

## Foxs' Wuxia

Wuxia Fan Translation

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## SDXL Chapter 22



### Chapter 22 – The Baby Girl of the City in Danger

*Translated by Noodles*



*The golden wheel was shot low to the ground. As it got closer and closer, Yang Guo had no other option but to use his sword to repel the wheel. He knew that he had no strength left and knew that it was nigh on impossible for him to succeed but he had no choice but to give it his all. The wheel was now just two feet away from the horse with the wheel generating a soul shaking noise.*

Just as Guo Jing and Yang Guo thought they had ran out of luck, the Mongolian soldiers and horses suddenly started to disperse. An old crippled man with a metal crutch in his left hand and a hammer in his right advanced towards them. He called out, “Master Yang, escape quickly, I’ll hold them off.”

Yang Guo took a glance at him and recognized it was one of Peach Blossom Island's disciples Feng Mofeng. He was extremely surprised by this event, but in this perilous danger, he didn't give it much thought as to how he suddenly appeared.

When Feng Mofeng was forced into working for the Mongolian army, he used the chance to assassinate members of the Mongolian army and had already killed a Noyan and a Jagen leader. He was very careful in making his moves and was yet to be discovered. Today, he heard a great commotion and so he headed up to a high vantage point to see what was happening. He saw that Guo Jing and Yang Guo were surrounded, so he fought his way in to help them. His iron hammer caused gusts of wind as it was swung and those who met it died instantly. A bloody trail was left in his wake.

Yang Guo was delighted with this development and swung his sword to try to break out. However, Fawang used his wheel to intercept Yang Guo's and Feng Mofeng's stances at the same time. Whenever Xiaoxiang Zi's rod came down towards Guo Jing's back, Fawang would allow Yang Guo to save Guo Jing. If Fawang used his wheel to smash down on Guo Jing, Xiaoxiang Zi would block his attack with his rod. If it wasn't for the two fighting each other, and even if Yang Guo gave his life in trying to protect Guo Jing, Guo Jing would have been dead long ago.

When Khubilai came up with the reward of being 'Mongolia's Greatest Warrior', he had hoped that his men would use all their efforts to achieve this goal; but instead they fought with each other, which was something that he did not predict.

Guo Jing's life might be safe for the time being, but the Mongolian army had positioned themselves all around him like an iron wall, presenting a metal boundary. Fawang and Xiaoxiang Zi were fighting for first place. Nimoxing bit down on his tongue as he held in his pain and looked for a chance to attack, attacking with vicious stances here and there.

By now, Yang Guo and Guo Jing had been battling within the army for over an hour. The sun was now skewed to the side. Fawang suddenly changed his stances and his wheel collided with Yang Guo's long sword. The 'Gentleman Sword' was a blade that can cut through metal like butter; as soon as the weapons collided, a hole was made in the golden wheel. Fawang followed the momentum and kept on going forward. The wheel caused an extremely strong pressing wind over them. Yang Guo was afraid that if he moved out of the way, Guo Jing would be injured so he used his sword to take this attack head on. The wheel slanted slightly and a light 'chi' sound was heard; Yang Guo's right forearm was slashed open. Though the wound wasn't deep, it had cut a vein and

blood rushed out. As he fought, he felt his legs going limp and was running out of breath; under these attacks, how could he stop defending in order to stop his bleeding?

Feng Mofeng swung his metal hammer viciously and used every ounce of strength in his efforts to help Yang Guo and Guo Jing. But Fawang's left palm blocked and attacked, reducing Feng Mofeng to a state where he could only defend. If Feng Mofeng hadn't fought for his life, he wouldn't have even been able to save himself.

Xiaoxiang Zi saw his chance had come; he first sent Nimoxing's iron snake to the side and then leapt up into the air. He pointed his rod towards Guo Jing and was about to release the poisonous dust.

Yang Guo was shocked by this and quickly stretched out his left hand to take the rod. At the same time, he sent his sword forward. At that time, his body was completely open; all Fawang had to do was strike him lightly with his golden wheel and he would have been sent to his death. But Fawang wanted to use Yang Guo to send Xiaoxiang Zi away. Fawang forced Feng Mofeng away with his palm and sent out his arm to grab Guo Jing's back. Capturing him alive would be a great achievement. Xiaoxiang Zi did not predict that Yang Guo would actually risk his life to stop him. Before he came back to ground his rod had been grabbed and he couldn't exert any force while in midair. A white light flashed across his eyes as the sword arrived at his chest. He could do nothing but let go of his rod and move out of the way to save his life.

Feng Mofeng smashed forwards with both his hammer and crutch at Fawang's back. Two 'dang dang' sounds were heard as Fawang used his wheel to repel the attack. Feng Mofeng's joints bled from the force. Fawang's left hand went out for Guo Jing's back. Feng Mofeng gave a howl and abandoned his weapons and grabbed Fawang's back. The two fell down onto the ground. Fawang was furious and struck his shoulder with a palm. Feng Mofeng felt as if his insides were turned upside down. Feng Mofeng saw how cruel and vicious the Mongolians were from the camp and saw how they used his citizens in their attack on Xiangyang. He also saw how Guo Jing fought with his life to drive the enemy away. He didn't know Guo Jing personally and had no idea that Guo Jing was his Master's son-in-law; he just knew that if this person dies, Xiangyang would fall. So he made up his mind; he was going to endure anything in order to get Guo Jing out of danger. Fawang's palms came out with unspeakable speed. Feng Mofeng's bones were broken and his innards severely damaged but still, Feng Mofeng did not let go and dug deep into Fawang with his ten fingers.

The Mongolian soldiers had decided to watch from the side because they thought that Fawang would definitely be able to handle the situation. But when they saw him fall

down to the ground, they all rushed forward. In such a situation, even if Guo Jing was perfectly healthy and if his and Yang Guo's martial arts were even better, how could they fight off the rush of hundreds of soldiers?

Yang Guo sighed to himself, "It's over...it's over!" He swung out Xiaoxiang Zi's rod wildly when suddenly there was a light 'po' sound; black dust spurted out from the end of the rod. The ten soldiers that were directly in front of the smoke fell down immediately. In his wild movements, Yang Guo had accidentally triggered the release of the poisonous dust. Yang Guo was slightly startled but immediately understood. He carried Guo Jing and made his way forward; whenever Mongolian soldiers came to meet him, he would trigger the poison and send more men to the ground with the poison.

Though the Mongolian soldiers were great in battle, they were all superstitious. When they saw how their own men suddenly fell down dead to the ground as soon as black smoke came from the rod, they shouted, "His rod is covered by an evil spell, everyone back!"

Khubilai's personal guards were extremely brave and regarded his orders above all else; even though they saw how dangerous it was for them, they still went forward to catch Yang Guo and Guo Jing. Yang Guo sent out some more poisonous dust and immediately sent another ten or so men to their deaths.

Yang Guo whistled and summoned his horse. His yellow horse stretched its legs and flew towards him. Yang Guo used every last ounce of his strength to place Guo Jing on the horse's back but felt his limbs were all drained of energy. He had no strength left to get onto the horse. He could only strike the horse's back lightly and call out, "Quick, leave quickly!" However, the yellow horse was very loyal to its master; when it saw that Yang Guo had no strength to get on, it raised its head and neighed. Yang Guo saw that the Mongolian soldiers were closing in on him; though the poison in the rod was lethal, there's a limit to the amount of poison it holds. He raised his sword wanting to jab his horse to force it to leave, but in the end he couldn't bear to. He called out, "Leave!" He poked the horse with the end of the rod. Because his strength had been drained in battle, his poke wasn't accurate and actually struck Guo Jing. Guo Jing had been unconscious but with this sudden poke, he opened his eyes. He immediately picked up Yang Guo and helped him onto the horse. The yellow horse gave out a joyous neigh and galloped away.

However, the sounds of horns followed closely behind them. Guo Jing gave a whistle and his red horse galloped towards him. The Mongolian army was right behind them. The red horse galloped to the yellow horse's side and kept nuzzling Guo Jing. Yang Guo

knew that although his yellow horse was a fine animal, it was still inferior to the red horse. He drew a deep breath and with Guo Jing in his arms, leaped on the red horse. Just at this time, he heard a 'ming ming' sound; Fawang's golden wheel was flying towards them. Yang Guo's heart ached as he thought, "Feng Mofeng has died at Fawang's hands."

His thoughts stilled as the wheel came closer and closer. Yang Guo lowered himself to the horse's back and hoped the wheel would brush past him. But the wheel sounded from below; it was actually aiming for the horse's legs.

After Fawang had killed Feng Mofeng, he stood up and saw that Yang Guo and Guo Jing had already gotten onto their horses; it was too late to chase after them. He immediately shot out his golden wheel low to the ground. Fawang knew that if the wheel struck Yang Guo and kills him, the red horse would still escape with Guo Jing. Only by cutting off the horse's legs would he have a chance to succeed in his task.

As the wheel got closer and closer, Yang Guo had no other option but to use his sword to repel the wheel. He knew that he had no strength left and knew that it was nigh on impossible for him to succeed but he had no choice but to give it his all. The wheel was now just two feet away from the horse with the wheel generating a soul shaking noise. He hung his sword down to protect the horse's legs but who would have thought that as soon as the horse realized it's life was in danger, it galloped faster and faster. The wheel remained two feet away from the horse. Yang Guo was delighted as he knew that the wheel would only get slower and slower. Indeed, a little while later the distance between the wheel and the horse's legs increased to three feet, to four feet, to five feet; the gap was getting larger and larger. Eventually a 'dong' sound was heard as the wheel landed on the ground.

Yang Guo was filled with delight, but then he heard a pitiful neigh behind him. He turned around and saw his yellow horse, its stomach filled with arrows, still staring lovingly at its master. Yang Guo's heart was filled with sadness and tears fell from his eyes. The red horse galloped like the wind and traveled like a shooting star. In just a short while, it had left the pursuing army behind.

Yang Guo held Guo Jing and asked, "Uncle Guo, are you okay?" Guo Jing let out a moan. Yang Guo checked his breathing and felt that it was still deep and strong; he knew that he was okay. He was now able to relax and he could hold on no longer. He fell into a semiconscious state on the back of the horse and let it go wherever it pleased.

Suddenly, countless numbers of soldiers and horses appeared in front of him. He immediately swung his sword and called out, “Don’t harm my Uncle Guo!” He cut and slashed wildly around him. He couldn’t see clearly as faces appeared here and there. After a bout of slashing around wildly, he eventually fell off the horse. But he was still calling out, “Kill me, kill me, it was my fault, don’t harm my Uncle Guo.” Suddenly, he felt as if the world was spinning around him and he eventually fell unconscious.

Some time passed before he woke up again. He called out, “Uncle Guo, Uncle Guo; are you okay? Don’t harm my Uncle Guo!”

A tender voice by his side said, “Guo’er, relax, Uncle Guo will be okay after some rest.”

Yang Guo turned his head and saw Huang Rong with an extremely grateful expression. Behind her was someone with tears in her eyes, someone staring at him tenderly and lovingly; it was Xiao Longnu.

Yang Guo called out in alarm, “Gu Gu, why are you here? Have you been captured as well? Quick, run away; just leave me.”

Xiao Longnu said, “Guo’er, you’re back, don’t be afraid. We’re all safely back in Xiangyang.”

Yang Guo let out a relieved sigh. His limbs felt lifeless and he closed his eyes again.

Huang Rong said, “He’s awake now, he’ll be fine. You stay here with him.”

Xiao Longnu agreed but her eyes never left Yang Guo. Huang Rong stood up and was about to leave the room when suddenly a noise came from the rooftops. Her expression changed slightly and with a wave of her left palm, she distinguished the light in the room.

When Yang Guo saw the room plunging into darkness, he sat up in alarm. His injuries were just superficial; the reason he had fainted was due to losing a lot of blood and from over exerting himself in the heated battles. He had rested for half a day now and Huang Rong had fed him the Peach Blossom Island’s great medicine the Nine Flowers Jade Dew Pill. With him being young and in great shape, he had almost recovered completely by now. When he heard that someone was on the rooftop, he immediately became alert and was about to get up to face this enemy. Xiao Longnu blocked his way and unsheathed the ‘Gentleman Sword’ that was beside the bed. She whispered, “Guo’er, don’t move, I’ll guard here.”

A laugh came from the rooftop followed by, “I have come to deliver a letter, is it the custom for the Song to greet their guests in the dark? If you are busy, might I come back later?” It was Fawang’s disciple, Huo Dou.

Huang Rong said, “It is the custom of us Song to meet esteemed guests in broad daylight; we meet those who sneak about under the cover of darkness with darkness.”

Huo Dou’s voice choked up and he lightly leapt down to the courtyard. He said, “I have a letter for Guo Jing, Hero Guo.”

Huang Rong opened the door and said, “Please enter.”

Huo Dou did not dare to enter the pitch-black room and stood outside the door. He said, “The letter is here, please take it.”

Huang Rong said, “You described yourself as a guest so why don’t you enter?”

Huo Dou chuckled, “A gentleman in a dangerous place should prepare for the worst.”

Huang Rong said, “What kind of gentleman views others with the mind of a scoundrel?”

Huo Dou’s face flushed. Dealing with someone with such expertise with words as Chief Huang, it would be difficult for him to gain any sort of upper hand so he decided it would be better to keep quiet. He stood outside the door in silence with the letter held out in his hand.

Huang Rong struck out suddenly with her bamboo rod and attacked Huo Dou’s front. Huo Dou, startled by this sudden move, leapt back a few feet, but something was wrong; his hands were empty. Huang Rong had placed the end of her rod on the letter and trapped it with her rod while Huo Dou was jumping back. She was soon to give birth and didn’t want to see any outsiders. This is why she kept away from her enemy. After that shock, Hou Dou became despondent; the confidence he had gained from entering the city had all but disappeared. He shouted loudly, “I have delivered the letter; we will meet again tomorrow night.”

Huang Rong thought, “If I let you come and go as you please from the city, how will that make us look?” She picked up a teapot from the table and shook it to the side; a spout of hot tea shot outwards.



Huo Dou had been on his guard for projectiles shot at him. But the water from the teapot came out without any kind of noise; it wasn't like your typical projectile that cuts the air with a sound. By the time he found out something was wrong, his neck, chest and right arm was covered with the tea. He felt a hot tingling sensation and called out 'ai ya' in shock while leaping aside. Huang Rong stood by the door and while Huo Dou's feet were still unsteady, she stuck out her bamboo rod and used the "Dog Beating Stick Technique's" 'trip' formulae. She flicked the stick up and sent Huo Dou to the ground. Huo Dou leapt up but the rod strokes of this particular 'trip formulae has each stroke faster than the last. If you are able to dodge the first stroke, you might then be able to think of a way to evade the next. Hou Dou had already been sent to the ground with the first stroke, how easy was it going to be for him to avoid the next? He felt as if his feet had stepped into a pool of slippery mud; he also seemed to have found himself caught in between countless numbers of tree branches and found he was tripping up as soon as he picked himself up from the ground.

Huo Dou's martial arts were by no means weak; if he fought Huang Rong fair and square he would eventually find himself to be a level lower than Huang Rong. Were his martial arts higher he wouldn't have been tripped up so pathetically as this just after one stance. The reason he was in such a state was because he thought that the tea that landed on him was some kind of lethal poison. Just as he was fearfully thinking about what kind of horrible death the poison would bring him, Huang Rong suddenly attacked. Once the first attack succeeded, there was no way to defend against the second and in the pitch-blackness, he was tripped up until he was black and blue. Just at this moment, the Wu brothers arrived after hearing all the commotion.

Huang Rong shouted, "Capture that little bastard!"

In his moment of danger, Huo Dou became alert. He knew that if he picked himself up again he would definitely be sent down to the ground again so he called 'ai ya' and pretended to have a serious fall. He lay on the ground and didn't make a move. The Wu brothers threw themselves forward to capture him. Huo Dou's metal fan suddenly came out and then 'da da'; he had sealed the pressure point on their legs. He pushed the two forward at the same time to block Huang Rong's rod stances and leapt up to the top of the wall. He made a bow with his hands and said, "Chief Huang, terrific rod techniques, but it's a shame about your disciples!"

Huang Rong chuckled, "With that poison on your body, who in their right mind would come and touch you?"

As soon as Huo Dou heard this, he was scared witless, “This poison burns the skin and carries the scent of tea with it; what kind of weird powerful poison is this?”

Huang Rong knew what he was thinking and said, “You’ve been poisoned yet you don’t even know what the name of the poison is. I guess if you die, you won’t die in peace. Fine, there’s no harm in telling you. This poison is called ‘The Tea of Bones from Midnight to Noon’.”

Huo Dou mumbled, “The Tea of Bones from Midnight to Noon?”

Huang Rong said, “Correct. If even one drop of this poison lands on your skin, your whole body will dissolve away to your bones. From midnight you won’t see noon, from noon you won’t see midnight. You’ve still got about twelve hours to live; you better make the most of it.”

Huo Dou knew that this Chief Huang has great martial arts and possesses an unfathomable mind. Her father Huang Yaoshi is a greatly educated man and with the name Yao Shi (translates as master of medicine), he of course must be especially skilled in medicine. With Huang Rong’s intelligence and her family’s skills, to make a poison such as ‘The Tea of Bones from Midnight to Noon’ would be easier than turning one’s palm. He stood on top of the wall in a daze, not knowing whether to go back and wait for his death or to lower his head and beg her for the antidote.

Huang Rong knew that Huo Dou was not an idiot, if a little time passes he will see through this little deception so she said, “I had no feuds with you to begin off with, if it wasn’t for your little act of disrespect towards me just now, I wouldn’t have condemned you to your death.”

When Huo Dou heard these words he knew he had a chance to live. He abandoned his pride and leapt down from the wall. He bowed to the ground and said, “I have been disrespectful to Chief Huang, I ask her for her forgiveness.”

Huang Rong hid behind the door and with a light flick of a finger; she shot out a Nine Flowers Jade Dew Pill. She said, “Take it quickly.”

Huo Dou caught it and didn’t waste anytime in taking this life saving pill. He felt a clear essence entering his dan tian and noticed an extremely relaxing feeling throughout his body. He made another bow and said, “Thank you Chief Huang for the antidote!” By now, all his arrogance had disappeared and he retreated slowly to the wall before flipping over and making a swift exit out of the city.

Huang Rong watched him leave and then went over to the Wu brothers and unsealed their pressure points. She then recalled Huo Dou's words; 'Chief Huang, terrific rod techniques but it's a shame about your disciples!' Though she managed to get rid of Huo Dou with her intelligence, she felt no pride. She may have used the exquisite and deft "Dog Beating Stick Technique" to trip Huo Dou up but her womb still acted up. She sat down on a chair and rested for a while.

Xiao Longnu lit the candles. Huang Rong opened the letter to see:

To Hero Guo from the First Protector of Mongolia Jinlun Fawang;

To be able to meet and admire Hero Guo was a great honour. I had hoped to converse through the night but our meeting was cut short. What did I do to make you leave in such a hurried manner? I will come and visit Hero Guo tomorrow. Until then..."

Huang Rong was alarmed and handed the letter over to Yang Guo and Xiao Longnu to read. She said, "The walls of Xiangyang may be solid but how can it hold out skilled fighters? The enemy is planning an attack but your Uncle Guo is hurt and I can't do much, what are we going to do?"

Yang Guo said, "Uncle Guo..."

Xiao Longnu looked at him with a scolding glance. Yang Guo knew she was angry with him for risking his life and saving Guo Jing. He closed his mouth and didn't say a word.

Huang Rong began to get suspicious and said, "Miss Long, Guo'er has not fully recovered yet, we can only rely on Brother Zhu Ziliu and you to fight off the enemy."

Xiao Longnu has always said whatever that was on her mind and said coldly, "I will protect Guo'er and only him; other people's lives are nothing to do with me."

Even more questions appeared in Huang Rong's mind but she didn't say much about it. She said to Yang Guo, "Uncle Guo said that it was thanks to your efforts that you managed to escape."

Yang Guo thought about the many times he had wanted to kill Guo Jing and felt ashamed of himself. He said, "I'm useless, it was my fault that Uncle Guo has become injured."

Huang Rong said, “Just rest. When the enemy comes, we’ll win by our wits if we can’t win with force.” She turned to Xiao Longnu and said, “Miss Long, come with me, I have something to say to you.”

Xiao Longnu hesitated, “He...” Since Yang Guo returned to Xiangyang, Xiao Longnu had not left his bedside. When she heard Huang Rong summon her, she was afraid that something might happen to Yang Guo.

Huang Rong said, “The enemy said that they will attack tomorrow, nothing is going to happen tonight. I have something to say to you about Guo’er.” Xiao Longnu nodded and whispered instructions to Yang Guo to be careful before leaving the room.

Huang Rong took her to her own room and closed the doors. She said, “Miss Long, you want to kill my husband and I, don’t you?”

Xiao Longnu might be naïve but she was by no means a fool. Xiao Longnu had made her mind up about killing the Guo couple to save Yang Guo’s life. So no matter what Huang Rong would ask her, there was no way she was going to reveal anything to her. However, Huang Rong knew what she was like so she went straight to the point and asked her just like that. Xiao Longnu was shocked by this and hesitated, “I... I... you treat us so well, why should I... why do I want to kill you.”

Huang Rong saw her face had become red and knew that she had guessed correctly so she continued, “You don’t have to keep it from me, I knew long ago. Guo’er blames us for his parents’ deaths and wants to kill us to avenge his father. You love Guo’er so of course are going to help him achieve his wish.”

Xiao Longnu could not deny any of this and kept silent for a while. She eventually gave a sigh and said, “I really don’t understand.”

Huang Rong said, “Don’t understand what?”

Xiao Longnu said, “Why did Guo’er risk his life today to save Master Guo? He and Jinlun Fawang and the others had agreed to kill master Guo together.”

When Huang Rong heard this, she was extremely shocked. She knew that Yang Guo was up to no good but she never could have imagined that he would actually hook up with the Mongolians. She didn’t let any of this show on her face and pretended that she knew all along and said, “It must be because of how well Master Guo has treated him. In the end, Guo’er could not make himself go through with it.”

Xiao Longnu nodded and said mournfully, “There’s nothing more I can say. Since he has decided to let his life slip away then so be it. I have always known that he is the kindest person in the world. He’d rather die than hurt his enemy.”

Many thoughts ran through Huang Rong’s mind but she could not figure out what her words meant. When she saw Xiao Longnu’s mournful expression, she comforted, “There are still some things you don’t know about the death of Guo’er’s father, we’ll clear everything up with him later on. His injuries are not serious, all he needs are just a few days rest, there’s no need for you to be upset.”

Xiao Longnu stared at her for a while before bursting into tears and sobbing, “He... he’s only got seven days to live, how’s resting a few days going to help?”

Huang Rong was stunned and quickly asked, “What is this about only seven days to live? Quickly tell me, we’ll find a way to save him.”

Xiao Longnu shook her head but eventually she revealed all; the events of the Passionless Valley, how Yang Guo fell victim to the Passion Flower, how Qiu Qianchi gave him half the antidote only and telling them to trade the other half of the antidote for the lives of the Guo couple in a deadline of just eighteen days. She told of the suffering that one goes through when poisoned by the Passion Flower and how the other half pill is the only antidote that exists in the entire world. The more that Huang Rong heard, the more shocked she became. She could never have guessed that Qiu Qianren and Qiu Qianzhang would have a sister named Qiu Qianchi and that this sister would end in such a state.

After explaining everything, Xiao Longnu said, “He’s only got seven days left, even if we kill you and your husband tonight there’s no guarantee that we’ll make it back in time, why should I still want to try to harm you? I just want to save Guo’er; I don’t care about avenging his father.”

Huang Rong had previously thought that the only reason that Yang Guo was up to no good was because of his father’s death, but who would have thought that there were so many other reasons buried within. Saving Guo Jing was just the same as deciding to kill himself. A person that can do such a heroic deed as this is really something to commend.

She stood up slowly and paced back and forth across the room. Even with her intelligence, she could not come up with something to get out of the pressing situation they were in; in just a few hours time, the enemy will come and attack. She may have con-

soled Yang Guo by saying that 'if they can't win with force then they'll win by wits' but how? How?

Xiao Longnu had just one thing on her mind; Yang Guo. Huang Rong however had two; her husband and her daughter. She was thinking, "How can I keep brother Jing and Fu'er safe?" A thought went through her mind, "Guo'er could risk his life for others so why can't I?" She then turned around to Xiao Longnu and said, "Miss Long, I have a way to save Guo'er, will you agree to it?"

Xiao Longnu trembled in delight in reaction to this and said, "I... I... even if I have to die... what's death, even if it's something ten times worse than death... I'm... willing..."

Huang Rong said, "Fine, only you and I can know about this, you must not let it slip out."

Xiao Longnu agreed instantly.

Huang Rong said, "Tomorrow, you and Guo'er will protect master Guo; once the danger is over, I will give you my head and you can ride the red horse to get to Passionless Valley and obtain the Passionless Pill."

Xiao Longnu was stunned. She asked, "What?"

Huang Rong said softly, "You value Guo'er more than you value your life, don't you? As long as he's safe and well, you will be happy even if you're dead, right?"

Xiao Longnu nodded, "Yes, how do you know?"

Huang Rong gave a smile and said, "It's because I love my husband the same way as you love Guo'er. You don't have a child so you don't know that a mother's love for her child is also as strong. I just want you to protect the safety of my husband and daughter, what else could I want?" Xiao Longnu didn't reply.

Huang Rong said, "If you and Guo'er don't fight together, we won't be able to fight off Jinlun Fawang. Guo'er saved my husband and I on many occasions, can't I save him just once? The red horse can run a thousand li (500km/310miles) in a day; you will be able to reach Passionless Valley within three days. Let me tell you, Qiu Qianzhang and Guo'er's father were harmed by me alone, it has nothing to do with Master Guo. Once Qiu Qianchi sees my head, she will have no choice but to hand over the antidote even if she feels it's not enough. Afterwards, it would be great if you two can help to defend the

country; but even if you decide to live in some secluded place by yourselves, I will still be touched.”

It was clear, there was no other way. In the past few days, Xiao Longnu had been trying to come up with a way to kill Guo Jing and Huang Rong to save Yang Guo. But after hearing these words from Huang Rong’s own mouth, she felt uncomfortable and kept on shaking her head, “We can’t, we can’t!”

Huang Rong was about to explain again when suddenly Guo Fu’s voice came from the door, “Mother, mother, are you there?” Her voice sounded urgent.

Huang Rong was shocked and asked, “Fu’er, what is it?”

Guo Fu opened the door and threw herself straight into her mother’s arms, ignoring the fact that Xiao Longnu was there. She called out, “Mother, the Wu’s are...” She burst into tears.

Huang Rong creased her brows and said, “What is it now?”

Guo Fu choked, “They... they are fighting outside the city.”

Huang Rong was furious and shouted, “Fighting? They are fighting each other?”

Guo Fu had rarely seen her mother get so angry and was frightened herself. She mumbled, “Yes, I told them to stop but they didn’t listen... they said... they said they were going to fight to the death. They said only one would return... even if the loser doesn’t die, they will not come back to... to see me.”

The more Huang Rong heard the angrier she got. The lives of the army and the people of the city were at stake here and these two brothers were actually fighting each other over a girl. Her anger disturbed her womb causing her great pain; sweat could be seen on her forehead. She lowered her voice and said, “It must be your doing, tell me everything now.”

Guo Fu glanced at Xiao Longnu and became red. She called out, “Mother!”

Xiao Longnu was longing for Yang Guo and had no time to hear about this matter. She turned around and left the room to be with Yang Guo. Her mind was pondering Huang Rong’s words.

Guo Fu waited for Xiao Longnu to leave the room before saying, “Mother, it was entirely my fault that the two went to assassinate Khubilai. Father ending up hurt trying to get them was my fault. If I don’t tell you all about it, how can I face my mother and father?” She then told her mother about how both brothers were trying to please her and how she suggested going to assassinate Khubilai. Anger filled Huang Rong but she could not let it out, she just rolled her eyes at her with displeasure.

Guo Fu said, “Mother, what shall I do? Each of the brothers has their own good points, how can I choose one over the other? Isn’t my suggestion about killing our enemy what you and father want? Whose fault is it that they are so useless and got captured immediately?”

Huang Rong said, “The Wu’s martial arts aren’t the best, you know that.”

Guo Fu said, “What about Yang Guo? He’s only a few years older than them, how did he battle Fawang and break out of the camp at the same time and never got caught?” Huang Rong knew that her daughter had been spoiled ever since she was born and so even at times when Guo Fu knew that she was wrong, she would still try to argue to get her way. Huang Rong did not inquire further about this matter and just said, “They’ve come back now, why are they fighting outside the city?”

Guo Fu said, “Mother, it’s your fault; it’s because you said they are shameful disciples.”

Huang Rong was shocked and said, “When did I say that?”

Guo Fu said, “I heard from the Wu’s that when Huo Dou came with the letter, you told them to capture him but instead they had their pressure points sealed. You then blamed them for being useless.”

Huang Rong gave a sigh and said, “If they can’t compete with others, what can I do? Huo Duo was the one who called them shameful disciples.”

Guo Fu said, “Even so, you didn’t argue with him and just stayed silent. The two couldn’t accept it and started arguing amongst themselves, saying how it was each other’s fault. One blamed the other for being too slow and one blamed the other for getting in the way. The argument became heated and soon they drew their swords. I said ‘If you fight in the city and let others see, what’ll happen then? Anyway, father is still recovering; if you bring any more trouble to him I will never see either of you again.’ They then said, ‘Fine, we’ll fight outside the city.’”



Huang Rong stayed silent for a while before saying with anger, “I’ve got much more pressing matters on my mind at the moment. If they want to fight then let them fight all they want.”

Guo Fu hugged her elbow and said, “Mother, if either of them gets injured, what then?”

Huang Rong replied, “If the two were injured while trying to fight off the enemy then they deserve our care. But they deserve to die if they are fighting each other.” Guo Fu saw that her mother had an angry expression on her face. This was completely different to the way she normally talked to her so she didn’t dare say anything else. She left the room and closed the doors.

It was now dawn. Light was coming through the windows; Huang Rong was alone in her room. Though she was angry with the Wus, she was still concerned about them; after all, she had watched them grow up over all these years. Her thoughts then turned to the impending danger and tears flowed from her eyes. She was worried about Guo Jing’s injury so she went to see how he was.

Guo Jing was sitting on his bed in meditation when she entered the room. Though his face was pale, his breathing was even and deep. She knew that all he needed was to rest for a few days and he would be back to full health. Memories of when they were younger came flooding back. She thought of the time when they recuperating in Linan.

Guo Jing slowly opened his eyes and saw that his wife had been crying. A smile appeared on his face as he said, “Rong’er, you know my injury is not serious, what are you worried about? You need more rest than me.”

Huang Rong smiled, “Yes. My womb has been acting up over the past few days. Your Polu or Guo Xiang is about to see their father.” She was afraid that Guo Jing would worry if he knew about Huo Dou and the letter so she kept it from him, as well as what the Wus were up to.

Guo Jing said, “Tell the Wu brothers to be on extra alert when patrolling the city, the enemy knows that I’m injured and will most probably take this opportunity to attack.” Huang Rong nodded. Guo Jing continued, “How’s Guo’er’s injury?”

Before Huang Rong could reply, the sound of footsteps followed by Yang Guo’s voice could be heard from outside the room, “Uncle Guo, I just have superficial injuries, I’m fine now after taking Auntie Guo’s Nine Flowers Jade Dew Pill.” He then opened the door and entered the room. He continued, “I’ve been to the city walls and took a look

around; everyone is on high alert but the Wus are...” Huang Rong coughed and made a signal to him with her eyes. He immediately understood and said, “The Wus said that it was their fault that you are injured so if the enemy comes to attack, they will fight to the end to repay their debts to you.”

Guo Jing sighed, “After this experience, I hope that the Wus are now wiser and don’t see everything as achievable.”

Yang Guo said, “Auntie Guo, isn’t Gu Gu with you?”

Huang Rong replied, “I had a little chat with her just now, she’s probably gone back to her room for some rest. Ever since you came back, she hasn’t slept a wink.”

Yang Guo gave an ‘en’ sound and assumed that after their little chat, Xiao Longnu must have gone back to see him. She must have just missed him when he went out to take a look around along the city walls. When he first arrived at Xiangyang, he had his mind set on killing the couple. But after the experiences of these past few days and seeing how they risked their lives for the country and how Guo Jing risked his life saving him, he changed his mind and had now decided to repay them by helping them in any way he could. He knew that he only had seven days to live but he didn’t care; as long as he could do one or two good deeds in these few days he could say that he has been able to do something with his life. He knew that while Guo Jing was injured, the enemy would definitely take this opportunity to attack the city. As soon as he recovered, he immediately went along the city walls to survey the current situation.

He was longing for Xiao Longnu and was about to leave the room in search of her when suddenly laughter could be heard from the rooftops about one hundred feet away. Two loud noises followed as gold clashed with silver; Jinlun Fawang had arrived.

Guo Jing’s face changed slightly and he pulled Huang Rong, trying to hide her behind him.

Huang Rong said, “Brother Jing, what’s more important, Xiangyang or us? Are you more important or am I?”

Guo Jing let Huang Rong go and said, “Yes, the country comes first!”

Huang Rong took out her bamboo rod and went over to the door. What she had discussed with Xiao Longnu had yet to reach Yang Guo’s ears, what was he going to do? Will he help to repel the enemy or will he take advantage of the situation to avenge his

father and save his life? His thoughts have always been shrouded in mystery, if he does turn on us it will be even more trouble. Though she was guarding the door, she kept her eye on him.

Though what the Guo couple had said didn't seem much, in Yang Guo's ears, they rang loud and true. Guo Jing's kindness had touched him and he had already decided to pay him back with his life and help him. But as he heard the words 'the country comes first', something stirred in him and he began to remember the teaching of Guo Jing of a few days earlier, "a hero's duty is to serve your country, serve your people," and, "holding your body to the task until your dying day". He saw how deeply the couple loved each other, but even with themselves in such danger, they put the country first. Yet he could not let the death of his father go and he could not let Xiao Longnu out of his mind; when had he ever thought about his country? When had he ever worried about the suffering of his people? He felt extremely ashamed of himself.

Suddenly, a childhood memory came flooding back to him. It was a memory of Huang Rong teaching him on Peach Blossom Island; the teaching was along the lines of 'dying for a righteous cause' and 'giving your life for justice'. It was now clearer to him than ever before. He seemed a little frightened by this, yet at the same time felt inspired. With life and death now on the line, many things that he'd never thought about never cared about suddenly became crystal clear. He seemed to be a different person with this newfound spirit, taller, bigger and brighter.

Many thoughts flickered through his mind. All this had happened in a short space of time. Huang Rong watched as his face turned from confusion to shame, from poignant to resolute but she couldn't fathom what he was thinking.

Suddenly Yang Guo said quietly, "You can relax!" Unsheathing the Gentleman Sword, he made his way to the door.

Jinlun Fawang stood on the rooftop with a wheel in each hand. He laughed, "Brother Yang, how does it feel to be a man who goes back on his word?"

If it were the Yang Guo of old, these words would definitely have angered him, but the present Yang Guo was calm and clear. He thought to himself, "You're right; my mind had never been set until this day. From now on, no matter how long I live, I will never be one who goes back on their word." He laughed, "Fawang, you're right. I don't know what came over me that day; I don't know why I helped Guo Jing escape. But once he got back to Xiangyang, I don't know where he's gone and I can't find him, It's only now

that I've regretted what I've done. Do you know where he is?" He then leapt up to the roof and stood a few feet in front of him.

Fawang squinted, he knew that this little kid was very crafty and didn't know whether he was telling the truth or telling a lie. He laughed, "If you find him, what will you do?"

Yang Guo said, "There's a sword in my hand."

Fawang scoffed, "Huh, you'd actually dare stab him?"

Yang Guo said, "Who said I'd stab him?"

Surprised, Fawang replied, "Who then?"

The Gentleman Sword pierced the air as it came towards Fawang's left side very quickly. At the same time, Yang Guo laughed, "You of course!" This attack came out of nowhere and with great force. With the close distance and being caught unaware, had Fawang's martial arts been just a little lower, like that of Nimoxing and Xiaoxiang Zi, he would surely have died from that attack. Fawang managed to react in time and gathered chi in his left arm and blocked the attack. However, the Gentleman Sword is an extremely sharp blade, his arm was cut by the sword and he suffered a wound inches deep and blood flowed.

Fawang might have known that Yang Guo was sly, but he would never have guessed that he would actually attack him. Getting injured like this just as he entered Xiangyang enraged him and he attacked furiously with the golden wheel in his right hand and at the same time, he threw the silver wheel in his left towards Yang Guo. Yang Guo stood his ground and took three stances before replying with three stances. He laughed, "I owed you one from your attack at the Mongolian camp. Let me tell you something, do you know that there's something special about this sword?"

Fawang couldn't help himself and asked, "What?" as he attacked continuously with his silver wheel.

Yang Guo laughed, "Let me tell you that it's not my fault."

Fawang said, "Damn you punk! What's not your fault?"

Yang Guo said smugly. "This sword came from the Passionless Valley. Gongsun Zhi likes to use a bit of poison here and there so if you want to take revenge, go find him."

Fawang was slightly alarmed as he wondered whether Gongsun Zhi would have laced his swords with poison. Unsettled, his stances become slower.

In reality, what poison was there on the sword? Yang Guo remembered how Huang Rong had scared away Huo Dou with tea and because he knew that his martial arts were not Fawang's match, he tried to use words to disturb his enemy. As soon as he saw it had worked, he concentrated on defending and waited for a chance to pounce. Though Fawang's injury was not serious; even without poison, the wound bled non-stop and as time went by, he would definitely tire. In the current situation, it would be to his advantage to have a quick battle so he hurried his wheels and attacked with even more vigor.

Yang Guo knew what Fawang intended to do and he defended even harder than usual. The power behind Fawang's wheels was getting greater and greater. Suddenly, Fawang's golden wheel attacked upwards and his silver swept across leaving Yang Guo with no other choice but to leap back. Fawang tore a piece of his sleeve off to wrap up his wound but as soon as he did this, Yang Guo came at him again. This game of cat and mouse continued on for a little while before Fawang decided on another plan; as soon as Yang Guo leaps back, he would leap back also and at the same time, throw his silver wheel. This would force Yang Guo to go back even further. This would leave him with enough time to tend to his wound. By the time Yang Guo came back for another attack, Fawang had wrapped up his wound. The fact that there didn't seem to be any discomfort from his wound indicated that the blade was probably not laced with poison; he relaxed.

At that same time, the sounds of clashing weapons could be heard from a southeastern direction. Yang Guo glanced over and saw Xiao Longnu engaged in battle with Xiaoxiang Zi and Nimoxing. In Xiaoxiang Zi's hand was a rod that looked exactly like the one that Yang Guo had snatched away and lost in his daze at the Mongolian camp, did this one contain poison as well? With the Guo couple directly below him, Yang Guo knew that it would be disastrous if Fawang finds them, he needed to lure him away. He must make sure that he didn't reveal his intentions to Fawang so he called out, "Gu Gu, don't worry, I'm coming!" After a few leaps, he landed behind Nimoxing and he sent his sword forward.

Fawang was of course furious with Yang Guo after being wounded by him but he had come to Xiangyang for Guo Jing; Yang Guo could wait. He called out loudly, "Guo Jing, Hero Guo, I've come to visit; why aren't you here to greet your guests?" He called out a few times but there was no reply.

Shouts and calls could be heard from the northwest; it was his two disciples Da'erba and Huo Dou fighting Zhu Ziliu. The fight between Yang Guo and Xiao Longnu with Nimoxing and Xiaoxiang Zi wasn't going to end anytime soon. More and more guards were coming to see what was going on. Fawang knew that these guards wouldn't be able to do anything to him but in numbers, they would make things cumbersome for him, so he called out again, "Guo Jing, oh Guo Jing, you are a so called Hero so why are you hiding away like some coward?"

He was becoming more and more insulting; the calls went on as he attempted to anger Guo Jing into coming out, but still, there was no sign of him. He thought, "There are thousands of homes in Xiangyang, who knows where he's hiding? He's willing to accept this abuse to keep his life, but once his injuries have recovered it will be difficult to kill him." He pondered for a little while and an evil plan hatched. He leapt down from the roof and found where the firewood was kept. He took out his fire knife and splint to the firewood and lit it. He went around and lit several piles of firewood before leaping back up to the roof. Once the fire spreads, Guo Jing will have no choice but to come out.

Though Yang Guo was in battle with Xiaoxiang Zi and Nimoxing, he kept his eye on Fawang. When he saw Fawang suddenly set the place on fire and the rooms north and south of Guo Jing's room started smoldering, he became alarmed and, as he did so, he almost let Nimoxing's Iron Snake strike him across the chest. He quickly moved out of the way. If Guo Jing hadn't broken Nimoxing's ribs a few days earlier, this attack would have left Yang Guo seriously injured.

Yang Guo thought, "That was close!" His thoughts then turned to Guo Jing. "Uncle Guo is seriously injured and Auntie Guo's due to give birth. If the two don't come out then they'll be trapped by the fire, but if they do, they'll run into that bald scoundrel." He had no choice but to leave Xiao Longnu alone to fight the two; so he quickly thrust out two stances towards Xiaoxiang Zi and leapt down. He dived into the fire and flames to look for the Guo couple.

He found Huang Rong by Guo Jing's bed but at same time, smoke was pouring through the windows. Guo Jing had his eyes closed and was meditating; Huang Rong appeared weak and fragile. When she saw him enter, she could only smile. Yang Guo was put at ease a little when he saw that the two weren't alarmed and immediately thought of a plan. He whispered, "I'll lure them away. Take uncle Guo to some place safe and hide." He then lightly took off Guo Jing's hat and leapt out of the window.

Huang Rong didn't know what he was up to but the smoke was getting closer and closer. She reached out to help Guo Jing up and she said, "Let's find another place to

rest.” As soon as she used an ounce of her strength in her arm, she felt a pain in her stomach. She sat down on the bed and cursed, “You little devil, you’ve got a great sense of timing haven’t you; do you want to kill your daddy and mommy?” There were a few days before she was actually due but all the stress and commotions of the past few days had inadvertently sped the birth along.

As soon as Yang Guo leapt out of the window, he saw guards shouting and bellowing everywhere; some were taking buckets of water to dampen the flames, others were firing arrows towards the rooftop. There were some who were slashing their weapons about jumping and cursing. He jumped behind a guard in grey and sealed his pressure point. Yang Guo placed Guo Jing’s hat on him and lifted him onto his back. He then leapt up to the rooftops whilst swirling his sword around.

At this time, Xiao Longnu and Zhu Ziliu who were fighting two opponents each in the form of Nimoxing and Xiaoxiang Zi, and Huo Dou and Da’erba, and were losing. Jinlun Fawang on the other hand was threatening Guo Fu with his wheels, waving them around inches away from her face to force her to reveal her parents’ location. Guo Fu’s hair was in a mess and her sword tip had been smashed to pieces by Fawang’s golden wheel, but she bit down on her tongue and kept on fighting, ignoring Fawang’s questions. She was extremely angry inside as she thought, “If the Wus hadn’t gone off to kill each other, the three of us could take care of this bald scoundrel.” She couldn’t help herself blurting out, “Fine, go and fight amongst yourselves, I don’t care who wins, you’ll just be coming back to a corpse!”

Fawang was dumbfounded by her words; “What? Where is Guo Jing?”

He was waiting for Guo Fu to reply when he spotted Yang Guo making his escape in a northwesterly direction with a person on his back; this had to be Guo Jing. He left Guo Fu and immediately chased after Yang Guo. Huo Dou, Da’erba, Xiaoxiang Zi and Nimoxing had also spotted Yang Guo and they left their opponents and chased after Yang Guo. Zhu Ziliu followed to help Yang Guo protect Guo Jing.

When Yang Guo was on the roof, he ran past Xiao Longnu, winked and smiled at her with a crafty expression on his face. Xiao Longnu knew he was up to something but she didn’t know what. With so many people chasing after him, she wanted to go with him to help him but at the exact same time, she heard crying from below; the crying of a baby.

Guo Fu said with joy, “Mother’s given birth!” and leapt down.

Xiao Longnu was curious and along with the fact that Yang Guo seemed to have things under control, she wanted to take a look at Huang Rong's child, so she too leapt down from the rooftops and followed.

Jinlun Fawang chased after Yang Guo with great effort and saw the distance between them getting smaller and smaller. He thought, "Let's see how you're going get out of this one." He saw that the person on Yang Guo's back was wearing the same hat that Guo Jing was wearing a few days ago and was sure that it was him.

The Ancient Tomb's lightness kung fu that Yang Guo had learned could be said to be unequalled under heaven's skies; even with someone on his back, Fawang would not be able to catch up with him for the time being. Yang Guo ran along the rooftops for a while but he soon heard the footsteps behind him getting closer and closer, so he leaped down into an alleyway and ran around in circles, playing hide and seek with Fawang.

Yang Guo's lightness kung fu may be a level higher than Fawang's but after all, there was someone on his back. If it was in the open, Fawang would have caught up long ago but in the dark and twisty alleyways, he was able to keep one step ahead of Fawang. After circling in the alleyways a few times, Nimoxing, Xiaoxiang Zi and Zhu Ziliu arrived.

Fawang said to Nimoxing, "Brother Nimo, guard the end of the alley, I'll chase the rabbit out of its den."

Nimoxing rolled his eyes and shouted, "Why the hell should I listen to you?"

Fawang felt that Nimoxing was being unreasonable. He leaped up to the rooftops and took a look around; he spotted Yang Guo trying to catch his breath in a dark corner with Guo Jing on his back. He quietly went closer to him overhead, but just as he was about to jump down and catch him, Yang Guo suddenly called out and disappeared into the smoke.

Fawang had set the fire to force Guo Jing out, but now the smoke from the fire was making it difficult for him to catch Yang Guo. As he was looking around, Da'erba suddenly called out, "He's over there!"

Fawang followed his voice to find Da'erba fighting Yang Guo with his golden rod. Fawang went forward to block Yang Guo's escape route. Yang Guo dashed ahead and in



a flash, he was by Da'erba's side. At the same time, Fawang's silver wheel had come shooting out.

The silver wheel came like the wind leaving Yang Guo with no time to dodge; a tearing sound was heard as it brushed past 'Guo Jing', leaving a deep wound.

Fawang was delighted and called out; "Ha! I hit you!"

However, Yang Guo kept on running, ignoring whether or not 'Guo Jing' was still alive or not.

Yang Guo made his way to the end of the alley only to hear a cackling voice, "Little boy, just give up!" It was Xiaoxiang Zi with his rod blocking the end of the alleyway. Yang Guo had no way forward and no way back, he looked upwards and saw a black figure; it was Nimoxing. Yang Guo leapt up but Nimoxing used his Iron Snake to strike downwards, wanting to force him back down into the alleyway. Yang Guo calculated that by now, he had given the Guo couple enough time to escape so he took the guard off his back and threw him towards Nimoxing, calling out, "Here, I'll let you have Guo Jing."

Nimoxing was delighted by this turn of events, he had thought that Yang Guo would give him a lot of trouble, but who would have thought that he would give up and actually give him such a great gift? He stretched out his hands to catch him. Yang Guo sent out a powerful kick that struck him on the behind, sending him down into the alleyway.

Nimoxing called out in delight, "I've got Guo Jing; I'm Mongolia's Greatest Warrior!"

Da'erba and Xiaoxiang Zi were never going to let him take this prize on his own without a fight and both went over to him. The three of them held on to the guard pulling at him with great strength and with such force, that the guard tore into three pieces. The hat fell off the guard's head and only then did the three see that it was not Guo Jing. Stunned, they stood there speechless.

When Fawang saw that Yang Guo had left Guo Jing, he knew something was up so he did not go forward to struggle with the three. Seeing them standing there in a daze, he scoffed, "Idiots!" He continued to go after Yang Guo, thinking that, even if he does not capture Guo Jing, taking Yang Guo's life would be a good day's work.

But by now, Yang Guo was nowhere to be seen, how was he going to find him? Fawang thought for while and came up with a plan, "Yang Guo must have lured us away from

the real target. Guo Jing must have been near where we first started. Fine, I'll lure him out." He made his way to where the flames were strongest.

Yang Guo was hiding underneath a rooftop, observing what was happening. He watched as Fawang headed in Guo Jing's direction. Yang Guo did not know whether Guo Jing had escaped to another place yet so he followed Fawang quietly. Fawang ran back to near the room where Guo Jing was and leapt down. He called out, "So Guo Jing, you're hiding here. Come with me!"

Yang Guo was shocked and was about to jump down when he heard the sounds of clashing weapons. Fawang called out; "Guo Jing, surrender now!" The sounds of clashing metal rang loudly.

Yang Guo rolled his eyes and laughed, "Bald bastard, I almost fell for your trick. Your plan is flawed, why the sound effects? In Uncle Guo's condition, how can he exchange stances with you? And how could he last so long? I'll hide here and watch what else you'll get up to."

Suddenly, Fawang called out, "Yang Guo, this time you die!"

Yang Guo was puzzled, "What's this about me dying this time?" He then knew what Fawang was planning, "Oh, you can't get me to come out so now you're trying to get Uncle Guo to out to save me."

He heard Fawang laughed, "Yang Guo oh Yang Guo, you've lived long enough."

As soon as he finished, a white blur came out of the smoke; a young girl had darted forward and was thrusting her sword towards him.

Yang Guo called out, "Gu Gu, I'm here!" However, Fawang swung his wheels and blocked Xiao Longnu's way. When Fawang was trying to give the impression that Yang Guo was in danger, Xiao Longnu heard him and of course she was concerned so she came dashing out.

Yang Guo rushed forward armed with his sword. After a smile to each other, the two of them used the "Pure Heart of the Jade Maiden Swordplay", trapping Fawang within the boundary of the swords.

Fawang cursed, "What have I done?" Scalding smoke, burning pillars and falling debris were all around them.

Fawang put everything he had behind his wheels to fend off the swords and quickly retreated to the northwestern corner.

Yang Guo said, “We can’t let him escape, we must get rid of him once and for all.” He aimed for Fawang’s back with his sword.

After tasting defeat from the “Pure Heart of the Jade Maiden Swordplay”, he pondered and tried to come up with a way that would defeat it. But this swordplay was deep and profound, the two users became as one and it was like fighting against a great martial artist who had four arms and four legs. He didn’t have much confidence as to whether or not he could actually defeat this swordplay, but in this dangerous situation, he had no other choice but to use the “Cyclone of the Five Wheels” that he had been working on. Though there were still many weaknesses with this technique, he had to give it a try so he searched his body and with a ringing sound, three wheels were in the air and one each in his hands. His five wheels were of different weights and of slightly different sizes, and they come to and from his hands as he pleased; slanting in the air sometimes and suddenly straightening up.

Yang Guo and Xiao Longnu felt their eyes dazzled and were slightly alarmed. Yang Guo sent two stances to the left as he leaned right, Xiao Longnu immediately responded and she too sent out numerous stances to the right with her Lady Sword. She moved with force and shifted towards Yang Guo. The two saw that the enemy’s stances were too strange so they decided to defend first and try to grasp the techniques that Fawang was using before coming up with a counterattack in response.

Fawang’s wheels turned and flew about but the two’s swords flew up and then crossed, forming a net of light. Though the power of the five wheels was great, it was unable to penetrate the swords. He sighed, “Looks like even with using five wheels, I am still unable to defeat their swordplay.” Just as he was feeling dejected, a baby’s crying could be heard coming from Xiao Longnu’s arms. Fawang was shocked at this sudden turn of events but he wasn’t the only one; Yang Guo was extremely surprised. In shock, their stances slowed.

Xiao Longnu patted the child in her arms with her left hand and said, “Don’t cry precious, and watch me drive that monk away.” However, the baby cried even louder.

Yang Guo said, “Its Auntie Guo’s?”

Xiao Longnu nodded and sent a piercing stroke towards Fawang.

Fawang swept his golden wheel across and blocked the attack. He didn't hear Yang Guo and didn't know what Xiao Longnu was doing with a baby in her arms; but since she's got extra baggage, her swordplay will suffer so he threw out his golden wheel and attacked Xiao Longnu.

Yang Guo intercepted the attacks and turned his head towards Xiao Longnu, asking, "Uncle and Auntie Guo are safe?"

Xiao Longnu said, "Chief Huang and Master Guo escaped..." A clashing sound was heard as she parried Fawang's bronze wheel. She continued, "It was becoming dangerous as it looked like the beam in the ceiling was about to collapse so I took the baby girl..."

Yang Guo slashed out at Fawang's right leg and neutralized the lead wheel's attack directed at Xiao Longnu before asking, "It's a girl?" Yang Guo was slightly surprised that it was another girl since Guo Jing had a daughter already.

Xiao Longnu nodded, "It's a girl, here quickly take her..." She was about to hand the baby over to Yang Guo.

But amongst the cries of the baby, Fawang's attacks were becoming more and more ferocious. Three wheels circled in the air and attacked from the above while vicious attacks still came from the wheels in Fawang's hands.

Yang Guo had to use every ounce of strength he had to fend off these attacks, how could he take the baby?

Xiao Longnu called out, "Quickly take the baby and use the red horse to go to..."

Ringling sounds were heard as the two wheels became more and more threatening; Xiao Longnu no longer had time to speak. The two's thoughts were not in line and so they could not unleash the full power of the swordplay.

Yang Guo knew that if he took the baby from Xiao Longnu, she would no longer be distracted so he moved towards her slowly. Xiao Longnu wanted to hand the baby over to him and now that their thoughts were the same, the power of the swordplay suddenly increased. It was as if the sword had lengthened and Fawang was forced backwards two steps. Xiao Longnu handed the baby over to Yang Guo and he was just about to take it when a black blur suddenly came towards them; the iron wheel was sent flying towards the baby. Xiao Longnu was afraid that the baby would get hurt so she loosened

her grip on the baby and used her left hand to catch the wheel. The iron wheel was coming towards her with great force and it was extremely sharp but Xiao Longnu was wearing the golden silk gloves, and as she met the wheel, she followed the force of the wheel and pushed it to the side to dampen the urgent spinning of the wheel before finally pushing up and catching the wheel; it was a great use of the 'Four Liangs Against a Thousand Jin' theory.

By now, Yang Guo had the baby in his hands and when he saw the wheel in Xiao Longnu's hand, he called out, "Wonderful!"

If Fawang had sent the wheel towards Xiao Longnu, she would not have been able to catch it; she was only able to catch it because the wheel was aimed at the baby.

Xiao Longnu was delighted when she caught the wheel but the icy expression on her face remained. Suddenly, she copied the form of Fawang and raised the wheel, smashing it towards her enemy; she wanted to give him a taste of his own medicine.

Fawang was alarmed, with one wheel missing; his "Cyclone of the Five Wheels" was neutralized. He decided to take in two of his wheels and just use two in his hands, cutting and slashing forwards.

Yang Guo held the baby with his left arm and said, "Let's kill this bald scoundrel first and talk later."

Xiao Longnu said, "Fine!" Her left hand held the iron wheel across her chest as she attacked with Yang Guo. With another powerful weapon in her hand and with one thing less to worry about, she should have become more powerful but after a few stances, she found that her sword strokes did not match Yang Guo's and they found it difficult to unite.

This swordplay's power lies within the user's pure and complete love for each other, right now the wheel between the two swords was an extra thing. It was like placing a third person between a pair of lovers, causing trouble and unrest, how could their thoughts become one now? The two did not know what was wrong for the time being and after a few more exchanges; they actually found themselves worse off than fighting individually.

Xiao Longnu was getting anxious and she said, "We can't beat him today, quickly take the baby to Passionless Valley and..."

Yang Guo now knew her intentions; if he rode the red horse now, he would definitely be able to reach Passionless Valley within seven days time. Though he wouldn't have the heads of Guo Jing and Huang Rong for Qiu Qianchi, by taking the baby to Qiu Qianchi and telling her that they'll definitely come for it, she would be able to come up with her own way to take revenge. Qiu Qianchi would definitely hand over the antidote. As soon as he recovers, he can rescue the baby from danger. Qiu Qianchi would definitely fall for this plan. If it were two days ago, Yang Guo would have agreed without any hesitation but now, Guo Jing's patriotic spirit had left him in complete awe, he could not risk Guo Jing's daughter for himself. Taking his daughter to Passionless Valley was taking advantage no matter which way you look at it; it is not the act of a true man and because of this he kept quiet before saying, "Gu Gu, no!"

Xiao Longnu said, "You... you..." She had only said two words before a tearing sound was heard as the cloth on her left shoulder was cut by Fawang's golden wheel.

Yang Guo said, "If I do such a thing, how can I face Uncle Guo? I would not be worthy of using this sword?" He raised the Gentleman Sword.

Xiao Longnu did not know about his sudden change of mind, all she was concerned about was to rid the poison in his body. After hearing him say that he can't treat the person who killed his father like this and how he wants to be a honorable gentleman, she couldn't stop herself from feeling shocked.

With the differing thoughts, it was even more difficult for the swords in their hands to respond. Fawang took this chance to advance forward and elbowed Yang Guo on the left shoulder.

Yang Guo felt numbness go through him and the baby in his arm dropped. The three of them had been fighting on the rooftops and now the baby fell towards the ground. Yang Guo and Xiao Longnu both cried out wanting to jump after it but it was too late.

Fawang had heard what the two had said and now knew that the baby was Guo Jing and Huang Rong's daughter. He may not have caught Guo Jing but by having his daughter as hostage, he could force Guo Jing to surrender, what more could he want? It was now getting urgent and he sent out the golden wheel with his right hand, which intercepted the falling baby.

The wheel was five feet above the ground, carrying the baby with it. The three of them leapt down from the roof to grab the wheel. Yang Guo was closest and saw that the wheel was flying closer and closer to the ground and soon will hit the ground. He im-

mediately rolled over towards the wheel, wanting to sandwich himself between it and the ground so he could take the wheel and baby at the same time, keeping her safe. Suddenly, an arm stretched out from the side and grabbed the wheel, taking the baby with it. The person turned and ran.

Yang Guo got up and Xiao Longnu and Fawang dashed over to him. She said, “It’s my apprentice sister.”

Yang Guo saw that the person was wearing an apricot yellow gown and was holding a fly whisk; it was indeed Li Mochou. How could the baby be safe now that it had fallen into the clutches of this evil woman? He immediately ran after her.

Xiao Longnu called out, “Apprentice sister, apprentice sister, that baby is very important, what are you doing?”

Li Mochou did not turn back and replied from afar, “Every generation of my Ancient Tomb sect have been virgins yet you have actually given birth, how shameful!”

Xiao Longnu said, “It’s not my child, give it back to me.” She called out many times but as she did so, she loosened her chi and she was left behind. She saw that they were headed north and so she followed.

The city was filled with soldiers; as some tried to control the fire and others hunted down the spies. Xiao Longnu ignored them all and ran to the city walls to find Lu Youjiao with a group of Beggar Clan members patrolling the northern gate in case the enemy wished to take advantage of the city being on fire and attack.

As soon as he saw Xiao Longnu he asked, “Miss Long, are Chief Huang and Hero Guo safe?”

Xiao Longnu ignored his question and instead asked, “Have you seen Master Yang and Jinlun Fawang? Have you seen a woman carrying a child?”

Lu Youjiao pointed outside of the city and said, “The three of them leapt down from the wall and left.”

Xiao Longnu was startled; the wall was extremely high, even with supreme martial arts your legs and arms would break if you jumped down from such a height; how did the three manage this feat? She was just about to inquire further when she spotted a Beggar Clan member brushing the precious red horse and a thought went through her

mind, “Even if Guo’er somehow manages to snatch the baby back, without this horse, how will he get to the Passionless Valley in time?” She darted over to the horse and took its reigns before saying to Lu Youjiao, “I have an urgent matter to attend to and I need to leave the city with this horse.”

All Lu Youjiao was concerned with was the safety of Huang Rong and Guo Jing and he asked again; “Are Chief Huang Rong and Hero Guo safe?”

Xiao Longnu mounted the horse and said, “They’re safe. Chief Huang’s baby daughter has just been snatched away; I need to get her back.” Lu Youjiao was shocked by the news and immediately ordered the gate opened.

The city gate was only opened a few feet and the drawbridge had yet to touch the ground when Xiao Longnu had made her way out. After one slap, the gallant red horse flew over the moat spectacularly. The on looking guards all cheered at the spectacle.

Outside the city walls, Xiao Longnu saw the crushed corpses of two soldiers by the city wall along with the carcass of a horse. She looked all around but how would she know what direction they were headed? She was now anxious and desperate. She stroked the neck of the horse and said, “I’m trying to find your baby master, please take me there!”

Who knew whether the horse understood or not but it raised its head and neighed before galloping in a northeasterly direction.

After chasing Li Mochou to the top of the city wall, both Yang Guo and Jinlun Fawang thought with the walls being at such a height, there would be no where else for her to go. However, as soon as she reached the top of the city walls she grabbed a soldier and threw him off the wall before following herself. Before the guard reached the ground, she used him to break her fall and threw herself forward, gliding down to the ground, all without disturbing the baby. The soldier died without ever making a sound.

Fawang cursed, “What a vicious woman!” He did as she did and sent a guard down from the wall using him to break his fall.

Yang Guo could not bring himself to use someone else as a cushion for himself but it was getting urgent. Just at this moment, his mind lit up and he sent a steed off the city wall and before it landed, he leapt onto the horse’s back. While the horse met its death, Yang Guo continued his chase.



During the battle at the Mongolian camp a day earlier, Yang Guo was wounded twice by Fawang's wheels and though the injuries themselves were not serious, he had lost a lot of blood, his body was weak and after another day of intense fighting, he felt he could not last much longer. But as he thought about the dreadful fate that would fall upon his Uncle Guo's daughter in the hands of either Li Mochou or Jinlun Fawang, he ignored his pain and urgently chased after them.

The three of them had been running extremely fast but with Li Mochou having to carry a baby and with Fawang taking precautions about his possible poisonous sword wound, none of them were traveling as fast as before. A few miles later, with Xiangyang far behind them, there was still about a distance of a hundred feet between them. Fawang could not catch up with Li Mochou and Yang Guo could not catch up with Fawang.

After a while, Li Mochou saw that there were hills and mountains in front of her so she sped that way thinking it would be easier to lose her pursuers in the mountain valleys. Though she had heard Xiao Longnu say it was not her child, after seeing how Yang Guo risked life and limb for it, she was sure that it was their bastard child and as long as it was in her hands, they could be forced to hand over her sect's "Jade Maiden's Manual" to her.

The further they went the higher they got as the terrain became more mountainous and wooded. Fawang was afraid that if he didn't stop her now, should she hide in the dense woodland, it would be difficult for him to find her. He had never fought Li Mochou before but after seeing her excellent lightness kung fu, he knew that she would be a strong foe. He had lost two of his wheels and didn't want to risk throwing any. But it was getting urgent, he could not waste any more time so he called out, "Lady, leave the child and I'll spare your life; if you don't, then don't blame this monk for being merciless."

Li Mochou laughed and sped up once again. With a wave of his right arm, he sent out his silver wheel. The wheel became a white streak as it headed for Li Mochou's back.

Li Mochou could not ignore the force of the incoming weapon and she turned around, deciding to use her fly whisk against it. However, as soon as she saw how fast the wheel was turning she changed her mind. She was afraid that her weapon would break; she decided to move out of the way instead. Fawang advanced two steps and threw out his bronze wheel. This time, he threw it outwards so that it would curve in, smashing its target on its way back. Again, Li Mochou did not dare to take this attack head on; she moved back three steps and bent her waist, using advanced lightness kung fu to avoid

this attack. Now, there was only about thirty feet between she and Fawang. Fawang caught his silver wheel with his left hand and threw the lead wheel in his right hand towards her left shoulder.

Li Mochou whirled her fly whisk to the side, forming thousands of golden needles that rained toward Fawang's eyes. Fawang threw his silver wheel upwards to block the attack while at the same time with his free hand; he caught his incoming bronze wheel. He crossed his arms and his wheels collided, ringing throughout the valley. His silver and bronze wheels had changed hands and he now started to use lethal attacks with both.

With a great foe in front of her, Li Mochou's spirit stirred, who would have thought that this tall and skinny monk would possess such great strength and be so swift in his attacks. She fought with everything she knew and gave it everything she had.

After a few exchanges, Yang Guo had made his way to them. He watched from the side, catching his breath and waited for a chance to snatch the baby back. The two of them were fighting quicker and quicker with a fly whisk whirling about amongst the three wheels.

When it came to martial arts and internal energy, Fawang was a level higher than Li Mochou along with the fact that Li Mochou was carrying the child; she would surely be defeated within a hundred stances.

However, towards the beginning of the fight when Li Mochou was trying to protect the child from the sharp blades of the wheels, she noticed that whenever the wheels came close to the baby, Fawang would quickly take the attack back and she then knew what he was trying to do, "That bald bastard wants to take the child and he doesn't want to hurt it."

With her ruthless nature, she didn't care about the safety of others and now that she knew what Fawang was up to, whenever she found herself unable to withstand his vicious moves, she would hold the baby up to protect herself. The baby was now no longer a hindrance but instead a powerful shield, as soon as it was raised, no matter how vicious and ruthless Fawang's stances were, they would all be taken back.

Fawang attacked several times with the wheel but each time he was forced back by Li Mochou using the baby as a shield. Yang Guo watched with anxiety; a mistake by either of them would surely send the baby to its death. Just as he was about to make his move, Fawang suddenly smashed out and inwards with the silver wheel in his right hand and

pushed forward with the bronze wheel in his other hand; by doing this, the wheels trapped Li Mochou within his arms.

Li Mochou's face went red; what kind of monk would actually use such a stance? She whirled her fly whisk behind to block the silver wheel and raised the baby in front of her to protect her chest. When Fawang had decided to use this particular stance, he had calculated the response; he loosened his left finger and his bronze wheel shot upwards towards her face.

The wheel was only about inches away from her; with the wheel suddenly flying towards her like that with such great force, it was not going to be easy to fend off this attack. Luckily for her however, she was an experienced fighter after all these years in the world of Jiang Hu; experience that far exceeded that of Fawang. In this danger she leaned back with her feet nailed to the ground and sent an attack of her own towards his shoulders. Fawang shrugged his shoulders and the fly whisk brushed past; however there were a few threads that had struck his shoulder. His left hand was empty and so, he chopped down onto her left arm. Li Mochou's arm immediately went numb and she cried out in pain. She leapt away but something was missing; the baby had been snatched away by Fawang.

Just when Fawang thought he had succeeded, a gust of wind came from his side; it was Yang Guo throwing himself forward to grab the baby. Rolling on the ground, he swung his sword into a web of light to protect his body and as he got up, he used a stance of "Sailing with the Waves", stopping his two foes from getting close to him.

When he saw that the baby had fallen into Fawang's hands, he knew that as soon as Fawang got a proper hold on her, it would be near to impossible to snatch her back so he risked life and limb to get her back. In a flash, the baby had exchanged hands twice.

Li Mochou praised him; "Yang Guo, exquisite move!"

Fawang was furious and he knocked his wheels together, the wheels ringing like the roar of a dragon. He waved out his left sleeve and threw the wheel in his right hand towards Yang Guo. Yang Guo pretended to stab forward before turning around to run but something breezed past him; it was Li Mochou blocking his path with her fly whisk. She smiled, "Yang Guo, no running! Let's see you fight a bit with that monk first." Yang Guo saw that Fawang's bronze wheel was only inches away from him; he had no choice but to raise his sword and block the attack.

After dueling with each other for so long, the two were very familiar with the other's martial arts and both attempted to beat the other with speed. The two became a blur as three streaks of light danced around; in a flash the two had exchanged over twenty stances.

Li Mochou was shocked, thinking, "It wasn't too long ago that I last saw him, how on earth has he achieved such a level of martial arts?"

Yang Guo had made improvements in his martial arts but some of the improvement was due to the fact that he knew that he didn't have long to live. He decided to repay Guo Jing back with his life and so, when a dangerous stance came at him, he didn't care and instead replied with one of his own, forcing Fawang to adjust.

Yang Guo may not have cared about his life but it was a different story with the life of the baby. Though he saw that Fawang's and Li Mochou's stances avoided the baby during their fight, this was Guo Jing's child and he was not going to employ the tactic that Li Mochou used and risk the safety of the child. By putting the safety of the child first, he was soon facing death in the face.

Against Li Mochou, Fawang had to take extreme care in avoiding the baby but with Yang Guo doing the opposite of Li Mochou and protecting her, he began to aim for the baby more than he did at Yang Guo. As a result, Yang Guo was forced on the back foot ever further and he couldn't last much longer. He called out, "Martial Uncle Li help me against this bald bastard."

Fawang glanced over at Li Mochou who was standing there watching the fight with a smile on her face.

Fawang didn't understand, "Xiao Longnu called her apprentice sister and she is indeed his apprentice uncle, why isn't she helping? Are they planning something? I need to wound this kid and snatch the baby first." He increased the power in his attacks leaving Yang Guo almost defenseless.

Li Mochou knew that Fawang would not harm the child, no matter how many times Yang Guo asks for help she'd just ignore him. She placed her hands behind her back and watched at leisure.

After a while, Yang Guo felt a throbbing pain in his chest. He knew that his internal energy could not compare with his opponent; he would not be able to last much longer fighting as hard as this. He hadn't heard the baby's cries for a while and was afraid

something was wrong, so he looked within his arms only to see an adorable face with pearl black eyes starring back at him.

Yang Guo had never got on with Guo Fu but he felt something towards this baby girl in his arms, “In seven days time I’ll be dead, I’m risking my life and limb for her today and if by some miracle I managed to save her, I wonder whether she’ll remember me a few years when she’s all grown up like her sister?” In such an emotional state, he almost cried.

Li Mochou saw that he was exhausted and knew that he’ll soon die by the twin wheels; she was about to go forward and help him when she thought, “This kid’s martial arts have made great improvements, I better leave it to the monk to finish him off to save me future trouble.” So, she kept to the side.

Of the three, Fawang had the highest martial arts, Li Mochou was the most ruthless but Yang Guo was the most cunning. After he got over his sadness, he immediately came up with a plan, he thought, “When Auntie Guo told me the story of the Three Kingdoms, she said that Cao Wei was the strongest and when Shu Han rebelled against Cao Wei, Shu needed the help of Sun Quan.” Li Mochou may not offer help but he can offer his help to her. He blocked Fawang’s attack and threw the baby over to her calling out, “Catch!”

This action was something that Li Mochou did not expect, she didn’t know what he meant by this action but took the baby anyway.

Yang Guo called out, “Apprentice Uncle, take the baby and leave, I’ll hold the monk up!” He sent two strokes forward with all his might, keeping Fawang back.

Li Mochou thought, “Oh, he’s hoping I’ll still respect the fact that we are of the same sect and so I’ll keep it alive.”

How would she know that Yang Guo had an ulterior motive, as soon as she tried to make her escape, Fawang smashed his silver wheel towards her back, switching his attention from Yang Guo to her. This stance came at her extremely fast and she tried to adjust her movements but the silver wheel followed her like a shadow. Li Mochou had no choice but to use her fly whisk to block the attack.

Yang Guo breathed out a sigh of relief when he saw that his plan had worked, but he did not wait by the side and watch the two destroy each other like Li Mochou had done. As soon as he gathered his breath he immediately dived in and attacked Fawang.

The sun was in the sky and light shone through the canopy of the forest. Yang Guo felt freshened and his swordplay became more fluent. A ringing sound was heard as the Gentleman Sword slashed a piece of the bronze wheel off. Fawang was slightly alarmed but his attacks became even more vicious.

Yang Guo thought of another trick and called out, “Martial Uncle Li; be careful of that wheel, don’t let where the wheel was cut touch you, it has poison on it.”

Li Mochou said, “How?”

Yang Guo said, “My sword has poison on it!”

After Yang Guo wounded Fawang, Fawang had been worried about being poisoned but because he had yet to feel any effects from wound, he had ceased worrying. Now upon hearing Yang Guo’s words, he thought, “Gongsun Zhi is a ruthless man, its more likely than not that there is indeed poison on that sword.”

Li Mochou suddenly whirled her fly whisk forward and said, “Guo’er, pierce him with your poisoned sword.” She waved her hand out, appearing to shoot some kind of projectile. Fawang used his wheels to protect himself. Li Mochou was trying to scare him off, she knew that with Fawang’s martial arts, her “Soul Freezing Needles” would most probably miss the target but this little pause allowed her just enough time to move out of the wheel’s range and escape.

Though Fawang suspected there was poison on Yang Guo’s sword, his wound had not swollen up and there were no ill effects after all this time. He did not want to leave empty handed after all this trouble and immediately chased after Li Mochou.

Who knew when the battle would end? With them chasing and fighting like this, Yang Guo was worried that if this was kept up, the baby would catch a chill or the like; even if he does manage to rescue her it might end up all in vain. He knew that the first thing he must do is to use Li Mochou to help to defeat Fawang before dealing with her. He called out loudly, “Martial Uncle Li, there’s no need to run! This bald bastard has been poisoned, he won’t live for long.” As soon as he finished, Li Mochou darted into a cave.

Fawang stopped in his tracks and did not dare to enter. Yang Guo did not know what she was going to do with the baby and without care for his life, he burst into the cave with his sword across his chest. He saw a silver flash and immediately knocked three Soul Freezing needles out of the air. He called out, “Martial Uncle Li, it’s me!”

It was pitch black in the cave but he had the ability to see in the darkness; Li Mochou was holding the baby with her left hand and her right was holding some silver needles. To show that he had no ill intent, he turned his back to her and said, “We need to defeat that bald bastard first.” then guarded the entrance of the cave.

Fawang knew that the two would not come out for the time being and so he loosened his gown and tended to his wound. He saw that his blood was crimson red and when he touched the wound it ached, after circulating his internal energy he discovered there wasn't anything wrong. He was happy but also furious with Yang Guo for tricking him into worrying about poison for almost half a day. The entrance of the cave was covered with grass and only allowed for one person to enter at a time; with his height he would not find it easy to maneuver if he burst in and would most probably fall victim to an ambush.

Just as he was trying to come up with a plan, he heard a strange voice behind him calling out, “Hey monk, what are you doing here.” It was the voice of the Indian dwarf, Nimoxing.

Fawang kept his eye on the cave and said, “Three rabbits have just entered the cave, and I'm going to force them out.”

After leaving empty handed from Xiangyang, Nimoxing was on his way back to the Mongolian camp when he saw from a distance Fawang's silver, bronze and lead wheels flying about in the air. He knew that he was in battle with someone and tracked him down. After seeing Fawang staring at the cave, he asked, “Guo Jing is in there?”

Fawang scoffed, “There's two male rabbits and a female one.”

Nimoxing was delighted when he heard this and said, “So, not only are the Guo couple in there but also that rascal Yang Guo.”

Fawang ignored him and after a look around, he came up with an idea. He gathered some dry wood and placed it in front of the cave before lighting it. The wind was blowing southwesterly and the smoke poured into the cave.

When Fawang was placing the dry wood in front of the cave entrance, Yang Guo knew what he was up to and said quietly to Li Mochou, “I'll check if there's another exit.” He went back into the cave which was about sixty feet deep and found that it was a dead end. He returned to her and said, “Martial Uncle Li, they are trying to smoke us out, what shall we do?”

Li Mochou thought that there was no way that she would be able to escape from Fawang if she dashed out, but staying in the cave and getting suffocated wasn't a good plan either. If worse comes to worse she'll just leave the baby behind; with Fawang's main target being the baby, he'll probably let her go. She wasn't anxious and just smiled.

Not long after, the smoke had filled the cave and the two of them held their breath. The baby however started crying and coughing.

Li Mochou chuckled, "Are you upset?"

After the life and death battle that he had experienced with the baby, he started growing attached to her. When he heard her crying louder and louder, he said, "Give her to me!" He stretched out his hands and advanced two paces.

Li Mochou snapped her fly whisk down towards his arm and said, "Don't come any nearer! Aren't you afraid of my Soul Freezing needles?"

Yang Guo leapt back. When he heard the words 'Soul Freezing Needles' a sudden thought popped into his head. He remembered the time when he first met Li Mochou and picked up one of her needles. After just holding it for a little while, he was poisoned. He tore off a piece of cloth from his gown and wrapped it tightly around his right hand before going over to the three needles that Li Mochou had previously shot at him and picked them up. He planted the needles in the ground leaving about an inch of the tip above surface and then he covered them with sand and dirt to conceal the shininess of the needles. The cave entrance was blocked with a fire and the cave was filled with smoke; Fawang and Nimoxing did not see what Yang Guo had done.

After he had finished his trap, Yang Guo went over to Li Mochou and said quietly, "I've got a plan, try to stop the baby from crying." He then called out, "Great, there's an exit; we can get out of here." His voice was filled with joy.

Li Mochou was surprised and actually believed that there was another exit.

Yang Guo then whispered into her ear, "It's a lie; I'm trying to lure that bald bastard into my trap."

Fawang and Nimoxing were shocked when they heard this and believed that they had escaped. It seemed to be true when it suddenly became quiet and the cries of the baby died down. How could they know that Yang Guo had covered the cries of the baby with



his sleeve? Nimoxing did not take any time to think and immediately flew around to the other side of the mountain to stop them. Fawang however took his time and noticed that cries of the baby were just muted; they were not coming from afar. He knew that it was Yang Guo trying to trick him into going around the back of the mountain so he could escape with the baby.

He chuckled, “Do you think I’m stupid!” He hid beside the entrance of the cave and armed himself with his wheels as he waited for Yang Guo to come out.

Yang Guo then called out, “Martial Uncle Li, that scoundrel has gone, let’s leave.” Suddenly he whispered, “We’ll both shout in surprise at the same time and trick him into the cave.”

Li Mochou didn’t know what he had planned but she was well aware of his cunning after falling for his tricks before. Since he was sure of his plan, it would definitely work. Luckily for her, the baby was still in her hands, so after driving away Fawang, Yang Guo would still have no choice but to bring the “Jade Maiden’s Manual” to her. She nodded.

Both of them cried out, “You...!” Yang Guo pretended that he was wounded and called out, “Why... why?” He then whispered, “Pretend that you are about to die.”

Li Mochou said furiously, “You... though I... have died by your hands today, I’m... not going to die alone.” Her voice silenced.

Fawang was delighted when he heard this, he thought that the two had fought over the baby and had destroyed each other before even leaving the cave. He was afraid that the baby would die along with them and if that happened, he would not be able to blackmail Guo Jing. So he brushed away the fire and entered the cave. Just two steps in; he felt a pain in the bottom of his foot.

He made a swift adjustment, and before he trodden down fully, he immediately pushed back with his right root and leapt back out of the cave. When he landed, his left leg was numb and he almost fell down. With his profound internal energy, even after suffering several hacks and slashes from a knife, he could still remain upright; he realized at once that he had trodden on something extremely poisonous. Just as he was about to take off his shoe and examine the wound, he heard Nimoxing returning and he was calling out, “That lying punk, there’s no entrance at the back, the Guo couple are still in there.”

Fawang took his hand away from his shoe and acted normal, saying, “You’re right, but there’s no more noise coming from the cave, they must have fainted from the smoke.”

Nimoxing was delighted when he heard this thinking that finally he has managed to capture Guo Jing alive. However, he did not give a second to himself to think about why Fawang would allow him to do this without a fight. He whirled his Iron Snake to protect himself as he dashed into the cave.

Yang Guo had planted the needles in such a way that no matter how large or small your stride is, you will, step into one of them. Nimoxing was short, had small steps and a fast pace, his right foot stepped onto one and before he could react, his left foot stepped onto another. India is a hot and dry place and the people there don’t wear shoes, Nimoxing was no different; though his feet had been conditioned to be as hard as leather, the Soul Freezing needles are extremely sharp and they punctured his feet. He was a manly fellow; a little pain was nothing to him. He used his Iron Snake to check if there were sharp objects and found nothing. Just as he was about to continue on his way to catch Guo Jing and his wife, his legs suddenly went limp and he collapsed. It was only now that he knew that the poison on the sharp objects was extremely venomous and he quickly rolled out of the cave.

He saw that Fawang had taken off his shoe and was holding a black and swollen left foot. Fawang was using his internal energy to suppress the poison.

Nimoxing was furious and he roared, “Bastard, you fell for that trap so why the hell didn’t you tell me about it?”

Fawang smiled, “I fell for it and you fell for it, both of us have suffered.”

Nimoxing could no longer control his anger as he sputtered, “I... no need capture Guo Jing...Nimoxing...rotten monk...a fight to the death!”

He could no longer use his legs; Nimoxing pushed the ground with his left hand and threw himself forward at Fawang while his right hand smashed down towards Fawang’s head with his Iron Snake. Fawang raised his bronze wheel to block the Iron Snake and then swept his arm across, throwing his elbow out. With his body in midair, it was difficult for Nimoxing to avoid this blow; Fawang’s elbow came at him extremely fast and struck him in the shoulder.

Nimoxing may have been thick boned, but this attack from Fawang left him in great pain. In such a state of fury he didn’t give a damn about his life and threw himself at

Fawang again. He hugged him tightly and bit down on Fawang's 'Qi Abode' pressure point. If everything was normal, Nimoxing would never be able to get so close to Fawang and hug him. Even if he did manage to grab him, how would he ever get a clear path towards Fawang's 'Qi Abode' pressure point? But right now, Fawang had fallen victim to an extremely lethal poison and was using all his internal energy to suppress it at the 'Bending Spring' pressure point. As long as he didn't let the poison spread, the most serious thing that would happen to him is the loss of a foot; his life would be safe. When Nimoxing threw himself at Fawang, Fawang had in effect lost his internal energy and was relying on his external martial arts to fend him off. Nimoxing however was giving everything he had and he bit down on the pressure point and didn't let go.

Fawang hooked out his right foot and with Nimoxing having lost use of his legs, they both fell down. Fawang tried to pull him off but with a vital pressure point held down, his strength had diminished, how could he pull him off? He could only hold Nimoxing's 'Great Shuttle' pressure point on his neck to stop him from making a fatal blow. The two were great martial artists but after falling victim to poison, they were now brawling on the ground, and not reflecting their martial arts status.

The two of them rolled around and were getting dangerously close the edge of a cliff. Fawang saw what was happening and he called out, "Let go, another roll and we'll fall to our deaths."

But Nimoxing had lost all his senses, with his internal energy unoccupied, his was greater than Fawang's and Fawang was unable to stop Nimoxing from pushing forward. Just a few inches away from falling into a deep chasm, Fawang's survival senses came to life and he called out, "Guo Jing's here!"

Nimoxing stopped and said, "Where?" As he said this, his mouth loosened. Fawang's pressure point was no longer blocked and he regained his strength, sending out a left palm. Nimoxing knew that he had been tricked and he lowered his head and threw his waist forwards.

Fawang's palm was meant to force Nimoxing back but he had forgotten that, after being poisoned, Nimoxing's legs were no longer in his control, how could he jump back? Instead of sending him back, Nimoxing was now going forward and the two bumped into each other, knocking them over the edge.

When Li Mochou knew that Yang Guo's plan had worked, she secretly praised him. After hearing Fawang and Nimoxing struggling with each other, she thought the danger

was over and was about to exit the cave. Suddenly she heard the two letting out a strange scream.

This was the scream of the two when they fell over the edge. With the cliff being over a hundred yards away and with a boulder blocking their view, they could not see what was happening.

Li Mochou said, “Hey kid, what are they up to?”

Yang Guo could not have guessed that the two had actually fallen off a cliff and said, “That damn monk is very sly, it could be possible that he is copying our trick of being injured to lure us out.”

Li Mochou agreed and whispered, “Yes, they must be trying to trick us out to get my antidote.” She walked to the entrance in order to take a look at what exactly was happening.

Yang Guo said, “Be careful of the needles.” As soon as he said this he regretted his words; “Why should I warn that witch?”

Li Mochou quickly pulled her feet back. The fire at the entrance of the cave was now out and she could not see in the dark like Yang Guo could, if she had continued her steps, she would surely have stepped onto the needles. She may have the antidote but the poison was very lethal, it would leave her in great pain. If she had stepped on one, Yang Guo would have taken advantage and she might have died by her own poisonous needles.

She said, “Remove the needles, why should we stay in here?”

Yang Guo said, “Let’s wait for the poison to finish them off.”

Li Mochou scoffed at his reply. She was extremely wary of Yang Guo, the longer she stayed with him in the cave the more danger she was exposed to. When it came to martial arts, she wasn’t confident that she could defeat him and she certainly wasn’t going to out think him. She lowered her head and tried to think of a way out.

Silence filled the cave. The two were preoccupied with their own thoughts. Suddenly, the baby cried. Ever since she was born, she hadn’t been fed; it was a cry of hunger.

Li Mochou chuckled, “Where’s my apprentice sister? Don’t tell me that she’s going to let her child starve to death?”

Yang Guo replied, “Who said its Gu Gu’s child, its Hero Guo’s.”

Li Mochou said, “Do you think using Hero Guo’s name would scare me? If it were someone else’s child, why would you risk life and limb for it, it’s got to be the bastard child of you and her.”

Yang Guo shouted angrily, “Yes, I do want to marry Gu Gu but we’re not married yet, how can we have a child? Watch your words.”

Li Mochou scoffed, “If you want me to watch my words then you should watch your actions.”

Yang Guo worshipped Xiao Longnu, how could he not be furious? He shouted, “My Master is pure and chaste, don’t tarnish her name.”

Li Mochou said, “Pure and chaste sounds so nice, it’s just a shame that the virginity spot on her arm is gone.”

A whooshing sound was heard as Yang Guo thrust his sword towards her chest. He shouted, “You can insult me but not my Master, I’m going to kill you.” Whoosh, swish, swoosh; three strokes in a row were unleashed. His swordplay was clever, his eyes could see in the dark, Li Mochou only survived because she could hear the weapon coming through the air. Though she didn’t get hit, these stances left her staring at death. Luckily for her, Yang Guo was watching out for the baby, he held back on his most threatening stances in case she decided to take the child with her.

The two of them fought for over ten stances when suddenly the baby gave a howling cry before falling silent.

Yang Guo was afraid and immediately took back his sword. His voice was shaking as he said, “You’ve hurt the baby?”

When Li Mochou saw how much he cared for the baby, she was even more convinced that he was the father and said, “Right now it’s alive, but if you don’t follow my orders, do you think I’ll keep it alive?”

A chill went through Yang Guo. He knew that she was a cold blooded murderer; if someone merely offended her just one little bit she would kill them and destroy their whole family. Killing a newly born child would be nothing to her. He said, “You are my Martial Uncle, as long as you don’t insult my Master, of course I’ll follow your orders.”

Li Mochou could hear that he was willing to back down and knew that as long as the baby was in her hands, he could do nothing. She said, “Fine, I won’t insult your Master, you’ll obey me. Go out and take a look and see how they are doing against the poison.”

Yang Guo obeyed and went outside. He took a look around and didn’t see anyone, but he was wary that Fawang was hiding around somewhere so he hacked and slashed the surrounding trees and bushes. He found no one so he returned to the cave and said, “They’re gone, the poison must have scared them off.”

Li Mochou said, “Huh, even if they ran, how far are they going to get after falling victim to my poison? Go and pick up the “Soul Freezing Needles” from the cave entrance and hand them over to me.”

After hearing the non-stop cries of the baby, he knew that he should go out and find something for the baby to eat so he followed her instructions. He wrapped his hand with a piece of cloth and gave the needles back to her.

Li Mochou put the needles away and headed for the exit. Yang Guo followed and asked, “Where are you taking the baby?”

Li Mochou said, “Back to my home.”

Yang Guo said anxiously, “Why do you want the baby? It’s not yours.”

Li Mochou blushed before saying with a serious tone, “What are you saying? If you hand over the Ancient Tomb’s “Jade Maiden’s Manual”, I’ll hand the baby back to you without harming a single of its hair.” She then started to use her lightness kung fu and headed north.

Yang Guo followed her and said, “You’ve got to feed her some milk first.”

Li Mochou turned around with a flushing face and shouted, “What the hell are you saying boy?”

Yang Guo said with surprise, “What? I’m just saying that the baby needs milk, otherwise, won’t she starve?”

Li Mochou said, “I’m a pure and chaste virgin, how will I have milk for her?”

Yang Guo smiled, “Martial Uncle Li, I’m saying that you should find some milk for her to drink, I’m not asking for your milk...”

When Li Mochou heard this, she couldn’t help but laugh. She had stayed single and chaste, she lived a life of swords and sabers, and she knew nothing about caring for a child. She said, “Where can we get milk? How about feeding her rice?”

Yang Guo said, “Has she got any teeth?”

Li Mochou opened her mouth and shook her head, saying, “Not even one.”

Yang Guo said, “We’ll go to a village, find a woman who’s just given birth and can produce milk to feed her, how about that?”

Li Mochou said with delight, “You are indeed full of ideas.”

They climbed to the top of a hill and looked all around. Far away in the west, there was smoke. The two of them traveled very quickly and arrived at a small settlement in a short period of time. The area around Xiangyang had been incinerated and the Mongols had destroyed the large towns and villages near the main roads, the only types of settlements remaining were those in the wild and secluded valleys.

Li Mochou checked the houses one by one and when she got to the fourth one, she found a woman feeding a year old child. Li Mochou was delighted that she had found someone, she went in and picked up the child from the woman’s arms and flung it away towards a bed. She then placed the baby girl’s mouth in the woman’s breast and said, “This child’s hungry, feed it.”

The woman’s child was flailing its arms and legs, crying its eyes out on the bed. The woman quickly went to pick up her child. When Yang Guo saw that the woman was exposed, he quickly turned his back to her before hearing Li Mochou say, “I told you to feed my child, didn’t you hear? Who told you to hold your own child?” Yang Guo heard a thud and quickly jumped around just to see the woman’s child by the wall with its head covered in blood. The woman was distraught and put Guo Jing’s daughter down and threw herself onto her child, crying and sobbing as she did so.

Li Mochou was furious and she lifted her fly whisk to strike down onto the woman's back.

Yang Guo quickly used his sword to block this blow and thought, "How can there be such an irrational woman?" However, the words that came out of his mouth were, "Martial Uncle Li, if you kill her, there won't be anyone else left to feed the child."

Li Mochou replied angrily, "I'm looking out for your child yet here you are sticking your nose in where it's not wanted."

Yang Guo thought, "This child isn't mine yet you keep on saying so, and if it is, then how can I be sticking my nose in?" He smiled and said, "The baby is hungry, the most important thing right now is to feed her." He then stretched out his hands for her.

Li Mochou raised her fly whisk and blocked his arm, saying, "You dare pick her up?"

Yang Guo took a step back and smiled, "Fine, fine! You take her."

Li Mochou picked up the baby and was just about to place it back into the arms of the woman when she discovered that she was gone. While the two were arguing, the woman had slipped out with her child. Li Mochou was filled with rage and dashed outside to see the woman running away. She flew up and struck down with her fly whisk with a gust of wind; both mother and child died under that strike. She went to find another woman to feed the child but the settlement was filled with men. Li Mochou became even angrier and she killed a few people at random. She then picked up a burning stick from a stove and set a few thatched houses on fire before leaving the settlement.

Yang Guo sighed to himself when he saw how vicious Li Mochou was. They didn't say a word as they wandered across the plains for several li. The baby had cried itself to sleep in Li Mochou's arms.

Li Mochou suddenly stopped in her tracks; there were two leopard cubs in front of her playing with each other. She took a step forward with the intention of kicking them away when she heard a roar from the side as a leopard leapt at her. She was startled by this and moved to the left. The leopard immediately turned around and leapt forward once again, clawing and slashing. Li Mochou raised her fly whisk and struck the leopard between the eyes. The leopard growled in pain and became even more vicious showing its sharp white teeth. It crouched on the ground and stared at its enemy with its gleaming eyes, waiting for a chance to attack.



Li Mochou waved out her left hand and shot out two needles at the leopard's eyes. Yang Guo called out, "Wait!" He blocked the needles with his sword while at the same time the leopard pounced; it leapt ten feet into the air speeding at him. Yang Guo leapt up and after knocking the needles out of the air with his sword, he punched the leopard on the spine. The leopard was in pain from this blow but immediately after it landed, it attacked again. Yang Guo moved to the side and sent out a left palm with half his energy. The leopard was sent rolling back.

Li Mochou wondered what he was up to; the needles that she had shot out would have killed the leopard, why is he wasting so much effort to save it? She watched as Yang Guo sent out a left palm here and right palm there, keeping the leopard on the ground. He was relentless but each palm of his avoided the vitals of the leopard. The leopard's roars were becoming quieter and quieter, and after ten palms, it could take it no longer and ran away. Yang Guo was prepared for this and reached out for its tail to pull it back but after being defeated, the leopard ran away dejected with its tail hanging down between its legs and Yang Guo missed. He was about to use his lightness kung fu to chase after it when he saw the leopard turn around and call to its cubs to run. Yang Guo now knew what to do and he picked up the cubs, one in each hand.

Seeing its cubs being captured, the leopard no longer cared about its life and threw herself at Yang Guo once again. Yang Guo threw the cubs at Li Mochou and called out, "Catch them but don't kill them." He leapt up higher than the leopard and aimed to land on its back. When he landed, he pulled at its ears. The leopard used all her strength to throw Yang Guo off but she was no longer in control of her movements.

Yang Guo called out, "Martial Uncle Li, quickly get some tree bark and make some rope to tie it up."

Li Mochou said with annoyance, "I don't have time to mess around with you." She turned around to walk away.

Yang Guo said quickly, "Who's messing? This leopard can give milk!"

Li Mochou now understood and was filled with delight, she laughed, "Only you would come up with something like this." She then went off and tore off ten pieces of tree bark and made a rope with it. She first tied its mouth before tying its legs.

Yang Guo patted the dust off himself and smiled. The leopard could not move and its eyes showed that it was filled with fear.

Yang Guo stroked its head and said, “We just want your milk, and we won’t kill you.”

Li Mochou then placed the baby at a teat. The baby was starving and suckled immediately. The leopard could provide a lot of milk and as soon as the baby was full she closed her eye and slept.

Their gaze never left the baby girl as she fed and fell asleep. The two were filled with delight as they watched her smiling in her sleep and they smiled at each other.

The smile shared between these two dissolved most of the wariness between them. Li Mochou’s face was filled with tenderness and she hummed a song as she held the baby in her arms. Yang Guo found some soft hay and made a bed on a large rock beneath a shady tree. He said, “Let her sleep here!”

Li Mochou quickly signaled with her hand, telling him to be quiet. Yang Guo stuck out his tongue and made a face at her. As he watched the baby sleep peacefully, he gave a sigh of relief before turning his heads to the cubs who were feeding off their mother.

The scent of flowers filled the air, a warm breeze blew through their clothes, the aura of death disappeared as both man and beast felt at ease.

Yang Guo had been through hell and high water in the past few days and it was only now that he could unwind. But it was in the strangest of circumstances; there was a cold blooded murderer to one side of him and a vicious beast on the other.

Li Mochou sat beside the baby and used her fly whisk to chase away the forest’s flies. Her fly whisk had killed countless people and could send shivers down the spines of the people of Wulin; yet now it was doing the first kind thing it had ever done.

Yang Guo watched Li Mochou as she stared at the baby. Sometimes there was a smile, at others there would be sadness on her face. She would look overwhelmed then suddenly, peace would fill her face. Yang Guo guessed that she must have been looking back on her life. He did not know much about her; all he knew were a few things that Cheng Ying and Lu Wushuang had told him. Behind all these cruel and vicious acts was someone who must have endured bitter suffering; he had always hated her but right now, he couldn’t stop himself from pitying her a little.

After a while, Li Mochou lifted her head and her eyes met Yang Guo’s. She was slightly taken aback by this. She said quietly, “It’s getting dark, what are we going to do about tonight.”

Yang Guo looked around and said, “We can’t take that big leopard with us, we’ll find a cave to spend the night in for the time being and decide on what to do tomorrow.” Li Mochou nodded her head.

Yang Guo looked all around and eventually found a cave that was just about suitable. He gathered some long grass and made a small and large bed in the middle of the cave. He said, “Martial Uncle Li, rest here, I’ll go find something to eat.” He then went off in search of some food. He was back within the hour with three rabbits and some wild fruits. He untied the leopard’s mouth and fed one of the rabbits to it. He then gathered some firewood and roasted the other two rabbits for Li Mochou and himself. Afterwards, Yang Guo said, “Martial Uncle Li, go to sleep, I’ll go outside and guard the cave.” He took out a long rope and suspended it between two trees, and slept on the rope in midair.

This didn’t surprise Li Mochou at all; after all, it was a skill of the Ancient Tomb. Apart from occasionally traveling with her disciple Hong Lingbo, she had always wandered alone. Tonight she had spent time with Yang Guo who tended to all her needs; what a contrast it was to the all the times she spent alone in the wild. As she thought about this, she sighed.



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