

Foxs' Wuxia

Wuxia Fan Translation

SDXL Chapter 17



Chapter 17 – The Secluded Passionless Valley

Translated by Noodles



Fan Yi Weng quickly moved his head to the left. The opponent's attack was fast, his reaction was also very swift and his beard followed him and flung upwards. Yang Guo's scissors had been opened and was guarding the right; a 'ka' sound was heard as the scissors cut down. He cut off over two feet of the beard.

After Yang Guo woke up the next morning, he left the stone house and went outside. Last night it was dark and he couldn't see the surroundings clearly but now he could; he was surrounded by emerald green grass, the flowers like a brocade, the scenery of

this place was already magnificent but the beauty of this place was even more rarely seen.

He followed where his feet took him and along the path he saw cranes, herds of white deer, squirrels and rabbits but none of them were alarmed by his presence.

He passed two bends and saw the girl in green plucking flowers off to one side. She saw him approaching and greeted, "You wake up really early, have some breakfast." She plucked two flowers from the tree and offered them to him.

Yang Guo accepted them and thought, "Is it possible that flowers can be eaten?" But then he saw the girl tearing the flower petal by petal and placing them in her mouth, he did the same. When he placed the petals in his mouth, he noticed a sweet fragrance, a fragrance like that of honey and there was a subtle air of wine, he felt a feeling of comfort but after a few chews the taste became bitter and sour. He wanted to spit it out but felt that he couldn't give it up; he wanted to swallow but had a little difficulty in getting it go down his throat.

He carefully looked at the plant and saw that the branches were covered in thorns but the flowers were extremely beautiful, and even more fragrant than lotuses, he asked, "What is this flower? I've never seen it before."

The girl said, "This is the Passion Flower, I've heard that it is a very rare plant. Tell me, what do you think of the taste?"

Yang Guo said, "At first, it is extremely sweet but afterwards it is extremely bitter. This is called the Passion Flower? There's a meaning behind this name." He stretched out his hand to pluck a flower.

The girl said, "Careful! There's thorns on the plant, don't touch it!"

Yang Guo avoided the thorns and was very careful but he didn't notice that behind the flower was hidden another and it pricked his hand.

The girl said, "This valley is called the 'Passionless Valley' yet there are so many Passion Flowers growing here."

Yang Guo said, "Why is it called the Passionless Valley? This name really is... really is special."

The girl shook her head and said, “I don’t know why. This is the name our ancestors gave it, maybe my father knows.”

The two then started to walk down the path, shoulder to shoulder. The scent of flowers filled Yang Guo’s nose, by the side of the path were rabbits and young deer were darting about, it was very adorable sight. He had a feeling of being carefree and joyous, and naturally he started to think about Xiao Longnu, “If the person walking with me was Gu Gu, I really would love to live in this place forever with her and not ever leave.” Just as he thought about this, the wound on his finger suddenly became painful, the wound was very small yet the pain was so great, it was like someone smashing a hammer across his chest, he couldn’t hold it in and gave an ‘ai’ call, placed the finger in his mouth and sucked it.

The girl blandly said, “You’re thinking about your lover, is that it?”

Yang Guo’s thoughts were guessed; his face went red and asked, “How do you know?”

The girl said, “If you’ve been pricked by the thorns of the Passion Flower, you cannot think about love for the next twenty four hours otherwise the suffering will be unbearable.”

Yang Guo was surprised and said, “There’s actually such a strange thing as this in the world?”

The girl said, “My father said: love is like this, when it enters the mouth it is sweet but afterwards it becomes bitter and sour, furthermore, it is covered by thorns, even if you are extremely careful, pain from it would be unavoidable. The flower was given its name most probably because it has this special characteristic.”

Yang Guo asked, “How come that within twenty four hours, one cannot... cannot... think about love?”

The girl said, “Father said: there’s poison on the thorns of the plant. When people think about love, not only does their blood flow quicker, some unknown thing is created in the blood. The poison of the thorns of the Passion Flower is not harmful normally, but once it meets this something in the blood, it will create unbearable pain in the person.”

When Yang Guo heard this, he felt that it was fairly reasonable and believed her with few doubts.

The two slowly walked to the unsheltered mountainside. The light of the sun lighted up this place, the ground and air were gentle and warm; the Passion Flowers have bloomed early here and there were fruits on the plant.

Yang Guo saw that the fruits were either red or green, but some were red and green and there were hair on the fruits, like a caterpillar.

Yang Guo said, "The Passion Flower is so beautiful yet its fruits are so ugly."

The girl said, "The fruits of the flower can't be eaten, some are sour, some are hot and some stink so much that it makes people want to vomit."

Yang Guo gave a laugh and said, "Is it possible that there aren't any that are sweet as honey?"

The girl glanced at him and said, "Sometimes there are but you cannot tell by its appearance. Some that are extremely ugly are sweet but an ugly fruit doesn't necessarily mean it will be a sweet one. Only by tasting it directly will you know for sure. Out of ten fruits, nine are bitter; because of this we never eat them."

Yang Guo thought, "Though she is talking about the Passion Flower, it is like an analogy for love. Could it be that although the love between lovers is at first sweet, it will eventually turn sour? Can it be that a pair of lovers who are deeply in love with each other will eventually experience more bitterness than sweetness? Could it be that the yearning love I have for Gu Gu will eventually..."

As soon as he thought about Xiao Longnu, his finger suddenly broke out with a piercing pain again and he swung his arm around a few times. He now knew that the words of the girl were indeed true.

When the girl saw him like this, her lip moved a little, as if she wanted to laugh but was refraining from doing so. Sunlight lit up her face and showed a pair of elegant eyes and brows, her skin was white with redness floating on top of it, she looked very beautiful.

Yang Guo laughed, "I once heard a story; there was once an emperor, he set up a fire display and burned all things, throwing away most of his kingdom as a result, and the only reason for this was that he was trying to get a legendary beauty to smile. To be able to see a smile is a fortunate thing, so, the same applies whether it's in the past or in the present."

After being teased by Yang Guo, the girl could no longer hold it in and eventually gave a giggle.

Yang Guo noticed that she had been cold as ice throughout this time and there were some feelings of anxiety in his heart, but after this smile, most of the divide between the two went away. Yang Guo continued, “Everyone knows that a beauty’s smile is rare to come by, they say something like a smile can overturn a city, another can overturn a country, actually there’s something of a beauty’s that is even rarer than a smile.”

The girl’s eyes opened wide and asked, “What?”

Yang Guo said, “A beautiful girl’s name. To have the opportunity to come across a beautiful woman is an extremely lucky event, to be able to see the smile of a beautiful girl would be because of the good deeds of their ancestors and one must go through three lifetimes...” Before he finished the girl giggled again.

Yang Guo continued looking serious and said, “To be able to hear a beautiful girl reveal her name that really requires eighteen generations of great deeds.”

The girl said, “I’m not some beautiful girl; no one in the valley has ever called me beautiful, why must you joke?”

Yang Guo sighed and said, “No wonder this place is called the Passionless Valley. But in my opinion, the name should be changed to something else.”

The girl said, “Change to what?”

Yang Guo said, “It should be called Blind Man’s Valley.”

The girl asked surprised, “Why?”

Yang Guo said, “Look at how beautiful you are but none of them praise you; aren’t the people who live in this valley blind?”

The girl laughed again. Her beauty could be classed as first class but compared to Xiao Longnu’s; there were still many li between them. Compared to the gentleness of Cheng Ying and the prettiness of Lu Wushuang, she appeared to be slightly inferior. But she was elegant, graceful and there was a wholesome air about her. No one had praised her beauty before, and this was because the martial arts her valley practiced revolved around abdication. When her fellow apprentices see each other they are always cold

and remain unmoved. In the hearts of her fellow apprentices though, they did think that she was very beautiful but none of them dared to say it out loud.

Today she suddenly met Yang Guo. This person's character was dynamic and spirited, the stricter and more restrained she acts, the greater the urge he has to make her get rid of this unfeeling appearance. The girl was pleased with these words and laughed, "I'm afraid that you're the blind man, calling this ugly girl a beautiful girl."

Yang Guo put on a serious face and said, "You never know, my eyes could be wrong. However if you want this valley to remain peaceful and quiet then you can't smile."

The girl asked surprised, "Why?"

Yang Guo said, "There's an old saying: 'a smile can overturn a city, another can overturn a country', that saying really ought to be changed. It shouldn't be country; it should be changed to valley."

The girl bowed subtly and laughed, "Thank you, can you stop teasing me please?"

Yang Guo saw her fine, elegant waist and trembled slightly, his heart was moved. Although it wasn't an intense feeling, his finger suddenly broke out in a severe pain again.

When the girl saw him waving his finger about, she felt slightly displeased and said angrily, "I'm talking to you right now yet you're thinking about your lover."

Yang Guo said, "I'm innocent, I'm innocent, it's because of you that my finger hurts and here you are blaming me." The girl blushed and suddenly ran away.

Yang Guo immediately regretted his words as soon as he said them, thinking, "My heart belongs to Gu Gu yet why haven't I changed this type of behavior? Yang Guo ah Yang Guo you little bastard, don't talk such rubbish again." He inherited some of his father's scoundrel's attitude and ungentlemanly behavior. Every time he met a girl he would tease and flirt with them, causing them to fall for him as a result. Although he didn't have any ill intentions, it was something that made him feel joy in his heart.

The girl ran for a few tens of feet and suddenly stopped below a Passion Flower tree and hung her head deep in thought, after a little while she turned to him and said, "If an ugly girl tells you her name, it must be because your ancestors have done bad deeds for eighteen generations and the bad karma has passed down onto you."

Yang Guo went over to her and laughed, “Of all the things to be born with, you were born with the love of saying negative things. My ancestors for the last eighteen generations have done many good deeds; some of the good karma should be reaped by me.” His words were again praising her beauty.

Her face went slightly red and quietly said, “I’ll tell you but you cannot tell another and I forbid you to call my name in front of others.”

Yang Guo stuck out his tongue and said, “Oh sweet beauty, aren’t I afraid of not having any descendants?”

The girl showed another smile and said, “My father’s surname is Gongsun...” She still did not want to reveal her name and wanted to go around in circles.

Yang Guo interrupted, “But what is Miss’s name?”

The girl smiled and said, “My father gave his only daughter the name Lu’E.”

Yang Guo praised her, “The name is as beautiful as the owner.”

After Gongsun Lu’E told Yang Guo her name, she felt closer to him and said, “When father invites you to see him, you mustn’t smile at me.”

Yang Guo said, “What happens if I smile.”

The girl sighed and said, “If father knows that I smiled at you and told you my name, I really don’t know how father would punish me.”

Yang Guo said, “I’ve never heard of such a strict father, not even allowing his daughter to smile at someone. He has a beautiful daughter, could it be that he doesn’t love you?”

When Gongsun Lu’E heard these words her eyes went red and said, “My father used to love me very much but after my mother died when I was six, he treated me stricter and stricter. After he marries again, I wonder how he will treat me?” Two drops of tears rolled down her cheeks as she said this.

Yang Guo comforted her, “After your father marries he will be happy, he’ll definitely treat you better then.”

Gongsun Lu'E shook her head and said, "I rather he treats me even stricter than marry another wife again."

Yang Guo's parents died when he was young so he didn't know much about these types of feelings; he wanted to make her happy and said, "Your new mother's definitely not as half as beautiful as you."

Gongsun Lu'E quickly said, "You're wrong, my new mother is a true beauty. Because of her my father... my father... Yesterday we caught that old man named Zhou but my father was busy with organizing the wedding, otherwise he would never have allowed that Old Urchin to escape again."

Yang Guo was shocked and pleased, he asked, "That Old Urchin escaped again?"

Lu'E frowned slightly and said, "Didn't you hear me?"

The two spoke for a while and the sun gradually rose up in the sky. Lu'E suddenly realized something and said, "Quickly go back, don't let my fellow apprentices see us together talking, they'll tell my father."

Yang Guo pitied her situation and stretched out his left hand to hold her hand and patted her on the back with his right, consoling her.

Gongsun Lu'E's eyes showed that this touched her, she lowered her head and suddenly her face went red.

Yang Guo was afraid that his thoughts would lead to Xiao Longnu again and cause his finger to break out in a severe pain again, he quickly rushed back to the stone house that he was staying in.

Before he even got back to the stone house he could hear the bellows of Ma Guangzou, complaining how his stomach can't survive on water and vegetables and how could these sweet and bitter flower petals be eaten. Are they trying to kill me?

Yin Kexi laughed, "Brother Ma, you better hide all the valuables that you have; I think the Master of the valley has ill intent."

Ma Guangzou didn't know he was being ridiculed and nodded his head in agreement.

Yang Guo returned to the room and saw a few dishes filled with the petals of the Passion Flower on the table. He watched them eat the petals with squinting faces and he was amused as he thought about how even Jinlun Fawang the monk was affected by effects of the passion flower.

He picked a cup of water and took two sips when he heard footsteps approaching, a man in green came in, bowed to them and said, "Our Master will now see his guests."

Fawang, Nimoxing and the others were all great Masters, no matter where they went, the Master of that place would come out and personally greet them; even Mongolia's Fourth Prince Khubilai showed great respect to them. They could never have thought that the Master of this secluded valley would be so impudent, they all were angry and thought, "When I see that rude Valley Master I'm going to show him a thing or two."

The six of them followed the man in green for a li or so and suddenly came across a swaying green bamboo forest. Bamboo was rare in the north and such a large piece of bamboo forest was even rarer. In the middle of the forest, the light fragrant relaxing scent of flowers could be noticed. As soon as they passed through the forest, the scent suddenly became overwhelming; everywhere in front of them were Chinese narcissi. A shallow pond with a depth that was less than a foot was filled with the flowers. These flowers were also something that was usually seen in the south, why could they be found here in this mountain valley?

Fawang thought, "There must be some hot springs below the mountain that keeps the ground and air warm."

Every five feet or so was a Mu Chun plant, the man in green darted across the pond over them. The six followed but Ma Guangzou was heavy and had poor lightness kung fu; though his footsteps were large they weren't large enough to take steps of five feet or so. After stepping on a few plants, he decided to drop into the pond and follow them by wading instead.

They followed a green stone path and from afar, they saw a large stone building built under the cover of the mountains. The seven advanced towards it. Outside the building were two young attendants who were holding a fly whisk in their hands. One of the attendants went inside the house to tell the Master of their arrival while the other opened the door to receive them.

Yang Guo thought, "I wonder whether the Valley Master will come and receive us in person?" Before his thoughts were settled, a bearded old man in green came out of the

house.

This old man was extremely short, no more than four feet tall, his appearance was strange but the strangest thing about him was his exceedingly long thick beard that hung down to the ground. He was wearing a dark green gown and had a green rope tied across his waist.

Yang Guo thought, "This Valley Master looks so weird yet his daughter is so beautiful."

The old man bowed deeply to him and said, "It is our luck to have such prestigious guests, please come in for tea."

When Ma Guangzou heard the word 'tea', he frowned deeply and said loudly, "Drink tea! What place doesn't have tea? Why must I come to this place for it?"

The long bearded old man did not know what he meant; he glanced at him and then bowed again receiving the guests.

Nimoxing thought, "I'm a short man but the Master of this valley is even shorter. You win on shortness but let's see who wins on martial arts." He barged forward to the front, stretched out his hand and said, "Nice to meet you." He took the old man's hand and immediately used the strength in his hands.

The others took a couple of steps back when they saw the two stretching out their hands to receive each other, they knew that when two great Martial artists exchange forces, it will be something out of the ordinary.

Nimoxing first used twenty percent of his power in his hands but he found that the opponent did not counterattack nor block; he was slightly surprised and increased another twenty percent. He felt that it was like holding a slab of solid wood. He increased another twenty percent of the force in his hands. A faint green air glimmered across the old man's face and his hand was still like a rigid piece of wood.

Nimoxing was extremely surprised and didn't dare to use the rest of his strength just in case the enemy counterattacked when he was at full strength, then, he would not be able to defend against the attack. He laughed and released his hand.

Jinlun Fawang was second in line. He saw what had happened and knew that Nimoxing was unable to ascertain the short man's abilities. There was no need for him to make a rash move while the opponent's abilities were still unclear, Fawang folded his arms and

gracefully walked past. Xiaoxiang Zi and Yin Kexi followed together with Ma Guangzou behind. Ma Guangzou had seen the short man's beard and thought that it was extremely weird. He hadn't eaten anything except the Passion Flowers and that made him even hungrier; at this moment in time he was hungry and angry. When he entered he suddenly stuck out his foot and stepped on the tip of the man's beard.

The old man was unmoved and said, "Please be careful."

Ma Guangzou put his other foot on the beard and said, "What?"

The old man moved his head slightly and Ma Guangzou suddenly flipped over. Such a large person falling to the floor is no ordinary matter.

Yang Guo was the last one to enter; he quickly dashed forward two steps and struck Ma Guangzou on the backside moving his gigantic body forwards. Ma Guangzou stood firmly on the ground and rubbed his backside.

The old man acted as if he didn't see anything; he invited them into hall and sat them on the west side before saying clearly, "The guests have arrived, call for the Valley Master."

Yang Guo and the others were shocked, "So that old man is not the Valley Master."

From the back of the hall, ten or so green clothed disciples came in and stood to the left, Gongsun Lu'E was amongst them. After a while, a person entered the hall and bowed to the six and casually sat down on a chair on the east side. The long bearded old man stood by his chair. From the man's presence, this person will be none other but the Valley Master.

This man was about forty five or six years of age, he had a handsome face and appeared graceful; from the way he greeted them and sat down, he also seems to possess a lofty air. His face was yellow and dried, not looking like someone who possessed great martial arts. As soon as he sat down; some of the disciples in green brought tea forward. The hall was decorated in green, but the Valley Master was wearing a precious satin blue gown, he was extremely eye catching in the deluge of green.

The Valley Master picked up a tea bowl and said, "Please have some tea."

Ma Guangzou took a look at the bowl of tea, he saw that it was cold and had a few tea leaves floating on top; it was extremely bland to him and he snapped, "Valley Master,

you don't eat meat and you don't even drink tea, no wonder you look ill."

The Valley Master did not move a muscle. He took a sip of his tea and said, "The people of our valley have been vegetarians for hundreds of years."

Ma Guangzou said, "What's so good about being vegetarian. Does it make you live longer without aging?"

The Valley Master said, "My ancestors have lived here since the Tang dynasty; since then, none of the descendants has ever dared to break the vegetarian code."

Jinlun Fawang folded his arms and said, "So this place was set up in the Tang dynasty and has lasted until now, that really is something."

The Valley Master folded his arms and said, "You're too kind."

Xiaoxiang Zi suddenly spoke in a strange way, "Did your ancestors ever see Royal Concubine Yang?" His tone was extremely peculiar.

Nimoxing, Yin Kexi and the others were familiar with his voice after spending time with him, they were surprised when they heard this voice and all turned towards him. They were even more shocked when they saw his face, it had somehow has completely changed, his face had the appearance of a zombie before but now it looked even odder.

Fawang, Nimoxing and the others were slightly worried, "So this person possesses such great internal energy, even his face changes. He's circulating his internal energy so he can immediately strike out; does he want to show the Valley Master a thing or two?" They all put their guards up when they thought about this.

The Valley Master replied, "My ancestors did work in the Tang court as officials, when they saw what state the court had falling into under Yang Guozhong, they were furious and left to reside in a secluded place."

Xiaoxiang Zi laughed, "Your ancestors must have drunk the water that Royal Concubine Yang had washed her feet with."

Everyone's face in the hall changed as soon as these words came out. It was a challenge to the Valley Master and he was going to make his move very soon.

Fawang and the others were surprised, thinking, “This Xiaoxiang Zi is extremely crafty, he always lets other people go first in all matters, why has he volunteered to go first suddenly?”

The Valley Master ignored him and signaled to the old long bearded man. The old bearded man said clearly, “Our Master has treated you with respect as guests, how can you say such things?”

Xiaoxiang Zi laughed and said in his strange manner, “Your ancestor has definitely drunk the foot water of Royal Concubine Yang; if they haven’t drunk it, I’ll cut off my head for you.”

Ma Guangzou was surprised and asked, “Brother Xiaoxiang, how do you know? Could it be that you drank some that day as well?”

Xiaoxiang Zi laughed, his voice changed again as he said, “If they didn’t drink the foot water and upset their stomachs, what other reason is there for them not to eat meat?”

Ma Guangzou clapped and laughed, he called out, “Yes, yes, it must be for this reason.”

But Fawang and the others frowned, they all felt that Xiaoxiang Zi’s words were going a bit too far; everyone has their own eating habits, how can you use it as a joke? Not mentioning the fact that the six of them were deep in this valley, the people of this valley were definitely not kind people; even if fists had to be raised, a backup plan should be made first.

The old bearded man could endure this no longer; he went to the middle of the hall and said, “Mr. Xiaoxiang Zi, our valley has not offended you. If you’re looking for a fight then please come forward.”

Xiaoxiang Zi said, “Good!” He remained in his chair and leapt over the table in front of him; after a ‘deng’ sound, he landed in the middle of the hall in his chair. He called out, “Long bearded old man, what’s your name? It’ll be unfair if we fight with me not knowing your name but you knowing mine. I cannot afford to be in this predicament.”

His words seemed sound but unsound at the same time; the old man became even angrier but his wariness also deepened after seeing how graceful Xiaoxiang Zi was in moving the chair into the centre of the room, he wasn’t anything ordinary.

The Valley Master said, “Tell him, it’s not important.”

The old man said, “Fine, my surname is Fan, first names Yiweng, please stand up and start.”

Xiaoxiang Zi said, “What weapon are you going to use? Go get it and let me take a look.”

Fan Yiweng said, “You want to compete with weapons? That’s good.” His right foot stamped on the floor and he called out, “Bring it!”

Two attendants rushed inside and when they came out, they had an eleven foot long steel Dragon Head Staff on their shoulders.

Yang Guo and the others were shocked when they saw this, “How can this short man use such a long and heavy weapon.”

Xiaoxiang Zi didn’t take any notice and took out an extremely large pair of scissors from underneath his gown. He said, “Do you know what this pair of scissors is used for?”

When the others saw this weapon, they just felt that it was a strange weapon, but Yang Guo was shocked. He didn’t stretch out his hand towards his bag, but instead he just straightened his back a little and noticed that his pair of scissors was missing. He thought, “Blacksmith Feng made that large pair of scissors for me that I had intended to use against Li Mochou. How did that zombie steal it off me in the middle of the night without me noticing?”

Fan Yiweng took his staff and placed it on the floor. The hall was extremely spacious; as soon as the staff landed, it produced ‘weng’ ‘weng’ noises and along with the echoes from the room, the noise was tremendous.

Xiaoxiang Zi lifted up the scissors with his right hand and opened them. He held the scissors with all the strength in his fingers. He called out, “Hey, shortie, you don’t know the name of my precious scissors, do you want me to tell you?”

Fan Yiweng angrily said, “Such an unorthodox weapon won’t have an elegant name.”

Xiaoxiang Zi laughed and said, “Correct, the name is not elegant, it is called the Dog Fur Scissors.”

Yang Guo was not pleased, “Who wants you to give my pair of scissors such an ugly name.”

He heard Xiaoxiang Zi continue, “I knew long ago that there was a long bearded creature around here; because of this I prepared this pair of Dog Fur Scissors so I can cut off your beard!”

Nimoxing and Ma Guangzou burst out laughing, Yin Kexi and Yang Guo too couldn't hold in their laughter and laughed; only Jinlun Fawang kept his self-control and along with the Valley Master, the two appeared as if nothing had happened.

Fan Yiweng swung his staff a little and created a gust of wind, he said, “I was thinking my beard is too long, since you want to be a barber and help me trim it, nothing could be better, let's fight!”

Xiaoxiang Zi lifted his head and looked up at the beam of the hall in thought, it appeared that he didn't hear his words. Suddenly, his right arm came out like lightning and the scissors cut towards the man's beard.

Fan Yiweng would never have dreamed he would actually attack while sitting in the chair; he had no time to dodge and urgently dropped his staff down. His body lifted up and somersaulted through the air about ten feet off the floor with the staff still on the floor.

Xiaoxiang Zi's attack was extremely quick and Fan Yiweng's dodge was also very swift; in that cut and dodge, the two skilled martial artists had displayed their advanced martial arts. But Fan Yiweng still suffered by that attack; though he managed to avoid that cut, three strands of his beard were cut off by the tip of the scissors.

Xiaoxiang Zi was extremely proud of himself. He picked up the three strands of beard with his left hand and blew the strands of hair which flew towards his bowl of tea on the table. A ‘ping pang’ sound was heard as the bowl fell onto the floor and shattered.

Yang Guo and the others knew that he was putting on a show and that it was his breath that forced the bowl to drop on the floor. But Ma Guangzou did not know this and thought that the strands of beard had great power after being blown by Xiaoxiang Zi. He called out loudly, “Xiaoxiang Zi, your strands of beard are really something!”

Xiaoxiang Zi laughed, he opened and closed the scissors then called out, “Short beard, do you want to test out my Dog Fur Scissors again?”

Though everyone could see that he was laughing, his face remained unmoved; they were becoming more and more shocked by him. They were thinking, “When someone

reaches an advanced state in their internal energy, they can be angry and delighted without showing it on their faces, even to the point where the face looked emotionless. But it is unheard of that someone can laugh so heartily but keep that fearful face.” His face was too unsightly for the eyes; everyone just took one look and immediately turned away again.

Fan Yiweng was now furious after being ridiculed again and again; he bowed to the Valley Master and said, “Master, today this disciple cannot continue treating the guests with respect.”

Yang Guo was extremely surprised, “That short man is a lot older than the Valley Master; how can he call him Master?”

The Valley Master nodded his head slightly and gently waved out his left hand.

Fan Yiweng swept out his staff towards the chair that Xiaoxiang Zi was sitting on; though he was a short man he possessed incredible strength, the hundred kilo (220 lb) staff swept out and created a great gust of wind.

Though Yang Guo and the others were on the same side as Xiaoxiang Zi, they did not know exactly how skilled he was. They all watched the men battle with great concentration.

The staff was now half a foot away from the leg of the chair. Xiaoxiang Zi lowered his left hand and actually stretched it out to grab the head of the staff and at the same time, he cut forward towards his opponent’s beard with the scissors.

Fan Yiweng was extremely angry, he thought, “You actually dare to look down on me like this!” He swung his head to the side and his beard moved to the side while the staff continued its sweep and struck Xiaoxiang Zi’s palm.

The others called out and stood up; they all thought that Xiaoxiang Zi’s palm would have suffered a serious injury.

But Fan Yiweng felt as if his staff had struck water, soft as if nothing was there; he knew something was wrong and quickly pulled back. However, Xiaoxiang Zi’s twisted his wrist and kept his hold on the staff.

Fan Yiweng felt his opponent immediately pushing outward so he immediately sent the staff forward. The force he applied was ferocious; he assumed that Xiaoxiang Zi would

have to leave his seat but he didn't predict that the opponent would again leap away with his chair, this time to the left as the staff thrust towards thin air. He had no choice but to release his grip on the head of the staff.

Fan Yiweng's left hand twisted above his head and the staff made a circle and was sent towards his opponent's head.

Xiaoxiang Zi wanted to ridicule him and leapt up about ten feet with the chair and actually passed over the staff.

The others saw that his hands techniques were extraordinary and swift; though he was in the chair, he moved as if he was not, they all called out in appreciation.

Fan Yiweng saw that his opponent was highly skilled; he poured all his concentration into this battle, the staff created gusts of wind as he moved it around. He knew that hitting him would not be easy but if he smashes his chair, he will be able to get the initiative.

But Xiaoxiang Zi's martial arts were extraordinary; his right hand continued to open and close the scissors and suddenly cut towards his beard while Xiaoxiang Zi's left hand used the "Trapping Hand Technique" to snatch his staff.

In the blink of an eye the two had tens of exchanges; though they appeared to be equal, Xiaoxiang Zi had not left his chair, not giving an ounce of respect towards his opponent.

Jinlun Fawang was shocked inside, "Who would have thought that zombie would actually possess such great abilities?"

More exchanges passed between the two; Fan Yiweng kept on using sweeping stances across the floor, while Xiaoxiang Zi kept on leaping up in the chair, getting quicker and quicker.

The Valley Master suddenly called out, "Don't hit the chair, otherwise you can't handle him."

Fan Yiweng was startled but then immediately understood, "While he's sitting in the chair, I can only fight him to a draw. If his legs were on the ground, then my beard will be cut off in just a few stances." He suddenly changed his stances and urgently waved and twisted the staff around. A circle of silver light covered the short man in green

while on the outside there was a zombie like person leaping up and down without stopping. This was a strange rarely seen spectacle.

The Valley Master knew that Xiaoxiang Zi was deliberately trying to make a fool out of Fan Yiweng; if it continued he would definitely suffer. The Valley Master then stood up and slowly left the table. He said, “Yiweng, you are not a match for that Master, come back.”

Fan Yiweng obeyed his Master and said loudly, “Yes!” He straightened his staff and was about to take it back when Xiaoxiang Zi called out, “That won’t do, that won’t do!” He flew up from the chair and threw himself down onto the staff. A ‘ka la’ sound was heard as the staff smashed the chair into pieces; but the staff was held onto by Xiaoxiang Zi with his left hand. Xiaoxiang Zi steadied his left leg and opened the scissors. Fan Yiweng’s beard was hanging between the blades, a cut now and his beard would be gone.

Who knew that the long beard that Fan Yiweng grew was an extremely soft lethal weapon; the technique for using it is along the same lines as a whip, a chain and a whisk. His head moved slightly and the beard whipped around escaping from the blade of the scissors and wrapped up the scissors instead; he moved his head backwards and a great force pulled the scissors forward.

Xiaoxiang Zi called out loudly, “Ai yo, old shortie, your beard is pretty powerful; Xiaoxiang Zi is in awe of you.” One had his beard wrapped around the scissors whereas the other had his hand holding onto the staff, there was no result for the time being.

Xiaoxiang Zi laughed out loud and said, “Interesting, interesting!”

Suddenly a grey blur flashed in from the front door; this person was extremely quick and was pushing both his palms forward towards the back of Xiaoxiang Zi.

The Valley Master shouted, “Who is it?”

This attack was quick and vicious and it was certain to hit its target. Xiaoxiang Zi released his grasp of the staff and turned his left palm around and pushed out at the opponent below the elbow, immediately dispersing the power of his palms.

The person angrily said, “You bastard, I’m going to kill you!”

Yang Guo and the others were incredibly surprised when they saw this person; they all called out, “Xiaoxiang Zi!” The person who had dashed forward and attacked was Xiaoxiang Zi. Can he divide into two? And why was he attacking his own double? They were all puzzled by this.

Once they had settled down, they saw that the person who was tangling with Fan Yiweng was dressed in the clothes of Xiaoxiang Zi; everything was correct from the shoes to the hat. Though his face looked like a zombie, it was not the face of Xiaoxiang Zi. The person who had entered had the face of Xiaoxiang Zi but he was dressed in green. The man in green sent his claw like hands out towards the back of the Xiaoxiang Zi who was holding the scissors and called out, “What kind of hero attacks from an ambush?”

Fan Yiweng was slightly surprised when he saw help had come; this person was dressed in the valley’s uniform but he did not know him. He placed his staff to the side and saw the two zombie-like people battle each other.

It was now clear to Yang Guo, the person who was holding the scissors must have stolen his mask as well. He put it on, changed into Xiaoxiang Zi’s clothes and then came here to the hall to stir up trouble. Because Xiaoxiang Zi’s face normally was like that of a corpse, no one was able to tell. Though Yang Guo had worn the mask himself, but he did not know what he looked like when wearing the mask. When Cheng Ying had her’s on, he didn’t dare to look at her too often. He was actually deceived by this person.

He concentrated for a while and recognized the martial arts of the person holding the pair of scissors, he called out, “Zhou Botong, give back my mask and scissors.” He then leapt into the middle of the hall and stretched out his hand to snatch the pair of scissors back.

This person was Zhou Botong. He’d had a lapse in concentration and was captured by the fish net of the four disciples of the valley. But Zhou Botong possesses amazing abilities; just a slight lapse in concentration by the four disciples and he immediately broke out of the fish net. Afterwards he hid behind some rocks. He had planned to turn the valley over but then he saw Yang Guo and the other five. In the middle of the night, he ambushed Xiaoxiang Zi; he sealed his pressure points and moved him outside of the house. Then he changed into his clothes. Zhou Botong had great lightness kung fu and he comes and goes without a trace; Xiaoxiang Zi was still asleep when this happened and even Jinlun Fawang didn’t notice anything. After he changed clothes, Zhou Botong returned to the stone house and lay down by Yang Guo, and then stole the scissors and

mask from his bag. When they woke up the next morning, no one actually noticed anything amiss.

Xiaoxiang Zi tried to unblock his pressure points after they were sealed but Zhou Botong's pressure point sealing skills were powerful; it was six hours before he was able to move his limbs again. At that time, he had only his undergarments on. He was extremely angry and when a valley disciple passed by, he immediately took his clothes and hurried to the stone building. When he got there, he saw a person dressed in his clothes in a heated battle with Fan Yiweng; his anger was uncontrollable and he threw his palms forward viciously.

Zhou Botong saw Yang Guo coming forward and began to use his skill of left right mutual combat; his left hand came out and in as he fought Yang Guo while his right hand used the scissors and forced Xiaoxiang Zi to stay back. When the scissors opened, the distance between the blades was two feet; if his head were in between the blades when it closed, his head would separate from his neck. Though Xiaoxiang Zi was furious, he did not dare to get close.

When the Valley Master first saw Zhou Botong fight Fan Yiweng, he was already secretly in awe. Now he saw him using two hands to fight two people separately, it was as if he were divided into two. The "Yin Yang Twin Blades" that he practices has some similarities to the technique that Zhou Botong was using; but how could he do two things at the same time like Zhou Botong was doing? He also saw Xiaoxiang Zi's claws were like steel, his stances vicious, and he saw that Yang Guo was graceful and elegant, his form and posture exquisite, he pondered, "There are many able people in this world. The two old men are indeed terrific; though this young man's internal energy is shallow, his form, fists and kicks are filled with elegance." He then said clearly, "Please hold your fists."

Yang Guo and Xiaoxiang Zi leapt back at the same time. Zhou Botong took off his mask and threw the mask along with the scissors towards Yang Guo and then called out, "I've had enough fun, I'm going!" His legs lightly touched the ground and he leapt up onto a beam up in the ceiling.

The valley's disciples gasped when Zhou Botong showed his face. Gongsun Lu'E called out, "Father, it's that old man."

Zhou Botong laughed as he sat on the beam. The beam was thirty feet off the floor; though there were many good fighters in the hall, to follow him and leap up in one go was something that none of them could do.

Fan Yiweng was the Master of the passionless valley's senior disciple and was older than his Master. Apart from his Master, he was the most skilled fighter of the valley; after being ridiculed by Zhou Botong many times, how could he not be angry? He was short and skilled at climbing; his body leapt up and grabbed a pillar, climbing up it like an ape. Zhou Botong loved it when someone tangles with him, he saw him climbing up but couldn't wait for him to reach the beam so he stretched out his hand to receive him.

How would Fan Yiweng know that that it was a kind gesture? When he saw his right hand stretching out towards him, he stretched out his finger and poked the 'Great tomb' pressure point on Zhou Botong's wrist. Zhou Botong felt a slight sensation in his hand and immediately sealed off his pressure point and loosened his muscles. Fan Yiweng felt that his finger was poking something like cotton wool; he quickly pulled his finger back. Zhou Botong's palm turned and struck the back of his arm with a very crisp sound, he called out, "One basket of barley, two baskets of barley, you and me slap the great barley!"

Fan Yiweng was extremely angry, he swung his head and his long beard swept towards Zhou Botong. Zhou Botong heard that urgent gust of wind and propped his left foot against the beam and moved his body, his left hand then held onto the beam and hung his body in the air.

Xiaoxiang Zi knew that Fan Yiweng was not a match for Zhou Botong; even if he went up there to join in as well he would not be able to beat him. He turned around to Nimoxing and Ma Guangzou and said, "Brother Ni and Ma, that old man doesn't give any respect to the six of us; he really has gone too far."

Nimoxing was a rash person and could be offended, Ma Guangzou was slow witted and wasn't clear on what was happening, when they heard him say, 'doesn't give any respect to the six of us', they were angered and both of them shouted. They then leapt towards the beam to grab Zhou Botong's leg. Zhou Botong kicked away their palms with his legs.

Xiaoxiang Zi turned to Yin Kexi and said coldly, "Brother Yin, are you really just going to watch?"

Yin Kexi gave a wry smile and said, "Brother Xiaoxiang, you go first and I'll be right behind you."

Xiaoxiang Zi made a strange whistle, the walls trembled and he suddenly leaped up. His knees were not bent; his whole body and arms were straight as a ruler as he went

for Zhou Botong's abdomen.

Zhou Botong saw the incoming attack and pulled in his body and became almost sphere like; his right hand swapped with his left hand in holding the beam. Xiaoxiang Zi clutched thin air and dropped back down. His body was straight as a stick, his feet touched the ground and he jumped up once again. Fan Yiweng was holding onto the pillar and sweeping his beard while Xiaoxiang Zi, Nimoxing and Ma Guangzou kept on going up and down trying to attack him.

Yin Kexi laughed, "This old man's martial arts really are incredible; I'll join in as well." He searched his pockets and took out a weapon. The hall was lit up with the reflection of pearls and the glimmering of gold; there was a whip in his hand. This whip was made out of gold and silver silk and was embedded with pearls and gems. In the world of Jianghu, one would not be able to find such a precious and lavish weapon as this. There were glimmers of gold and glistening of pearls as the whip was swept towards Zhou Botong's leg.

Yang Guo was amused with what was happening and thought, "These five are showing off their abilities in attacking the Old Urchin; if I don't do something out of the ordinary, I can't claim to be capable." He had an idea; he put on the human skin mask and copied the strange call of Xiaoxiang Zi. He then picked up Fan Yiweng's staff, stood it up against the floor and used the force to throw himself up into midair. The staff was already over ten feet long, so using it as a lever he was able to face Zhou Botong face to face. He called out, "Old Urchin, watch out for the scissors!" The large scissors cut forwards towards his white beard.

Zhou Botong was delighted, he moved his head and called out, "Little brother, your move is pretty amusing."

Yang Guo said, "Old Urchin, I haven't done anything to offend you, why did you make fun of me?"

Zhou Botong, "Things come and go and you haven't suffered one bit; instead you've gained something."

Yang Guo was startled and said, "What came and went?"

Zhou Botong laughed, "Right now I need to be excused, and I can't speak with you." He saw the incoming Golden Dragon whip of Yin Kexi and stretched out his hand to seize

it. Yin Kexi's whip twisted and he was about to counterattack his opponent's back when he fell back to the floor.

The Old Urchin said, "Your colorful dead snake is pretty funny." At this moment, Fan Yiweng's beard came sweeping across; his hands were holding onto the pillar and he was relying on his beard to attack his enemy.

Zhou Botong laughed, "So a beard can be used like that?" He copied him and swung his beard towards him, but his beard was a lot shorter than Fan Yiweng's and he had never practiced with it before; the move he made with his beard was useless. A 'shua' sound was heard as he was struck by Fan Yiweng's beard across the cheek leaving a red mark; if he didn't have such profound internal energy, he would have been knocked out. After receiving this attack, Zhou Botong wasn't angry, instead he had great respect towards Fan Yiweng and said, "My beard can't compare to yours, I admit defeat, we don't need to continue."

Fan Yiweng had just had a successful strike and was not going to hold back; his beard came out again. Zhou Botong did not dare to use his beard to meet it again, so his left hand used the techniques of the "Vacant Light Fist", throwing out soft fists. The wind created by the fists forced Fan Yiweng's beard to the right and just at this time, Ma Guangzou had leaped up to make an attack, the beard brushed against his face.

Ma Guangzou's eyes were covered so he grabbed the beard with his two hands. Fan Yiweng's beard had originally been under his control but after being forced away by the wind from Zhou Botong's fists, he lost control of it and it was now in Ma Guangzou's hands. He was startled and did not use force to pull it back. Ma Guangzou was holding it tightly and as he descended, he dragged Fan Yiweng down to the floor.

Ma Guangzou was thick skinned and the fall didn't hurt much. However, Fan Yiweng had fallen on top of him.

Fan Yiweng said angrily, "What are you doing, you still haven't let go?"

Though Ma Guangzou didn't feel much pain from the fall, Fan Yiweng's feet had landed on his stomach and it was quite painful; his anger also erupted and he shouted, "I don't want to let go; what are you going to do about it?" After he said this, he quickly wrapped the beard around his arm.

Fan Yiweng chopped out a right palm and Ma Guangzou moved his head to dodge, however, this was a dummy move and a fist came out from his left hand, landing squarely

on Ma Guangzou's nose.

Ma Guangzou called out and returned a punch. When it came to martial arts, Fan Yiweng was much better than Ma Guangzou; but his beard was trapped and he couldn't move his head, so the punch landed on his cheekbone. One tall and one short, the two of them began to fight. Though Fan Yiweng was on top, he could not escape from his opponent.

Jinlun Fawang saw that the hall had fallen into chaos; five people from his side had come out and yet still they were unable to take care of the Old Urchin. This was a bit too shameful. Sounds of 'qiang lang' 'qiang lang' were heard as he took out two wheels, one silver and one bronze. One swept from left to right and the other from right to left forming two arcs of light as they flew towards Zhou Botong. The ringing sounds were urgent and frightening.

Zhou Botong did not know how powerful they were and said, "What are these?" He stretched out his hand to grab them.

Yang Guo called out, "You can't catch them!"

Yang Guo threw the steel staff upwards. A 'dang' sound was heard and the thick, long staff was sent flying towards the corner of the room as sparks flew and dust rose up from the wall. The bronze wheel came back to Fawang and he once again sent it with his left hand. The wheel flew swiftly towards the beam.

After this, Zhou Botong knew that it wasn't good to annoy this monk. He knew that he wouldn't be able to fight off all of them so he flipped downwards and called out, "Excuse me everyone, the Old Urchin has to leave, we'll play again another day." He then ran towards the door. However, four disciples in green had blocked the exit with a large fish net.

Zhou Botong had experienced the fish net before and called out, "Oh no!" He wanted to escape through the window on the eastern side. He saw a green blur and the window was covered by a fish net as well.

Zhou Botong leapt back into the middle of the room and saw that in all four directions there were four disciples in green holding a fish net, blocking his path. Zhou Botong then leapt up onto the beam and used the stance "Surging Sky Palm" to break a large hole in the ceiling. He was about to leap out through the hole when he raised his head and saw that there was also another fish net above. He had nowhere to go and leapt

back to the floor. He pointed to the Valley Master and laughed, “Old yellow face, why do you want to keep me here? Do you need a playmate?”

Valley Master Gongsun said dryly, “All you’ve got to do is return the four things that you took and I’ll immediately let you go.”

Zhou Botong said surprisingly, “What use have I got with your smelly things? Even if a person could learn martial arts to a state equal to yours, who cares?”

Valley Master Gongsun slowly walked to the middle of the hall. He brushed the dust off his clothes and said, “If today wasn’t my wedding day, I would definitely exchange a few stances with you. Just leave the items of the valley here and leave.”

Zhou Botong was furious and called out, “So, you say that I’ve definitely stolen something from you? That’s crap, what have you got here in this valley?” He then started to take off his clothes and very soon, he was stark naked. The Valley Master called out to him to stop but was ignored. Zhou Botong then showed his garments inside out, indeed, there was nothing there. The female disciples in the hall were distressed and turned their heads away.

This turn of events was something that the Valley Master had not predicted. The missing objects from the library, pill room, fungi room and sword room were very important and had to be recovered; could it really be that the missing objects were not stolen by the Old Urchin?

Just as he was in deep thought, Zhou Botong clapped his hands and said, “Look at you, you’re old but why do you not act your age? You speak without thinking and you act mad and crazy, you do such an embarrassing thing in public, aren’t people going to laugh their teeth out?”

These words should have been said to him but he got it in first. The Valley Master didn’t know whether to laugh or cry and did not have a reply. He saw that Fan Yiweng was still battling Ma Guangzou so he shouted, “Get up Yiweng, stop tangling with the guest.”

Zhou Botong laughed, “Long beard, I like your temper, the two of us can be friends.”

In actual fact, Fan Yiweng has been strict and disciplined all his life; he only fought Ma Guangzou because he had no choice. He wanted to stand up many times but his beard was wrapped around Ma Guangzou’s arm and he had no way to escape.

Valley Master Gongsun frowned slightly and pointed to Zhou Botong saying, “I’m afraid that it is you who is embarrassing himself in public and it is you whose actions are laughable.”

Zhou Botong said, “I came out of my mother’s womb naked and I’m pure and innocent as I stand naked now, what’s wrong with that? Look at how old you are yet you still want to marry a beautiful young girl, ha-ha, laughable, laughable!” Those words were like a hammer that smashed into the chest of the Valley Master; his yellow face became red and he couldn’t say anything.

Zhou Botong called out, “Oh no, I’m afraid I might catch a cold without wearing any clothes.” Suddenly he dashed towards the exit.

As soon as the four disciples in green saw the blur, they immediately moved positions and threw the net over him, trapping him in the net. They felt him struggling fiercely and they tied the corners of the net then carried him over to the Valley Master. The fish net was made out of extremely pliable and soft golden silk; even a precious sword or saber would not find it easy to cut through it. The hand movements of the four disciples were unusual and swift, the net covered heaven and earth as it was brought forward. Even an extremely skilled martial artist would find it difficult to deal with. The only disadvantage was that it required four people to work it; one person alone will not be able to use it. The four of them were extremely proud of themselves after they caught him in one swoop; but when they saw the Valley Master examine the net, he had an expression of displeasure. They quickly looked down; they were shocked and broke out in a cold sweat. They quickly opened the net up and let two people out; it was Ma Guangzou and Fan Yiweng.

No one could predict that Zhou Botong would suddenly dash out stark naked without his clothes. His hand movements were extraordinarily quick; he had picked up Ma Guangzou and Fan Yiweng and threw them in the net. When the four disciples took in the net, he quickly dashed out. The deception was unnoticeable.

The Valley Master’s face was full of humiliation because of what Zhou Botong had done; and even Fawang and the others felt shame in their hearts. They were all thinking, “I class myself as a first rate fighter of Wulin and yet all of us together were unable to capture that mad old man, that is shameful.” Only Yang Guo was pleased; he had great respect for Zhou Botong and thought that if he was captured, I would definitely think of a way to rescue him. Since he’s managed to escape by himself, then it couldn’t be better.

Fawang had originally wanted to learn the background of this Valley Master, but after all this trouble with the Old Urchin, he wasn't in the mood to carry on. He spoke a few words with Xiaoxiang Zi and Yin Kexi then stood up and folded his arms, saying, "Thank you for your hospitality, we ought to stay longer and make acquaintances but we all have other pressing matters to attend to and so we say goodbye."

The Valley Master had originally suspected that Fawang and the others were friends of the Old Urchin, but he had later seen Xiaoxiang Zi fight for his life and Fawang, Yang Guo, Yin Kexi, Ma Guangzou and Nimoxing attacking Zhou Botong. They all had showed signs of helping him so he folded his hands and said, "I have a request; I wonder will our six guests grant me my wish?"

Fawang said, "If it's in our ability then we'll do our best."

The Valley Master said, "After noon, there will be my wedding procession, I request your presence. This valley is very secluded and remote; there have been very few guests over the last hundreds of years. It is the luck of three generations that today six esteemed guests have arrived."

Ma Guangzou said, "Will there be wine?"

The Valley Master was about to reply when he saw Yang Guo's eyes were fixed on something outside, his face was extremely strange; he seemed to be extremely happy but also appeared to be full of anguish. Everyone was surprised and followed his gaze.

They saw a girl in white passing along a corridor outside. The sunlight shone on her white, cold face and it seemed that the sunlight had turned into moonlight. There was a sparkle under her eyelashes and after she walked a couple of steps, a teardrop rolled down her cheek. Her steps were light; it was as if she was gliding on water as she made her way down the corridor. She did not glance over at the people in the middle of the hall.

It was as if Yang Guo's pressure points had been sealed and he didn't move a muscle. Suddenly he called out, "Gu Gu!"

The girl in white was at the head of the corridor when she heard the call, as soon as she did her body trembled and said faintly, "Guo'er, Guo'er, you're here? Is it you that's calling me?" She turned her head around and appeared as if she was looking for something, but her eyes were uncertain as if she was in a dream.

Yang Guo quickly leapt out of the hall and held her hand, saying, “Gu Gu, you’re here, I’ve searched for you continuously!” He then suddenly called out; there was unbearable pain in the place where his finger had been pricked by the passion flower.

The girl in white called out, her body trembled and she sat down on the floor with her eyes closed, it was as if she had fainted.

Yang Guo called out, “Gu Gu, how are you feeling?”

After a while, the girl slowly opened her eyes and stood up. She said, “Who are you? What did you call me?”

Yang Guo was greatly shocked, he stared at her, if it wasn’t Xiao Longnu then who else could it be? He quickly asked, “Gu Gu, It’s’ Guo’er, how... how come you don’t recognize me? Are you hurt? Where are you feeling discomfort?”

The girl looked at him and said coldly, “I do not know you.” She then walked into the hall and sat down by Valley Master Gongsun. Yang Guo was flabbergasted; he returned to the hall in a daze and leaned on the back of a chair.

Valley Master Gongsun’s face had been unmoved all along but now his face was filled with joy, he raised his hand towards Fawang and the others, saying, “This is my bride; the wedding has been set for today after midday.” He then glanced over at Yang Guo wryly, offended by his rudeness just now in recognizing someone wrongly and scaring his new bride.

Yang Guo’s shock was indescribable; he said loudly, “Gu Gu, could it be... could it be that you’re not Xiao Longnu? Could it be that you’re not my Master?”

The girl said, “No! What Xiao Longnu?”

Yang Guo clenched his fists, his mind filled with thoughts, “Is Gu Gu angry with me and doesn’t want to recognize me? Is it because we’re in danger and she’s deliberately pretending? Is she like Godfather and has lost her memories? But Godfather was still able to recognize me. Could it be that there really is someone else in the world that looks exactly like her?” He just said, “Gu Gu, you... you... I’m... I’m Guo’er!”

Valley Master Gongsun frowned slightly as he watched him lose his composure, he quietly said to the girl, “Sister Liu, there are many weird people here today.”

The girl ignored him and poured a cup of water. She slowly drank it and glanced over at Jinlun Fawang and the others but she avoided Yang Guo, not looking at him again. Everyone saw her sleeve tremble slightly and water splashed from the cup onto her clothes but she did not notice anything.

Yang Guo's mind was turning upside down and didn't know what to do; he turned around to Jinlun Fawang and asked, "My Master and I have dueled with you before, you remember. Tell me... have I recognized the wrong person?"

When the girl entered the hall, Fawang had recognized her as Xiao Longnu but she completely ignored Yang Guo, he thought that the two must have had a lovers quarrel so he smiled wryly and said, "I don't remember."

He had endured a great defeat by them when Xiao Longnu and Yang Guo used the "Simple Heart of the Jade Maiden" swordplay against him; something which had never happened before. He thought that if the two had quarreled, it really was something that was beneficial to him, why should he help them get back together?

Yang Guo was startled again but immediately understood, in his mind, he was furious, "You really are evil. That day on the mountain top, I helped you to recuperate and now you're doing this to me." He wanted to kill him right there and then.

Jinlun Fawang saw that he had fallen to pieces but his eyes revealed hatred, he pondered, "There's hate towards me in his heart now; if I let him live he will be a problem in the future. Today he's making a spectacle of himself; this really is a good chance to get rid of him." He folded his arms to Valley Master Gongsun and laughed, "Since today is Valley Master's day of celebration, of course we'll attend but it is a bit embarrassing that my friends and I have not brought any gifts."

Valley Master Gongsun was delighted when he heard that they would stay for his wedding, he said to the girl, "These people are great Masters of Wulin; just being able to have one present is a great honour never mind being able to..." He wanted to say six of them but he felt Yang Guo was young. Just now when he fought Zhou Botong, though his form and position were exquisite, his internal energy was ordinary. He felt that his martial arts practice aimed for style over substance and couldn't rank him as one of the 'great Masters of Wulin'. But if he leaves him out and says five, it would be a bit too discourteous, he hesitated a little and said, "...invite these heroes."

Fawang thought to himself, "This Valley Master has a majestic air, and from the formation he set to catch the Old Urchin, his martial arts and intelligence are excellent; but

he hasn't got the ability to do great things. Yang Guo and Xiao Longnu just said a few words and he's agitated."

Valley Master Gongsun said, "Sister Liu, this is Jinlun Fawang..." He then told her who they were and said Yang Guo's name last. When the girl heard their names, she just nodded slightly, her face unmoved as if she did not care but to Yang Guo's name, she stared outside and didn't even nod.

Yang Guo's face was red, his mind was turning upside like an ocean storm, whatever Valley Master Gongsun said, he didn't hear. Nimoxing, Yin Kexi and the others did not know his background, they thought that he was embarrassed because he had recognized the wrong person.

Gongsun Lu'E was standing behind her father and heard every single word that Yang Guo had said, she thought to herself, "This morning his finger was pierced by the passion flower, and he immediately suffered pain from yearning for his lover. Right now he's filled with these thoughts, could it be that my new mother is his lover? What are the chances of that? Could it be that these people have come to the valley because of my new mother?" She examined her 'new mother' and saw that her face was expressionless, there was no joy or happiness on her face, neither was there any shyness; she did not look like a new bride at all and her suspicions deepened.

Yang Guo's chest felt as if it wanted to burst, he then thought, "Gu Gu must have a reason for being like this, I better stop running away with these thoughts and find out the truth."

He then stood up and bowed to the Valley Master. He said clearly, "I have a close one, that... that looks extremely like that Miss, I apologize for my mistake just now."

When the Valley Master heard these polite words, his face immediately changed and returned the bow. He then said, "It's not unusual to mistake someone for someone else, who can be blamed? But..." He stopped for a while and laughed, "To have someone else who looks exactly like her is not only a great coincidence; it is also an extremely odd thing." He was saying how could there be another equally as beautiful girl under heaven's skies?

Yang Guo said, "Yes, it is extremely odd. Can I take the liberty to ask this Miss' surname?"

Valley Master Gongsun had a faint smile and said, “Her surname is Liu. Is your close one also named Liu?”

Yang Guo said, “No.” He pondered, “Why did Gu Gu change her name to Liu?” He then had a thought, “Ah, it’s because I’m named *Yang.” [*Yangliu is the combined name for a willow tree. It symbolically indicates the link between them.] After another thought like this, his finger broke out in unbearable pain again.

Gongsun Lu’E saw his suffering and pitied him, her eyes never left his face.

Valley Master Gongsun examined Yang Guo for a while and then looked at the girl in white, her head was lowered and she didn’t make a single sound. He was becoming suspicious and thought, “Just now when she heard this punk call out, I heard her call out quietly ‘Guo’er, Guo’er, you’re here? Is it you that’s calling me?’ Could it be that she really is that little punk’s Auntie? But why is she not recognizing him?” He wanted to ask her but there were many people present; he thought this matter could be explained later after the wedding, so he took back his words.

Yang Guo said, “This Miss has not lived in this valley for long; I wonder how, did you and her meet?”

In ancient times, ordinarily girls would not meet outsiders easily, and they were even stricter about seeing guests on their wedding day; but Jinlun Fawang and the others didn’t take much notice. Some of them were from the west and the others roamed Jianghu; they weren’t restrained by customs and traditions. They just felt that wearing plain white silk on her wedding day was a bit too dull. When they heard Yang Guo inquire about someone else’s business when he asked the Valley Master how he met the girl, they felt that he had gone too far.

But Valley Master Gongsun also wanted to know about the background of his bride to be, he thought, “It could be that little punk really knows sister Liu.” He said, “Brother Yang is correct. Half a month ago, I was picking herbs by the mountain side when I saw her lying at the foot of the mountain; she had a serious injury and was on the point of death. I examined her and knew that she had suffered a fire deviation while practicing internal energy, so I took her back to the valley and used my family’s medicine to help her recover. We met by chance.”

Jinlun Fawang interrupted, “This is the so called thousand li fate of marriage led by a string. Miss Liu must have wanted to repay this kindness so she agreed to marry. This

really is a match that was made in heaven.” His words seemed to be praising Valley Master Gongsun but in reality, he wanted to spite Yang Guo.

When Yang Guo heard this, his face did indeed change dramatically; his body trembled and there was a faint sweet taste at the back of his throat, he threw up a mouthful of blood.

When the girl in white saw this she quivered, “You... you...” She quickly stood up and wanted to stretch out her hand to help him up, but she forced herself to stop. Then she too spat out a mouthful of blood; her white dress was stained by it.

This Miss Liu was a name that Xiao Longnu had made up. That night after hearing the words of Huang Rong, she thought to herself that if she married Yang Guo, she will have caused him to be looked down on by everyone in the world. She felt uneasy about this; but if she were to stay with him in the ancient tomb forever, after a while he would get bored and would not be happy. She thought long and hard, eventually she hardened her heart and quietly left. Her love for Yang Guo was immense; to suddenly leave him like this was extremely difficult. She thought that if she returned to the ancient tomb, he would definitely come back and find her so she wandered alone in a wild, vast valley. One day, she sat down to practice when suddenly her thoughts of love surged forward; it was difficult to control and her inner chi suddenly surged through her veins and meridians and caused her old injury to react again. If Valley Master Gongsun hadn't passed by, she would have died there in the wild mountainside.

Valley Master Gongsun had lost his wife a long time ago; when he saw her, he couldn't imagine that someone could be as beautiful as she; his intent to rescue her had salacious thoughts added onto them.

Xiao Longnu was disheartened; she also thought that if she lived somewhere in seclusion by herself, she would not be able to stop herself and would follow the same disastrous path again. Going out again in search of Yang Guo and cause him grief. She saw the love that Valley Master Gongsun had for her and he asked for her hand. She blocked out her heart and agreed; she thought that after she becomes someone else's wife, she will sever her ties with Yang Guo completely. Along with living in such a secluded place, she assumed that she would never see him again. Who could have thought that Zhou Botong would suddenly appear to cause trouble in the valley? The results would lead him here.

Xiao Longnu was filled with emotional turmoil at this sudden reunion with Yang Guo. She thought, “I've already agreed to marry someone else; I'll just keep up this act and

let him leave in anger and hate me forever. With his talents and appearance, what need is there to worry that he won't be able to find someone else? Though my heart will be in pain for the rest of my life, he will be able to avoid the suffering of the future." Because of this, although she saw Yang Guo suffering, she ignored him; but her heart was mournful and it was becoming more and more difficult to endure. When she saw him throw up blood, she was filled with pity and sorrow; she couldn't help herself and she too threw up a mouthful of blood.

Her face was extremely white, she was staggering and wanted to return inside when Valley Master Gongsun said quickly, "Quickly sit down and don't move, don't disturb your veins and meridians." He turned around and said to Yang Guo, "Just leave; don't ever come back."

Hot tears filled Yang Guo's eyes, he said to Xiao Longnu, "Gu Gu, if I've done something wrong, you can beat me, scold me; even kill me with one thrust of a sword. I'm willing to accept all that. But why are you pretending that you don't know who I am?"

Xiao Longnu lowered her head and didn't reply, just lightly coughing twice.

Valley Master Gongsun was furious with Yang Guo when he angered her into throwing up blood. However, his self-control training was extremely good; he didn't break out in a rage. He lowered his voice and said, "If you don't leave then don't blame me for being merciless."

Yang Guo did not take any notice, his eyes were fixed on Xiao Longnu, he begged, "Gu Gu, I promise you that I will stay in the tomb with you forever; I won't regret it, let's leave together."

Xiao Longnu raised her head and her gaze met his; she saw his face was filled with boundless love along with thousands of pieces of pain and worry. Her heart was moved and thought, "I'll leave with him now!" But she immediately had another thought, "I didn't leave him on a whim. I have thought about all the good and bad points in detail. If I give in, I will bring him trouble in the future." So she turned her head to the side and gave a long sigh before saying, "I don't recognize you, I don't understand what you are saying. Just leave!"

There was no force behind the words but it was filled with love and passion; apart from Ma Guangzou who was a slow person and had no perception, everyone in the hall could tell that she loved Yang Guo and these words were against her heart's feelings.

Valley Master Gongsun was jealous, he thought, “Though you have agreed to marry me, you have never said half a word with such feeling.” He looked at Yang Guo and saw a handsome face, his valiant air exuding everywhere; he and Xiao Longnu did indeed make a perfect couple. He pondered, “It looks like these two must be lovers. Because they had an argument, sister Liu agreed to marry me out of anger, she still has feelings for this punk. ‘Gu Gu’, ‘Master’, these must be pet names that they use when they are flirting with each other. This punk is older than sister Liu, how can he really call her ‘Auntie’, ‘Master’.” As he thought about this, his eyes revealed anger and hatred.

Fan Yiweng was very loyal to his Master. He knew that his Master was lonely and was always thinking of a way that would be able to solve his Master’s loneliness. A few days ago, he saw his Master had rescued a beautiful young girl and the girl had agreed to marry him; he was almost happier than his Master. Now he saw Yang Guo had suddenly come to cause trouble and had made his Master’s new wife throw up blood; but his Master was still enduring this. So he came forward and shouted, “The punk named Yang, if you know what’s best for you you’ll leave! We don’t welcome rude guests such as the likes of you.”

Yang Guo heard but didn’t listen; he said softly to Xiao Longnu, “Gu Gu, have you really forgotten me?”

Fan Yiweng was furious; he stretched out his hand to grab his back, intending to throw him out of the hall.

Yang Guo was concentrating on speaking to Xiao Longnu; he had completely ignored everything that was going on around him. He only noticed something when he felt Fan Yiweng’s fingers on his back. He quickly moved out of the way and his opponent clutched thin air, but he heard a ‘chi’ sound, his opponent had made a hole in the back of his garment.

Yang Guo was becoming more and more anxious after his pleading once again was ignored by Xiao Longnu. If it were in the tomb where there’s no one else, he could slowly plead with her; but here in the hall there were many people. Now Fan Yiweng had come out with insults and threats; he felt his whole body was filled with pain and suffering, and he turned all his anger and emotions onto Fan Yiweng. He shouted back, “I’m talking to my Gu Gu, what has it got to do with you Shortie?”

Fan Yiweng shouted loudly, “My Master told you to leave and never come back; if you don’t listen then don’t blame me for being merciless.”

Yang Guo said angrily, “I choose not to leave; if my Gu Gu doesn’t leave then I’ll stay here for the rest of my life. Even if I die and my bones turn to ash, I’ll still follow her.” These words were meant for Xiao Longnu.

Valley Master Gongsun looked at Xiao Longnu and saw tears rolling from her eyes and eventually they splashed down on her blood stained dress. He felt sad and worried; he glanced over to Fan Yiweng and made a signal with his hands, telling him to kill Yang Guo and rid the longing that Xiao Longnu had once and for all.

Fan Yiweng was surprised with the signal that his Master had made, he had wanted to send him away from the valley and stop all this trouble and that was it. He didn’t think that his Master would actually give him the signal to kill. He said loudly, “Just because it’s my Master’s day of celebration you think I won’t kill you?” He then looked at his Master.

Valley Master Gongsun once again signaled with his hands, telling him to forget about what kind of day it was and just kill him. Fan Yiweng picked up his large staff and slammed it down on the floor, filling the room with vibrations. He shouted, “Little punk, are you really not afraid of losing your life?”

Yang Guo had just thrown up blood and the blood in his chest was rolling about, wanting to be thrown up. The internal energy of the Ancient Tomb sect is all about controlling your emotions, when Xiao Longnu’s Master imparted her the formulae, she repeatedly told her to purge her emotions. In the end, Xiao Longnu was not able to control them and as a result, she threw up blood on many occasions.

Yang Guo was taught by Xiao Longnu; his internal energy was of the same nature as hers and now his arms and legs were as cold as ice. He thought, “I’ll throw up blood violently right here and now and die here in front of her; will she still ignore me?” But then he had another thought, “Gu Gu normally loves me very much, there must a reason behind all this; most probably she’s being blackmailed by that Valley Master. She has no alternative and that’s why she’s ignoring me. If I cripple myself, it would be difficult for me to oppose him.”

He made up his mind; his heart was stirred and he decided to fight his way out of this problem and rescue Xiao Longnu from this place. He steadied himself and submerged his chi into his dan tian, forcing the blood in his chest to flow back down. He gave a wry laugh and pointed to Fan Yiweng, saying, “This valley feels like it’s filled with an air of death. When I want to come, you can’t stop me, when I want to leave, don’t dream of trying to make me stay.”

Everyone saw the emotional state that he was in. He was like a madman but all of a sudden, he had steadied himself; they were all surprised to see this.

When Fan Yiweng saw Yang Guo throwing up blood just now; he felt sorry for him and had no desire to threaten his life. He swept his staff and a fierce gust of wind brushed over Yang Guo's clothes. He shouted, "Are you going to leave?"

Valley Master Gongsun frowned and said, "Yiweng, why are you still going on about leaving?" Fan Yiweng had just received a strict order from his Master; he had no choice but to sweep out his staff towards Yang Guo's shins.

Gongsun Lu'E knew her senior apprentice brother had great martial arts; though he wasn't tall, he possessed great strength and he had learned about seventy to eighty percent of her father's skills. His steel staff had killed countless wild beasts. She thought that with Yang Guo being of a young age, he would definitely not be able to beat her apprentice brother's eighty one stances of the "Spilling Water Staff". If she waited for them to fight it would be difficult for her to save him. Though she saw her father's face was harsh as frost and filled with anger, she plucked up her courage and stood towards Yang Guo, saying, "Master Yang, staying here will do you no good, why do you want to give your life away for no reason?" Her tone was gentle, filled with compassion.

Fawang and the others looked at her, secretly surprised, thinking, "Yang Guo came to the valley with us; when did he become friends with this girl?"

Yang Guo nodded and laughed, he said, "Thank you for Miss' kindness. Do you want a beard to play with?"

Gongsun Lu'E was startled and asked, "What?"

Yang Guo said, "I'll rid him of his beard and give it to you to mess around with, how about it?"

Gongsun Lu'E lost her color in shock. She thought that he must be bored with his life; actually daring to make a joke like this. The rules of the Passionless Valley were very strict; these few words of advice to Yang Guo would result in a heavy punishment. How could she know that he would reply jokingly? Her face went red; she didn't dare to say anything else and stepped back into the line of disciples.

Fan Yiweng was a short man and was immensely proud of his beard; when he heard these mocking words from Yang Guo, he threw away his staff and rushed forward,

shouting, “Little punk, I’ll let you experience pain from my beard first.” In the middle of his cry, his long beard swept forward.

Yang Guo laughed, “The Old Urchin didn’t cut off your beard; let me have a try.” He took out his scissors from his bag and cut forward towards the beard. Fan Yiweng’s beard was flung forward towards his neck; it had great force behind it. Yang Guo had already moved out of the way; the opened blades of the scissors came forward, a ‘ka’ sound was heard as they closed.

Fan Yiweng was shocked and he quickly did a somersault to get out of the way; just one slight delay and his beard would have been cut off. This wasn’t an ordinary kind of shock. The people who were watching called out quietly.

The reason Yang Guo had asked Blacksmith Feng to make this pair of scissors was so that he could use it against Li Mochou’s fly whisk. Li Mochou uses her “Divine Five Poison Palm” and her fly whisk to sweep through Jianghu; her fly whisk techniques were superb. Before Yang Guo could use the scissors to neutralize her fly whisk techniques, he had to first think carefully about how to use it; how he’d need to thrust forward when the fly whisk swayed around; how he’d cut when the fly whisk came forward to attack him. How could he know that before he had the chance to use it against Li Mochou, he would actually come across a person in the Passionless Valley who uses his beard as a weapon? Yang Guo thought, “No matter how good your beard is; it can’t be better than Li Mochou’s fly whisk.” He had no fear and pressed forward with the scissors.

Fan Yiweng had spent over ten years in training his beard technique; because he had his hands for protection, his beard was more lethal than the conventional whip or fly whisk. His head swung around and brought his beard forward; at the same time he threw out two palms towards Yang Guo.

A while ago, Zhou Botong had tried to use the scissors to cut off his beard; but instead of cutting it off, the beard wrapped around the scissors, and he could only admit defeat. Everyone had seen the martial arts of Zhou Botong; everyone knew that Yang Guo could not compare to him. Who knew that in the hands of Yang Guo, the scissors swept, cut and threatened; going to and fro like it was in a dance? It was actually better than the way Zhou Botong had handled the scissors and everyone marveled. In the proficiency of martial arts and internal energy level, of course Yang Guo was miles behind Zhou Botong; but he had carefully studied the stances of Li Mochou’s fly whisk and had devised scissors stances to counter them. Because the way the beard was used was similar to that of the fly whisk, the scissors were indeed effective against the beard and

Yang Guo got the upper hand. Of course this was different to the unplanned and unstructured scissor techniques of Zhou Botong. But Fawang and the others did not know the reason behind it; they saw with their own eyes Zhou Botong thrusting the scissors towards him. In accordance with his character, this would be something that he would devise to cause trouble. Yang Guo was most proficient with a sword and Fawang knew this.

On many occasions, Fan Yiweng was almost injured by the scissors and as a result, he stopped looking down on Yang Guo. He changed his stance and swung his beard wildly around, striking out in all directions, attacking forward and sweeping across. This actually formed another set of stances. Yang Guo cut downwards many times but each time he caught thin air, he also felt the wind from his opponent's palms was fierce. Sometimes the beard was a decoy while the palm was real, at other times the palms lured the opponent and the beard attacked; this was a set of ingenious martial arts that the world of Wulin had never seen before.

In a short while, tens of moves were exchanged. Yang Guo thought, "The Valley Master is vicious and cruel; his martial arts would definitely be much better than this shortie; if I can't beat the disciple, how can I beat the Master?" He became slightly impatient. But Fan Yiweng's beard was thicker and longer than Li Mochou's fly whisk; as the beard spread out, there really were no weaknesses.

After a few more stances, Yang Guo concentrated on his opponent. He saw his opponent's head swinging around; he had a ludicrous appearance and his beard was getting faster and faster. His head was swinging around especially fast and suddenly he had a thought; he had found a way to break this martial art of his. Yang Guo leapt back five feet and called out, "Hold off!"

Fan Yiweng stopped his attack and said, "Since you've admitted defeat little brother, just leave!"

Yang Guo shook his head as he laughed and said, "After your beard's been cut, how long will it take to grow back?"

Fan Yiweng said, "What's it got to do with you? I've never cut my beard before."

Yang Guo shook his head and said, "Pity, pity!"

Fan Yiweng said, "Pity what?"

Yang Guo said, “In three stances I’m going to cut off your beard.”

Fan Yiweng thought, “You and I have already fought for tens of stances and we’re at a draw; you must be dreaming if you think you can win in just three more stances.” Fan Yiweng shouted, “Watch this stance!” His right palm came chopping out.

Yang Guo slanted his left palm and smashed down with the scissors in his right hand, attacking the opponent’s forehead on the left side. He was tall, when the scissors attacked his opponent’s head it cut downwards. Fan Yiweng slanted his head to avoid the attack but then, Yang Guo’s left palm came downwards across his forehead on the right side. There was a vicious force behind the chop; Fan Yiweng quickly moved his head to the left. The opponent’s attack was fast, his reaction was also very swift and his beard followed him and swung upwards. Yang Guo’s scissors had been opened and was guarding the right; a ‘ka’ sound was heard as the scissors cut down. He cut off over two feet of the beard.

Everyone called out and all felt shocked; they saw that he did indeed succeed in cutting off Fan Yiweng’s beard in three stances.

After fighting for a long time, Yang Guo eventually found out that when Fan Yiweng’s beard was flung to the left, his head would first move right; when the beard was swung upwards, his head would first hang down; he cursed himself for being so stupid, “His beard is on his head, if the beard moves, he will of course first move his head. I didn’t attack the source and tangled with his beard, what an idiot.” He planned his three attacks and then told him that he would cut off Fan Yiweng’s beard in three stances.

Fan Yiweng was stunned as he watched the beard that he has grown for half his life floating to the floor; he felt anger and sorrow at the same time. He went up and down as he picked up his staff and then shouted angrily, “If you don’t kill me, then don’t dream of leaving the valley.”

Yang Guo laughed, “I wasn’t planning on leaving in the first place!”

Fan Yiweng swept his staff towards his waist.

Ma Guangzou had fought with Fan Yiweng previously and had been on the receiving end; right now he was feeling rather pleased and said loudly, “Old Shortie, you face wasn’t the best sight in the first place; but after losing your beard, you look even weirder.”

When Fan Yiweng heard this, he clenched his teeth and fought even harder.

Yang Guo only knew what his soft beard techniques were like and didn't know how strong he was; he saw the incoming staff and stuck out his scissors; a 'dang' sound was heard and his arms felt numb, the scissors had been bent out of shape.

Just one stance and the scissors were out of commission. The onlookers had seen Yang Guo gain victory but they didn't predict that the weapons would change and the battle would continue. The difference between the two could be clearly seen, one was holding an extremely long and heavy weapon while the other was holding a piece of scrap metal.

Gongsun Lu'E could not hold back anymore and called out, "Master Yang, you're not as strong as my senior apprentice brother; why continue?"

Valley Master Gongsun was beginning to get angry when he saw his daughter protecting an outsider; he glanced at her and saw her face was filled with concern. He then looked at Xiao Longnu and saw that her expression was calm, appearing like she had no concern for Yang Guo's safety whatsoever; his anger immediately turned to joy. He thought, "So she has no feelings for that punk; otherwise, how could she have no concern for him now that he's facing danger?"

He didn't know that Xiao Longnu knew that Yang Guo was ingenious and his martial arts were above those of Fan Yiweng; when the two fight, victory is certain so there was no need for her to worry.

Yang Guo threw the bent scissors on the floor and said, "Old Fan, you're not a match for me, just throw away your staff and surrender."

Fan Yiweng said angrily, "If you can beat my staff then I'll knock myself dead."

Yang Guo said, "What a pity, what a pity!"

Fan Yiweng called out, "Watch this stance!" A stance of "Pushing Down the Peak of Mount Tai" was sent out towards his head. Yang Guo dodged to the side and his left foot was placed on the head of the staff. Fan Yiweng shook his hands, flinging the staff. Yang Guo followed the staff and was forced into midair, but his left foot was still standing steadily on the staff head. Fan Yiweng shook the staff a few times but couldn't shake Yang Guo off. He was about to turn the staff when Yang Guo's right foot advanced and he was actually running towards him on the staff.

In the eyes of Fan Yiweng and the onlookers, these two stances were inconceivably strange; but in reality, it was a technique of the Ancient Tomb sect that utilizes great lightness kung fu to defeat a long and large weapon.

Years ago when Li Mochou fought Wu Santong in Jiaxing, she stood on the chestnut tree that Wu Santong had used as a weapon and she couldn't be shaken off by him. Li Mochou had used this type of martial art.

Fan Yiweng was stunned and in this time, Yang Guo's left foot had advanced a step and he kicked out with his right towards his nose. Fan Yiweng was in an extremely distressing situation; the enemy was attached to his weapon. If he leapt backwards he would bring the enemy with him and would not be able to avoid that kick. His hands were holding onto the staff so he couldn't use his hands to block; his beard had been cut off and couldn't be used as defensive weapon. It was an urgent situation and he had no choice but to throw away the steel staff and leap back to avoid the kick.

A 'dang' sound was heard as one end landed on the floor. Before the other end landed as well, Yang Guo had picked it up in his hands.

Ma Guangzou, Nimoxing, Xiaoxiang Zi and the others cheered.

Yang Guo placed the staff on the floor and laughed, "What about it?"

Fan Yiweng's face went red and said, "I was careless and fell for your trick, I'm not accepting it."

Yang Guo said, "We'll go again." He threw the staff towards Fan Yiweng who stretched out his hand to catch it. However, when the staff was two feet in front of him, it suddenly swept up. Fan Yiweng clutched thin air while Yang Guo flew over and stretched out his arm, taking the staff once again. Ma Guangzou's and the others' cheers were becoming louder. Fan Yiweng's face was now purple.

Fawang and Yin Kexi looked at each other and both secretly laughed, praising Yang Guo's cleverness. Yesterday, Zhou Botong had shot out broken spearheads towards them with the force immediately taken back as soon as it shot out; after the spearheads flew out, they suddenly changed direction in midair; now Yang Guo was copying him. But there were four spearheads while there was only one staff; the staff was also heavy and to change the force was not hard; what Yang Guo had done was much easier than what Zhou Botong had done.

But Valley Master Gongsun and his disciples did not know what it was about and all were shocked.

Yang Guo laughed, “What? Do you want to go again?”

His beard had been cut and weapon taken but it was all due to cleverness; how could he admit defeat without any protest? He said loudly, “If you use real martial arts to beat me then I’ll admit defeat.”

Yang Guo chuckled, “In martial arts, ingenuity comes first. Your Master’s mind is unclear; of course the disciples he teaches will be lacking a bit. I’ll give you some advice; it’s better if you go and find another Master.” These words were an insult directed at Valley Master Gongsun.

Fan Yiweng thought, “My study of martial arts is lacking and I’ve disgraced my Master; if I really can’t win then I’ll commit suicide to apologize to Master.” He clenched his teeth and stood up straight.

Yang Guo swept the steel staff towards him and placed it in his hands, he said, “Be careful this time; if you lose your staff again, you won’t be able to blame anyone else.”

Fan Yiweng did not reply. He held the end of the staff tightly with his right and thought, “You’ll only be able to take away this staff if you cut off my right arm.”

Yang Guo called out, “Careful!” He flung himself forward until his left hand rested on the end of the staff; the index and middle finger of his right hand went towards his opponent’s eyes; at the same time, his left foot had flipped upwards and was holding down the staff’s body. This was a stance from the “Dog Beating Stick Technique”, “Stealing the Staff from the Mouth of the Tiger”.

On the previous two times that Yang Guo took the staff, though everyone thought his movements were special, they all saw what happened clearly. But this time even Fan Yiweng didn’t know what was going on; he just blinked and the staff was in the hands of the opponent again. Only Jinlun Fawang with his profound martial arts knowledge and his experience of the “Dog Beating Stick Technique” knew that Yang Guo had used one of the skills of this stick technique.

Ma Guangzou called out, “The ‘No Beard Long Beard’. Are you in awe now?”

Fan Yiweng called out, “He used witchcraft, and it isn’t real martial arts, why should I admit defeat?”

Yang Guo laughed, “How will you admit defeat?”

Fan Yiweng said, “Only if you use real martial arts to beat me, then I’ll admit defeat.”

Yang Guo returned the staff to him and said, “Fine, we’ll go another couple of stances.”

Fan Yiweng was extremely worried about his clever empty-handed staff snatching techniques; he thought, “No matter how much advantage I get, when he’s at a point where he can hold me off no longer he’ll suddenly use his witchcraft. It would be difficult for me to win.” So he said, “I use such a large and long weapon yet you are empty handed, even if I win you won’t take it.”

Yang Guo laughed, “You’re afraid of my “Empty Hands Entering A Hundred Blades” kung fu; fine, I’ll use a weapon.” He scoured the room and all he saw were bare walls, there wasn’t one single weapon that he could use. However, in the courtyard there were two large willow trees; it had many branches and had emerald green leaves hanging down from it. He looked at Xiao Longnu and said, “Since you want to have Liu as a surname, I’ll use a willow branch as a weapon!” He leapt into the courtyard and broke off an inch thick branch; it was about four feet long. The length and thickness was similar to the Beggar Clan’s Dog Beating Stick. The branch still had its leaves which gave the weapon elegance.

Xiao Longnu’s mind was fluttering all over the place; she had no plans for the future, the longer that Yang Guo was in her sight, the harder it was for her to leave him. She pondered to herself, “Though separating from Yang Guo was heartbreaking, she had a thought about this a hundred times and was able to tolerate it.” Right now, he was here in person in front of her very eyes; every word of his, every action, every smile and even his anger, all of them moved and stirred her heart. She wanted to go inside and stop seeing and hearing him but how could she? She lowered her head and didn’t say anything; but she was feeling as if a thousand steel knives were cutting right into her heart.



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