

Foxs' Wuxia

Wuxia Fan Translation

SDXL Chapter 11



Chapter 11 – A Pause from Roaming

Translated by Noodles



Northern Beggar and Western Poison have been adversaries for many years, they hated each other, how could it be that they ended up dead together on Mount Hua. The two of them were enemies when they were alive, just before they died they were hugging each other and laughing. All the feuds and arguments that they have had over the years were finished with a laugh!

Yang Guo had dashed forward only two steps when suddenly a gust of wind brushed over his head, a person darted past and stood between him and the five clowns and laughed, "That was a great slumber!" It was the 'Nine-Fingered Wondrous Beggar' Hong

Qigong. Yang Guo was delighted while the five clowns were startled and shocked. When Hong Qigong first lay down on the snow he really was sleeping, but woke up when the fifth clown stepped on him. He wanted to test the young man and see whether he could keep his promise of guarding him for three days. Every time Yang Guo checked his breathing, he would stop breathing and pretended to be dead. Now he was standing at the mouth of the path with an awe-inspiring air. His left hand made a semi-circle, his right hand pushed out a palm; it was his life's proudest work, the stance of "Overcoming the Dragon with Regret" from the "Eighteen Dragon Subduing Palms". The first clown couldn't avoid it; he knew he couldn't meet this stance head on but all he could do was to push his palms out and use his strength to fend off the attack.

Hong Qigong was keeping his palm's power in check; he only used ten percent of his internal energy but the first clown felt his arms go numb and his chest ache. The second clown saw that he was in danger; he was afraid that Hong Qigong's palms will force him into the deep valley so he quickly stretched out his hand and pushed the first clown's back. Hong Qigong's palm power increased; the second clown moved back, almost slipping down into the deep valley. The fourth clown was standing behind them and stretched out his arm to support them. Hong Qigong's palms power spread through them, it spread towards the fourth clown who in turn passed it onto the third clown and the third clown spread it towards the final one in the line, the fifth clown. The clowns had nowhere to hide and nowhere to run; in the blink of an eye, they were defeated by Hong Qigong's single palm.

Hong Qigong laughed, "You five scoundrels are evil and wicked you should be able to die without complaint under the single palm of the Old Beggar."

The five of them positioned themselves into the mount posture; they flared up their chi and united their internal energy to resist the single palm but they felt the force of the palm getting heavier. Their chests felt tighter and gradually it was becoming more difficult to breathe. Hong Qigong suddenly gave out a 'yi' call showing his surprise. He took back eighty percent of his palm's power and said, "Your internal energy has its good points, who is your master?"

The first clown still had his two palms pushing out against him; he struggled for breath as he said, "We are... are under the tutelage of Master Da'erba."

Hong Qigong shook his head and said, "Da'erba? I haven't heard of him. Hmm, your internal energy can be spread mutually to each other, this kung fu is terrific."

Yang Guo thought, “To get Hong Qigong to say ‘terrific’, then it really must be terrific. Yet when I looked at their skills I thought they were very ordinary and none of them can beat me.”

Hong Qigong asked, “What’s your sect?”

The first clown said, “Our master is... is the second... second disciple of Western Tibet’s Holy ... Holy Monk Jinlun Fawang.”

Hong Qigong shook his head again, and said, “Western Tibet’s Holy Monk, Jinlun Fawang? I’ve never heard of him. Western Tibet has a monk, his name is Reverend Lingzhi, he I have seen; his kung fu is stronger than yours but his skills aren’t advanced. Your kung fu is good; hmm, it makes sense. Go and get your Grand Master here to fight with me.”

The first monk replied, “Our Grand Master is a holy monk, the living Buddha, Mongolia’s number one martial artist, all knowing and all powerful. How...how...”

The second clown noticed from Hong Qigong’s tone that he was going to spare them, but with the way that the first clown was replying they were cutting off their escape route so he quickly interrupted and said, “Yes, yes. We’ll quickly go and get our Grand Master here to duel with Hong Qigong. Only our Grand Master can fight with senior Hong. We juniors will raise our wine gourds and... and...”

As he said this, there came a ‘duo’ ‘duo’ ‘duo’ sound; a person appeared from around the corner of the mountain. His body was upside down, each hand holding a piece of rock, walking with his palms, it was Western Poison Ouyang Feng. Yang Guo’s voice cracked as he called out, “Father!”

Ouyang Feng did not bother to find out what was happening and leapt behind the five clowns and stretched out his right foot and placed it on their backs; a strong energy rushed through the five clowns. Hong Qigong was shocked with the sudden appearance of Ouyang Feng; he heard Yang Guo call him ‘Father’ and understood that he was his son; no wonder he was so good. He felt his arm sink as the opponent’s internal energy reached him; he quickly increased his strength and returned the attack.

Since the second Mount Hua competition, Hong Qigong had not seen Ouyang Feng for over ten years. Although Ouyang Feng’s mind was unclear, he practiced the Contrary Nine Yin Manual”; the more he practiced the stranger his kung fu became, and the stranger it became the more powerful he became. Guo Jing and Huang Rong had re-

cited a small portion of the manual to Hong Qigong; it made an impression on his kung fu and great progress in his martial arts. The final stage of the “Nine Yin Manual” is superior to the “Contrary Nine Yin Manual”, although Hong Qigong only knew a little; he wasn’t inferior to Ouyang Feng.

Tens of years ago it was difficult to separate the two, since then they had both met new boundaries. Today they came across each other on Mount Hua for the third time, once internal energy went out; it was indeed hard to differentiate between the two. The ones that were to be pitied are the Five Clowns of the Tibetan Border; being sandwiched between two of the world’s most powerful fighters, they became the apparatus for kung fu practice. A sandbag for punches and kicks, they were cold for a while, then hot for a while, their breathing was tight and then slow, the bones all over their body made ‘ka la’ noises; it was a hundred times more excruciating than the most severe punishments. Ouyang Feng suddenly asked, “The five’s internal energy is very good. What sect are you from?”

Yang Guo thought, “Even Godfather says their internal energy is very good; the five clowns indeed are not run-of-the-mill fighters.”

He heard Hong Qigong say, “They said they are the grand disciples of Western Tibet’s Holy Monk Jinlun Fawang.”

Ouyang Feng said, “Jinlun Fawang compared to you, who’s better?”

Hong Qigong said, “Don’t know, I don’t think there’s much difference.”

Ouyang Feng said, “How about compared with me?”

Hong Qigong said, “He’s better than you a bit.”

Ouyang Feng was shocked and called out, “I don’t believe it!”

In between the exchange of words, the energy in the hand and foot increased. Hong Qigong sent out different levels of palm energy but they were all dispersed by Ouyang Feng’s foot energy; the power in the foot increased but it was difficult to move Hong Qigong back even half an inch. After this exchange both admired each other, they laughed and jumped back.

The strong force within the Five Clowns of the Tibetan Border suddenly disappeared; they couldn’t stop themselves wobbling about as if they were drunk on wine. The five

had the internal energies of two great fighters circulated to and fro between them, their internal organs had been seriously injured, the muscles weakened and bones softened; they had become invalids. They wouldn't be able to fight off even a small child of seven or eight years of age.

Hong Qigong shouted, "You five scoundrels, your lifelines haven't reached their end today; it doesn't matter anyway since you can't do anymore harm, just crawl away. Remember to go and tell your Grand Master Jinlun Fawang to come to the central plains and find me so we can do a little sparring."

Ouyang Feng said, "With me too." The Five Clowns of the Tibetan Border all agreed and limped away, supporting each other as they descended down from the peak.

Ouyang Feng flipped upright and stared at Hong Qi Gong and then shouted, "Hey, your kung fu is very good, what's your name?"

After hearing this and seeing the confused look on his face, Hong Qigong knew that since he went mad over ten years ago, he hadn't recovered and so said, "I'm called Ouyang Feng, what's your name?"

Ouyang Feng's heart shook, he felt that the words 'Ouyang Feng' were very familiar but he couldn't remember what he was called, and he shook his head and said, "I don't know. Hey, what am I called?"

Hong Qigong laughed and said, "You don't even know your own name. Go home and think about it."

Ouyang Feng angrily said, "You must know, tell me."

Hong Qigong said, "Fine, you're called Smelly Toad." The word 'Toad' was very familiar to Ouyang Feng, when he heard this it felt right, but there was also a feeling that it was wrong. He and Hong Qigong had been adversaries for tens of years; the hate had been etched deeply into his mind, although he didn't understand right now. Yet when he looked at him, Ouyang Feng felt aggravated.

Hong Qigong saw him standing there in a daze, a fierce glow was in his eyes. Hong Qigong secretly put his guard up, indeed he heard Ouyang Feng shout out and ruthlessly throw himself forward. He didn't dare hesitate and immediately used his "Eighteen Dragon Subduing Palms". The two fought in the wind and the slippery snow on a narrow path that was only about a foot wide; using their greatest skills with great

effort in the battle. On one side was a two thousand foot deep chasm, just one little mistake and they would fall to their deaths; this was much more dangerous than fighting on flat, even ground. The two of them were now fairly old, though their vigor has lessened; their study of martial arts had reached an extremely pure level. The stances were pure and profound, so profound that everything was ingenious and masterly, only ten or so moves were exchanged. The two couldn't stop themselves from admiring each other.

Ouyang Feng said, "The Old Beggar is very lethal."

Hong Qigong laughed and said, "Smelly Toad is also terrific."

Yang Guo knew that the terrain was extremely dangerous, he was afraid that Ouyang Feng would fall down into the valley; but then he could see that Hong Qigong was in distress and hoped that he too would be safe. Ouyang Feng was his Godfather, he had deep feelings for him; nevertheless, Hong Qigong was gallant, he had the air of a great hero around him. As soon as he met him an impression was left in his heart. He had endured hunger, cold, extreme dangers in guarding Hong Qigong for three days and three nights. Although they didn't say a word to each other in the three days, in Yang Guo's mind, it was as if they both endured hundreds and hundreds of life threatening dangers together.

Tens of stances later, Yang Guo saw that the two's incomparably swift and powerful attacks had changed from dangerous to safe. He soon forgot about the safety of the two and concentrated on watching the masterly kung fu that was on display. The "Nine Yin Manual" is the peak of the world's martial arts, he only knew odd fragments of it; now he saw the two use the theories of the manual within their stances. He couldn't help himself from being shocked and surprised, he thought, "So even an ordinary sentence from the manual has so many ways to express its meaning."

Over a thousand stances passed, although the two had yet to use all their skills, their age was catching up with them. They felt they were getting out of breath and their hearts were beating faster, it was unavoidable that their arms and legs would get slower."

Yang Guo called out, "You two have been fighting for over half a day, you must be hungry, how about eating first and then carry on later?"

As soon as Hong Qigong heard the word 'eat' he immediately jumped back and said, "Great idea, great idea!"

Yang Guo had seen the fifth clown bring up cold food in a bamboo basket and had placed off to the side. He went to it and brought it over and opened the lid, he saw cold chicken and meat, white wine and cold rice; everything that was needed was there. Hong Qigong was delighted, he picked up a cold chicken and bit down with large bites hurriedly, eating noisily.

Yang Guo picked up some cold meat and passed it to Ouyang Feng and softly said, "Father, where have you been all this time?"

Ouyang Feng stared at him and said, "I've been searching for you."

Yang Guo's heart ached and thought, "There is someone on this world that actually loves me like this." He held his arm and said, "Father, you are Ouyang Feng. Senior Hong is a good person, don't fight him."

Ouyang Feng pointed to Hong Qigong and said, "He's Ouyang Feng, Ouyang Feng is a bad person." Yang Guo saw that his mind was confused and felt sad.

Hong Qigong laughed and said, "You're right, Ouyang Feng is a bad person, Ouyang Feng deserves to die."

Ouyang Feng looked at Hong Qigong and then at Yang Guo. He exhausted his strength trying to remember but his mind and memories were still scrambled. Yang Guo fed Ouyang Feng some food and then stood up, he said to Hong Qigong, "Senior Hong, he is my Godfather. He has a severe mental illness, his mind is confused, please pity him and don't make it hard for him."

Hong Qigong heard this and nodded a few times, and said, "Young man, so he's your Godfather."

Who could have expected that Ouyang Feng would suddenly leap up and called out, "Ouyang Feng, we can't find a winner using our fists and kicks, we'll compete again using weapons."

Hong Qigong shook his head and said, "There's no need to compete, let's just say you win."

Ouyang Feng said, "What win or lose? I must kill you." He stretched out his hand and broke off a branch; he took off the twigs and leaves from the branch forming a staff. He attacked downwards at Hong Qigong's head. His snake staff was famous years ago, it

was extremely lethal, although there wasn't a snake at the head of this staff, before the attack arrived, the wind produced was so strong that it made it difficult for Yang Guo to breathe. Yang Guo quickly dived out of the way. When he looked up at Hong Qigong, he saw him pick up a branch and used it as a short rod, the two battled again. Hong Qigong's "Dog Beating Stick Technique" has nothing like it in the world, but he doesn't use it casually; apart from this technique, he has many refined and ingenious rod stances and right now he was using them.

This heated battle was another spectacular fight like the last one with fists and kicks; the stick was like an elusive dragon, the staff like an efficacious dancing snake. It was like watching a rainbow traveling across the sky or a shooting star chasing after the moon, the fight held Yang Guo entranced as he watched. The staff and stick went to and fro, they fought until dusk, and again it was difficult to separate the two. Yang Guo saw that the ground was extremely dangerous; the mountain was covered with ice and snow and was extremely slippery. The two of them were old, if they fought for much longer they would definitely lose their footing so he loudly called out, telling them to stop. But Hong Qigong and Ouyang Feng were fighting with great pleasure, why would they stop? Yang Guo knew that mentioning food to Hong Qigong made him stop, so he thought that luring him with good food would be effective. So he went to the wild mountainside and dug up some mountain herbs and yams, started a fire and roasted them.

Hong Qigong smelt the fragrant scent and called out, "Smelly Toad, I don't want to fight with you, eating is more important." He ran to Yang Guo's side and picked up two clumps of mountain herbs and ate them. Although they burnt his mouth he kept on chewing. Ouyang Feng rushed over and raised his staff over Hong Qigong's head chopping down. Hong Qigong ignored him and threw him a clump of the mountain herbs and called out, "Just eat!" Ouyang Feng stopped. He caught it and started to eat it, forgetting about the heated battle they were just in.

That night the three of them slept in a cave. Yang Guo wanted to help his Godfather regain his memories and mentioned past events to him. Ouyang Feng stood there in a daze not replying, sometimes he would hit his head with his fist, showing that he's trying extremely hard to remember but he could not, it was extremely hard for him. Yang Guo worried that he would get even crazier so made him go to sleep, he himself was tossing and turning and couldn't sleep. He was thinking about the fist and palm stances that the two used, the more he thought about it the more excited he got. He couldn't stop himself and got up quietly. Studying them, he felt that the ingenuity and mastery of the stances was boundless; he practiced into the middle of the night until he was extremely tired and went to sleep.

The next morning, Yang Guo had not yet wakened up from his sleep when he heard gusts of wind from outside the cave, in between them were the sounds of leaping and jumping. He quickly hurried outside to see Hong Qigong and Ouyang Feng battling each other heatedly again. He sighed and thought, “These two old seniors aren’t acting their age, what’s the point of fighting like this?” He could only sit aside and watch. He saw Hong Qigong’s stances and understood every stance and every move but it was difficult for him to grasp Ouyang Feng’s strange stances, every time Hong Qigong seemed to gain the upper hand, Ouyang Feng’s strange stances would bring them to a level pegging again.

The two of them battled in the day and slept at night, they fought for four days running, both of them were exhausted but neither of them dared to let slip even half a stance. Yang Guo pondered, “Whatever happens tomorrow I mustn’t allow them to fight again.” That night he waited for Ouyang Feng to go to sleep and then quietly said to Hong Qigong, “Senior, please come outside, I have something to say.” Hong Qigong followed him outside. About a hundred feet away from the cave, Yang Guo suddenly got down on his knees, and kept on kowtowing, yet he didn’t say a word. Hong Qigong was startled but understood; he knew that Yang Guo wanted him to have pity on Ouyang Feng and his illness and leave. He laughed at the sky and said, “So be it.”

After only walking away for a few tens of feet, his garments were held in a gust of wind, Ouyang Feng darted out of the cave and swept out his staff angrily shouting, “Old Beggar, trying to escape?”

Hong Qigong conceded three stances to him as he tried to find a path of escape but he was held up by the gusts of wind created by the staff. When skilled fighters are dueling, one mustn’t concede even half a move, Hong Qigong had the intention of conceding to him and immediately fell into danger. It was a desperate situation; many times he almost lost his life to the staff. He saw the staff heading straight for him, attacking his lower abdomen; he knew that this stance must have a lethal move to follow it. He couldn’t avoid it and let him have this stance. He raised his stick to block it. He suddenly felt a powerful internal energy surging through the staff, he couldn’t stop himself from being shocked, “You want to compete internal energy with me?” He thought, “The enemy’s internal energy is arriving, there is no other way to defend apart from using my own internal energy to block it.” He quickly circulated his internal energy and prepared to defend. If they lose concentration for a split second and get struck by the opponent’s weapon or palm, their internal energy will be all over their body and will defend against the attack. Although they would be injured, it won’t be anything serious. Now that they are competing with internal energy, they couldn’t concede to the other one iota; they had reached a stage where it wouldn’t finish unless one died. The two of

them had fought each other many times in the past, and each time both were worried about their own safety and how strong the other was. Normally they wouldn't use such a dangerous way to attack each other since they were afraid that in their quest to seek glory, they would be disgraced instead and lose their lives for no purpose. But Ouyang Feng wasn't thinking properly; he hadn't managed to gain victory in the last few days so suddenly circulated his internal energy to attack.

Decades ago, Hong Qigong hated Ouyang Feng to the bone, but now he was old and had mellowed. Now Ouyang Feng was mad and Yang Guo had pleaded for his life; Hong Qigong had no intentions of killing him, so he circulated his chi throughout his 'dan tian'. He just defended and didn't attack, waiting for Ouyang Feng to exert all his energy. He didn't know that his opponent's internal energy was like the waves of a large river, the source of it incessantly sending out waves of internal energy. After one wave, came another, there was no sign of it weakening but instead it was getting fiercer and fiercer. Hong Qigong always believed that his internal energy was profound. In these past years he had refined his fierce internal energy to new levels; even if he couldn't beat Western Poison, if he used all his energy to defend, he would not lose. But who could have guessed that after all these exchanges of internal energy, Ouyang Feng was getting stronger and stronger.

Hong Qigong remembered the time when he was competing internal energy with Ouyang Feng with the Five Clowns of the Tibetan Border sandwiched in between them; Ouyang Feng had sent out his internal energy with his foot three times, each time stronger than the last. He noticed, at that time, that before the first wave of internal energy had dissipated the second wave had arrived, after the second wave arrived, the third followed. If he just defended and let him keep on pressing, it would definitely be hard to defend against. Only by returning his own energy between the gaps and forcing him to defend will he stop Ouyang Feng from amassing a great force. Once he thought about this he immediately circulated his internal energy and attacked. The two's bodies shook as the energies collided.

When Yang Guo saw the two competing internal energy he was extremely worried; if he attacked Hong Qigong's back, he would help his Godfather gain victory. He looked at Hong Qigong and saw a head full of white hair, and within his commanding air there was a compassionate and merciful part. In the spaces between his heroic natures there was peacefulness to go with it. He couldn't stop himself from bowing down to him, not to mention that he had responded to his plea and was willing to leave. How could he harm him?

The two of them froze for a while, white smoke came out from Ouyang Feng's head, and gradually it became denser and denser, like steam coming from a steamer. Hong Qigong had also used all his strength to defend; right now he had no way to control whether or not he would harm his opponent's life. If he could just protect himself that would be fortunate enough.

They competed from dawn until morning, from morning until midday until Hong Qigong gradually felt his internal energy draining away. However, his opponent's internal energy kept on surging towards him like a violent storm. He quietly said, "So the madder the old poisonous animal gets, the more powerful he becomes; the Old Beggar's life is going to end today." He knew that his battle would have an ending; he now had no way to avoid this and could only use all his strength to resist. But he didn't know that Ouyang Feng's internal energy was also declining due to exhaustion, it was hard for him to maintain his palm's power. They continued for another four hours until it got dark. Yang Guo saw that their faces had changed; he thought that if they battled any longer, they would definitely perish together. The difference in internal energy between him and the two was vast. If he wanted to break them up himself, most probably he would not be able to separate them. Instead he would lose his life in the attempt. He delayed for a while and saw Ouyang Feng's face looked worried and Hong Qigong was out of breath, he thought, "Even if it is dangerous I need to save their lives." So he went and broke off a tree branch and got down on his knees between the two; he circulated his chi around his body to protect himself and stretched out his branch placing it in between the staff and stick.

Who could have known that this separation would not waste any energy? The two's internal energy rushed into the branch and after meeting his circulated chi, the energies were dispersed. A strong bow cannot pierce a silk cloth; although the Northern Beggar and Western Poison are two of the most renowned men in the world of Wulin, they had spent many days consuming and exhausting their energy. After being disturbed by his interference, the two of them fell onto the ground, their faces grey as ash and it was hard for them to move.

Yang Guo was alarmed and called out, "Father, Senior Hong, are you okay?"

The two of them struggled to breath and didn't reply. Yang Guo wanted to move them into the cave to rest but Hong Qigong lightly shook his head. Yang Guo knew that the two were severely injured and could not be moved. That night he slept between the two, afraid that they would get up in the middle of the night and fight again. The two of them couldn't even circulate their chi to recuperate, how could they fight each other? The next morning, Yang Guo saw that they looked like they were on the point of death,

they looked worse than yesterday. He was alarmed and flustered; he dug up some more mountain herbs and roasted and fed it to them. On the third day, the two of them showed signs of being a little better. Yang Guo moved them into the cave, placing them on either side with him in the middle.

They rested like this for several days. Once Hong Qigong regained his appetite he started to recover. Ouyang Feng didn't say anything but his expression was calm, Yang Guo tried to get him to talk but he wouldn't say anything.

That day, the two of them were lying on the ground facing each other when Hong Qigong suddenly called out, "Smelly Toad", do you revere me now?"

Ouyang Feng said, "Revere what? I still have many stances that I haven't used, once I use them all, you'll be beaten into dust."

Hong Qigong laughed and said, "What a coincidence, I too have many kung fu that I haven't used yet. Have you heard of the Beggar Clan's "Dog Beating Stick Technique"?"

Ouyang Feng trembled, and thought, "The "Dog Beating Stick Technique" sounds familiar, it seems to be extremely potent, could it be that the Old Beggar knows it? But how come he hasn't used it when we've been fighting for our lives? He's probably used it already. Or, he doesn't know it." So he said, "What's so special about the "Dog Beating Stick Technique"?"

Hong Qigong was regretful; during the days when he was fighting with him, all he had to do was just use a few stances of the "Dog Beating Stick Technique" and he would definitely be able to subdue him. But he felt that Ouyang Feng was mentally unstable so he already has an advantage over him. Using the Beggar Clan's treasured "Dog Beating Stick Technique" against him wouldn't be fair. It was not the actions of a hero. But who knew that although his mind was unstable, his kung fu did not decline one bit. In the end, both of them ended up seriously injured. He wanted to use this set of skills but he had no energy to do so. When he heard Ouyang Feng ask this question he couldn't take it and had a thought, he signaled to Yang Guo telling him to lower his ear and said, "I am the Beggar Clan's previous chief, do you know that?"

Yang Guo nodded, in Chongyang Palace he heard the Taoists talk about the famous people of the world. They said that the Beggar Clan's previous chief the "Nine Fingered Wondrous Beggar" Hong Qigong had supreme martial arts and was courageous, a real hero.

Hong Qigong said, “I have a set of techniques that I’m going to teach you. This set of techniques is passed onto the Beggar Clan’s chief only and never to outsiders. Because your Godfather is belittling me with his words, I want you to perform it for him to see.”

Yang Guo said, “Since this skill of Senior’s is never passed on to outsiders, this junior will not learn it. My Godfather’s mind hasn’t recovered yet, there is no need for Senior to torment him.”

Hong Qigong shook his head and said, “If you learn the stances but don’t know the formulae to accompany it, should you face an enemy, it would be useless. And so, you can’t really say that I’m teaching you kung fu. I don’t want you to attack your Godfather, just demonstrate it to him and once he sees it, he will understand.”

Yang Guo thought, “Since that this set of kung fu is a treasure of the Beggar Clan, my Godfather may not be able to beat it; why should I help you to defeat my Godfather?” He rejected the offer, saying that he can’t learn the secret skill of the Beggar Clan.

Hong Qigong saw through him and loudly said, “Smelly Toad”, your Godson knows that you can’t beat my “Dog Beating Stick Technique”, he doesn’t dare to demonstrate it to you.”

Ouyang Feng was angry and called out, “Son, I have many great skills that I haven’t used yet, why should I be afraid of him? Quickly demonstrate it for me.”

The two were forcing him, he had no other response but to go over to Hong Qigong’s side. Hong Qigong told him to take a branch and taught him a stance of the “Dog Beating Stick Technique”, “The Stick Beats Two Dogs”, carefully describing it to him. Yang Guo understood immediately and demonstrated it. Ouyang Feng saw that the stick technique was indeed wondrous and powerful, it would be difficult for him to overcome it straight away, he thought for a while and taught a staff technique stance to Yang Guo.

Hong Qigong gave a slight smile and said, “Fine, here’s another stance.”

The two of them then compared martial arts with their mouths and tongues. They continued until night fell, only ten or so moves were exchanged yet Yang Guo was exhausted and sweating all over. The next morning they continued, and they carried on for three days, by then, the thirty six stances of the “Dog Beating Stick Technique” were described. Though there were only thirty six stances, the changes in between them had boundless ingenuity, in the end, Ouyang Feng took longer and longer to come up with a

solution. But the stances that he came up with attacked and defended at the same time, the strength and power of them was excellent; when Hong Qigong saw this he let out a sigh of respect.

By the night of that day, Hong Qigong described the thirty-sixth stance “No Dogs Under Heaven” sixth change. This was the “Dog Beating Stick Technique’s” final stance and final change; once this stance was used, there would be a stick everywhere and when the internal energy arrived, had there been eighty evil dogs, all of them would be killed at the same time. It was called “No Dogs Under Heaven” because of this, the ingenuity and mastery of the rod technique had reached the highest echelons of martial arts. Ouyang Feng couldn’t think of a reply. He spent that night tossing and turning as he pondered that stance.

Before Yang Guo woke up the next morning, Ouyang Feng suddenly called out, “I’ve got it... I’ve got it. Son, use this staff stance to break his.” His voice was excited and urgent at the same time. Yang Guo could hear that there was something wrong with him, he took a look and was shocked. Though Ouyang Feng was old, his internal energy was profound, so the hair on his face and head was grey white in colour; but he had exerted himself too much that night thinking. In just a night his hair became completely white, as if he’d suddenly aged ten years.

Yang Guo was sad, he wanted to ask Hong Qigong to stop the competition, but Ouyang Feng repeatedly forced him to do as he said, in the end he could only comply. This stance was extremely complicated, Ouyang Feng repeated it and explained it until Yang Guo understood and did as he was instructed. When Hong Qigong saw this stance his face changed. He was lying on the floor, unable to move; suddenly he somehow gained divine strength and leapt up calling out, “Old poisonous animal, Ouyang Feng! Today, Old Beggar is in awe of you.” He jumped forward and hugged him tightly. Yang Guo was startled, he assumed that he was trying to harm his Godfather. He tried to pull him away but Hong Qigong was holding on tightly, he was unable to pull him away. He heard Hong Qigong laugh and called out, “Old poisonous animal, Ouyang Feng, you actually thought of a stance to break mine, you really are something! Good Ouyang Feng, good Ouyang Feng.”

After many days of fighting and a whole night of thinking, Ouyang Feng had exhausted all his strength. When he heard Hong Qigong call him ‘Ouyang Feng’ three times, suddenly something lit up in him. His mind was like a mirror, all the events of the past came before his very eyes; he also laughed and called out, “I’m Ouyang Feng! I’m Ouyang Feng! I’m Ouyang Feng! You’re the Old Beggar Hong Qigong!”

The two white haired men hugged each other and laughed. After a bout of laughter, the voices became quieter, then suddenly stopped, and the two of them lay motionless.

Yang Guo was shocked and kept on calling out, “Father, Senior!” neither replied. Yang Guo pulled Hong Qigong’s arm, but as soon as he did so the arm hung limp, he was dead. Yang Guo was startled and bent over to take a look at Ouyang Feng; he too had all lost signs of being alive. Though the two’s laughter has ended, their faces still held a smile, and the valley quietly echoed back the sounds of two people laughing. Northern Beggar and Western Poison had been adversaries for many years and they hated each other. And now they ended up dead together on Mount Hua. The two of them were enemies when they were alive, but just before they died they were hugging each other and laughing. All the feuds and arguments that they have had over the years were ended with a laugh!

Yang Guo was shocked and sad at the same time; he had no idea what to do. He remembered that Hong Qigong pretended to be dead for three days and three nights, could it be that the two of them were pretending to be dead? But judging from how they looked, it didn’t appear that they were pretending. He thought, “Maybe after dying for a while they’ll come back to life. Their martial arts are extremely good; they wouldn’t die just like that. Maybe they are competing again, seeing who can fake death the longest.”

He guarded the two for seven days and nights and every time a day passed, a bit of his hope drained away. He saw that the two’s faces had changed colour and knew then that they had really passed away. He sobbed for a while, and then, in the side of the cave, he dug two holes and buried the two extraordinary figures of the Wulin world. The weapons they used and Hong Qigong’s wine gourd were buried with them. He saw that the footprints that the two had left when they were fighting had turned to ice, the prints were still here yet their bodies have now been placed in the ground. Yang Guo stepped into the footprints and reminisced, he couldn’t stop himself from being depressed again. He then thought about how even with their frightening abilities, in the end they were buried by someone the world despised. What is fame, what is reputation; it’s just a dream that’s finished.

He kowtowed eight times in front of their tombs, thinking, “Though Godfather was brilliant, in the end he was a level below Hong Qigong.” When the “Dog Beating Stick Techniques” were demonstrated, Godfather had to think for quite a while before he overcame them, if he really faced this in battle, who would allow him to carefully study it and then think of a way to counter it?”

After many sighs, he found a path down the mountain and left it behind. This time when he was leaving the mountain, he was trusting in his footsteps again, he didn't distinguish between east, south, west or north. He thought that since the world is a large place, he was alone, he would wander around and when his time comes, he'll lie on the ground somewhere and die. He hadn't been on Mount Hua for a month, yet to him it was like many years had passed. When he was ascending the mountain, he was thinking about how everyone looked down on him, he was full of hate and anger. As he descended, he felt life was like a passing cloud, if others respect him or look down on him it's all the same. What's it have to do with him anyway? At such a young age, he was resentful of the world's customs, he won't rise in respect for the world.

Within a day's time he arrived at a wild place in Xianan; he took a look around and saw withered trees and wilted grass everywhere. The grass was fluttering in the wind. The sound of quiet hoofs could be heard in the west, dust and smoke rose, after a short while, tens of wild horses galloped past about a mile or so in front of him. He saw the herd of horses galloping wildly, freely, Yang Guo also felt carefree and joyous. With wild lands in front of his eyes and horses galloping afar, the world was vast and had no obstructions. Just as he was feeling satisfied he suddenly heard a horse hissing out for mercy from behind.

Yang Guo turned around and saw a yellow haired skinny horse pulling a cart of firewood slowly along the main road. He thought that the horse must have seen the other horses galloping freely in the wild lands. It was toiling with hard work and it hissed out as it lamented for itself. The horse was so skinny that its breast bone was sticking out, its four legs had no muscle and they were as thin as branches. Its fur was patchy, its skin was covered in scabies, and there were numerous traces of blood from wounds caused by whipping. A rude man was sitting on the cart, he disliked that the horse was going slow and whipped it incessantly. Yang Guo has suffered by others many times before; when he saw the horse suffering such punishment, it felt like he himself was suffering the whippings. His chest ached and tears almost escaped from his eyes. He stood in the road and angrily shouted, "Hey you, why are you whipping the horse?"

The rude man saw a kid in torn and old garments looking like a beggar blocking the road, he raised his whip and shouted, "Move out of the way now, don't you want your life?" As he said this he slapped his whip on the horse's back again. Yang Guo was furious and called out, "If you hit the horse again, I'll kill you." The man laughed and lashed out at Yang Guo's head. Yang Guo stretched out his hand to take the whip and turned it around. He swung the whip and it made a tangling loop around the man's neck and pulled him down, beating him on the head and face. Although the skinny horse was ugly, it was very lively, when it saw the man getting beaten; it neighed with

delight and stretched out its head rubbing Yang Guo on the leg, displaying signs of affection. Yang Guo pulled apart the cart's collar and harness then patted the horse on the back. He pointed in the direction of the other horse's trail and said, "Go, no one's going to harm you anymore."

The horse reared and neighed, and galloped forward. But the horse's body was weak; he wasn't able to continue this sudden burst. It galloped for around a hundred feet then its front legs weakened and it fell onto the ground. Yang Guo couldn't bear it, he ran over and picked up the horse by its stomach and shouted, "Up", pulling the horse back onto its feet. The man saw Yang Guo's unbelievable strength and was frightened, so frightened that he didn't want his cart of firewood. He picked himself up and ran. About half a mile away, he shouted, "There's someone strong stealing horses and firewood!"

Yang Guo thought this was funny. He pulled up some green grass for the horse. He saw that the horse had such an unfortunate life and couldn't help but feel linked with it. He stroked the horse's neck and said, "Horse, horse, follow me from now on." He held its rope and walked slowly to a town. He bought some barley for the horse to eat. On the second day the horse seemed to regain its spirit and so he rode it slowly. At first the horse struggled along and limped, when wasn't losing its footing it would stumble, but the further it walked the better it got. After seven or eight days of having enough to eat, it regained its strength; its steps as light as if it were flying. Yang Guo couldn't speak his delight and took even more care of it.

One day Yang Guo was in an outdoor restaurant awaiting an order when the horse walked over to a table and kept neighing at a bowl of wine on the table, as if he wanted to drink the wine. Yang Guo was curious and ordered a large bowl of wine and placed it on the table, and then stroked the horse's head. The horse drank it all in one go; its tail raised its legs stepped, it was feeling very pleased. Yang Guo felt that this was interesting and called some more wine; the horse drank over ten bowls one after the other, and wasn't finished. Yang Guo wanted to call for more wine but the waiter saw he was dressed in ragged garments and afraid that he had no money to pay so said that they didn't have any more wine. Afterwards he got on the horse. The horse was under the influence of the wine and took large steps, galloping like crazy; the trees by the side of the road receded, it was extremely fast. When a normal spirited horse galloped, it would gallop steadily. Though this horse was fast, its body would be high and then low, jolting about very uncoordinated, if it weren't for the fact that Yang Guo possessed excellent lightness kung fu, he would not have been able to ride it. The horse also had another strange characteristic, whenever there was another animal on the road, it would speed up and overtake it, no matter if it was a cow, horse, pony or donkey, it would gal-

lop past them before slowing. This proud and competitive air seems to have come about because of the suffering it has had in its life.

Yang Guo thought that this thousand-mile colt has been trapped in the hands of the villager, wasting half its life; now that its spirit is free, it wants to gallop and fly over the lands. This behavior was similar to Yang Guo's; the man and horse were like good friends. He was bored sometimes and would play with the horse, in a few days he was happy again. He has been heading south and had arrived at the banks of Han Shui. As he rode the horse he thought about how he teased Lu Wushuang and tricked the Li Mochou Master and disciple team, he couldn't stop laughing. He then remembered he didn't know where Xiao Longnu was or when they were going to meet again, he became sad and despondent.

That day he traveled until noon and on the road he kept on seeing beggars. From their appearances, most of them knew kung fu, he thought, "Could it be that the matter between Wifey and the beggars hasn't finished yet? Or could it be that the Beggar Clan has summoned all these people to fight with Li Mochou? I must take a look." He didn't like the Beggar Clan much, but because he admired Hong Qigong, he couldn't stop himself from feeling close to the Beggar Clan. He thought as long as the beggars don't trouble Lu Wushuang he will give them the news that Hong Qigong had passed away. He carried on for a while and saw the road was filling up with more and more beggars. When the beggars saw Yang Guo they were surprised, there was no difference in the way they were dressed but if there wasn't an urgent matter, members of the clan would not travel by horseback. Yang Guo ignored them and slowly carried on.

He continued until afternoon when suddenly he heard the cries of eagles in the air; two white eagles flew past, and descended ahead of him. He heard a beggar say, "Chief Huang is here, there's probably going to be an assembly tonight."

Another beggar said, "Will Hero Guo come?"

The first beggar replied, "The two are never apart." he saw Yang Guo reign in his horse listening to their words; he gave him a glance and closed his mouth.

When Yang Guo heard the names Guo Jing and Huang Rong he was slightly alarmed, and then in his heart laughed coldly. "Earlier I lived in your home, ate your food and you made a fool out of me; then I was young and useless and I suffered a lot. Right now I'm relying on the world, who needs your support?" He had another thought, "Why don't I pretend I have nowhere to go and have come to them for help and then see how they treat me."

He then found a quiet place and messed up his hair. Then he punched himself in the left eye, he scratched his cheek a few times; there was now a blue green bruise on his left eye and there were some red marks on his face. His clothes were already torn and old but he tore them even more making them look even more ragged. He rolled in the mud and dust a few times and then got up on the horse that was covered in scars and skin ulcers. Indeed, he now looked like he was a person with nowhere to go and on his last legs. As soon as he finished he limped back to the main road, he didn't ride on the horse and walked amongst the beggars. He didn't lead the horse along, the horse just followed on its own. Someone from the Beggar Clan asked whether he was on his way to attend the great feast, Yang Guo stared and didn't reply and slipped back into the crowd, walking back and forth. The group of people wound along the road and eventually came up to a large, old and ruined temple. He saw the two white eagles roosting on top of a pine tree in front of the temple.

One of the Wu brothers was holding a dish, while the other took a slab of meat from the dish and flung it towards the eagles. Yang Guo had seen the two before when they teamed up with Guo Fu to fight Li Mochou, but at that time he was too busy thinking about Guo Fu. He didn't take the two to mind, but now he took a closer look at the two. He saw Wu Dunru looked intense, he was concentrating one hundred percent, on the other hand Wu Xiuwen was active and lively; he ran to east and darted to the west, not taking a moment's respite. Wu Dunru was wearing a purple coloured Chong silk gown, Wu Xiuwen was wearing a large blue coloured Shandong silk gown, and around their waists were tied an embroidered satin 'hero' sash. They were indeed young heroes, standing out from the crowd. Yang Guo went up to them and made a bow, and stammered, "Greetings... greetings brothers Wu, I hope you've been...been well."

At this time there were beggars everywhere around the temple, all their clothes were ragged, so although Yang Guo was covered in dirt, he did not look out of place in the crowd of beggars. Wu Dunru returned the favour and glanced up and down at Yang Guo, he couldn't recognize him and said, "Forgive my inexperienced eyes, what is brother's name?"

Yang Guo said, "There is no need to worry about such a lowly name, little brother... little brother wants to meet with Chief Huang."

Wu Dunru thought his voice sounded slightly familiar, he was about to question him when a voice like a silver bell came from the entrance of the temple, "Big brother Wu, I asked you to buy me a soft horse whip, have you bought it?"

Wu Dunru quickly moved Yang Guo aside and walked forward saying, “I bought it ages ago, give it a test, does it feel right?” He fished out a horse whip from his pocket as he said this.

Yang Guo turned his head and saw a girl in a light green dress hurrying from the temple's doors; her brows were curved, her little nose slightly raised, her face like white jade, her smile like a flower, it was Guo Fu. The adornments in her hair weren't extravagant, only a pearl was worn in her hair, the light make her look as if she was adorned with jade gem make up. Yang Guo only gave her a glance but he couldn't stop himself from having a feeling of inferiority; he turned his head and didn't look back. Wu Xiuwen also dashed forward and the two brothers spent all their effort talking to her. After speaking with Guo Fu for a while, Wu Dunru remembered Yang Guo and turned around saying, “You've come because of the ‘Heroes Feast’?”

Yang Guo did not know what the ‘Heroes Feast’ was and just answered agreeably. Wu Dunru summoned one of the beggars with his hand and said, “Take care of this friend, tomorrow take him to Da Xingguan.” After he said this he turned his attention back to Guo Fu and ignored him. The beggar agreed and after greeting each other, asked for his name. Yang Guo told him truthfully. He was a nobody. Of course the beggar won't have heard of his name before and wouldn't think anything of it. The beggar called himself Wang Shisan; he was a second band Beggar Clan member. He asked, “Where has brother Yang come from?”

Yang Guo said, “From Xiayi.”

Wang Shisan said, “Ah, Brother Yang is from Quanzhen sect?”

As soon as he heard the words ‘Quanzhen sect’ Yang Guo's head ached, he shook his head and said, “No.”

Wang Shisan, “Brother Yang you've got the ‘Heroes’ invitation with you?”

Yang Guo was startled and said, “I've just wandered around Jianghu, how can I call myself a hero? I have met your clan's chief Huang once before, I only want to see her and ask for some money to return to my home.”

Wang Shisan's eyebrows wrinkled and he thought for a while and then said, “Chief Huang is receiving the heroes at the moment, I'm afraid that she won't have time to see you.” Yang Guo had deliberately made himself such a sorry sight, the lower the regard the other person had for him, the prouder he'll get, he made himself more pitiful and pleaded earnestly.

The members of the Beggar Clan are all people from poor environments, they have always helped those in need and distress; they would never look down on other poor people. Wang Shisan heard him speak with such grief and woe, and so said, “Little brother Yang, have a meal first, tomorrow we’ll go to Da Xingguan together. I’m your big brother, I’ll go and tell the elders, who in turn will inform our chief. We’ll wait and see what orders she gives, how about that?”

Wang Shisan had called him brother Yang, but now he heard that he wasn’t one of the guests for the ‘heroes’ feast. He was a fair few years older than him so he changed his greeting to little brother Yang. Yang Guo thanked him repeatedly. Wang Shisan invited him into the derelict temple and bought out some rice and dishes for the guest. One of the rules of the Beggar Clan is when a Beggar Clan member arrives to celebrate a ceremony, they’ll first need to get chicken, fish, beef and lamb and leave it until it starts to rot, and gets like a soup of spoiled meat. The meaning was that they shouldn’t forget their origins; but when treating guests, proper wine and dishes are bought out.

As Yang Guo was eating, a flash of light shone in his eyes, he saw Guo Fu enter the hall, her face with a smile, the Wu Brothers followed behind on her left and right. He heard Wu Xiuwen say, “Fine, we’ll leave tonight and travel through the night to rush to Da Xingguan. I’ll go and get your red horse.” The three of them were too busy talking to notice Yang Guo who was sitting on the floor eating. The three of them went to the back garden to get their bags and weapons and exited the temple. Many hoof beats could be heard as the horses galloped away. Yang Guo planted his chopsticks into his bowl, and heard the hoof beats of the horses become distant; a hundred emotions went through his mind, but was it worry or hate, anger or sorrow?

The next day, Wang Shisan looked after him as they went back to the road. On the road, apart from the crowds of Beggar Clan members, there were many eminent names of Wulin, some traveled by horseback, some traveled on foot, all heading for the ‘Heroes Feast’. Yang Guo didn’t know what the ‘Heroes Feast’ was or what the ‘Heroes’ invitation was about; he knew that Wang Shisan wouldn’t dare to reveal it to him so he pretended to be stupid and miserable. They arrived at Da Xingguan at around seven o’clock that night. Da Xingguan is an important strategic point in the Henan province, the topography of the area was divine yet there weren’t many towns and cities around. This was because the Mongolian soldiers were situated north of here. Wang Shisan led Yang Guo past a town and traveled for another seven or eight miles. In front of them were hundred of Japanese Scholar trees surrounding a large manor; all the heroes were heading for this manor. Building followed building inside the manor, all folding over each other and it was hard to see how many rooms there really were; but it appeared that the manor could easily hold thousands of guests and have room to spare.

Wang Shisan was just a lowly member of the Beggar Clan, he knew that their Chief was occupied right now; how could he go disturb her over such a trivial matter such as borrowing traveling money? He arranged quarters for Yang Guo and then went away with his friends.

Yang Guo saw that this was a very grand manor, there were many servants busy with serving the guests; he was curious and wondered who the master of the manor was and how come they had so much respect? He suddenly heard the three blasts from a trumpet and a musical ensemble started their music. Someone said, “The master and mistress of the manor are meeting the guests now, let’s go take a look and see who the hero is that just arrived?” He saw the guest and servant move to one side. The crowd of guests also stood to either side of the hall.

A man and a woman entered the hall shoulder to shoulder, they were both around forty years of age. The male wore an embroidered gown, he had a slight moustache, exuding an air of authority and prosperity; the woman had white skin, she was courteous and gracious like an affluent mistress. The guests quietly discussed amongst themselves, “Master Lu and Mistress Lu are greeting this important guest personally.”

Behind them was another couple, when Yang Guo saw them his heart trembled, he became flustered; it was Guo Jing and Huang Rong. He hadn’t seen them for many years, Guo Jing seems to be more serious, there was a slight smile of Huang Rong’s face; her beauty had not diminished slightly.

Yang Guo thought, “So Auntie Guo is this beautiful, I never noticed it when I was younger.”

Guo Jing wore a coarse long gown, Huang Rong was wearing a light purple silk gown, but because she was the Chief of the Beggar Clan, she could only tie the gown with pins in the places where it doesn’t catch the eye and that was it. Behind Guo Jing and Huang Rong followed Guo Fu and the Wu brothers. Right then, the hall was lit up with countless red candles, under the candle light the crowd could see that the males were noble and the girl was lovable and glamorous.

The crowd pointed, “That is hero Guo, and that is Madam Huang, Chief Huang.”

“Who’s that girl who’s cute as a flower?”

“It is the Guo couple’s daughter.”

“Are those young men their sons?”

“No, they’re their disciples.”

Yang Guo didn’t want to meet the Guo couple in the crowd so he hid behind a tall man and watched; four Taoists appeared from the direction of the music. When Yang Guo saw them, he couldn’t refrain from feeling angry. The first one that entered was an old Taoist with a head of white hair, his face was purple, it was the Blithe Elder Hao Datong; behind him was a grey haired old Taoist priestess, Yang Guo has never seen her before. Behind them entered two middle-aged Taoists standing shoulder to shoulder, one was Yin Zhiping, and the other was Zhao Zhijing. Master and Mistress Lu greeted them; they greeted the old Taoist priestess Master; they received the Guo couple, Guo Fu and the Wu brothers and led them forward.

Yang Guo heard from the crowd, “That old Taoist priestess is Quanzhen’s sword heroine; her name is Sun Bu’Er.”

“Ah, she’s the Sage of Tranquility, famous throughout the northern and southern sides of the Changjian River.”

“Yes. She is Mistress Lu’s master. However, Master Lu’s kung fu was not taught by her.”

Master Lu’s first names are Guanying, his father Lu Chengfeng was a disciple of Huang Rong’s father Huang Yaoshi, and so, they could be regarded a generation lower than Guo Jing and Huang Rong. Lu Guanying’s wife Cheng Yaojia is Sun Bu’Er’s disciple. The couple originally resided in Lake Tai’s Returning Echo Manor. The manor was burned down by Ouyang Feng. Lu Chengfeng was furious and influenced by his anger, he told his son that he didn’t want to be on the minds of Lake Tai’s bandits again; so he took his family north and resided in Da Xingguan. Lu Chengfeng had now passed away. Years ago, Cheng Yaojia was in trouble, she was rescued by Guo Jing, Huang Rong and the Beggar Clan; she had always remembered this. When the Beggar Clan sent out the ‘Heroes’ invitation, the Lu couple took on the task themselves and arranged the ‘Heroes Feast’ here at their manor.

Guo Jing waited for the greetings to be over and led Hao Datong and Sun Bu’Er towards the hall to meet the gathering of heroes. Hao Datong stroked his beard as he said, “When Ma, Qiu, Liu and Wang received Chief Huang’s invitation, they wanted to come here in person but apprentice brother Ma has not been feeling well, apprentice brother Liu and the others are helping him to recuperate and can’t leave him, they can only apologize to Chief Huang.”

Huang Rong said, “Well said, well said. Those seniors are too polite.”

Though she was young, she was the leader of the world’s greatest clan, Hao Datong and the others treated her with great respect. Guo Jing and Yin Zhiping knew each other when they were young and had met when Qiu Chuji took Yin Zhiping and 18 or 20 others to meet Genghis Khan. When they saw each other both of them were delighted; the two of them entered together. Guo Jing asked about Ma Yu’s illness and missed him very much. The main hall was arranged for the feast, the noise of people and the reflection of the red candles created a great atmosphere.

Yin Zhiping looked to the east and then west, it was as if he was searching for someone in the crowd of people.

Zhao Zhijing chuckled and quietly said, “Apprentice brother Yin; will the one named Long make an appearance here?” Yin Zhiping’s face became red and didn’t reply.

Guo Jing did not know they were talking about Xiao Longnu and interrupted, “There’s a hero named Long? Are they your friend?”

Zhao Zhijing said, “It’s apprentice brother Yin’s friend, I dare not to make such a friend.” Guo Jing saw they looked strange; there was something else going on and he didn’t inquire any further.

Suddenly, Yin Zhiping spotted Yang Guo in the crowd; his whole body trembled like he was struck by lightning. He knew that if he’s here, Xiao Longnu would also be here. Zhao Zhijing followed his gaze and his face suddenly changed, he angrily shouted, “Yang Guo! It’s Yang Guo! That ... That Xiao Longnu is here as well!”

When Guo Jing heard the two words ‘Yang Guo’ he immediately turned around. The two haven’t seen each other for years; Yang Guo has now grown up, Guo Jing would have not been able to recognize him straight away. But when he heard Zhao Zhijing’s shout, he immediately recognized who he was. He was shocked and delighted, he dashed over and took his hand and said with joy, “Guo’er, you’re here as well? I was afraid that I was going to disturb your training so I did not request your presence. It’s great that your master has bought you here.”

Everyone in Quanzhen was ashamed about the incident of Yang Guo expelling himself from Chongyang Palace; no one had leaked a word about this to outsiders. Guo Jing did not know about it; at the time he was on Peach Blossom Island. The reason that Zhao Zhijing came to the ‘Heroes Feast’ was to tell Guo Jing about this event, he couldn’t pre-

dict that he would encounter Yang Guo here. He was afraid that he had heard Yang Guo's account of the events and would take his side, but judging from his reaction he knew that the two had just met again. His face became clear and faced the sky saying, "How could this Taoist dream of being Master Yang's Master?"

Guo Jing was shocked and asked, "Why does brother Zhao say this? The child does not listen to your teachings?"

Zhao Zhijing saw that the hall was filled with heroes, if he talked about this he would definitely get into an argument with Yang Guo. Quanzhen sect would lose face; he just chuckled coldly and didn't say a word. Guo Jing was worried about Yang Guo, he saw his eye was bruised and nose blue, his garments were torn and ragged, his body covered in mud. It showed that he had suffered a lot and he held him to his chest. As soon as Yang Guo was held, he secretly circulated his chi to protect his body from harm. This hug was out of love, why would Guo Jing have any intentions to harm him? He called out to Huang Rong, "Rong' Er, look who's here."

When Huang Rong saw Yang Guo she was shocked. She did not feel Guo Jing's delight and calmly said, "Great, you're here as well."

Yang Guo lightly struggled free and said, "My body is filthy, there is no need to dirty your clothes." His sentence was said coldly and he had a scornful tone in his voice. Guo Jing felt slightly sad and thought, "This child doesn't have a father or mother; it looks like even his Master doesn't care for him." He held his hand, wanting him to sit at the same table as he. Yang Guo arranged to sit in the corner table. He didn't want to sit with such people and said coldly, "I'll sit over there. Uncle Guo, take care of your important guests." Guo Jing felt that since there were many guests here, it wasn't convenient to leave the guests alone so he lightly patted his shoulder and made a toast at the main guest's table.

After three rounds of wine, Huang Rong stood up and said clearly, "Tomorrow is the day for the 'Heroes Feast'. There are still many heroes and good men who have yet to arrive. Tonight I ask you to enjoy your appetite and don't stop drinking until you are drunk; we'll talk about the serious matters tomorrow."

Meat piled up like mountains on the tables, wine flowed like rivers; the guests either played drinking games or told stories. That day, the amount of pigs and sheep that were prepared and the amount of wine that was poured in the Lu manor were beyond measure.

After the meal, the servants led the guests to their rooms to rest. Zhao Zhijing said a few quiet words to Hao Datong, Hao Datong nodded. Zhao Zhijing stood up and saluted with his hands towards Guo Jing and said, “Hero Guo, the Taoist has a heavy burden to reveal. It is extremely shameful, and today I have come to apologize because of this.”

Guo Jing quickly returned the greeting and said, “You are too modest apprentice brother Zhao. We’ll go and speak in the study. Whatever the child has done to offend apprentice brother Zhao, I will heavily punish him to ease apprentice brother Zhao’s anger.” He said these words clearly, though Yang Guo was a couple of tables away, Yang Guo heard it and decided, “If he shouts at me just once, I will get up and leave and never see him again. Though my kung fu cannot compare to his, if he beats me I will fight him with my life.” Once he made this decision he felt slightly more comfortable, he wasn’t as fearful as he was when he first saw Zhao Zhijing. He saw Guo Jing signaling to him with his hand and went over to him and followed behind him.

Guo Fu and the Wu brothers were drinking wine at another table, she didn’t know who Yang Guo was, but after being told the news by Guo Jing and Huang Rong, she remembered that it was the boy who they played with when they were younger on Peach Blossom Island. They had been separated for a long time; young people change their appearances the most, and after a few months great changes can be seen, let alone a few years. The fact that Yang Guo had made himself look in such a sorry state, and then hiding himself in the crowd, of course Guo Fu would not know who he was.

When she saw Yang Guo had returned, she couldn’t help herself from thinking: she remembered how they had a little argument when they were small on the island, would he still be angry at this event? She saw him in such a weary state, compared with the graceful and the distinguished look of the Wu brothers; they were poles apart. She couldn’t help but feel some pity for him and said to the Wu Dunru, “Father sent him to Quanzhen to learn martial arts; I wonder how his skills are compared to ours?”

Before Wu Dunru could reply, Wu Xiuwen interrupted, “Master’s skills are unequalled; how could he compete with us?”

Guo Fu nodded, “His foundation was bad before, it would be difficult for him to make any progress, how did he end up in such a state?”

Wu Xiuwen said, “Those old Taoists stared at him as if they wanted to swallow him whole. That kid has such a bad temper; he must have caused a major incident.”

The three of them talked quietly for a while, and then they heard Guo Jing inviting Hao Datong and the others to the study. He said he was going to punish Yang Guo heavily; she was curious and said, “Quick, we’ll go and hide ourselves in the study first and listen to what they are talking about.”

Wu Dunru was worried about being punished by their master if they found out and didn’t reply. Wu Xiuwen agreed and went ahead. Guo Fu’s right leg stopped; a slightly angry expression came across her face and she said to Wu Dunru, “Don’t listen to me then.”

Wu Du Run saw her face showed signs of anger but her brows, eyes and smile were still exuding their beauty, his heart jumped and he couldn’t disobey and followed her quickly. As soon as they hid behind the bookshelf, Guo Jing and Huang Rong led Hao Datong and the others to the study, and they sat down. Yang Guo followed and stood to one side.

Guo Jing said, “Guo’er, just sit!”

Yang Guo shook his head and said, “I won’t sit.” Even in the presence of six great fighters of the Wulin world he was still bold, but he couldn’t help but feel a little bit restless.

Guo Jing had always treated Yang Guo as his own son, he was also extremely respectful of the Quanzhen seven masters. He thought that it wasn’t necessary to ask about the rights and wrongs of what happened; it must be the junior’s fault, he put on a face and said to Yang Guo, “You are very bold, how dare you not greet your master. Quick, kowtow to your Martial Grandmasters, your Master and your Martial Uncle to apologize.”

The relationship between an emperor and his subjects, a father and son, a master and disciple were all very significant. When a subject is called upon by an emperor to die, they dare not stay alive; if the father wants the son to perish, the son must do so; the same can be said for the Wulin relationship between Master and disciple, a hint of disobedience is not allowed. Guo Jing reprimanded him this way because he pitied him for the suffering he has had alone, his tone was very gentle and soft. Had it been someone else, he would have shouted ‘bastard, animal’ long ago, and struck him with his fists on the head and face.

Zhao Zhijing stood up and chuckled, “How can I be Master Yang’s Master? Hero Guo, there is no need for you to ridicule me. Our Quanzhen sect has done nothing to offend hero Guo, why is it necessary to insult me in public? Master Yang, this little Taoist will

kowtow to apologize to the Senior; it was my fault for being blind, I didn't recognize such a hero and good man."

The Guo couple saw that his expression had changed completely, the more he said the angrier he became, both of them were shocked. If a disciple did something wrong, the Master punishing them would be normal, why is it necessary for such a reaction? Huang Rong knew that whatever Yang Guo did, it was very serious. After this bout of anger by Zhao Zhijing, Guo Jing couldn't speak so she slowly said, "I am extremely sorry for giving apprentice brother Zhao such trouble. Please don't get angry apprentice brother Zhao, sit down and discuss what the child has done to offend his Master."

Zhao Zhijing said loudly, "How can I, Zhao Zhijing dare to be someone's Master with my lowly skills? Won't that just make the heroes and good men of the world laugh their heads off? How does that make me look?"

Huang Rong's eyebrows wrinkled, she was resentful. She and the Quanzhen sect weren't the greatest of friends; years ago they used the "Big Dipper Formation" against her father. Qiu Chuji also tried to arrange for Mu Nianci to be Guo Jing's bride; though these events happened long ago, the animosity had disappeared; but this outburst by Zhao Zhijing in front of her may have been a bit too impolite. Though both Hao Datong and Sun Bu'Er felt that it was hard to blame Zhao Zhijing for getting so angry, but the way he was acting was not how a Taoist should act.

Sun Bu'Er said, "Zhao Zhijing, explain everything to hero Guo and Chief Huang. Look at the way you're acting and think how it looks! We are Taoists, what kind of Taoism have we been studying?" Though Sun Bu'Er was a woman, she was very stern, her juniors all feared her; when Zhao Zhijing heard her speak slowly he didn't dare to make any more outbursts and said, "Yes, yes." He returned to his seat.

Guo Jing said, "Guo'er, look how your Master treats his Seniors with such respect, why don't you follow his example."

Zhao Zhijing wanted to say, "I'm not his Master", but he took a look at Sun Bu'Er and managed to restrain himself. But who knew that Yang Guo would say loudly, "He's not my Master!" When he said this, Guo Jing and Huang Rong were both extremely shocked; Guo Fu and the Wu brothers who were hiding behind the bookshelf were also extremely surprised. The master disciple relationship was very significant in the world of Wulin, there's a saying, "A Master for one day, a Father for life."

Guo Jing was brought up the Jiangnan Seven Freaks and was taught martial arts by Hong Qigong; he was very grateful to his Masters. Ever since he was young he believed that the ways of his Masters were right and proper. How would he know that Yang Guo would dismiss his Master in public, and say such treasonous and heretical things? He got up and pointed at Yang Guo; his voice trembled as he said, “What...what... what did you say?” He wouldn’t scold anyone but his face went green, he was very angry. Huang Rong had very rarely seen him get so angry; she whispered to him, “Brother Jing, that child has always been bad; there is no need to get angry over him.”

Yang Guo was actually afraid but when he saw his loving Uncle Guo change his face to such an angry expression, he made a decision and thought, “Nothing is greater than death, and the worst that will happen is that you people will kill me.” So he said clearly, “My character has always been bad, but I have never begged you to teach me martial arts. You two are eminent people of the Wulin world, why was it necessary for you to use such a crafty plan to harm a child who doesn’t have a mother or father?” When he said ‘who doesn’t have a mother or father’, he pitied himself, his eyes became slightly red but he bit down on his lips and thought, “Even I die today, I won’t shed a single tear.”

Guo Jing angrily said, “Your Auntie Guo and Master taught you martial arts sincerely because of the friendship between me and your deceased father, who... who used a crafty plan? Who...who wants to harm you?” He wasn’t the most articulate; he stuttered even more now that he is angry.

Yang Guo saw how impatient he was and spoke even slower, “Uncle Guo has treated me very well, I will never forget this.”

Huang Rong slowly said, “Auntie Guo has wronged you; if you want to remember this for the rest of your life that’s up to you.”

At this stage, he might as well boldly go on, he said, “Auntie Guo has not treated me badly, nor has she wronged me. You said you were going to teach me martial arts, in reality, you taught me to study. You didn’t teach me an ounce of kung fu. Studying is a good thing; this nephew has learned a few more words and heard you speak about the stories of the past. But those old Taoists” He pointed to Hao Datong and Zhao Zhijing and said furiously, “There will be a day when I will take my revenge.”

Guo Jing was shocked and quickly asked, “Whaa...What? What revenge... what happened?”

Yang Guo said, “The one named Zhao calls himself my Master, he didn’t teach me any martial arts, fine, but he ordered many young Taoists to beat me up. Auntie Guo didn’t teach me martial arts and the Quanzhen sect didn’t teach me martial arts, I could only take the beatings. The one named Hao saw that there was a Grandma that loved me, and he killed her. The rotten Taoist named Hao, speak, isn’t this the truth?” When he remembered how Grandma Sun died for him, he ground his teeth and wanted to leap over to Hao Datong and kill him.

Hao Datong was an eminent Taoist of Quanzhen, he had learned martial arts, and he had reached a deep level in both areas. He accidentally killed Grandma Sun and in all these years he hadn’t had a moment’s peace. This was the most hateful thing he had done in his life. The Seven Masters of Quanzhen had killed countless people in their lives, but all the people they had killed were scoundrels, traitors and crooks; they had never harmed an innocent. Now, he heard Yang Guo blaming him in front of everyone, he couldn’t stop his face from turning grey. The events of that day when he made Grandma Sun throw up blood with his palm flashed in front of his eyes. He didn’t have a weapon so he stretched out his left hand and took a long sword from Zhao Zhijing’s waist.

Everyone thought that he wanted to stab Yang Guo with the sword, Guo Jing took a step forward to protect Yang Guo but who could have known that he would turn the long sword around with the handle facing Yang Guo and say, “Correct. I killed the wrong person. Take revenge for Grandma Sun, I won’t retaliate.”

When everyone saw him do this, they were surprised. Guo Jing was afraid that Yang Guo would take the sword and harm him so he called out, “Guo’er, don’t be impolite.”

Yang Guo knew that he wouldn’t be able to avenge Grandma Sun in front of Guo Jing and Huang Rong; he said coldly, “You know that Uncle Guo won’t let me attack, so why are you pretending to be so gracious? If you really want me to kill you, then why don’t you hand me over the sword in a place where there isn’t anyone about?”

Hao Datong was a Senior of Wulin, he was made speechless by the words of this young man. He couldn’t hand over the long sword or take it back; he circulated his chi through his hands and forced the sword to snap in half. He flung the sword on the floor and gave a long sigh, he said, “It’s finished, it’s finished!” He exited the study. Guo Jing wanted to persuade him to remain behind but his head did not turn back.

Guo Jing looked at Yang Guo and then at Sun Bu’Er and the others, he thought that from what had happened, the child has not lied. He thought for a while and said, “Why didn’t

Quanzhen teach you any martial arts? What have you been doing for the past few years?” As he said this, his words had slowed down a lot more.

Yang Guo said, “When Uncle Guo went up Mount Zhongnan, he defeated hundreds of Taoist without reply, even if Ma, Qiu, Liu, Wang and the others didn’t mind, would the others just forget about it? They couldn’t do anything to Uncle Guo but could it be that they wouldn’t vent their anger on a child like me? They wished they could kill me; why would they teach me martial arts? These few years I have experienced days where there was no light, the fact that today I have the chance to see Uncle Guo again is all down to heaven opening its eyes.” Those words did not mention the fact that he expelled himself from Quanzhen and pushed all the blame on Guo Jing. He said he had endured ‘days where there was no light’, this wasn’t a lie exactly, when he was living in the tomb, he didn’t see much light or day. When Guo Jing heard these words, he couldn’t stop his pity and compassion from rising.

Zhao Zhijing saw that Guo Jing more or less believed him and became anxious, he said, “You... you bastard talking such crap, the name of Quanzhen has been tarnished by... by”

Guo Jing believed that what Yang Guo said was the truth. Huang Rong’s face was not moved, she saw Yang Guo’s eyes sparkled and he had a clever expression on his face; she thought, “This child is extremely crafty, there must be a lie somewhere.” She said, “From what you said, you don’t know any martial arts? All these years in Quanzhen were wasted?” As she asked these questions she slowly got up, she suddenly stretched out her left hand and sent put a palm towards the crown of his head. The fingers of the palm was aiming for the head’s ‘Hundred Meetings’ pressure point, the base of the palm was heading for the ‘Rising Star’ pressure point that was an inch from the hair-line, these two main pressure points were fatal. If there was a heavy blow to these places the person would die, there would be no saving them.

Guo Jing was shocked and he called out; “Rong’er!” But Huang Rong was extremely fast, this palm was her family’s “Descending Brave Divine Sword Palm”, there was no warning, as soon as the hand moved the palm arrived; if Guo Jing wanted to save him, it was too late.

Yang Guo moved back slightly and wanted to avoid it, but with Huang Rong’s kung fu, now that she had attacked, just how would he dodge it; he saw the palm going towards his head. Yang Guo was shocked, he quickly stretched out his arm to react but his mind had a quick thought, his right arm moved slightly and then hung down. Someone such as Guo Jing who was greatly skilled but slow in thought would not understand what

was happening; they would quickly repel this attack. But Yang Guo was extremely quick, he immediately understood, “Auntie Guo is trying to test my kung fu, if I avoid this palm, then it will show that I’ve been lying.” He saw Huang Rong’s attack was fatal, if she wasn’t testing out his kung fu and he himself didn’t react, wouldn’t that mean he will have lost his life in vain? In a flash he fired up his stubborn nature and thought, “Fine, if I die then I die!” Though his kung fu may not be as good as Huang Rong’s, if he wanted to stretch out his hand and repel her palm, it wouldn’t be hard, but now he risked his life and didn’t move his arms.

Indeed Huang Rong was testing his kung fu with this stance, as soon as the palm reached his head she didn’t increase her strength, she saw a frightened and shocked expression on his face. He didn’t stretch out his hand to repel this attack and he didn’t secretly circulate his chi to protect his vital pressure points, showing he didn’t know an ounce of martial arts. She smiled and said, “I didn’t teach you kung fu because I wanted what was best for you. It looks like the Taoists of Quanzhen had the same thought as me.” She returned to her seat and quietly said to Guo Jing, “He really hasn’t learned any of the Quanzhen’s martial arts.” As soon as she said this, her mind secretly called out, “Ai yo, something’s wrong! I almost fell for his lie.” She remembered how when he was little he used the “Toad Stance” to attack Wu Dunru; he had some kung fu foundation. Even if he hasn’t made an inch of progress but knew she was about to strike with her palm, he would definitely block the attack. She thought, “Young man, young man, you’re too clever, if you scrambled and waved your hands in a frantic state to block my attack, I might have believed your lie. But there is one point that doesn’t make sense in your charade, you’ve left a flaw.” She didn’t reveal this and thought that she would watch him and see what other schemes he’ll come up with. She looked at Zhao Zhijing and then at Yang Guo, and she just smiled slightly.

Zhao Zhijing saw Huang Rong test out a stance on Yang Guo who didn’t fight back, he knew that Yang Guo had managed to conceal his kung fu from her, displaying even more signs that he was in the wrong. His anger erupted and said loudly, “That bastard is very crafty; if Chief Huang couldn’t find anything then let me try.” He went over to Yang Guo and pointed to his nose and said, “Little bastard, you really don’t know any martial arts? If you don’t defend, I will not hold back, if you want to live or die, it’s up to you.” He knew that Yang Guo’s kung fu was above his, but under his fatal attacks, there would be no other option for him but to reveal the truth. If he still kept up this charade, he might as well take his life. The worst that would happen is he will lose the Guo’s couple’s friendship and be heavily punished by his sect’s leader. Fury filled his chest, hate filled his guts, he thought, “You knew that Chief Huang wouldn’t harm your life that’s why you were so bold; you acted very well. Let’s see if you still have the guts to keep up the charade?” His sleeve waved, he was about to attack.

Guo Jing called out, “Please wait!” He was afraid that he would harm Yang Guo’s life and wanted to intervene.

Huang Rong tugged his sleeve and quietly said, “Don’t do anything.” She knew that Zhao Zhijing was extremely angry, his attacks would not be light, and Yang Guo had no way to avoid his attacks by mere luck. When he defends, the truth will come out. How would Guo Jing know that there are so many other things going on here; he was worried but knew that his wife’s plans had never failed before. He didn’t say anything else and just took one step forward, if there was a real danger he would still be able to make a rescue.

Zhao Zhijing said to Sun Bu’Er and Yin Zhiping, “Martial Uncle Sun, apprentice brother Yin, that bastard is pretending that he doesn’t know martial arts, I am forced with no other option but to test him myself. If he keeps it up to the end and I kill him, please be a witness for me in front of our leader, Martial Uncle Qiu and my Master.”

Sun Bu’Er knew what had happened with the incident of Yang Guo expelling himself from the Quanzhen sect. She saw him using his wits and craft to make sure Zhao Zhijing could not back down and make sure it was Quanzhen sect who was in the wrong. She hoped Zhao Zhijing would force him to use his martial arts and chuckled, “That disobedient disciple and traitor to our Quanzhen sect. Killing him wouldn’t be anything serious.” She is an eminent Taoist, how could she tell someone to kill? Those words were actually meant to scare Yang Guo, wanting him to stop pretending.

Zhao Zhijing had his Martial Uncle’s support and was even more daring; he raised his right foot and aimed for Yang Guo’s abdomen. The stance “Flying Past Heaven’s Mountains” had softness within its hardness; in the yang there was yin, it was a really lethal stance. Though this kick was very powerful, it wasn’t very profound; it was a stance that is taught when one first enters the Quanzhen sect. It was a very ordinary stance when it is used, and as long as someone knows a little kung fu, they would be able to neutralize it. On the first day of practicing martial arts, the disciples of Quanzhen would first learn the stance of “Flying Past Heaven’s Mountains” and then “Force of the Retreating Horse”; this was the stance to avoid the stance of “Flying Past Heaven’s Mountains”. One attack one defense, this was the most basic set of kung fu. By using this stance, he wanted Guo Jing and Huang Rong to understand one thing, “Even if I did not teach him advanced martial arts, could it be that I didn’t even teach him the basic kung fu of our sect’s very first lesson?”

When Yang Guo saw the kick come, he did not use the “Force of the Retreating Horse”; his left hand hung down protecting his abdomen. Zhao Zhijing saw that he was so bold

that he didn't even move or dodge, he didn't hold back on his kick and kicked straight across, when the tip of his foot was about three inches away from Yang Guo's abdomen, he saw in the moonlight Yang Guo's left thumb slightly sticking out, aiming for his right foot's ankle 'Large Opening' pressure point. If he kicked out with power, before the tip of the foot had reached the abdomen, his pressure point will be sealed first; the opponent wouldn't actually seal the pressure point themselves. As the foot strikes his finger, it will be struck on the pressure point, sealing it in the process.

He was the best fighter of Quanzhen's third generation; in the midst of danger he quickly changed his stance, he turned and changed the direction of the kick, his right leg passing Yang Guo's side. At least he was able to avoid the trap but his body was off balance, and his face turned red.

Guo Jing and Huang Rong were behind Yang Guo and didn't see his thumb, they thought it was because Zhao Zhijing was holding back, at the very last second he changed his stance. But Sun Bu'Er and Yin Zhiping could see this clearly. Yin Zhiping didn't say a word.

Sun Bu'Er stood up and shouted, "Little punk, very crafty!"

Zhao Zhijing's left palm hung in the air, his right palm aimed to chop across Yang Guo's left cheek; this stance of "Purple Lightning Striking through Words" was a refined stance of advanced martial arts. As the palm arrives halfway, the direction suddenly changes, originally aimed to the left cheek it now was aiming to chop down on his neck on the right side. How could he know that Yang Guo has learned the "Jade Heart Manual" to a very fluent state, the manual was the Black Star of Quanzhen's kung fu. Every lethal fist techniques and palm stances that Wang Chongyang invented were all defeated ingeniously by Lin Chaoying years ago. When Yang Guo saw his left palm hanging in the air, he quickly covered his head with his arms as if he was scared, his left index finger hid itself by his neck on the right side but because he covered it with his right palm, Zhao Zhijing had no way to see it. As soon as the palm arrives, Yang Guo's right hand slanted slightly, a 'bo' sound was heard as the finger sealed the 'Back Stream' pressure point on Zhao Zhijing's palm.

Once again, it was Zhao Zhijing himself who forced his own pressure point to be sealed by hitting it on his finger; Yang Guo knew what the opponent would do and prepared his finger in place. Once Zhao Zhijing's pressure point on his palm was sealed, his arm immediately went numb; he knew he had fallen into his trap. He was furious and his left leg came sweeping out.

Yang Guo called out, “Oh no!” He bent his left arm and placed his elbow two and a half inches above his waist. When Zhao Zhijing’s left leg came, the elbow struck his ankle’s ‘Reflecting Sea’ and ‘Great River’ pressure points. This kick came out of fury; it was kicked with great strength. The pressure points were severely struck, his left leg went numb and he knelt down on the floor.

Sun Bu’Er saw that her martial nephew was being embarrassed, she stretched out her left arm and pulled him up with her hand and then pushed his back a few times, unsealing his pressure points. Yang Guo quickly backed away. He saw that she unsealed Zhao Zhijing’s pressure points with ease. He knew that her martial arts were far superior Zhao Zhijing’s. Yang Guo was afraid of her and kept a distance between himself and Sun Bu’Er. Though she had been practicing Taoism for many years, she was still very stubborn and strong. She saw that his kung fu was extremely crafty, it looked like that it was their sect’s Black Star; if she fought herself she might not be able to win, so she called out, “Let’s go!” She then said goodbye to Guo Jing and Huang Rong. Her sleeve swept out and she leapt out of the study through the window, and then jumped up onto the roof.

Yin Zhiping had seemed to be out of it all this time; he wanted to tell Guo Jing and Huang Rong what happened when Zhao Zhijing angrily shouted, “What more is there to talk about?” He pulled on his sleeve and the two of them leapt out of the window and then followed Sun Bu’Er.

With Guo Jing’s and Huang Rong’s awareness, of course they knew that Zhao Zhijing’s pressure points had been sealed, but Yang Guo had not stretched out his finger, could it be that a eminent person was secretly helping him?

Guo Jing immediately went over to the window to take a look, where was the person? Guo Jing thought that as Zhao Zhijing was about to kill him, he couldn’t bear to and so pretended to have his pressure points sealed and left in the confusion. However, Huang Rong could see this was the doing of Yang Guo, firstly because she was behind him and couldn’t see his elbow and secondly, she was not aware of the existence of a martial art skill such as the “Jade Heart Manual”. This enabled the prediction of the enemy’s reaction and countered the skills of Quanzhen without reply; she wasn’t able to understand exactly what had happened. She wouldn’t act like Guo Jing and view others with the heart of a gentleman. When she saw the four Quanzhen Taoists sweeping their sleeves and leaving, it was very impolite, secretly, she was furious. She pondered and turned around to see Guo Fu’s dark green shoes sticking out from under the bookshelf, she immediately called out, “Fu’er, what are you doing here?”

Guo Fu laughed and came out with a silly look on her face and said, “Me and the Wu brothers are looking for a book to read.”

Huang Rong knows that the three of them have never been interested in books, why would they have suddenly taken an interest today? One look at her daughter's face and she knew that they must sneaked in earlier to hide so they can eavesdrop on what was happening. As she was about to tell them off, a Beggar Clan member came with news of a guest arriving, she took a look at Yang Guo and then she and Guo Jing went out to meet the guest.

Guo Jing said to the Wu brothers, “Brother Yang is a childhood friend of yours, take good care of him.”

The Wu brothers had never been friendly with Yang Guo; right now they looked at the state that he was in. They knew that he hadn't learned any martial arts at the Quanzhen sect and was called ‘bastard, animal’ by his Master. They looked down on him even more; they summoned a servant and told him to take care of Yang Guo.

However, Guo Fu was very curious about Yang Guo, she asked, “Brother Yang, why doesn't your Master want you?”

Yang Guo said, “There are many reasons. I'm dumb and lazy, I have a bad temper and I don't know how to treat the relatives of my Master well. ‘Buying horse whips and donkey whips and what nots’.”

When the Wu brothers heard this their faces changed, Wu Xiuwen was the first who couldn't control himself anymore and shouted, “What did you say?”

Yang Guo said, “I said I'm useless, I don't know how to please my Master.”

Guo Fu smiled captivatingly, and said, “Your Master is a Taoist, how would he have a daughter?” Yang Guo saw her smile, it was as if a flower suddenly blossomed, bright, beautiful and glamorous, unconsciously his heart jumped, his face went red and he turned his head away. Guo Fu had managed to control the Wu brothers and could mess them around long ago, now she saw Yang Guo turn his head away and knew that he was moved by her beauty, she was very proud of herself.

Yang Guo looked to the west and saw a couplet on the wall, the first line said: ‘The image of peach blossoms descending with the divine flying sword’, the second line was ‘The jade sea brings new waves according the jade flute’. Yang Guo has seen this cou-

plet in the practicing sword pavilion on Peach Blossom Island. He knew that it was Huang Yaoshi who wrote it but underneath this couplet was signed ‘The five useless people who were ill fated’. Compared to the three people in front of him, he was only a few years older but as he read and studied the writing it was as if he was ten years older. When he saw the words ‘the five useless people’, he remembered about himself, how all those close to him had either died or have gone away; he wandered the world alone, there was no difference between himself and a useless person. The pride he felt just now forcing Zhao Zhijing to scamper away disappeared; a sad, lamenting feeling filled his heart, he couldn’t stop himself from dropping his head and pitying himself.

Guo Fu softly said, “Brother Yang, go and rest, I’ll come and speak with you tomorrow.”

Yang Guo calmly replied, “Fine!” He followed the servant out of the study and heard Guo Fu flare up at the Wu brothers, “I want to speak with him; can you two stop me? His kung fu is not good, I’ll ask father to teach him.”



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