his life, and didn’t want him as a father, now both of them had the same feelings, they were like a real father and son, but he felt that the man had something on his mind. His feelings were so strong that he was willing to die for him if need be. The strange man

was laughing and crying at the same time and said, “Good son, good son, obedient son. Call me father again.” Yang Guo called him twice, and then leaned on his body.

The man smiled and said, “Good son, come here, I will teach you all the martial arts I know.” As he said this he dropped down and made three strange noises and then pushed his hands out. The sound of an explosion was produced, the earth in front of him rose up like a violent grey mudflow and then the dirt scattered. Yang Guo looked on with his mouth open, his tongue out, shocked and asked, “What is that skill called, can I learn it?”

The strange man replied, “Its called “Ge Ma” stance (Toad Stance), if you work hard, you will be able to learn it.”

Yang Guo said, “If I learn it then no one can bully me again?”

The man’s eyebrows raised and said, “If anyone bullies my son then I’ll rip their skin and tear their muscles.”

The strange man was the “Western Poison” Ouyang Feng.

Ever since Huang Rong had made him go mad at the second Mount Hua tournament, he has traveled, for these last ten years, to the edge of the world and always asked one question, “Who am I?” Whenever he is near a lush land, he would always linger on trying to find the answer to his question; these past months he has been staying in Jiaying. These few years he has been practicing the “Contrary Nine Yin Manual”. His internal energy has been increasing to new levels, his mind had become clearer, but he was still mad. His memories were slowly coming back but he still could not remember who he was.

Right now, Ouyang Feng was passing on the formula to practice “Toad Stance” to Yang Guo. The “Toad Stance” is one of the top skills in the martial arts world, the changes refined, mysterious and clever, and its internal energy aspect hard to beat; but if it is practiced wrong, not only will the body be harmed, but the practitioner will expel blood and die. Because of this, he didn’t even pass it on to his son when he was alive. At this moment in time, he was touched and added to the fact he wasn’t mentally clear, he couldn’t differentiate between important and dangerous things. He didn’t take this into consideration and taught the skill to his stepson.

Yang Guo does not have a good martial arts foundation, though he learnt the formula to the skill and memorized it, would he be able to understand the meanings behind the

words?

Though he was extremely clever, there were phrases which he didn't understand. Ouyang Feng had taught him for half a day now, and when he listened to Yang Guo's explanation and it wasn't making sense, he had another mental attack and wanted to hit him. But when he saw his handsome and cute face in the moonlight, it reminded him of his own son when he was younger, and so he lowered his hand.

"You're struggling. Go and rest, I'll carry on tomorrow."

After Guo Fu had ridiculed him because of his hand, he had a dislike for her family and said, "I want to follow you, I don't want to return."

Ouyang Feng didn't understand his own problems but he was aware of the world's problems and said, "I have some trouble with my mind, I'm afraid I can't take care of you if you follow me. You return first and when I've solved one problem I will come and collect you, we won't part, okay?"

After the death of his mother he has never talked to someone as if they were family and grabbed his hand and said, "Collect me soon."

Ouyang Feng nodded and said, "I will secretly follow you, wherever you go I'll be there. If someone bullies you, I'll break their ribs into seventy or eighty pieces." He then picked up Yang Guo and returned him to the inn.

Ke Zhen'E had gone to check on Yang Guo and found he wasn't there. He searched the entire inn but still couldn't find him; he became extremely concerned. He checked on Yang Guo's room again; Yang Guo had returned. He was about to ask where Yang Guo had been when he heard the wind generated by someone passing along the rooftop. He knew two people had passed along on the roof, their skills extremely high, he picked up Guo Fu and then placed her by his side. He went over to the window with his iron walking staff, afraid that the two people were enemies; he listened carefully and heard that the wind created by the two people was coming closer and eventually had arrived on the roof above them.

"Did you see who he was?"

"Strange, strange, was it him?" replied the other person.

It was Guo Jing and Huang Rong.

Ke Zhen'E was relieved and opened the door to let them in. Huang Rong said, "Senior master, did anything happen?"

"Nothing," replied Ke Zhen'E.

Huang Rong turned to Guo Jing and said, "Did we recognize the wrong person?"

Guo Jing replied shaking his head, "No, I'm ninety percent certain it was him."

"Who was it?" asked Ke Zhen'E.

Huang Rong tugged on Guo Jing, trying to tell him not to say. But Guo Jing didn't dare to lie to his master and said, "Ouyang Feng."

Ke Zhen'E despised this man, as soon as he heard his name his complexion changed and quietly said, "Ouyang Feng? Isn't he dead?"

Guo Jing said, "When we came back from picking the medicine, we saw someone on the roof, the person's movements were quick and strange, when we went to take a look, the person had already gone. It looked like Ouyang Feng."

From the description, Ke Zhen'E knew it must be Ouyang Feng and no one else. Guo Jing was concerned about Yang Guo so grabbed a candle and went over to the bed. He saw that Yang Guo's face was red, his breathing relaxed and sleeping peacefully. He was pleasantly surprised and called out, "Rong'er, he's better!" Yang Guo was really awake and he was just pretending to be asleep, he had secretly listened in and now knew his stepfather was called Ouyang Feng. The three of them were extremely concerned about him, and now they were all relieved and pleased.

Huang Rong took a closer look, and was surprised, before his arm's poison had returned but now after just a few hours, the black colour of the poison had faded; the poison seems to have disappeared. She was greatly surprised by this. She and Guo Jing had searched for medicine all day, but could not gather everything they wanted, so they decided to return with what they had and give it to him for the time being.

The next day, Guo Jing, Huang Rong and Ke Zhen'E with the two small ones headed west from Jiaying, intending to return to Peach Blossom Island, and firstly cure Yang Guo's poison before deciding to do anything else. That night they were in another inn, Ke Zhen'E and Yang Guo were in one room, the Guo family in another. The Guo couple slept into the middle of the night when suddenly they heard a noise on the rooftop.

They heard Ke Zhen'E call out through the wall, and jumped out of the window. The couple quickly jumped out of the window only to see on the rooftop Ke Zhen'E was fighting barehanded with someone, the enemy was tall and had long hands, it was Ouyang Feng. Guo Jing swallowed, frightened that Ouyang Feng would take his master's life in one move and he jumped up onto the roof to help. Only to hear Ke Zhen'E shout and fall off the roof. Guo Jing flew over to him, and before Ke Zhen'E head had met the ground, he lightly caught him from behind and gently placed him gently down on the ground.

He asked, "Senior Master, are you okay?"

"I'm not dead yet. Go and fight Ouyang Feng." Ke Zhen'E replied.

"Yes," replied Guo Jing and he jumped onto the roof.

At the time, Huang Rong was fighting with her palms, the palms like a flying dance. It has been ten years since she has seen her old enemy, and right now they were fighting ferociously. Her internal energy has improved tremendously over the last few years, her internal energy is now very forceful, the palms she were using were changing mysteriously and cleverly; after ten moves, Ouyang Feng didn't gain any advantage.

Guo Jing called out, "Mr. Ouyang, how have you been."

Ouyang Feng replied, "What did you say? What did you call me?" His face changed, in the fight with Huang Rong he did not attack, he had a feeling that the two words 'Ouyang' was significant to him. Guo Jing was about to say something when Huang Rong interrupted as she saw that he wasn't clear about who he was and said, "You are called Zhao Qiansunli, Zhou Wuchenwang!"

Ouyang Feng listened, "I'm called Zhao Qiansunli, Zhou Wuchenwang?"

Huang Rong replied, "Correct, your nickname is Zuo Fengchengchuwei, Jiang Shenhanyang." Huang Rong had randomly picked out some surnames. Ouyang Feng was originally confused but after hearing her call him many names, he scratched his head and asked, "Who are you? Who am I?"

Suddenly someone behind shouted out, "You are the old animal that killed my five brothers." Before the sentence was finished, an iron walking staff came out, it was Ke Zhen'E. When Ouyang Feng knocked him off the roof, he wasn't hurt and went into his room to get his iron walking staff to battle him again. Guo Jing shouted out, "Careful

master!” Ke Zhen'E smashed down his iron walking staff on Ouyang Feng's back but he didn't move, he made a strange noise and the walking staff fiercely came back out at Ke Zhen'E. Ke Zhen'E couldn't hold on, and let go of his walking staff and fell into the courtyard. Although Guo Jing knew that his master was falling, it wasn't going to be serious but Ouyang Feng had used his back to launch a lethal attack so he shouted, “Watch out!” His left leg bent, his right palm circled, and then pushed out; it was the “Eighteen Dragon Subduing Palms” ‘Overcoming the Dragon with Regret’ (Kang Long You Hui). He had practiced this particular stance night and day without a break, when he first learned the stance its power was obvious, but after ten years of practicing, it was now at a flawless level. When he first unleashed it, it looked light and fragile but when it meets an obstruction, it will be able to unleash its force in thirteen levels, each level stronger than the last one. It will move the unyielding, there is no force it can't overcome. He had incorporated ideas in the “Nine Yin Manual” into the palms and modified them, like Hong Qigong had modified the palms years ago, although it was only the stances and not the mysterious energy behind it.

Ouyang Feng had just knocked Ke Zhen'E off the roof when he suddenly felt a gust of wind throwing itself at him, although the wind wasn't strong, it caused his breathing to be uneven, and knew it wasn't something ordinary so quickly crouched down and pushed out his two palms, it was his most refined skill the “Toad Stance”. They exchanged three palms; both of them were hit once. Guo Jing's palm strength increased; the next level higher than the last, like a torrent of waves throwing it self forwards. Ouyang Feng made two ‘Ka Ka’ noises, his body getting lower, as if he was going to fall down any minute. Guo Jing's palms were getting stronger, his counteracting strength also increased.

The two haven't exchanged moves for over ten years, now they meet again in Jiangnan, they must test each other to see how they have advanced over the years. Long ago at the Mount Hua tournament, Guo Jing couldn't match Ouyang Feng, but since then he has refined his internal energy, his skills have vastly improved. Ouyang Feng has been practicing the “Contrary Nine Yin Manual” and got what he deserved. However, one phrase real and one phrase fake, eventually he produced a learnable copy from the fake and up until now, Guo Jing was fighting him to a draw, unable to distinguish who has the upper hand. Huang Rong wanted her husband to win by himself so stood to one side and didn't interfere.

The roofs in south were very different to the roofs in the north. The roofs in the north had to support the amassed snow in winter, the roofs were solid. In the south it was wet weather that had to be addressed, the roofs were covered in tiles, with removing rain in mind. Guo Jing and Ouyang Feng were matching internal energy through their

palms, and braced their legs, and after a moment, the sound of something creaking was heard below their feet, with one sound followed by another, the beams of the roof snapped, a hole was made in the roof as the two of them fell in. Huang Rong gulped and jumped down the hole and followed them, only to see the two still competing, their feet supported by some more beams, but they were above one of the inn's guests. The guest was sleeping, how would he know the roof was falling in, at that moment his legs broke and he was screaming out in pain. Guo Jing didn't want to hurt any innocent bystanders and so didn't use his legs for support, but Ouyang Feng didn't care if anyone dies because of them. The two of them were equally matched but because Guo Jing didn't use the beams as support, his palms had no foundation to rely on. He was on his way to losing. He used one hand to push against Ouyang Feng's two palms, he channeled all his strength in his right hand, his left hand was empty, there was no strength for it to use. Huang Rong saw her husband was being pushed backwards, although it was only half an inch or so, he was losing.

She shouted, "Hey, Zhang Sanlisi, Hu Tuwangba, watch out," and aimed a light palm on Ouyang Feng's shoulder. Though this palm was light, it was from the "Descending Brave Divine Sword Palm" (Luo Ying Shen Jian Zhang) skill, when it lands, the internal energy will spread through the internal organs. Though Ouyang Feng is one of the most powerful martial artists of his time, he would still suffer from this blow. Ouyang Feng heard her call out weird surnames at him and was distracted for a second. As he saw the palm come in, he pushed his two palms, forcing Guo Jing back another inch, and in a flash he held onto Huang Rong's shoulder, his five fingers like a hook, trying to tear a piece of her flesh off. When this move came out, the three of them swallowed simultaneously. Ouyang Feng felt severe pain in his fingers; she was wearing soft armour with needles, he couldn't loosen his hand. At this time, Guo Jing's palm's power increased again, and Ouyang Feng pushed out a palm to counteract this, in the midst of this danger he used all his strength. After a clashing sound, both of them moved back, the room was full of dust and dirt as the walls collapsed.

When the two clashed palms, it was under the shroud of night and the both of them could not see each other clearly, the large force of the "Eighteen Dragon Subduing Palms" and the "Toad Stance" hit each other on the shoulder. The two of them were sent through opposite walls; half of the roof fell in. Huang Rong had suffered a blow but she wasn't hurt although she had a fright and made her flush. In the midst of all this she flew out of the room before the roof collapsed. She saw Guo Jing and Ouyang Feng five feet apart motionless; the both of them had suffered internal injuries. Huang Rong didn't attack the enemy and instead just walked over by her husband's side to guard him. The both of them shut their eyes to try to control their chi, but after two stuttering noises both of them spat out a mouthful of blood.

Ouyang Feng said, “The “Eighteen Dragon Subduing Palms”, good stuff, good stuff!” A mad laugh followed as he ran away, in a blink of an eye he was nowhere to be seen.

Presently, the inn was in the midst of chaos. Huang Rong knew that they couldn't stay here any longer, and from the hand of Ke Zhen'E grabbed her daughter and said, “Master, you carry brother Jing and follow us.” Ke Zhen'E put Guo Jing on his shoulder and step by step slowly headed north. After a while, Huang Rong suddenly remembered Yang Guo, she didn't know where he had gone to, but she was more concerned about her husband's injuries so left this matter until later on. Guo Jing understood, but because of the injury caused by Ouyang Feng, he couldn't speak. He breathed evenly while on Ke Zhen'E's back, circulating his energy to unravel his veins, after they had travel about seven, eight miles, his veins had all been cleared and said, “Master, I'm okay.” He put Guo Jing down and said, “You've recovered?”

Guo Jing shook his head and said, “The “Toad Stance” is a great skill!” He saw his daughter supporting herself on her mother's shoulder sleeping peacefully, and said, “Where's Guo'er?” Ke Zhen'E had forgotten about Yang Guo, and struggled for words.

Huang Rong said, “Don't worry, first we'll find a place to rest. Then I'll go back and look for him.”

The sky was beginning to brighten, and under the moon they recognized a house by the forest. Guo Jing said, “My injury is not serious, we'll go find him together.”

Huang Rong frowned and said, “That boy is extremely clever, you don't have to be too concerned.” As they said this they arrived at the house, suddenly they saw someone come out from behind the white wall and then was about to return again. Huang Rong went over there and grabbed the person, it was Yang Guo.

He laughed and said, “Auntie,” and carried on saying, “You guys arrived? I've been waiting for a long time now.”

Huang Rong couldn't explain but she suspected something and replied, “Fine, follow us.”

Yang Guo laughed, and followed. Guo Fu opened her eyes, and asked, “Where have you been?”

Yang Guo replied, “I went to catch some crickets to see them fight. It was great fun.”

“What’s so much fun about that?” Guo Fu said.

“Huh, what’s not fun about that? A large cricket was fighting with an old cricket. When the old one lost, two little crickets came to help out, three versus one. The large cricket jumped around, kicked out a foot there, and bit one over there, it was extremely powerful.” When he reached this point, he didn’t add anything else. Guo Fu had listened carefully and asked, “Then what happened?”

Yang Guo said, “You said it’s not fun, so why are you interested?”

Guo Fu touched her nail, and angrily turned her head away, ignoring him. Huang Rong could tell that his words were praising Ouyang Feng and ridiculing the couple and Ke Zhen’E. She said, “Tell Auntie, who won in the end?”

Yang Guo laughed and said, “Just when things were getting interesting, you came along, the cricket jumped away.”

Huang Rong thought: “Like father like son,” but kept her suspicions of him to herself.

After a while, they arrived at a village. Huang Rong went to a large residence to look for the owner. The owner was very hospitable, when they heard someone was hurt, they quickly prepared two rooms for the guests. Guo Jing ate three bowls of rice, and then sat on the couch, closed his eyes and meditated. Huang Rong saw that her husband was resting, and managed to relax, sitting next to her husband guarding him. She thought about Yang Guo in all the situations they have been in, and felt although he was young, there are a lot of strange things that couldn’t be explained, and when he was asked for detailed explanations, half of it was a lie. She made a mental note to herself to pay extra attention to Yang Guo and be wary of him. She’d had a tiresome day, and after a meal, she went to bed.

Yang Guo and Ke Zhen’E were sharing the same room, and in the middle of the night he quietly got up. When he heard Ke Zhen’E snoring in his deep sleep, he quietly opened the door, he slipped out of the room and went over to the wall, and to a Cinnamomum Cassia tree, climbed it, and leapt over the wall slipping away. The dogs outside the wall picked up a human scent, and started to bark. Yang Guo was prepared; he took out a piece of bone out of his bag, and threw it to them. The dogs bit onto the bone, and stopped their barking.

Yang Guo checked his bearings, and headed southwest, and in seven, eight li, he had reached the Iron Spear Monastery. He pushed open the doors and called out, “Father,

I'm here!" He heard a noise coming in from within. It was Ouyang Feng. Yang Guo was happy, he went inside and felt out a table, and found candle. He lit it and saw Ouyang Feng reclining on top of some statues, his body unwell, and his breathing weak. He and Guo Jing have suffered similar injuries, but because Guo Jing has amassed an abundant amount of rich internal energy over the years, he is able to recover very rapidly; Ouyang Feng is closer to old age, his energy isn't as good.

What had happened on the previous night was that Ouyang Feng had come again for Yang Guo, but Ke Zhen'E was awake in the room, so they started to fight. Afterwards when Huang Rong and Guo Jing came and joined in the battle, Yang Guo was watching. Eventually both Ouyang Feng and Guo Jing had suffered injuries, and so Ouyang Feng escaped. In the chaos, everyone forgot about Yang Guo, and he sneaked away after Ouyang Feng. At first Ouyang Feng was moving at a fast pace, Yang Guo could not catch up, but Ouyang Feng's injury was agitated, moving was hard. Yang Guo eventually caught up and took him aside to rest. Yang Guo knew that if he didn't return Huang Rong and Ke Zhen'E would come and look for him, and feared his stepfather's life would be in danger. So he arranged with Ouyang Feng to meet in the Iron Spear Monastery. Both were familiar with the monastery so knew where it was. When Yang Guo was guarding the road, Guo Jing and the others had come up behind them. Only now, in the middle of the night, was he able to come and check. Yang Guo took seven or eight buns out of his bag and handed them over to Ouyang Feng, "Father, eat something." Ouyang Feng had nothing to eat for the whole day, he was frightened he would meet one of his enemies, and was stuck in the monastery all day. He ate a few of the buns and was conscious for a while and asked, "Where are you and the others at?" Yang Guo told him everything.

Ouyang Feng said, "The one named Guo suffered from one of my palms, it would be difficult for him to recover within seven days. His wife will have to look after him, she won't leave his side, and I'm worried about that Ke old man. If he doesn't come tonight, he will be here tomorrow. It's a pity I don't have an ounce of energy in me. Hmm...I think I did kill his brothers but I don't know whether is it four or five." As he said this he let out a cough.

Yang Guo sat on the floor, his hand on his cheeks, many thoughts going through his little mind and suddenly thought to himself, "I've got it, I'll put some sharp objects on the floor first, so when the old man comes he'll suffer some injuries."

He then went over to the table with the candles on it, and tipped out the candles and collected the holders, and placed them by the entrance, and then closed the entrance, and emptied an old incense holder and placed it on top of the door. He looked around,

trying to think of more traps for any enemies, and saw a large bell hung in the room. Three people could not move the bell; it weighed about a thousand kilos. On the bell's neck were an extremely thick metal hook and a large wooden trestle system. The Iron Spear monastery was old and hasn't been maintained for a long time, but the large bell and system was undamaged. He thought, "If that old man comes, I will climb into the bell, he won't find me." He held the candle holders and was looking for sharp objects in the hall, when he suddenly heard a 'du du du' sound from the road, caused by a metal staff, and knew it was Ke Zhen'E and was going to blow out the candles when he thought, "That old man is blind, I don't need to blow it out." The sounds came closer, Ouyang Feng sat up and wanted to transfer all of his body's strength into his right hand, wanting to attack first and cause a violent death. Yang Guo turned the metal carvings on the candle holder up, and guarded Ouyang Feng and thought, although my martial arts skills are low, I will do my best to help stepfather to rid of the old man.

Ke Zhen'E knew that Ouyang Feng had a serious injury and would not be able to travel far; the Iron Spear Monastery was close by and an old hangout of his. He won't stay at an inn or at a family's shelter; he would hide in the monastery. He thought about his five brothers dying at his hands and today he has a chance to get revenge, would he be able to say no? In the midst of the night he woke up and called out, "Guo'er, Guo'er!" and when he heard no reply, he thought he was sound asleep. He didn't check and hurriedly went out. The two dogs outside the house were busy gnawing on the bone that Yang Guo threw at them and didn't bark when they saw him. He slowly made his way to the monastery, and listened carefully. Indeed there was the sound of breathing within the monastery. He shouted out, "Old animal, old man Ke is here, if you've got balls, come out now." As he said this he slammed his walking staff onto the ground. Ouyang Feng was afraid that he will lose the chi in his "dan tian" and didn't move.

Ke Zhen'E called out a few times, and stabbed his walking staff outside the monastery doors. He entered only to hear a clattering noise from above as the incense holder fell, his left foot stepped onto the candleholders metal protrusions and pierced his boots. Ke Zhen'E didn't understand and waved his metal walking stick about, when suddenly there was an extremely loud noise deafening him, he knocked away the incense holder and it rolled onto the floor, luckily the metal protrusions didn't pierce his foot. By his side were some more of those candleholders, one of them was piercing his shoulder. He pulled it out with his left hand and blood poured. He didn't dare to be careless anymore and listened for Ouyang Feng's breathing. His foot sliding across the ground, getting closer step by step, until he was three meters away. He held out his iron walking staff and said, "Old animal, what have you got to say today?" Ouyang Feng had already transferred all his energy into his right hand, when the opposition raises his weapon he would send out a palm, and take Ke Zhen'E with him. Ke Zhen'E knew that his enemy

had suffered a serious injury, but didn't know how serious, he held his ground waiting for the opponent to move first; then he would know how much strength he has. The two of them stood there silently, motionless. Ke Zhen'E could hear his breathing was heavy, his mind suddenly filled with the voices of his stepbrothers Zhu Cong, Han Bao Ju, Nan Xi Ren and others. The voices urged him to act, he couldn't resist and with a loud shout, unleashed "King Qin's Whipping Stone" (qin wang bian shi), sending the iron walking staff smashing downwards.

Ouyang Feng moved like lightning, wanting to strike out his palm, but as he moved his arm half an inch he couldn't hold on and fell down to the floor. He heard the a loud noise, sparks flying everywhere, the iron walking staff smashing down on the bricks of the floor. Ke Zhen'E missed with his first move, and raised his weapon again, and struck out in the direction of Ouyang Feng. The other day, Ouyang Feng just lightly pushed back and managed to force the iron walking staff out of his hand, and forced him to leap over the roof. But today Ouyang Feng's body was weak. He couldn't even use an ounce of his strength; he could only roll on the floor, trying to avoid the strikes. Ke Zhen'E used the "Dropping the Demon" set of strokes, with each stance faster than the last. Ouyang Feng was struggling to avoid the strokes, and eventually was hit by the "Concealed Medicine Poke" (Chu Fu Yao Cha) on the left shoulder.

Yang Guo was listening from the side, and couldn't hide his anguish, he wanted to help his stepfather, but with his level of martial arts, he would just be sending himself to his death. Ke Zhen'E managed to strike Ouyang Feng again; this time on the body. Ouyang Feng deserved what he was getting today, but his internal energy was deep. Though he had no power to attack, he could still avoid and parry some attacks. Only superficial injuries were apparent on him, his joints and his internal organs were still unharmed. Ke Zhen'E was slightly surprised, and thought to himself, that old animal's ability is certainly not simple, every time when it seems like I'm about to hit him, he manages to slip away. He manages to dissipate ninety percent of the power in my hits. If I utilize a soft type of attack, he won't be able to dodge. He then transferred his energy into his staff, and attacked his head. Ouyang Feng moved his head and managed to avoid the attacks for a few times but all of a sudden, he was trapped by the walking staff's wind, and he suffered a blow on the head. He managed to keep a hold of his life.

By luck he found himself within grasping range of Ke Zhen'E and grabbed his chest. Ke Zhen'E moved his walking staff out of reach of the enemy. He could only retaliate with his hands. The both of them rolled down on the floor together. Ouyang Feng didn't dare release his hands, and held on tighter. His left hand reached for his waist, he felt something solid and reached out to grab it. It was a knife. It was Zhang Ah Sheng (One of Ke Zhen'E's stepbrothers) weapon, the slaughtering cow blade, however contrary to its

name; it can't actually be used to slaughter cows. The knife can chop gold and break jade; its sharpness cannot be compared. After Cheng Ahsheng was killed by Chen Xuanfeng in the plains of Mongolia, Ke Zhen'E has kept the knife by his side to remind himself of him, and it never left him. Ouyang Feng went closer in to his body and snatched the knife out; he twisted his left arm, and aimed to pierce his enemy's side. As the knife was about to enter, Ke Zhen'E released his staff, and punched Ouyang Feng with his right hand a few times. Ouyang Feng was dazed, and waved the knife in the direction of the enemy. Ke Zhen'E heard the wind of the knife, and dodged away, only to hear a 'dang' sound, the sound didn't die down; the knife had struck the hall's large bell. Although this thrust by Ouyang Feng didn't carry much force, the knife's blade was extremely sharp, and caused it to quiver.

Yang Guo was standing next to the bell, the tip of the knife was heading for his cheeks. Yang Guo was frightened, his heart jumping to his throat, and quickly scrambled on top of the bell. After this move, Ouyang Feng went behind the bell. The bell's ringing had not diminished so Ke Zhen'E could not hear the breathing sounds. He went to the side and tried to pick up the sounds. The moonlight shone on the hall in the monastery; his hair was a mess, and he was leaning on the staff listening, his appearance frightening. Yang Guo saw what had happened and reached out for the knife, and then thrust it at the bell, causing a loud 'dang' sound, covering their breathing. Ke Zhen'E heard where the sound came from and headed in that direction. Ouyang Feng was still behind the bell. Ke Zhen'E stuck out his walking staff, Ouyang Feng evaded it.

The staff struck the bell and caused another loud deafening noise. Yang Guo felt his eardrums starting to hurt. Ke Zhen'E understood, and didn't aim for the bell. The ringing sound had not disappeared when another noise came from behind, getting clearer. Ouyang Feng was concerned, although Guo Jing is hurt, if the ringing continues, Huang Rong would eventually come and help. While the sound of the bell was deafening, he would take the chance to lightly step away and escape from the back of the hall. But Ke Zhen'E had very sensitive hearing, even with the loud ringing noise; he could still distinguish between light sounds, and heard the steps of Ouyang Feng. He knocked the bell with his staff, to lure out Ouyang Feng; when he is out in the open, he would attack his upper body with his walking staff. Although Ouyang Feng strength is weak at the moment, he has experienced a lifetime of storms and squalls (troubles and battles), how would he not know the tactics and tricks used in battle? When he saw Ke Zhen'E's right shoulder was raised, he knew what was going on, before the iron walking staff was raised, he moved back behind the bell. After he had suffered the serious injury, Ouyang Feng had already found it hard to move; though he has developed a profound level of internal energy in the last ten years, in this life-threatening situation he was unable to call upon it.

Ke Zhen'E called out, "Even if I don't kill you, you are going to die," and went over to the bell. Yang Guo saw the two circling around the bell, if this is kept up, his stepfather will definitely weaken. He suddenly thought of something, and climbed up on top of the bell and waved his hands about, trying to signal with his hands. Ouyang Feng was pre-occupied with his enemy and didn't see this. Only after two more circles did he see Yang Guo, his hands pointing to the floor and telling him to move away. He didn't understand what he meant, but if he wanted him to move away, he must have a plan so he hurried move out the way. Ke Zhen'E didn't move, he first needed to hear which direction his enemy moved in. Yang Guo took off his shoes and threw them to the back of the hall, making two thud sounds. Ke Zhen'E was baffled; he had heard Ouyang Feng was moving towards the doors so how come there was a noise at the back of the hall? When Ke Zhen'E was distracted, Yang Guo grasped the 'Slaughter Cow' knife, and with all his strength chopped at the wooden beam holding the large bell up. The beam was thick, Yang Guo was weak, the precious blade sharp; could he chop the beam in half? However the metal bell was extremely heavy, and after a few chops by the blade, the beam could not support the bell any longer. A creaking sound followed and the beam snapped, the large bell generated a wind as it fell, heading straight down on the Ke Zhen'E's head.

Ke Zhen'E had already heard the wind generated above him, thinking it was strange. The large bell fell down, he couldn't escape but the bell landed straight down on the iron walking staff, the staff held up the bell. As the bell was hindered he took this chance and slipped out of the way. He then heard a metallic snapping noise, and the metal walking staff snapped in half. The bell tipped over and rolled along the ground, hitting Ke Zhen'E in the shoulder, and flinging him out of the hall. He rolled around a few times and eventually landed on his nose, causing a nosebleed, his forehead also had a cut. Ke Zhen'E was blind and couldn't see anything, and didn't know what caused this. He was afraid that there was some strange being in the hall, and got up and escaped.

Ouyang Feng was by the side watching this, his heart able to relax and said, "What a pity, what a pity. Good son, very clever!"

Yang Guo climbed down, pleased with himself, and said, "That old man won't dare to come back."

Ouyang Feng shook his head saying, "He has a profound hatred for me, after a while, he will come back.

Yang Guo said, "We must go quickly."

Ouyang Feng shook his head again and said, “My injury is very serious, I won’t be able to get far.” He had escaped temporarily, but now he felt his bones were coming loose, he couldn’t even move one step.

“What should we do?”

Ouyang Feng thought for a while and said, “There is a way. Break another bell’s beam, and put me underneath it.”

“How would you get out?” asked Yang Guo.

“I’ll be meditating under the bell for seven days. After my strength has returned, I will be able to escape. If the old man returns within these seven days, he doesn’t have the ability to lift the bell up. If Huang Rong doesn’t come, I doubt if there is anyone that can break through. If Huang Rong does come, then the plan may fail.”

Yang Guo thought carefully, and knew apart from this plan, nothing else will work. So he asked carefully again will he be able to escape from the bell without anyone’s help and then said, “You won’t have anything to eat within these seven days, right?”

Ouyang Feng said, “Go and find a basin, and fill it with clean water and place it beside me. There are still a few buns left. This will last for seven days if I eat them slowly.”

Yang Guo went to the kitchen and found a large basin, and then filled it with clean water. He then placed it underneath another hung bell, and supported his stepfather directly underneath it, and sat him down.

Ouyang Feng said, “Son, follow the one called Guo. I will come and find you later on.” Yang Guo agreed and climbed up to the bell, and broke the beam, sending the bell down, covering Ouyang Feng.

Yang Guo shouted out ‘Father’. When he didn’t hear a reply, he knew that he couldn’t hear from within. As he was about to leave, he couldn’t let go and went back to find another basin and filled it with water and placed it next to the bell. He then flipped over and placed his left hand in the bowl, and followed the method to reverse blood flow taught by Ouyang Feng to force some poison out. As he had just begun practicing this skill, he could only force out ten or so drops of blood before his head was full of sweat. Afterwards he ripped off some of the cloth from the statues, and then wrapped it around a rod, dipped it into the blood and water mixture, and covered the bell with it.

He thought that if Ke Zhen'E does return, if he tries to move the bell, he would definitely be poisoned for sure.

Another thing that came to his attention was that his stepfather would definitely suffocate to death under the bell in seven days, so he would use the knife to dig out a brick tile beside the bell, and dig out a hole the size of a fist to allow the circulation of air. As he was digging the hole, the blade struck at another slab of stone underneath the tile and snapped. The blade was sharp, but it was very thin, and as he was digging the precious blade snapped. He didn't know the blade was precious, it wasn't his and he didn't feel it was a pity and threw the knife away. He knelt down on the ground and spoke through the opening, "Father, I'm going now. Come and collect me soon. Be careful when you come out, there is poison on the bell." Yang Guo bent his ear to the opening and hear Ouyang Feng replied weakly, "Good son, I'm not scared of poison; the poison should be scared of me. You be careful. I will definitely come back for you."

Yang Guo sat there for a while not willing to leave yet, but then started to hurry back; worried that Ke Zhen'E will notice that he has gone. When he got back to the room, he saw that Ke Zhen'E had not returned to the room, neither was he outside.

When morning came, he heard someone using a branch knocking on his door. He leapt out of his bed and opened the door. He saw it was Ke Zhen'E supporting himself on a wooden branch, his face grey and pale; he leant over into the room and fell onto the floor. Yang Guo noticed that his hands were black, he indeed did return to find Ouyang Feng. He was pleased that he had fallen into the trap that was left for him and pretended to be concerned, and shouted, "Grandpa Ke, what's the matter?"

Huang Rong and Guo Jing heard the shout, and hurried to see what the matter was; when they saw Ke Zhen'E on the floor they gasped. Guo Jing was still injured and struggled to walk, and so it was Huang Rong who supported Ke Zhen'E onto the bed. She asked, "First master, what did you do?"

Ke Zhen'E shook his head, and didn't reply. Huang Rong saw his hands were black and said angrily, "It was that Li bitch again. Brother Jing, I'll go and battle her." She tied her belt and walked out.

"It wasn't her," said Ke Zhen'E.

Huang Rong returned and asked, "Who was it then?"

Ke Zhen'E couldn't defeat a man who hasn't even got the strength to kill a chicken and it was he in return that was injured. It reflected badly on him. Ke Zhen'E was a stiff-necked man, it was what was called, 'tired of the ginger being old and not spicy', and didn't say a word about his wound. The two knew his behavior, if he wants to say, he will say it. The more they ask the angrier he'll get. It was lucky that the poison only got on his skin; the potency wasn't that strong. He'll feel a bit light headed, after taking a "Nine Flower Jade Dew" pill, he'll be alright.

Huang Rong already planned what they should do; at the moment Guo Jing and Ke Zhen'E are hurt, Li Mochou's poison is trouble, so the children and two wounded must be sent to Peach Blossom Island. Later on she will find Li Mochou and settle this score. They spent the morning resting in the inn, in the afternoon they got on a boat and headed east.

Yang Guo was happy with the fact that Huang Rong did not attempt to find Ouyang Feng and thought, "Father was scared that Auntie Guo will come and search for him. Auntie Guo is such a beautiful lady, could it be that she is more powerful than Ke Zhen'E?"

The boat had traveled for half a day, the sky now getting dark. The boat anchored by the shore, the owners of the boat preparing the rice for supper. Guo Fu saw that Yang Guo had ignored her when she wanted to talk and argue with him. She sat by the window, and looked out. Under the shade of willow trees were two boys sobbing, it looked like the two Wu brothers. Guo Fu shouted out, "Hey, what are you doing there?"

Wu Xiuwen replied, "We are crying, can't you see?"

Guo Fu said, "What's the matter, did your mother beat you?"

Wu Xiuwen said, "My mum's dead!"

Huang Rong gasped when she heard this and leapt onto the shore. She saw the boys sobbing over their mother. Madam Wu's face was completely black, she had died a long time ago. Huang Rong asked for news of Wu Santong and Wu Dunru replied, "We don't know where he went."

Wu Xiuwen said, "Mother sucked the poison out of father, a lot of black blood came out. Father got better, while mother died. When father saw that mother had died, he went mad again. We called after him, but he ignored us and went away." They cried as they said this.

Huang Rong thought, “Madam Wu sacrificed herself for her husband, she is a great woman.” She asked, “Are you hungry?” The boys nodded their heads. Huang Rong sighed and ordered the boat keeper to take the boys on board and feed them. When they reached a town, she bought a wooden coffin for Madam Wu, and prepared her body for it. She bought a piece of land and buried her at dawn. The brothers sobbed in front of the grave.

Guo Jing said, “Rong’er, the two boys have lost their parents, why don’t we take them back to Peach Blossom Island and we’ll care for them.” Huang Rong agreed, and took the boys under her wing. They traveled on the boat until they reached the sea, and then hired a large boat and headed east, towards Peach Blossom Island.



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