

Foxs' Wuxia

Wuxia Fan Translation

SDXL Chapter 18



Chapter 18 – Valley Master Gongsun

Translated by Noodles



Gongsun Zhi was using his greatest skill “Yin Yang Wild Blades”. The black sword was originally soft and yin but right now it was hacking and chopping solidly, changing into the yang and hard nature of saber play. Meanwhile, the heavy and clumsy jagged saber was now piercing and cutting, going down the road of lightness and swiftness. The saber had become a sword, the sword had become a saber, and it really was extraordinary.

Fan Yiweng was furious when he saw Yang Guo pick a willow branch as a weapon, treating this as if it was a game and showing no respect towards him at all. He didn't know that within the softness of the willow branch there was also toughness and that

he was going to use the “Dog Beating Stick Technique” with it. Though it couldn’t compare with the bamboo treasure of the Beggar Clan, it was a lethal weapon that matched any precious sword or saber.

Ma Guangzuo said, “Brother Yang, just use my saber!” He took the saber out of the sheath and the blade glimmered; it really was a sharp blade.

Yang Guo saluted with his arms and laughed, “Thank you! This brother isn’t a bad person; it’s just a pity that he follows the wrong Master. His martial arts are poor and just a willow branch will be enough to beat him.” The willow branch moved forward and attached itself to the steel staff.

Once again, Fan Yiweng heard him insult his Master; he was thinking that this time it will be a life and death battle; he was not going to hold anything back. He waved the staff around which generated noises within the air and started to use his eighty-one stances of the “Spilling Water Staff”. The reason behind the name ‘Spilling Water’ is that no splash or spill of water can advance; the staff stances were extremely tight and unyielding.

At first, the staff was swift and powerful, but after a few stances, he felt that the staff was gradually moving towards one side. The head of the staff felt skewed and the wind generated by the staff was becoming weaker.

Yang Guo was using the “Dog Beating Stick Technique’s” ‘coil’ theory; the branch was attached to the staff head and when the staff moved to the east, the branch moved to the east; when the staff was flipped upwards, the branch followed; but at the final stage, his internal energy forced the staff to pull or push a little more in another direction and staff head moved out of the control of Fan Yiweng. This particular ‘coil’ formulae of the “Dog Beating Stick Technique” is derived from the advanced martial art theory of ‘four liang moving a thousand jin’, subtle and ingenious, this theory far exceeded the methods of ‘using force against force’ or ‘using the current to move the boat.’

The onlookers were becoming more and more surprised; they could not believe that the very young Yang Guo would possess such ingenious martial arts. They saw that Fan Yiweng’s staff was gradually becoming weaker while Yang Guo’s willow branch was becoming stronger.

Thirty stances later, Fan Yiweng’s staff was completely under the control of the willow branch; the more strength Fan Yiweng used, the more uncontrollable the staff became.

In the end, he felt as if he had entered an extremely strong cyclone, making him dizzy and dazed, completely losing his bearings.

Valley Master Gongsun's hand came down on the stone table, and called out, "Yiweng, stand down!"

The noise created was thunderous, even Yang Guo's heart skipped a beat; he thought to himself, "I can't let him slip away." He then shook his arm and changed to the 'turn' formulae; his body froze and his wrist kept on drawing circles, turning Fan Yiweng around like a spinning top. The faster that Yang Guo turned his hands, the faster Fan Yiweng spun; the staff in his hand acted like the handle of a spinning top. Yang Guo said, "If you can stop your feet and don't fall, then you're a man. But if your master can't teach, then the disciples he teaches will trip up in battle." The willow branch lifted upwards and he leapt backwards over ten feet.

Fan Yiweng's body and mind were not under his control at this moment in time; he was stumbling, and after a few more turns, he would fall to the floor.

Valley Master Gongsun suddenly leapt up and palmed the head of the staff in midair and lightly came back down. That move he did appeared to be ordinary and light but there was a great force behind it; he had slammed the staff two feet into the floor and stopped it spinning. Fan Yiweng grabbed the staff tightly and didn't drop, but his body was stumbling and swaying as if he was drunk, his bearings lost for the time being.

Xiaoxiang Zi, Yin Kexi and the others looked at Yang Guo, and then looked at Valley Master Gongsun; they now knew that these two people were definitely not easy people to deal with. They planned to watch this great battle from the side without interfering. Ma Guangzuo was the only one who had intended to help Yang Guo; he called out, "Brother Yang, great kung fu! Shortie has lost!"

Fan Yiweng breathed in deeply and steadied himself; he turned around and suddenly knelt down before his Master. He then kowtowed four times and without saying a word, suddenly ran towards a stone pillar.

Everyone was shocked; no one had predicted that his character was so fiery that after suffering a defeat he would kill himself.

Valley Master Gongsun called out, "Oh no!" He leapt up from his table and stretched out his hand to grab his back; but they were too far apart and Fan Yiweng was very quick, the Valley Master could only grab thin air.

Fan Yiweng used all his strength in his effort to run into the pillar but suddenly he felt his forehead going into something soft. He raised his head and saw Yang Guo with his two palms out standing in front of the pillar.

He said, “Brother Weng, what is the most painful thing in the world?”

When Yang Guo saw Fan Yiweng kneeling down to his Master, he knew that he was up to something so he prepared himself. He was close to Fan Yiweng and managed to get ahead of him, keeping him from the pillar with his palms.

Fan Yiweng was stunned, he asked, “What is it?”

Yang Guo said mournfully, “I don’t know myself. But the pain in my heart is ten times greater than yours yet I haven’t killed myself; why are you doing this?”

Fan Yiweng said, “You’ve won; what pain have you got in your heart?”

Yang Guo shook his head and said, “What’s so important about winning and losing in battle? I don’t know how many times I’ve been beaten in my life. When you tried to kill yourself, your Master worried about you. If I tried to kill myself, my Master would think nothing of it; that is a deeply hurtful thing.”

Fan Yiweng still did not understand. Valley Master Gongsun called out sternly, “Yiweng, if you have any more stupid thoughts then you’ll be disobeying the orders of your Master. Stand to the side and watch me take care of this scum.”

Fan Yiweng did not dare to disobey his Master and retreated. He stared at Yang Guo; he himself did not know what he felt towards him...anger, loathing, or respect?

When Xiao Longnu heard Yang Guo say ‘If I tried to kill myself, my Master would think nothing of it’; her eyes turned red and more tears fell from them. She thought, “If you died, do you think I’d still be able to live?”

Valley Master Gongsun had kept his eye on her all along and now he suddenly saw her tears once again; he was jealous and angry. He clapped his hands three times and called out, “Catch that little rat.” He looked upon himself highly, thinking that it was beneath him to fight Yang Guo. The two groups of disciples from the side responded. They stood in all directions and suddenly called out; each group of four held a fish net and they surrounded Yang Guo.

Yang Guo and Fawang arrived here with the others with Fawang being the head of the group; now that it had come to this, he should come out and make a stand on this issue; but all he did was chuckle and watched from the side.

The Valley Master did not know what Fawang was thinking and assumed that he was laughing at him for not being able to handle Yang Guo, he thought, “I’m going to show what the Passionless Valley is made out of.” He again clapped three times.

The sixteen disciples crossed and changed positions, decreasing the size of the encirclement a few steps. The four nets kept on changing positions, from horizontal to vertical, from straight to bend.

Yang Guo had seen the disciples in green twice use this fish net formation to catch Zhou Botong; its variations were indeed profound and it was extremely hard to defend against. This formation and Quanzhen’s “Big Dipper Formation” each had its own strong points. He thought, “The Old Urchin with his martial arts was captured by this net formation; how am I going to cope? If he just wanted to escape and he threw Ma Guangzuo and Fan Yiweng into the nets and took the opportunity to slip away, it would not suit his purpose. My intent is to stay here.”

Each net was over ten feet wide and the handlers were hidden behind it; if he wanted to defeat this formation he would first have to attack the green disciples who were holding the nets. But as soon as he got too close, he would be captured by the nets. He had no way of making his move. The sixteen were pressing closer and closer. Yang Guo didn’t know what to do and could only use the Ancient Tomb’s lightness kung fu to dart and fly around in the hall; floating here and dashing there making it hard for the opponents to predict the direction he was heading.

He moved around in all directions but the sixteen disciples did not follow him; they just shank the encirclement step by step. Yang Guo dashed around as he searched for a way to defeat this formation. He saw that although the nets were turning around extremely swiftly, the places where they overlapped each other remained covered and didn’t show a gap at all. He thought, “There’s nothing I can do apart from using projectiles to hurt the handlers.” He swiveled around once and there were a handful of Jade Bee needles in his hand, he waved out his left hand and shot out seven or eight Jade Bee needles at the four disciples north of him. He saw that the four of them were about to get hit when he suddenly heard light ‘ding ding ding ding’ sounds; the Jade Bee needles were sucked in by the net. The fish net was actually embellished with small magnets; with such a large net, no matter how powerful the enemy’s projectile, it would still be

blocked by the net. The Jade Bee needle was seventy percent gold, thirty percent steel; because of this thirty percent, the Jade Bee needles were attracted by the net's magnets.

Yang Guo thought that this strike would succeed; how would he know that this net actually had so many clever uses? He quickly looked at the Valley Master and knew that it would be of no use to fire out any more projectiles. His right hand went into his pockets and put the needles away. He was just about to think of another way to break the formation when the net from the east side came closer. The leader of the four handlers whistled, a gold light flashed across his eyes as the net came over his right shoulder. Yang Guo darted back and was about to escape to the north west when the nets from the north and west side pressed forwards.

Yang Guo cursed, "It's over...it's over! I wonder what torture I'll endure after falling into the hands of this Valley Master." Suddenly he heard one of the handlers of the southern net call out, "Oh no!" Yang Guo turned his head and saw that Gongsun Lu'E had fallen onto the floor; one of the corners of the net was hanging down loosely.

This was the only route out of the formation; Yang Guo didn't give it another thought and darted out of the encirclement. He saw Gongsun Lu'E had fallen onto the floor calling out in pain but she was signaling with her eyes to leave the valley at once.

Yang Guo thought to himself, "I'm really touched by her kindness. But if I leave the valley, Gu Gu would definitely be forced into marrying that old Valley Master. I don't care if I get captured and suffer the pain of a thousand knives, I'll never leave." He stood in the corner of the room and looked at Xiao Longnu thinking, "I've just experienced great danger yet you still have no reaction?" He saw that Xiao Longnu was still hanging her head and keeping quiet.

The Valley Master clapped his hands twice and the nets suddenly dispersed. He turned to Gongsun Lu'E and said coldly, "What's wrong with you?"

Gongsun Lu'E said, "My leg suddenly had in a painful cramp."

Valley Master Gongsun suspected that his daughter had fallen in love with Yang Guo and as a result gave him an escape route at such a critical moment. But because there were outsiders here it wasn't appropriate for him to break out in a rage, he laughed coldly and said, "Fine, stand down. Shi Si'er will take her position."

Gongsun Lu'E lowered her head and stood down. A youngster in green responded and stepped forward. This person was only fourteen or fifteen years of age and had their

hair tied in two plaits.

Gongsun Lu'E glanced at Yang Guo with grieving in her eyes. Yang Guo felt apologetic and said to himself, "I'm afraid that I won't be able to repay her kindness and compassion in this life."

Valley Master Gongsun clapped his hands four times and suddenly the sixteen disciples retreated. Yang Guo was shocked, thinking, "Could it be that you admit defeat?" Just as he was wondering about this, he turned his head and saw Gongsun Lu'E had a fearful expression on her face; she kept on signaling to him with her eyes to leave the valley. From her appearance, it appeared that he was going to face something extremely dangerous. Yang Guo smiled; instead of running away, he pulled a chair over and sat down. There was a light ringing noise in the inner halls and the sixteen disciples came out again, their hands still holding fish nets.

Everyone's expression changed as soon as they saw the nets; the fish nets had been changed and now it were full of hooks and blades that glimmered. They were extremely sharp; whoever gets caught in the net would be pierced all over and would have no hope of surviving.

Ma Guangzuo called out, "Hey, Valley Master, do you want to lose face? How can you use such an evil thing to treat your guests?"

Valley Master Gongsun pointed to Yang Guo and said, "I don't want to hurt you. I've warned you many times to leave the valley but you chose to stay here and stir up trouble. This is your final warning, leave quickly."

Even someone with Ma Guangzuo's courage shivered at the sight of the nets; when he heard the hooks and knives colliding with each other, he was even more afraid. He stood up and pulled Yang Guo's hand, "Brother Yang, it would be better for us to leave than face this evil thing; why do you insist on quarrelling with him?"

Yang Guo looked at Xiao Longnu waiting to see her response.

As soon as Xiao Longnu saw the Valley Master summon out blade and hook laced nets, she had prepared for death. As soon as Yang Guo gets caught in the nets she would throw herself on them. They would die together in each others arms. When she thought about this, she felt peace in her heart, thinking that all the world's pain and suffering will be gone in a flash. Her lips couldn't stop themselves from showing a smile.

How would Yang Guo know what she was feeling at this time? He thought about how he was about to face a great danger yet she could still smile; his heart was in pain, even more deeply than before. In the midst of these feelings of hurt, sorrow, indignation, and approaching danger, he suddenly had an idea and didn't continue on with these thoughts. He went over to Xiao Longnu and bowed lightly. He said, "Gu Gu, Guo'er is in danger today; I would like to borrow your silk belt and silk gloves."

Xiao Longnu was only thinking about the joy of dying with him and nothing else; when she heard these words she immediately took out a pair of silk gloves and a silk belt to give to him.

Yang Guo received them slowly and stared at her, he said, "You're acknowledging who I am now?"

Xiao Longnu was filled with love and smiled, "My heart acknowledged you long ago!"

Yang Guo's spirits were greatly lifted and he quivered, "You've decided to leave with me and not marry that Valley Master?"

Xiao Longnu smiled and nodded, "I've decided to go with you, and of course I won't marry anyone else. Guo'er; naturally that makes me your wife'."

When she said 'go with you', she was talking about dieing with Yang Guo. Yang Guo didn't understand so of course the others would not either; but her words of 'naturally that makes me your wife' couldn't be clearer. Valley Master Gongsun's face went white and he hurried the disciples in green to make their move. The sixteen disciples set the nets in motion and moved around.

After hearing these words of Xiao Longnu's, Yang Guo felt as if he was bought back to life from death; his courage and valor soared; even if he were facing greater dangers he wouldn't care. He put on the impregnable silk gloves and held the silk belt in his right hand. The silk belt was sent out with its ringing noises like a white snake.

At the end of the silk belt was a gold bell, the belt extended and retracted once, the bell had struck the 'Concealed Valley' pressure point of one of the disciples in the southern position and on its way back it struck the 'Crooked Pond' pressure point of one of the disciples in the eastern position. The 'Concealed Valley' pressure point is found on the knee, the person could not stay upright and knelt on the floor; the 'Crooked Pond' pressure point is found on the elbow area, as soon it was struck, the person's arm became numb and limp, the fish net slipped out of their hands.

After those two pre-emptive attacks, the fish net formation immediately broke up. The four disciples in the west were shocked and when they attacked they were slightly slow; Yang Guo's gold bell turned towards them and after another two strikes, another two disciples had their pressure points struck. But at this time, the net from the north was thrown over his head. The knives and hooks were half a foot away from his head; he couldn't use the silk belt to deal with them.

Yang Guo's left hand turned upwards and grabbed the fish net; he used its force and flung it away. Although he grabbed hooks and daggers, his hands were covered by the silk gloves and were completely protected. The net was now heading back towards the four disciples in green.

When these disciples practiced this net formation, the only thing they were afraid of was the enemy slipping through the net; they concentrated on keeping it tight and unyielding. The thought of the net returning over them had never entered their minds. They watched as the glittering knives and hooks came towards their heads; they knew exactly how powerful the net was and called out in alarm as they let go and leapt away. The youngster who replaced Gongsun Lu'E was weaker than the rest; a dagger eventually pierced his thigh, blood poured and he fell down, crying out in pain on the floor.

Yang Guo laughed, "Little brother, don't be scared, I'm not going to hurt you." His left hand flipped the net away and his right moved the silk belt. Sounds of 'qiang lang lang' and 'ding ling ling' were heard as the hooks and daggers collided with each other with the golden bell ringing. The sounds were extremely crisp. After this, none of the disciples dared to come forward and stood far away by the wall. But because they hadn't received the order to back down by their master, they didn't dare admit defeat and run away. Though they didn't admit defeat, they had already lost.

Ma Guangzuo clapped and cheered for a while but because he was the only one, he felt a bit lonely and glanced over to Fawang saying, "Hey monk, aren't brother Yang Guo's martial arts great? Why aren't you cheering?"

Fawang laughed and said, "His skills are great, extremely good but there's no need to call out like that."

Ma Guangzuo asked, "Why?"

Fawang saw that the Valley Master was frowning and was now making his way towards the centre of the hall slowly. Fawang concentrated on him and ignored Ma Guangzuo.

When Valley Master Gongsun heard Xiao Longnu say, ‘naturally that makes me your wife’, he knew that his sweet dream of the past two weeks had come to an end; though he was disappointed and angry, he thought, “Even if I can’t have your heart I’m going to have you. I’ll kill that bastard in one palm and I don’t care what your feelings towards me will be, after a time, your heart will eventually return to me.”

Yang Guo saw that his eyebrows were rising higher and higher to a point where his brows and eyes looked like they were standing straight up; he didn’t know what school of martial arts this was from and became slightly afraid. His right hand lifted the silk belt and his left clutched the net, he was completely prepared. He knew that this battle would decide the life and death of he and Xiao Longnu; he didn’t dare to allow one strand of carelessness in his actions.

Valley Master Gongsun circled around Yang Guo slowly. Yang Guo too turned around slowly on the floor; he didn’t dare to gaze away from him. He saw that he was still delaying making his move and knew that when he attacked, it will be extremely swift and vicious. All he saw was him raising his hands, leveling them three times in front of him and then his hands came together. The sound generated was as if gold and iron had collided. Yang Guo’s heart skipped a beat and he moved back a step. Valley Master Gongsun suddenly stretched out his right arm and grabbed the fish net, pulling it away to one side. Yang Guo felt that his pull had great force behind it; his fingers ached and he could only let go. Valley Master Gongsun threw the net to the four disciples and shouted, “Stand down!”

After having the net snatched away, Yang Guo didn’t allow him to make the first move again. The silk belt shot out and the gold bell shook, attacking the opponent’s ‘Large Bone’ and ‘Celestial Tripod’ pressure points on the shoulder and neck.

Valley Master Gongsun’s chest was open with his arms stretched out to the side but Yang Guo didn’t dare to attack the major pressure points on his chest rashly. He first attacked the smaller pressure points on his body to test him out.

Valley Master Gongsun’s martial arts were actually from a different school of martial arts; he ignored the pressure point attacks of the bell and stretched out his right arm to grab Yang Guo’s arm. A ‘ding ding’ sound was heard as the ‘Large Bone’ and ‘Celestial Tripod’ pressure points were struck but he didn’t feel it. A ‘hu’ sound was heard as the grab turned into a palm, striking towards Yang Guo’s chest on the left side.

Yang Guo was alarmed and quickly leaned his body to the side. Luckily for him, his lightness kung fu was excellent and he avoided this sudden palm from his opponent.

Yang Guo had once heard the great fighters of Wulin, Ouyang Feng, Hong Qigong and Huang Yaoshi talk about martial arts, and knew that when someone has reached advanced levels of internal energy that, at the time the opponent strikes their pressure points, they were able to seal off themselves and negate the attack. But they will still show some effects of their pressure points being attacked. Ouyang Feng's martial arts could lead to reversal of the veins and the major pressure points over one's body to change position. When someone sees his legs above his head, they would be able to tell immediately.

But the enemy he is facing now actually made no response to his pressure points being struck; it was as if he didn't have any pressure points on his body. This type of martial arts is rarely seen or heard of; he couldn't stop some fear from creeping into his heart. He saw his palms had turned over and there seemed to be black air within the palms. While it was coming towards him the wind was forceful and pressing, he didn't dare to receive it head on. He used the silk belt to tangle with him while his left hand protected the vital areas of his body.

Soon, they had exchanged over ten stances. Yang Guo had put all his concentration into fighting him. Suddenly he saw the left palm of his opponent coming lightly towards his chest; it appeared to be a soft palm but it was the opposite; it was actually a palm from the same set of palm skills as Wanyan Ping's "Iron Palm". He quickly leaped away a couple of feet.

When the Valley Master's palm met thin air, he didn't take it back and the palm kept on going forward another two feet; he moved quickly and the palm was now in front of Yang Guo. Normally, when a person fires out a punch or sends out a palm, the strength originates from the arm. They would pull back their arm and send out the attack; but the attack Valley Master had just used now originated from his body. His hand and palm didn't move; he was actually using the force from his body to attack the opponent. Although the force from the body is greater than that from the arm, using it to send out a palm or punch will result in slower attacks; but Valley Master Gongsun's palm was both fierce and swift.

Yang Guo wanted to lean his body to the side to avoid the palm but there was no time, he could only send out his left palm and meet it head on. A 'pai' sound was generated as the palms collided; Yang Guo was jolted back three steps while the Valley Master stood his ground with his body swaying a little.

Standing there without moving, the Valley Master appeared to have the upper hand; but in actual fact the power from Yang Guo's palm had caused a throbbing pain in the

side of his body; he was extremely shocked. “I’d used all my power behind that “Iron Palm”, but that punk was still actually able to receive it. If we carry on like this I may not be able to kill him. If we fight to a draw, I won’t be able to say anything.” He clapped his hands twice; the sounds were ear piercingly loud. He said, “The one named Yang, I have been merciful in that palm, do you know that?”

If this were a normal martial arts duel, and if Yang Guo continued fighting, he would definitely lose. When the Valley Master said these words he should have admitted that his martial arts were weaker; but today he knew that the opponent would never allow him and Xiao Longnu to leave in peace. He had no other option but to engage in a fight to the death. Yang Guo still had his ridiculing and derisory nature towards his opponents and Xiao Longnu had returned to him now; his heart was overflowing with joy. He laughed and said, “If you kill me, how can my Gu Gu marry you? If you don’t kill me, my Gu Gu still would not marry you. What mercy is there? It’s just that you couldn’t do anything to me!”

Yang Guo was too kind in his surmising of his opponent’s thoughts. The Valley Master would love nothing more than to kill him in one stroke to avoid him causing any problems in the future. Even if it caused Xiao Longnu to hate and loathe him, he couldn’t have cared less; he couldn’t do anything to Yang Guo because his palms couldn’t do anything to him. He turned towards his daughter and said, “Take out my weapons.”

Gongsun Lu’E delayed and didn’t reply.

Valley Master Gongsun shouted, “Didn’t you hear?”

Gongsun Lu’E went pale and could only reply, “Yes!” She then left for the inner halls.

Yang Guo looked at the expression of the two and thought, “I couldn’t cope when he was empty handed; now that he’s going to use some weird weapon, what chance have I got? If we don’t leave now, when should we leave?” He went over to Xiao Longnu and stretched out his hand, softly saying, “Gu Gu, let’s leave!”

Valley Master Gongsun gathered energy in his hands; as soon as Xiao Longnu stands and takes Yang Guo’s hand, he’ll immediately throw himself forward and attack Yang Guo’s spine viciously with the “Iron Palm”. He made his decision and thought, “I don’t care if sister Liu hates me; I’m going to kill that punk. If sister Liu leaves with him, what joy will I have left for the next half of my life?”

But Xiao Longnu did not stand up, just saying calmly, “Of course I’ll go with you. But the Valley Master did save my life; we need to explain everything to him and ask for his forgiveness.”

Yang Guo was flustered and thought, “Gu Gu doesn’t know anything. Do you think he’s going to forgive us just like that because you’ve explained everything to him?”

Then he heard Xiao Longnu ask him, “Guo’er, have you been well over the last couple of days?” She said these words with great compassion and love.

When Yang Guo heard these gentle, loving words and saw her affectionate expression, he felt that if even the sky was falling down on him he wouldn’t care. How could he still be thinking about trying to escape? He said, “Gu Gu, you’re not angry with me?”

Xiao Longnu smiled and said, “Why should I be angry with you? I’ve never been angry with you. Turn around.” Yang Guo listened to her and turned around but didn’t know what she wanted to do.

Xiao Longnu took out a little bag with string and needles in them. She threaded the needle and measured the hole that Fan Yiweng had torn on the back of his garment. She sighed and said, “Over these past few days I’ve wanted to make a new gown for you; but when I thought about how I’ll never see you again, I thought ‘what’s the point?’ I could never have dreamed that you would find your way here.” The pain and grief in her words turned to joy and delight as she said this. She picked up a pair of small scissors and cut a piece of fabric from the corner of her gown. She slowly helped him repair his garment.

When the two lived in the tomb, whenever Yang Guo’s clothes were torn or ripped, Xiao Longnu would call him over and help him repair them just like this. Over the years, this happened countless times. The two of them did not care about life and death anymore; though they were under the stares of many people in the hall, the two of them acted as if no one was there and did as they used to when they lived with each other in the ancient tomb.

Yang Guo was filled with boundless joy and hot tears rolled down from his eyes, he choked, “Gu Gu, just now I made you throw up blood, I... it was my fault.”

Xiao Longnu smiled, “It’s not your fault. You know I had this kind of illness long ago. I haven’t seen you for a few days and your martial arts have advanced so much. You threw up blood as well just now, are you alright?”

Yang Guo laughed, "It's nothing. I've got more than enough blood to spare."

Xiao Longnu smiled, "You love to talk nonsense."

Though the words of the two were ordinary and plain, everyone could hear the love that the two had for each other and that the two had an extremely deep relationship.

Fawang and the others looked at each other. Valley Master Gongsun was shocked and jealous; he stood there stunned not knowing what to do.

Yang Guo said, "I've met some interesting people over the last few days. Gu Gu, guess where I got my pair of large scissors from?"

Xiao Longnu said, "I was wondering about that; it's like you knew that there was a long bearded old man here long ago, so you prepared a large pair of scissors to cut off his beard. You really are naughty; he's taken years to grow that beard and you cut it off just like that, isn't it a pity?" She gave a laugh as her bright eyes sparkled; her appearance was enchanting.

Valley Master could not endure this any longer; he stretched out his hand towards Yang Guo's chest and shouted, "Bastard, you're too disrespectful."

Yang Guo didn't block it and said, "There's no need to rush, I'll continue the fight once Gu Gu finishes repairing my garment."

Valley Master Gongsun's fingers were just a few inches away from his chest; he had the status of being a Master and even though he was furious, it would be inappropriate for him to attack him like this. Suddenly he heard Gongsun Lu'E call out from behind, "Father, the weapons are here." He didn't turn around as he moved backwards a few feet and took the weapons.

His left hand held a thick and wide jagged saber; the blade glittered with gold light and it appeared to be produced from gold; his right hand was holding a fine and long black sword and it shook a little in his hands displaying the softness of the blade. The edges of the blade emitted a blue light and it was extremely sharp. The two weapons were the opposite of each other; one was heavy and hard, the other light and soft.

Yang Guo just took one look at the strange weapons before continuing "Gu Gu, a few days ago I met a woman; she told me who my father's murderer was."

Xiao Longnu's heart trembled and asked, "Who is it?"

Yang Guo bit down on his teeth and said with hatred, "You could never have guessed who they were, and all along I've been thinking that they've been treating me extremely well."

Xiao Longnu said, "They? They've been treating you extremely well?"

Yang Guo said, "Yes, They are..." A clear buzzing sound that resonated without stop was heard; it was Valley Master Gongsun's black sword colliding with his golden saber. His wrist turned and three consecutive swings that sliced through the air were unleashed; one aimed towards Yang Guo's head, one aimed at the left side of Yang Guo's neck and other at the right side of Yang Guo's neck. They all passed within half an inch of his flesh. The Valley Master was looking after his status; since the enemy did not make a move to block these attacks he couldn't land them; but the accuracy of these attacks was unnerving.

Xiao Longnu said, "I've finished!" She patted him on the back.

Yang Guo turned around and smiled. He then made his way towards the centre of the hall with the silk belt.

Valley Master Gongsun's "Yin Yang Twin Blades", "Fish Net Formation" and "Closure of Pressure Points" were all passed down from his ancestors. But because they have lived in the valley in seclusion for all these years and haven't made any contact with outsiders for hundreds of years, these three extraordinary martial arts were unknown to the outside world. Another reason for its seclusion was that there were great weaknesses within all three sets of these martial arts. If a skilled martial artist discovers the weakness, the user would not be able to avoid death. His ancestors had passed down a strict rule; members of the valley were forbidden to go out and get involved in Jianghu affairs for this reason. Over twenty years ago, Valley Master Gongsun also learned martial arts of the Iron Palm School. Although the person who taught him wasn't some extraordinary martial artist, their knowledge was vast. Their thoughts were careful and attentive; this person helped him cover up numerous holes in his family's martial arts. In particular, a lot of changes were made to the stances of the "Yin Yang Twin Blades". This person said to him, "This set of saber and sword technique is now greatly improved; even if your opponent is extremely clever, they will not be able to see through the trappings of this technique within fifty stances. But once your saber and sword is unleashed, how can your opponent withstand fifty stances of it?"

When he saw Yang Guo motioning the silk belt to battle him, he called out, “Watch out for the sword!” The black sword quivered and it pierced towards Yang Guo’s chest; but the sword did not go straight towards his chest; instead it circled around in front of him. Yang Guo did not know where the sword was aiming and in shock, he leapt backwards.

Valley Master Gongsun’s attacks were extremely fast; when Yang Guo leapt back, the circles of the sword were thrust towards him. The circles were becoming bigger and bigger; at first it only circled around the chest area, but afterwards it covered the lower abdomen, and after a few more stances the encirclement gradually reached his neck. All the vital points between the neck and the lower abdomen of Yang Guo were covered by the sword tip. Fawang, Yin Kexi, Xiaoxiang Zi and the others has never seen such a swordplay where circling of the sword is used to press the opponent; they were shocked.

As soon as Valley Master Gongsun unleashed a stance, Yang Guo would immediately dart away; he drew ten circles with his sword and each time, Yang Guo backed away and had no way to attack. Yang Guo saw that the enemy’s sword stances were becoming swifter and more intense while the jagged saber in his left hand had still to be unleashed; when he actually uses it he would probably have no chance at all. There wasn’t time for any more thoughts and he leapt to the left while motioning the silk belt; a ringing ‘ding ling ling’ and the gold bell went flying towards the opponent’s left eye. Valley Master Gongsun slanted his head to dodge the attack and stopped his attack. Yang Guo was delighted, he quickly motioned the silk belt and wrapped it around his right leg; he was about to pull backwards when Valley Master Gongsun’s sword drew downwards and slashed the belt in two; the black sword was actually an extremely sharp weapon.

Everyone gave an ‘ah’ sound just in time to hear the gust of a fierce wind; Valley Master Gongsun had chopped down with his jagged saber towards Yang Guo. Yang Guo rolled on the floor. A ‘dang’ sound was heard which echoed throughout the room; Yang Guo had actually picked up Fan Yiweng’s steel staff to block the attack and the saber collided with it; both of their arms trembled and were slightly numb. Valley Master Gongsun was shocked, “This punk really is good; he is actually able to receive ten of my stances.” The saber chopped across and the sword pierced diagonally. A saber should take ferociousness and hardness as its aim, a sword swiftness and lightness; the two weapons were complete opposites. To use both a saber and sword at the same time is impossible; but Valley Master Gongsun’s attacks were becoming more and more pressing and the sword and saber techniques were both clearly distinguished. There was

softness and hardness, yin and yang; this really was a rarely seen great skill of the Wulin world.

Yang Guo gave out a call and waved the steel staff; he used the “Dog Beating Stick Technique’s” ‘seal’ formula, guarding his body tightly. Valley Master Gongsun wasn’t actually able to attack him with his twin blades as he did this. But the “Dog Beating Stick Technique” has subtlety and variation as its main aim; a light and fine bamboo stick can be used as pleased, but the heavy and long staff in his hand cannot. After a few more stances, he felt that variation of the stances gradually became ineffective.

Valley Master Gongsun suddenly found a weakness; the gold saber lifted up and the black sword drew down; a ‘ka’ sound was heard as the black sword cut the steel staff in half.

Yang Guo called out, “What luck! Just when I was thinking that this staff is too heavy!” A great increase in the effectiveness of the stances could be seen when Yang Guo continued using this slashed half staff.

Valley Master Gongsun gave a ‘huh’ grunt and said, “We’ll see whether it’s lucky or not.” The saber in his left hand chopped forward.

The saber slashed down towards Yang Guo’s head. This stance was rather slow and sluggish, all Yang Guo had to do was to slant his body to the side a little and he would be able to avoid it easily; however, the circles from the black sword were covering all his paths leaving him with no way to escape. Yang Guo could only raise his broken staff and use a stance of “Lifting the Sky with One Hand” to meet this stance head on. A loud ‘dang’ sound was heard as the two weapons collided; sparks flew everywhere as Yang Guo felt his arms go numb. Valley Master Gongsun continued the attack; he used the same stance as before. Yang Guo was knowledgeable in martial arts and he was extremely quick witted in battle yet he wasn’t actually able to neutralize such a clumsy stance; there was no other choice for him but to meet this stance in the same way again. Yang Guo’s arms ached even more after this second collision; he knew that if this continued, the tendons in his arm would suffer great damage. Before he finished his thoughts, the Valley Master had sent down a third chop. After a few more chops, the saber had hacked a groove on the staff and the joints in Yang Guo’s right hand started to bleed.

Valley Master Gongsun saw that even in the face of danger Yang Guo still carried his smile; the saber in his left hand chopped down and he thrust the black sword suddenly towards his lower abdomen. Yang Guo had been forced back into the corner of the hall;

when he saw the sword tip coming he stretched out his hand to block it. When the sword arrived at his palm, the blade bent in an arc and flicked away. Xiao Longnu's silk gloves were very tough, even though the black sword was extremely sharp, it still couldn't harm him.

Yang Guo knew that with the gloves he would not have to fear the black sword; he turned his palm around and suddenly stretched out his hand to grab the sword, wanting to do the same thing as Xiao Longnu did when she snapped Hao Datong's sword. But he didn't know that Valley Master Gongsun would flick his wrist lightly and curve his sword around his hand, piercing him in the forearm; blood flowed out of the wound.

Yang Guo was shocked and quickly leapt back. Valley Master Gongsun did not continue the attack and instead chuckled a few times before slowly advancing again. If Valley Master Gongsun had either the jagged saber or black sword only, Yang Guo would definitely have a way to defend against him; but as the soft and hard blades were use simultaneously against him, he was forced on the back foot, struggling against the attacks.

Fawang, Yin Kexi, Xiaoxiang Zi and Nimoxing were all thinking, "The Valley Master's "Yin Yang Twin Blades" is extremely swift, powerful and vicious; but at the same time, that kid is pretty clever, thinking of so many ways to avoid all these vicious stances."

Valley Master Gongsun chopped with his saber and thrust with his sword; Yang Guo was struck in the shoulder and blood trickled over his gown. Valley Master Gongsun said in a deep voice, "Are you in awe of me yet?"

Yang Guo smiled and said, "You came into battle with me having a huge advantage, and here you opening your mouth asking whether I'm in awe of you or not. Ha-ha, Valley Master Gongsun, how come you don't save face?"

The Valley Master took in his sword and saber and then asked, "Please tell me what advantage I have?"

Yang Guo said, "You're using customized weapons; one is a strange saber the other is an extraordinary sword; even if I searched all over the world I'm afraid that I wouldn't be able to find such weapons, isn't that true?"

The Valley Master replied, "So what? Your gloves and silk belt aren't ordinary either."

Yang Guo threw the broken staff onto the floor and laughed, “This belongs to your bearded disciple.” He took off the gloves and picked up the two pieces of silk belt. Yang Guo threw them over to Xiao Longnu and said, “These belong to my Gu Gu.” He cleaned off the dust on his body not taking any notice of the bleeding wounds that he had; he laughed, “I came to your valley empty handed; what ill intent did I have? If you want to kill me then kill; why must you talk so much?”

Valley Master Gongsun saw that he had a leisurely air about him; his face and eyes were elegant and handsome and even with all those wounds on him, he talked and laughed at ease as if nothing had happened. He couldn't help but feel inferior to him and thought, “I cannot compare with this person; if I let him live, sister Liu's heart will remain his.” So he said, “Fine!” He thrust the sword forwards towards his chest.

Yang Guo had already decided, “Since I can't beat him then I'll let him kill me.” When he saw the sword coming towards him, he ignored it and instead looked over at Xiao Longnu, thinking, “I will die happy with Gu Gu in my eyes.” He saw Xiao Longnu's face carrying a sweet smile and getting closer step by step; their eyes were locked on each other, both of them ignoring the black sword of Valley Master Gongsun.

Valley Master Gongsun had not met Yang Guo before, what feud has he got with him? The only reason he's trying to kill him is because of Xiao Longnu, so when he sent out this sword, he couldn't help but glance over at Xiao Longnu. When he saw her, his heart immediately filled with jealousy; he saw her staring at Yang Guo lovingly, and when he looked over at Yang Guo, he was doing the exact same thing toward her. The black sword had reached Yang Guo and all that was needed was a bit of force from his arms and it would pierce into Yang Guo's chest; but there was no fear or concern on Xiao Longnu's face. Yang Guo also made no attempt to block this attack; the two of them stared madly at each other, their thoughts were one, they had long forgotten about life and death.

Valley Master Gongsun broke out in a great rage, thinking to himself, “If I kill him now, sister Liu will immediately kill herself because of her love for him. I need to think of a way to force her to marry me; once I've bedded her there'll be plenty of time to kill that punk.” He called out, “Sister Liu, do you want me to kill him or spare him?”

When Xiao Longnu was staring at Yang Guo, she had not thought about Valley Master Gongsun; only after hearing this sudden call did she wake up and said alarmed, “Move the sword away; why are you pointing your sword at his chest?”

Valley Master Gongsun chuckled, “It’s not difficult to stop the sword. If you want to him to live, just tell him to leave the valley immediately and let us get married.”

Before Yang Guo came, she had decided to never see him again; she didn’t care if she would live the rest of her life in grief and pain. All she hoped for was that he would be safe and happy; but now that they’ve reunited, how could she still agree to marry the Valley Master? For the past few days, she knew that she couldn’t carry out the decision that she had made and would rather die than marry someone else; so she turned her head to the Valley Master and said, “Mr. Gongsun, thank you for saving my life. But I cannot marry you.”

The Valley Master knew the reasons but still asked, “Why?”

Xiao Longnu stood with Yang Guo and held his arm, smiling; “I have decided to marry him and spend the rest of my life with him, could you not tell?”

The Valley Master shook his head a few times and then said, “If you hadn’t promised me that day, why would I do this and try to force you? You promised with your own lips that it was what you wanted.”

Xiao Longnu said, “That is correct, but I cannot give him up. We need to go now, please forgive us.” She pulled Yang Guo’s hand and headed for the door.

Valley Master Gongsun quickly moved to block the exit and hissed, “The only way you’ll leave the valley is over my dead body.”

Xiao Longnu said, “I’m indebted to you for saving my life; how can I try to harm you? Anyway, your martial arts are too strong for me.” As she talked, she tore off a piece of fabric from her gown and helped Yang Guo tie up his wounds.

Jinlun Fawang suddenly said loudly, “Valley Master Gongsun, you better let them leave.”

The Valley Master gave a ‘huh’ grunt, his face was serious and he didn’t reply.

Fawang continued, “If those two joined up with their swords, how would your gold saber and black sword be able to handle them? Just do them a favour and let them go.”

He’d suffered the greatest humiliation in his life after losing to Yang Guo and Xiao Longnu’s “Pure Heart of Jade Maiden Sword”; ever since then, he’d been thinking of a

way to defeat this swordplay but was unable to. Now he had seen how powerful the yin yang blades of the Valley Master were; it wasn't below the martial arts of his golden wheel. So he came out with these words to anger him, hoping to make the three go into battle. Firstly, he could get a chance to take a look at Yang Guo's and Xiao Longnu's swordplay again and look for its weakness so he can avenge this defeat. Secondly, he hoped that the three would destroy each other.

In actual fact, if Fawang hadn't come out with these words to anger the Valley Master, he would never agree to let Xiao Longnu leave the valley with Yang Guo. He stared angrily at Fawang and thought, "You dare to say such words in front of my face? I haven't got time for you now, but I'll remember this for the future." He turned his head towards Xiao Longnu and clenched his teeth as he thought, "Your heart doesn't belong to me but your body will. You won't agree to marry me when you're alive, then I'm still going to marry you even when you're dead." At first he had planned to use Yang Guo's life to force Xiao Longnu to submit to him; but when he saw that the two weren't afraid of death, he thought that even if they die together, he wouldn't let them out of the valley. His eyebrows rose again and an air of death gradually showed up on his face.

He suddenly heard Ma Guangzuo call out, "Hey, old man Gongsun, she said that she doesn't want to marry you; why are you still blocking her way? Don't you want to save face?"

Xiaoxiang Zi said eerily, "Don't talk rubbish brother Ma. Valley Master Gongsun has already set up a feast today and has invited us to join in the celebrations."

Ma Guangzuo said loudly, "All he's got is water and vegetables; what's so great about that? If I were that girl I would never marry him. With her beauty, she can be the empress. Why should she stay with this cruel and evil old man for the rest of her life, eating nothing but green vegetables and tofu? Even if one didn't get annoyed to death, they'd be bored to death."

Xiao Longnu turned her head and said gently, "Master Ma, Mr. Gongsun saved my life and I'm indebted to him, I... I... I'll always be grateful for his kindness."

Ma Guangzuo called out, "Fine, old man Gongsun, if you want to show that you're a kind and benevolent person then why don't you let the two of them marry and consummate the marriage today. If you saved a girl because you wanted to bed her, then doesn't that put you in the same class as those raping lowlife bandits?" He was a straightforward man and says what comes into his mind; his words were all hard on the ears but they were hard to refute.

Valley Master Gongsun's intent to kill was stirred; he decided that he'll take care of all the outsiders in one go. He didn't make a move and said dryly, "My Passionless Valley may not be some extraordinary place; but if everyone here comes and goes as they please, then the one named Gongsun may appear to be a bit too humble in the eyes of others. Miss Liu..."

Xiao Longnu showed a smile and said, "I lied to you when I said my surname is Liu; my surname is Long. I named myself Liu because he's named Yang."

Valley Master Gongsun felt even more jealous; he could only pretend that he didn't hear those words and said, "Miss Liu, this..."

Before he finished Ma Guangzuo interrupted, "This girl is named Long, why are you calling her Miss Liu?"

Xiao Longnu said, "Mr. Gongsun is used to calling me that; the blame is on me for lying to him in the first place, he can call me whatever he likes."

Valley Master Gongsun ignored these words and continued, "Miss Liu, all the one named Yang has to do is beat my "Yin Yang Twin Blades" and I'll allow him to leave the valley safely. Our personal affairs will be severed of their own accord; it'll have nothing to do with other people." After all this, he still wanted to rely on his martial arts to force Xiao Longnu to stay.

Xiao Longnu sighed and said, "Mr. Gongsun, I did not want to fight you, but he can't beat you on his own, I must help him."

Valley Master Gongsun's eyebrows became a straight line; he said, "Aren't you afraid of what happened before; you throwing up blood? It'll happen again."

Xiao Longnu felt great remorse towards Valley Master Gongsun and said, "We haven't any weapons; if we fight you empty handed, then we'll definitely lose. You're a great and generous man; just let us go."

Jinlun Fawang interrupted, "Valley Master Gongsun, you've got everything here in this valley, don't tell me you haven't even got two swords? But I'd better warn you first; once those two join up together, your life will be endangered."

Valley Master Gongsun pointed to the western path and said, "The third room over there is the sword room; just pick whatever weapon you want. But I'm afraid even

these guests may not have the kind of weapons that I've hidden away." He then laughed coldly.

Yang Guo and Xiao Longnu looked at each other and both thought, "I will die willingly if we're able to spend time alone with each other away from other people before then." They held each other's hand and headed west, leaving through the side door. They passed two rooms and arrived at the third.

Xiao Longnu's eyes never left Yang Guo's face; when she saw the doors were closed she didn't give it any thought and pushed it open; she was just about to step into the room when Yang Guo suddenly thought of something and urgently pulled her back, he said, "Careful."

Xiao Longnu said, "Of what?"

Yang Guo's kept his left foot outside the room and placed his right foot into the room, quickly touching the floor before taking it back outside. Nothing happened.

Xiao Longnu said, "You're afraid that the Valley Master would leave a trap for us? He's a very kind person; he would never do such a thing..." As soon as she finished saying this, a sudden 'chi chi' sound was heard; there was a flash of light in front of them as eight sharp swords shot out all around the door frame, crossing over horizontally and vertically. If someone had stepped into the room at that time, even if your martial arts were supremely high, getting your body pierced several times over by the swords would be difficult to avoid.

Xiao Longnu let out a deep breath and said, "Guo'er, this Valley Master is so evil; I've really judged him wrongly. We don't need to fight him; let's just leave."

Suddenly someone said from behind, "Our master invites you inside to pick a sword."

The two turned around and saw eight disciples with a fish net blocking their way. The Valley Master was wary of the two escaping together so he sent these disciples to cut off their escape routes. Xiao Longnu's silk belt had been cut in half by the black sword; she was now unable to use it to strike their pressure points from faraway as Yang Guo did before.

Xiao Longnu said to Yang Guo, "What other traps has this room got?"

Yang Guo held her hands and said, “Gu Gu, we’re reunited now, what other worries have you got? Even if we get pierced by ten thousand swords it wouldn’t matter; we’ll see each other again in death.” Xiao Longnu’s heart too was overflowing with love. The two entered the sword room together.

The wall, tables, shelves and cupboards were all lined up with sharp weapons of various shapes; there were antique swords, some that had seven foot long blades and others that were quite short. There were iron and steel ones; a few had an overpowering glow. The two’s eyes were blinded for a second.

Xiao Longnu stared at Yang Guo for a while and then suddenly threw herself into his arms. Yang Guo held her tightly and kissed her on the lips. Both Xiao Longnu’s heart and soul were completely enchanted by that kiss. She stretched out her arms to embrace him around his neck.

Suddenly the door opened and a disciple in green entered who said sternly, “Our master ordered that as soon as you’ve picked your weapon, immediately leave, you cannot waste time.”

Yang Guo’s face went red and he removed her arms. But Xiao Longnu thought that there was nothing wrong with hugging and kissing her loved one. However, there was someone disturbing them which made it difficult for her to feel comfortable; so she gave a sigh and said softly, “Guo’er, once we’ve beaten that Valley Master, kiss me like that again.”

Yang Guo smiled and nodded; he stretched out his left arm and put it around her waist and said, “There isn’t enough time in this life for our kisses. Just pick a weapon.”

Xiao Longnu said, “It appears that these weapons are indeed all special, there isn’t one poor weapon. We haven’t got nearly as many in our ancient tomb.” She glanced over the weapons on the wall, wanting to pick out a pair of swords that were the same in all ways and most effective for her and Yang Guo to use against Valley Master Gongsun. But after searching for a while, she saw that all the swords were different. She was searching for a weapon and asking a question at the same time. “When we were about to enter the room, you knew that there would be booby traps, how did you know?”

Yang Guo said, “I guessed from the eyes and expression of the Valley Master. He wanted to marry you but when he heard that you were going to help me fight him, he immediately thought about killing you. I didn’t believe for a second that someone with his character would allow us to pick out weapons out of the kindness of his heart.”

Xiao Longnu gave another sigh and said, “Will we be able to beat him with our “Pure Heart of Jade Maiden Sword”?”

Yang Guo said, “Though his martial arts are strong, he’s not better than Jinlun Fawang. The two of us were able to beat Jinlun Fawang; I assume that we’ll be able to beat him.”

Xiao Longnu said, “Yes. The reason why Fawang kept on trying to force him to fight us is because he wanted to see us in danger.”

Yang Guo smiled, “People can have evil thoughts; now, you’ve learned a bit about this.” He then said immediately, “I’m just worried about your health, you’ve just thrown up blood.”

Xiao Longnu’s dimples from her smile were like a flower, she said, “You know that whenever I’m angry or upset I throw up blood. Now that I’m extremely happy, this little internal injury isn’t anything to me. You threw up blood too, is it serious?”

Yang Guo said, “I’m fine as long as I can see you.”

Xiao Longnu said tenderly, “That’s how I feel too.” She paused and then continued, “You’ve made much progress in your martial arts recently; and we were able to beat Fawang back then.”

When Yang Guo heard these words, he too felt great confidence about this battle. He held her hand and said, “I want you to promise me something, will you?”

Xiao Longnu said tenderly, “Why is there a need to ask me? I haven’t been your Master since long ago; I’m your wife. I’ll listen to whatever you say.”

Yang Guo said, “That’s... that’s great, I... didn’t know.”

Xiao Longnu said, “How can I still be your master after what happened that night on Mount Zhongnan, when you and I were that intimate. Though you didn’t want to marry me, in my heart I was already your wife.”

Yang Guo did not know exactly what happened that night. Maybe the reason for suddenly bringing this up again is because she’s emotional, he thought, “My father Ouyang Feng was teaching me martial arts that day; he sealed your pressure point, but I wasn’t intimate with you.” But when he heard the tenderness and love in her words, he was completely enchanted and couldn’t say anything.

Xiao Longnu rested against his chest and asked, “What do you want me to promise you?”

Yang Guo stroked her hair and said, “Once we beat that Valley Master we’ll immediately go back to the tomb; no matter what happens you cannot leave my side.”

Xiao Longnu lifted her head and looked into his eyes, she said, “Do think that I have thoughts of leaving you? Do you think that the pain and suffering I’ll experience if I part from you won’t be as great as yours? Of course I’ll promise you; I’ll never leave you even if the sky falls down.”

Yang Guo was delighted; he was about to say something when the disciple in green who was watching them said loudly, “Have you picked your weapons?”

Xiao Longnu smiled and said, “Let’s just get it over with.” She turned her head to look for a pair of swords when the western wall caught her eye. She was startled; the wall had signs of being set alight and the chairs and tables near it were also burned.

Yang Guo laughed, “The Old Urchin had broken into here previously and set this place alight; that’s his handiwork.” He then saw two sheaths behind a painting in the corner. He thought, “Those two swords were hidden originally by that painting; it’s only because of the Old Urchin’s fire burning that painting that enables me to see them now. Those two swords must be extremely precious to have been hidden away like that.” He went over to the wall and took the swords down; he gave one to Xiao Longnu and unsheathed the sword that was in his hand.

Xiao Longnu unsheathed her sword too. Both of them felt a chill as soon as the blades were drawn out; they saw that his sword was black and didn’t have any shine to it, like a piece of black wood. Her sword was the exact same as Yang Guo’s. When the two swords lined up, the room was filled with a cold air. The swords had no sharp points; the tips of the swords were round and blunt and they looked like a thin wooden whip. Yang Guo turned the sword over and saw the word ‘Gentleman’ carved on it; he looked over at Xiao Longnu’s sword and saw the word ‘Lady’. Originally Yang Guo did not like the form of this sword, but he loved the matching names; he looked at Xiao Longnu to see what she thought.

Xiao Longnu said happily, “This sword has no sharp points; this is just right for dueling with the Valley Master. He saved my life before; I don’t want to hurt him.”

Yang Guo laughed, "The names of the swords are 'Gentleman' and 'Lady'. I'm not worthy of the name. If 'Gentleman' was changed to 'Vagrant', it'd be much better for me to use." He then tested out the sword with two thrusts into the air and felt that the weight was perfect and the sword extremely agile; he said, "Fine, we'll use these two swords."

Xiao Longnu returned her sword into its sheath and was about to leave the room when she saw some extremely beautiful flowers in a vase on the table; but it wasn't arranged properly so she decided to fix it up.

Yang Guo called out, "No, you can't touch them." But it was too late; Xiao Longnu's finger had been pierced by the thorns of the flowers. She turned her head back startled, asking, "Why?"

Yang Guo said, "Those are Passion Flowers; you've been living here in the valley for a few days now, don't you recognize them?"

Xiao Longnu sucked her finger and shook her head. She said, "I don't recognize them. Passion Flower; what kind of flower is it?" Yang Guo was about to explain but the crowd of disciples kept on hurrying them so they left the room and returned to the hall. Valley Master Gongsun had been waiting impatiently, he stared angrily at his disciples, blaming them for being useless and allowing the two of them to waste time. All of the disciples were terrified and changed color.

Valley Master Gongsun waited for the two to come near before saying, "Miss Liu, you've picked your weapon?"

Xiao Longnu took out the 'Lady' sword and nodded her head, saying, "We'll use this pair of blunt swords to fight you; we don't dare to fight a life and death duel with the Valley Master, but just until a clear victor can be seen, how about that?"

The Valley Master's heart trembled and said sternly, "Who told you to pick those swords?" His gaze swept across to Gongsun Lu'E and then back to Xiao Longnu.

Xiao Longnu felt slightly surprised and said, "No one told us to pick them. If we can't use them, we'll go and change them."

The Valley Master stared angrily at Yang Guo and said, "If I let you change your weapons, how long will it take, half a day? There's no need to change, just start."

Xiao Longnu said, “Valley Master Gongsun; let’s make things clear before we start. If we fight one on one, neither of us are a match for you. We’ve got an advantage fighting you two against one. We don’t really want to fight you and we’re not competing with you. All you’ve got to do is allow us to leave and we’ll admit defeat and thank you.”

The Valley Master chuckled and said, “If you beat my “Yin Yang Twin Blades” then I’ll let you treat me anyway you want; if I win you have to marry me.”

Xiao Longnu gave an unperturbed smile and said, “If we lose, we’ll just die here in this valley.”

Valley Master Gongsun did not say anything more; the golden saber in his left hand waved out towards Yang Guo.

Yang Guo raised his sword and used a stance of “The White Crane’s Bright Wing”; a stance of Quanzhen swordplay.

Valley Master Gongsun thought, “Though this stance is tight and careful, it’s just ordinary and steady.” His right sword headed towards Yang Guo’s shoulder, actually winding past Xiao Longnu, both the sword and saber were aiming for Yang Guo. Yang Guo concentrated on his opponent and guarded his body tightly as he received three stances.

Xiao Longnu waited for the Valley Master to unleash his three stances before she raised her sword. The Valley Master did not use his sword or saber to block her sword stances; only in urgent situations did he use the black sword to repel her attacks. He showed signs of allowance in his stances.

After watching seven or eight stances, Jinlun Fawang gave a wry laugh and said, “Valley Master Gongsun, giving them such allowances will lead to suffering for you.”

The Valley Master replied, “Big monk, if you don’t think much of me then why don’t you wait for a little while and duel with me later. I don’t need you to waste your breath in trying to give me advice.” He hurried his sword and saber and the wind sounds from the weapons became increasing louder.

After a few more exchanges, Yang Guo used a stance of “Sweeping Across the Northern Desert” from the Quanzhen swordplay while Xiao Longnu used the “The Coloured Pen Painting an Eyebrow” stance from the “Jade Maiden Swordplay” Both of these stances were horizontal strokes, Yang Guo’s sword just swept across a few inches from the left

to right while Xiao Longnu flicked her sword subtly twice. The two stances became the stance “Dressing Under the Mirror” from the “Pure Heart of Jade Maiden Sword”. Valley Master Gongsun was shocked, he raised his black sword to block Yang Guo’s sword and swept his saber across to guard his face. Xiao Longnu’s sword drew across above his eyes, the sword and saber clashed, a ‘dang’ sound was heard as the tip of the golden saber was actually cut off by the ‘Lady’ sword.

The onlookers were shocked; they could never have predicted that such an ordinary looking blunt sword would actually be so sharp. Yang Guo and Xiao Longnu were both surprised; they originally picked these weapons because of the names and the fact that they were the same. They couldn’t have known that they had actually picked a pair of precious swords by luck. Their spirits were greatly roused and swords kept on attacking.

Valley Master Gongsun marveled in secret, “Sister Liu and that punk’s martial arts can’t compare with mine. I originally wasn’t afraid of them joining together, but I didn’t know that when their swords join it would actually be so powerful. It looks like that bald scoundrel was telling the truth. If I lose to these two... if I lose to these two...” When he thought to this point, the saber in his right hand suddenly attacked left and the sword in his right hand swept left, using his greatest skill “Yin Yang Wild Blades”. The black sword was originally soft and yin but right now it was hacking and chopping solidly, changing into the yang and hard nature of saber play. Meanwhile, the heavy and clumsy jagged saber was now piercing and cutting, going down the road of lightness and swiftness. The saber had become a sword, the sword had become a saber, and it really was extraordinary.

Jinlun Fawang, Xiaoxiang Zi and Yin Kexi were all knowledgeable people but the “Yin Yang Wild Blades” was something that they’ve never seen or heard of before.

Ma Guangzuo called out, “Hey, old man, what weird name has this mad kung fu of yours got? The... the... the older you get, the madder you get!”

Valley Master Gongsun was only around forty years of age. Today he had wanted to marry Xiao Longnu and because of this he’s been called old man this and that by this dim witted person; how can he not get angry? Right now he had no time for him. Now he used this kung fu that he’d studied bitterly for the last twenty years. He decided to defeat the two of them before doing anything else.

With the two paired using their swordplay, they had begun to gain the upper hand; but the opponent had swapped his weapons around and his stances were extraordinary.

The two were put on their back foot and met many dangerous stances over a short period of time. Yang Guo saw that the black sword was stronger than the golden saber; he intercepted all the sword strokes and allowed Xiao Longnu to face the golden saber. He thought that because she had an advantage in weaponry, the Valley Master wouldn't dare to clash with the 'Lady' sword and so she shouldn't meet any great danger. But by doing this the two were effectively fighting separately; the swordplay of the "Pure Heart of the Jade Maiden" had separated into two and its power immediately decreased.

Valley Master Gongsun was delighted; he unleashed three chops with his black sword while the saber in his left hand used the stances "The Still Yang Needle", "The Form of the Yielding Separates Gold", "The Thorn Pierces Qing" and "The Nine Lotuses". Those four graceful and flowing sword stances were mixed in with the three saber stances. Yang Guo could still block these attacks but Xiao Longnu was getting frantic; she wanted to use the sword to cut off the tip of the saber but the golden saber moved like a flying phoenix, she could not touch it. Yang Guo knew something was wrong and disregarded his safety and used a stance of "The Horse Trampling on the Descending Flowers" from the Quanzhen swordplay, sending the sword from his upper arm aiming upwards, intercepting the opponent's saber and sword. Xiao Longnu immediately took back her sword and protected Yang Guo's upper body. The two once again joined together, returning back to the swordplay of the "Pure Heart of the Jade Maiden". The theory of the swordplay lies in the two users having a mutual affinity for each other, as if two became one. In this stance Yang Guo had forsaken his life to save Xiao Longnu; this was the supreme premise of this swordplay. Xiao Longnu saw his front wasn't guarded while he was saving her; she was afraid that he would get hurt and quickly helped him to protect himself. The two had not protected themselves but both became protected as a result; the power of the swords suddenly increased.

Many more stances passed and beads of sweat could now be seen on the forehead of the Valley Master; his sword and saber stances were wanting and a picture of defeat could be seen on him. On the other hand, Yang Guo and Xiao Longnu were becoming more and more fluid in their swordplay. Yang Guo's left hand held the shaft of the sword and his right hand thrust the sword forward to the enemy's waist on the left. Xiao Longnu held the sword handle with both her hands and flicked the sword upwards; this stance was called "Resting Loftily with a Tidy Brow"; the stance was filled with love, tenderness and gracefulness. Her heart was filled with love and passion; she turned her head to look at Yang Guo. Suddenly her chest felt as if a hammer had smashed up against it and the finger on her right hand had broke out in unbearable pain; she almost dropped her sword. Her face changed and she leapt back three steps.

Valley Master Gongsun chuckled, “Ha, the Passion Flower; the Passion Flower!” The pleasure in his heart was greater than his jealousy.

Xiao Longnu did not understand but Yang Guo knew the poison of the Passion Flower had flared up. Her finger had just been pricked by the Passion Flower and as she thought about love, her finger broke out with an unbearable pain.

Yang Guo had tasted this pain before; he was deeply concerned for Xiao Longnu and softly asked, “Does it hurt very much?”

Valley Master Gongsun took this opportunity to launch an attack; he urgently attacked with his sword and saber at Yang Guo. Xiao Longnu’s pain had lessened and she raised her sword again. Yang Guo was concerned for her and said, “Rest a little while longer.” But as soon as he stirred his love for her, his finger broke out in pain once again.

Valley Master Gongsun took this chance and chopped heavily with the black sword, a ‘dang’ sound was heard as he knocked the ‘Gentleman’ sword out of his hand. The black sword extended forward and was once again at his chest.

Xiao Longnu was shocked and tried to save him but she was blocked by the gold saber and had no way to advance.

The Valley Master called out, “Hold that punk.” Four disciples in green responded, they walked forward and twisted the net over him, they circled him a few times and held him tightly in the net.

Valley Master Gongsun asked, “Sister Liu, what are you going to do?”

Xiao Longnu knew that she was not a match for him alone; she threw down her ‘Lady’ sword on the floor and heard a ‘ca’ sound; the ‘Gentleman’ sword and ‘Lady’ sword leapt closer together, joining up tightly. The two swords actually had great magnetism. Xiao Longnu said solemnly, “If the swords can do this how can we not do it? Just kill the two of us.”

Valley Master Gongsun gave a ‘huh’ grunt and said, “Follow me.” He folded his arms towards Fawang and the others, saying, “Excuse me!” He turned into the inner halls. The four disciples followed, dragging the net along with Yang Guo. Xiao Longnu followed.

Ma Guangzuo said, “Hey monk, zombie head, we need to think of a way to save them.”

Jinlun Fawang just smiled wryly and didn't reply.

Xiaoxiang Zi chuckled and said, "Hey giant, can you beat that old man?"

Ma Guangzuo stroked his cheek and couldn't think of a plan; he just said, "I'll fight even if I can't beat him! I'll fight even if I can't beat him!"

Valley Master Gongsun advanced forward with his head held high; he entered a small stone room and said, "Cut some Passion Flowers for me."

Yang Guo and Xiao Longnu had already decided to die; they looked at each other, smiling, and ignoring what Valley Master Gongsun said or did. Not long after, an enchanting fragrance entered the stone room. The two turned their heads to see what it was; there was a fusion of five colors, from tender red to soft yellow; more than ten disciples in green had entered the room carrying bunches of Passion Flowers in their arms. Their arms were covered in leather, protecting them from the thorns of the flowers.

Valley Master Gongsun waved his right arm; he said coldly, "Throw them on that scum."

It was as if ten thousands wasps were stinging Yang Guo; his limbs, his bones, they all were overpowered with unbearable pain; he couldn't take it and called out in pain.

Xiao Longnu felt pity and anger; she shouted at Valley Master Gongsun, "What are you doing?" She dashed forward wanting to remove the Passion Flowers from Yang Guo.

Valley Master Gongsun stretched out his hand to block her and said, "Sister Liu, today is the day when we would have consummated our marriage; but this punk entered the valley and ruined everything. We do not know each other and we have no debts or feuds; but you and he know each other. If he had acted courteously and respectfully as a guest, of course I would have treated him with great respect; now that it has come to this..." He then waved his left hand out and sent his disciples away. He closed the door. He continued, "Whether it'll end up in tragedy or joy, it will be up to you."

The pain that Yang Guo was in was indescribable but he didn't want Xiao Longnu to get upset so he clenched his teeth and didn't make a sound. None of the words of Valley Master Gongsun entered his ears as he endured the pain.

When Xiao Longnu saw the suffering he was in; her pity was roused and as soon as this happened, the Passion Flower poison in her finger flared up and she felt the excruciat-

ing pain again. She thought, "I've only been pierced once by the Passion Flower and it is already this painful; but he's covered with thousands and thousands of thorns, how can he stand it?"

Valley Master Gongsun knew what she was thinking and said, "Sister Liu, I sincerely want to marry and be with you; I have only admiration and love for you, I have no ill intent, you should understand this."

Xiao Longnu nodded her head and said mournfully, "You have treated me well all along; but even if we met before you saved me and you treated me like an empress you wouldn't be able to win my heart." She hung her head for a short while and then gave a long sigh; she said, "Mr. Gongsun, if you hadn't seen me that day by the mountainside, if you hadn't saved me and had let me die there, it would have been better for the three of us. You know that forcing me to marry you will result in a lifetime of unhappiness for me. What good is that to you?"

Valley Master Gongsun's eyebrows slowly rose again; he deepened his voice and said, "I have always been a man of my word; I don't allow people to insult or lie to me. Since you've agreed to marry me, you have to marry me. When it comes to happiness, sadness, joy and pain, the future is hard to predict; who knows what tomorrow may bring? Let's just see what happens." He waved his sleeve and said, "This person has been pricked by the Passion Flowers all over his body; the suffering will deepen every two hours; thirty six days from now he will die in excruciating pain. I have a medicine that I can give to him which will cure him within twenty four hours; but after a day, even a god won't be able to save him. It's up to you whether he lives or dies." He walked slowly towards the door and pushed it open; he turned his head and said, "If you'd rather watch him die slowly then you can stay here and watch him for the next thirty six days; it's up to you. I won't harm you so you can relax. If you change your decision within twenty four hours, all you've got to do it give a shout and I will bring the antidote to him." He was about to leave the room.

Xiao Longnu saw that Yang Guo was trembling all over; his lips were bleeding because of him biting down in pain; his eyes had been as bright as a shooting star, but now there was not even a single speck of light in them. The pain that he was in now was already unbearable; but the pain would deepen every two hours for the next thirty six days; even hell wouldn't have such a punishment. She bit down on her lip and said, "Mr. Gongsun, I'll agree to marry you. Quickly let him go and give him the antidote."

Valley Master Gongsun had been trying to force her to say this all along; when he heard this he was delighted but also resentful. He knew that from now on, she would detest

him and loathe him. She would never have any love towards him so he nodded his head and said, “It’s for the benefit of everyone that you have changed your mind. After we’ve consummated our marriage tonight, I’ll give him the antidote in the morning.”

Xiao Longnu said, “First cure him.”

The Valley Master sighed and said, “Sister Liu, you think too little of me. I know that agreeing to this is not what you want; even if I was stupid, how would I not know? Do you think I would cure him first?” He turned to leave the room.

Xiao Longnu and Yang Guo looked at each miserably, neither one saying a word for a while. Yang Guo said slowly, “Gu Gu, even when I’m down in the underworld I will feel no pain because of your love. Just kill me with one palm!”

Xiao Longnu thought, “I’ll first kill him with one palm and then commit suicide.” So she raised her hand and gathered internal energy in her palm.

Yang Guo’s face had a smile, his eyes soft and peaceful; looking at her sweetly, he whispered, “This is where we’ll consummate our love.”

Xiao Longnu saw his air was glorious; she thought, “Why is heaven so cruel towards such a handsome and graceful man, wanting him to die today.” Her chest ached and suddenly she tasted sweetness at the back of her throat; it appeared that she would throw up blood again and the internal energy in her arm immediately dissipated. Suddenly, she threw herself on top of Yang Guo; the thousands and thousands of thorns of the Passion Flower pierced her body; she said, “Guo’er, we’ll endure the suffering together.”

Valley Master Gongsun called out, “Oh no!” in shock, he said, “You... you...” He then said coldly, “Why did you do this? Will your suffering lessen his?”

Xiao Longnu took one deep look at Yang Guo, then slowly turned around. She exited the room and didn’t look back.

Valley Master Gongsun said, “Brother Yang, I’ll give you the antidote in twenty hours time. All you’ve got to do in these twenty hours is cleanse your thoughts and don’t rouse any feelings of love. Even if there is pain, it won’t be that hard to endure.” He then left the room and closed the door.

Yang Guo's body was wracked with pain and his heart was full of hurt. "All the pain and suffering that I've experience before today is nothing compared to the pain I'm experiencing now. The Valley Master is such an evil person; how can I just die like this and let Gu Gu suffer at his hands? Besides, I still have to avenge my father; how can I allow the phony, righteous and benevolent Guo Jing and Huang Rong to not get what they deserve for their evil deed?" When he thought about this, his blood boiled, shaking and stirring him, "I cannot die; whatever happens I cannot die! Even if Gu Gu becomes the wife of the Valley Master I'd still need to save her. I need to train my martial arts and avenge my father." So he clenched his teeth and sat up. Although he couldn't assume the proper form in the fish net, he was still able to submerge his chi into his dan tian and started to circulate his internal energy.

Four hours later, midday had passed. A disciple in green entered with a plate; there were four new buns on it. The disciple said, "Our master is celebrating his wedding and he's allowing you to have a good meal." The disciple placed the plate by the fish net; his hand was covered with a coarse cloth to avoid getting injured by the passion flowers. As Yang Guo stretched out his hand through the net for the buns and ate them, he thought, "Since I'm going to fight with my life against that bastard Valley Master, I can't torture myself."

The disciple laughed, "I couldn't have guessed that you would have such a great appetite."

Suddenly there was a green blur by the door; another disciple had come through the door and had moved up silently behind the first disciple. That disciple threw a heavy punch against the first disciple's back. The disciple fainted before he could see who threw the punch.

Yang Guo saw that the person who did the sneak attack was actually Gongsun Lu'E; he said with surprise, "You... you..."

Gongsun Lu'E first turned around and closed the door before whispering, "Quiet brother Yang, I've come to rescue you." She untied the knots of the net and cleared the Passion Flowers away from Yang Guo, letting him out. Her hands were covered with a thick piece of cloth.

Yang Guo hesitated, "If your father finds out about this..."

Gongsun Lu'E said, "I'll ignore whatever heavy punishment I'll get." She picked up a Passion Flower and placed it in the mouth of the unconscious disciple so that he won't

be able to call for help when he wakes up. Then she placed him in the fish net and threw the Passion Flowers over him. She whispered again, “Brother Yang, hide behind the door if someone enters. I’ll go and get the antidote for your poison from the pill room.”

Yang Guo was extremely touched. He knew that she was putting herself in danger by doing this; his friendship with her was not even a day old and she’s actually rebelling against her father to rescue him. He said, “Miss, I... I...” He was so touched that he couldn’t say anything.

Gongsun Lu’E smiled at him and said, “Just wait here for a little while, I’ll be right back.” She then left the room.

Yang Guo was lost in thought, “Why is she treating me so well? Though I’ve had an unfortunate life and suffered under other people ever since I was small, there are actually many people who have treated me sincerely. There’s no need to mention Gu Gu; there’s Grandma Sun, Hong Qigong, my Godfather Ouyang Feng and Island Master Huang. There’s also the girls Cheng Ying and Lu Wushuang, and now’s there’s Gongsun Lu’E as well amongst them; all of them have treated me with great sincerity. My birth date and time must be of an extremely strange nature; otherwise how could those who’ve been good to me treat me so well and those who’ve been cruel to me have treated me so badly?” But he never thought about how all his encounters have been extraordinary; the people he meets either treat him with great sincerity or treat him with extreme insincerity. His character was such that he would only get on well with those who could agree with him; those whose words clashed with his, he treated as an enemy. How he treated others was, of course, how others repaid him.

He waited for a long while but Gongsun Lu’E still had not returned. Yang Guo was getting more and more worried. At first he thought that there must have been someone else present in the pill room so she couldn’t steal the antidote. But as time went by, he thought that even if she couldn’t steal the antidote, she would have come back and told him so. It looks like something must have gone terribly wrong; she took such a big risk for me, how can I not try to save her? He opened the door slightly and peeked out. It was quiet outside and there was no one around; he slipped out but he did not know where Gongsun Lu’E might be.

Just as he was hesitating, he suddenly heard footsteps from around the corner; he quickly hid behind the corner and saw two disciples in green passing by shoulder to shoulder. In their hands was a thorny stick; it appeared that it was something that was used for punishment.

Yang Guo was furious, “Gu Gu would rather die than submit, and that shameless Valley Master is actually trying to force her to submit through torture!” He lightened his steps and followed the two disciples. The two disciples did not notice him; they turned and twisted along a few corridors before arriving outside a stone room. They said clearly, “Master, the thorny stick is here.” They pushed open the door and entered.

Yang Guo’s heart raced; he saw that there was a window on the eastern side of the room and ran over to it. He looked inside and saw that it wasn’t Xiao Longnu; it was Gongsun Lu’E who was standing in front of her father with her head hanging down. The Valley Master was sitting in the middle of the room while two disciples were holding long swords in their hands, guarding the left and right of Gongsun Lu’E.

The Valley Master took the thorny stick and said coldly, “E’er, you’re my own flesh and blood; why did you betray me?”

Gongsun Lu’E lowered her head and didn’t say anything.

The Valley Master said, “Do you think I don’t know that you’ve fallen for the one named Yang? I said I was going to let him go; why were you so anxious? When I see him tomorrow I’ll betroth you to him, how about that?”

How would Yang Guo not know how Gongsun Lu’E felt about him; but right now when it was said aloud in public, his heart raced.

Gongsun Lu’E still did not say anything and kept her head lowered. After a while, she lifted her head and said clearly, “Father, all you’re thinking about right now is your marriage; what time you do have for your daughter?”

Valley Master Gongsun gave a ‘heng’ grunt and didn’t say anything.

Gongsun Lu’E continued, “You are correct; I admire master Yang’s decency and honesty, his passion and righteousness. But I know that there is only Miss Long in his heart. I saved him because... because I can’t stand what you have done; it is not because of him.”

Yang Guo was extremely moved by this and thought, “This scoundrel is so cruel and violent, yet he has a daughter who is so kind and righteous.”

Valley Master Gongsun’s face was unmoved. There were no signs of being angry on his face as he said dryly, “So according to you, I’m not an honest person; someone who’s

not righteous and who's not passionate?"

Gongsun Lu'E said, "I do not dare to describe father this way. But... but..."

The Valley Master said, "But what?"

Gongsun Lu'E said, "Master Yang has been pierced by thousands and thousands of Passion Flower thorns; how can he withstand the suffering? Father, you're merciful and kind, just let him go."

The Valley Master chuckled, "I'm going to let him go tomorrow. I don't need you to be so meddlesome."

Gongsun Lu'E tilted her head and pondered; appearing as if she was weighing up whether she should say the words she had on her mind. Eventually her face became resolute and she said, "Father, you're the one who raised me; that master Yang is an outsider I've just met; how can I betray you and help him? If father was really going to let him go and cure his poison, why would I need to take the great risk of going to the pill room?"

Valley Master Gongsun said sternly, "Then why did you go there?"

Gongsun Lu'E said, "I know that you have ill intent towards him. After you've forced Miss Long to marry you, you will kill master Yang to end Miss Long's longing."

Valley Master Gongsun's eyebrows raised again; he said coldly, "Huh, it looks like I've reared an ill boding tiger. I brought you up and here you are now, biting back at me. Give it!" He stretched out his hand.

Lu E said, "What does father want?"

The Valley Master said, "You're still playing dumb? I want the Passionless Pill that cures the poison of the Passion Flower."

Lu E said, "I did not take it."

The Valley Master stood up and said, "Then where did it go?"

Yang Guo examined the room; he saw the cupboards were lined with bottles of medicine and there were countless herbs hung on the wall. In the western side of the

room were three pill cauldrons. This room looks like none other than that so called pill room. From the expression of Valley Master Gongsun, it appeared that Gongsun Lu'E would definitely face a heavy punishment.

He heard her say, "Father, it's true, I entered the pill room by myself because I wanted to find the Passionless Pill for master Yang. But I searched for half a day and still couldn't find it, otherwise, would I have been found out by father?"

Valley Master Gongsun said sternly, "The place where I hide this medicine is extremely secretive. The outsiders have stayed in the hall and have not left it. The Passionless Pill has suddenly disappeared; could it be that the pill grew legs and ran away?"

Lu E knelt on the floor and cried, "Father, spare master Yang's life; just tell him not to enter the valley again and leave it at that."

The Valley Master chuckled, "If it was my life on the line, I don't think you would kneel on the floor and beg someone to save me."

Lu E didn't reply and just hugged his knees.

The Valley Master said, "You took the Passionless Pill; how can I save him now? Fine, if you don't want to admit it that's up to you. You can wait here for a day. Though you've stolen the pill, if you can't get it to him, it will be of no use. I'll let you go in twenty four hours!" He then advanced to the doors.

Gongsun Lu'E bit down as she said, "Father!"

The Valley Master said, "You've got something else to say?"

She pointed to the four disciples in green and said, "First dismiss them."

The Valley Master said, "My valley is united as one; there's nothing that's said that can't be said in front of the others."

Gongsun Lu'E's face went red and then immediately turned white. She said, "Fine, since you don't believe my words then you need to see whether I have it on me." She then began to take off her gown and skirt. The Valley Master quickly waved the disciples out and closed the door. After a short while, Gongsun Lu'E had taken off her gown and skirt and was now left with her undergarments. Indeed, she had nothing on her.

Yang Guo's heart jumped when he saw her white gleaming body. He was a young man and Gongsun Lu'E had an attractive figure, her appearance elegant; his blood raced but then he immediately thought, "Because she's trying to save my life, she didn't hesitate to unclothe herself. Yang Guo ah Yang Guo, if you take another look you're worse than an animal."

He quickly closed his eyes but just as he was feeling troubled and confused, his forehead lightly knocked into the frame of the window.

Though only a faint noise was produced, Valley Master Gongsun noticed it; he went over to the three pill cauldrons and pushed the middle one out of the way. He moved the one in the east to the middle, he moved the one in the west to the east and finally he moved the one that was originally in the middle to the west. He said, "Since it's like this, I'll promise you to spare that punk's life."

Gongsun Lu'E was delighted and bowed, she quivered, "Father!"

The Valley Master sat down on a chair by the wall and said, "You know the rules of the valley. What is the punishment for entering the pill room without permission?"

Lu E lowered her head and said, "Death."

The Valley Master sighed and said, "Though you are my daughter, I cannot break the rules of the valley, go in peace!" He drew out his black sword and raised it in midair; he said softly, "E'er, if you stop pleading for the one named Yang then I'll spare you. I can only spare one of you, you or him?"

Gongsun Lu'E said quietly, "Him!"

Valley Master Gongsun said, "Fine, my daughter really is kind and righteous; much better than her father." He waved his sword out and chopped downwards towards her head.

Yang Guo was shocked and called out, "Wait!" He leapt in through the window as he called out, "You should kill me!" His right foot touched the floor and he was about to stretch out his hand to grab the Valley Master's wrist to stop the black sword from chopping down when the sole of his foot felt soft as if he was treading on thin air. Yang Guo knew something was wrong; he quickly roused his chi and his body leapt up. Valley Master Gongsun pushed his daughter on the shoulders with his palms. Gongsun Lu'E's body quickly went backwards, knocking into Yang Guo.

After he leapt back up, of course, he went back down. Gongsun Lu'E had knocked right into his body and the two of them dropped straight down. There was nothing under their feet and they had yet to reach solid ground even after falling for hundreds of feet.

Though Yang Guo was frightened, he still remembered he had to protect the life of Gongsun Lu'E; he quickly held Gongsun Lu'E in his hands. There was just darkness in front of him; he didn't know what they would land on; a mountain of knives or a forest of swords? Or would it be boulders or rocks? Before his thoughts were finished, a 'pu tong' sound was heard as the two fell into water, sinking downwards swiftly; there was actually a deep pool below the pill room.



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