

Foxs' Wuxia

Wuxia Fan Translation

SDXL Chapter 3



Chapter 3 – Seeking Tutelage at Mount Zhongnan

Translated by Noodles



Wu Xiu Wen jumped on Yang Guo's body. Held down by the two brothers, four fists rained down fiercely on him. Yang Guo bit his teeth and didn't make a sound. Guo Fu saw the beating was severe and was a little bit scared. But when she felt the red mark left by Yang Guo on her, she felt pleased and shouted out, "Hit him harder, harder!"

Guo Jing meditated on the boat, and after a few days, his energy has recovered by more than half. Huang Rong and Guo Jing raised the topic of Ouyang Feng, saying they hadn't seen him in ten years. Not only does it seem he hasn't aged much but his kung fu has improved. That palm he struck in Guo Jing's chest was lethal; it will take at least ten

days to half a month to fully recover. The two moved on to Hong Qigong, they didn't know where he was and missed him very much. Huang Rong lived on the Peach Blossom Island, but she held the position of the Beggar Clan leader so all the clan's affairs had to be cleared through her. One of the reasons she returned to Jiangnan was to meet with elder Zhu and discuss what was happening with the clan, and to search for news of Hong Qigong. But Guo Jing had suffered an injury, so they had to return to the island first. Then they talked about Yang Guo, and Huang Rong called him into the boat and told him to explain everything. Yang Guo told them that his mother had died due to an illness, and how he had wandered around in Jiaying afterwards. The Guo couple reminisced about their friendship with Mu Nianci and couldn't help but feel depressed. After Yang Guo had returned to the deck, Guo Jing said, "I've always had one wish and you know this. Today, heaven has given me this chance to see Guo'er, my wish can be completed."

Years ago, Guo Jing's father Guo Xiaotian and Yang Guo's grandfather Yang Tiexin became brothers, and both their wives were pregnant. The two agreed that if their wives gave births to boys, they will become brothers; if they were girls they would be sisters; if it was one girl and one boy then it would be arranged for them to be married. Eventually they had two boys, Guo Jing and Yang Guo's father Yang Kang became brothers. However Yang Kang recognized an enemy as his father, his deeds were unchivalrous and eventually he died tragically near Jiaying's Iron Spear Temple. Guo Jing still felt responsible for this. When he mentioned this, Huang Rong understood his intentions and said, "I won't agree."

Guo Jing asked, with light surprise, "Agree what?"

Huang Rong said, "Fu'er won't be married to that boy."

Guo Jing said, "His father didn't do any good, but our families' friendship is a long one. Yang Guo has a handsome face, he's extremely clever, and under our teaching he will achieve great things in the future."

Huang Rong said, "I'm afraid that he is too clever for his own good."

Guo Jing replied, "Weren't you clever? What is wrong with that?"

Huang Rong laughed and said, "I eventually fell for a dumb boy."

Guo Jing chuckled and said, "When Fu'er grows up, she may not find a dumb boy to love. Anyway, another boy as dumb as me, I doubt there'll be another one."

Huang Rong put on a shy face and said, “Are they rare?” The two joked around for a few more words before Guo Jing turned serious and said, “My father only had one wish, Uncle Yang Tie Xin also relied on me before he died. I didn’t do my best with brother Yang and sister Mu. If I don’t treat Guo’er as my own, how can I face father and uncle Yang?” He sighed, and looked disappointed.

Huang Rong gently said, “The two of them are young, there is no need to rush. If in the future Guo’er doesn’t develop any bad points, then you can do what you like.”

Guo Jing got up and clapped his hands, his spirits raised and said, “Thank you for your permission; I can’t say how thankful I am.”

Huang Rong replied, “I didn’t agree to anything. All I said was watch what becomes of Guo’er in the future.”

Guo Jing stood up and his waist straightened. He knew what Huang Rong meant and said, “Brother Yang Kang was raised in the palace of the Jin, and learned his ways from them. Guo’er will be on our island and he won’t turn bad. It was I who named him all those years ago. His name is Yang Guo, “to correct past mistakes”; if he does do wrong he will be able to change and right it. You can relax.”

Huang Rong laughed and said, “How can a name decide things? You are called Guo Jing, are you peaceful and quiet? Ever since you were young, you would jump around like a big monkey.” Guo Jing thought about what she said, and wasn’t able to respond. Huang Rong smiled, and changed the subject, and didn’t mention the affair again.

The boat was quiet as they reached the island. Guo Fu was ecstatic that she had gained two little friends who were about the same age as her. Yang Guo had taken Huang Rong’s antidote, and now his poison had dissipated completely. He and Guo Fu had their arguments when they first met, but they were still kids. After a few days they had forgotten about it. However in a few days, the four would argue again in game of catching crickets.

One day, Yang Guo came out of the house, looking for crickets again. He was relaxing, enjoying the scenery and whistling to himself when he suddenly heard laughing and joking behind the hills. He rushed to have a look, and saw Guo Fu and the Wu brothers lifting rocks and pushing aside grass; they were looking for crickets. Wu Dunru was holding a bamboo tube, Guo Fu was holding a basin. Wu Xiuwen moved a rock and gave a laugh, a large cricket jumped out. Wu Xiuwen jumped on it, and held it with his two hands and laughed joyfully. Guo Fu said, “Give it to me, gimme.”

Wu Xiuwen picked the cricket up and said, “Fine, I’ll give it to you.” He opened the lid of the basin and put the cricket in. The cricket’s head and legs looked healthy, it had a thick waist and abdomen, and it looked like a spirited cricket. Wu Xiuwen said, “This cricket is going to be an invincible general, brother Yang, all the crickets that you have caught won’t be a match.” Yang Guo was unconvinced and took out a few bamboo tubes containing crickets. He picked out his liveliest one to fight. After a few rounds, the large cricket bit the waist of Yang Guo’s cricket, causing it to slip out of the basin, fluttering its wings, looking weird.

Guo Fu laughed, “I won!”

Yang Guo said, “Wait, I’ve got more.” He took out three but they lost too, the third one bitten in half by the large cricket. Yang Guo’s face turned and said, “I’m not playing.” and turned around and walked away. Suddenly he heard three “ji” noises behind him in the grass, it was the call of a cricket, but it sounded different than normal.

Wu Dunru said, “Another one.” He parted the grass and suddenly jumped back, gasping, “Snake, snake!” Yang Guo turned around and saw a striped poisonous snake, flicking its tongue out of the grass. Yang Guo picked up a stone, and aimed it at the snake. It struck it on the head, the snake twisted and turned a few times and died. He saw beside the dead snake was a black cricket, its appearance strange, spreading out its wings to call out. Guo Fu laughed and said, “Brother Yang, catch the black one.”

Yang Guo heard that there was a ridiculing tone behind her words. Yang Guo’s proud character rose and said, “Fine.” He then went and caught it.

Guo Fu chuckled and said, “That thing, what do you want it for? You want to battle with my invincible general?”

Yang Guo said, “If you want to battle fine, this little one won’t let others bully it.” He placed the black cricket into Guo Fu’s basin. What was strange was that when the large cricket saw the small black one, it looked startled and seemed to shrink away from it. Guo Fu and the Wu brothers shouted and called out to encourage it. The little black cricket raised its head and jumped in front of the big one. The big cricket, not daring to face it in battle, wanted to jump out of the basin. The black cricket jumped up and, high in midair, bit the end of the large cricket, and both of them fell out of the air. The large cricket shook a few times, and then turned on its abdomen and died. Amongst crickets, there are types, which liked to live with poisonous worms or with poisonous centipedes. This type is called the “Centipede Cricket” and those which live with poisonous

snakes are called “Snake Crickets”. Because of the poison on it, the normal types of cricket aren’t their match. Yang Guo’s cricket was a “Snake Cricket”.

Guo Fu was very displeased with the fact that her invincible general had died, and after thinking for a while said to Yang Guo, “Brother Yang, give the black one to me.”

Yang Guo replied, “Giving it to you originally wasn’t a problem, but why did you ridicule the little black one?”

Guo Fu replied, “If you don’t give it to me fine, who wants it?” She picked up her basin and turned it over, the little black cricket fell onto the ground, and she squashed it with her right foot. Yang Guo gasped, his blood began to boil, his face went red, he couldn’t control himself and he hit her hard by the side of the ear.

Guo Fu didn’t know whether to stay quiet or cry. Wu Xiuwen shouted at him, “The little boy hits people!” and threw a fist towards Yang Guo’s chest. His family’s skills are deep. Ever since he was little his parents had taught him martial arts, so his martial arts roots are good, the fist that was coming towards Yang Guo’s chest was not light. Yang Guo flared up, and threw a fist back but Wu Xiuwen dodged it. Yang Guo leapt up to attack, but Wu Dunru stuck out his leg to hook Yang Guo’s leg, Yang Guo fell on the ground. Wu Xiuwen turned around and jumped on Yang Guo’s body. Held down by the two brothers, four fists rained down fiercely on him.

Though Yang Guo was two years older, it was difficult for two fists to defend against four. The Wu brothers had been taught some higher martial arts, and Yang Guo had only learnt very basic martial arts from Mu Nianci. He wasn’t their match. He bit his teeth and didn’t make a sound.

Wu Dunru said, “If you apologize and beg we’ll let you go.”

Yang Guo shouted, “Never!”

Wu Xiuwen threw out another two fists. Guo Fu was watching aside pleased that the Wu brothers were helping her to get revenge.

The Wu brothers knew that if they attacked the head, it would leave wounds, and if Guo Jing and Huang Rong found out, they would be blamed. So they treated Yang Guo’s body with fists and kicks. Guo Fu saw the beating was severe and was a little bit scared. But when she felt the red mark left by Yang Guo by her ear, she felt pleased and shouted out, “Hit him harder, harder!” The Wu brothers listened, and hit harder.

Yang Guo was on the ground, and when he heard Guo Fu's instructions he thought, "Guo Fu you evil little bitch, I'm going to get you for this." He felt extreme pain all over his back and it looked as if he would endure more. The Wu brothers had practiced martial arts since they were young, so their punches and kicks were strong. A normal adult wouldn't withstand it. If Yang Guo had not practiced a bit of internal energy, he would have long ago fainted. He bit his teeth harder and waved his hands wildly. Then he suddenly felt a cold and slippery object; it was the dead poisonous snake. He picked it up and threw it back at the Wu brothers.

When the Wu brothers saw the stripped poisonous snake, they gasped. Yang Guo turned his body around, and threw a fierce fist, hitting Wu Dunru in the nose causing a nosebleed. Yang Guo scampered up and quickly ran away. The Wu brothers were indignant, and chased after him. Guo Fu shouted out, "Catch him, catch him!" and followed.

Yang Guo ran on for a while and then turned around to see Wu Dunru's face full of blood, the expression on his face was furious, and knew if he was caught by the two brothers he would suffer an even more severe beating than before. So he ran and hurried to the foot of "Practicing Sword Peak", and climbed up.

Though Wu Dunru's face was full of blood, the wound didn't really hurt. It was just that feeling his face full of blood that made him angry, and he hurried after Yang Guo. Yang Guo climbed up the peak with the Wu brothers close behind unrelenting. Guo Fu was at the foot of the peak, hearing the footsteps she looked up and was pleased to see what was happening. Yang Guo hurried for a while, only to see a cliff, with nowhere else to go. Years ago, whenever Huang Yaoshi invented a new stance, he would jump across the chasm and then go to the peak top and practice it. Could Yang Guo jump across? He thought, "I'd rather jump and die, than get caught by those two and get beaten up again." He turned around and shouted, "If you come one step closer I'll jump!" Wu Dunru stopped, while Wu Xiuwen shouted back, "Jump if you want, who cares about you? You don't have the guts anyway!" As he said this he crept closer.

Yang Guo's blood rose again, and was about to jump when he saw a large loose rock from the corner of his eye. In a rush of blood and not thinking about the consequences, he stretched out his hand to move the smaller stones, the large stone did indeed began to move. He moved behind the large stone, and pushed with all his strength, the stone bounced twice and after a crashing sound, the stone began to roll down the hill. The Wu brothers were shocked when they saw him push the stone, the colour of their faces changed, and they hurriedly moved out of the way. The large stone carried numerous pieces of dirt and sand, and after moving past the Wu brothers, turned over many flowers and plants before heading into the sea. Wu Dunru panicked, his foot slipped, and he

started to roll down. Wu Xiuwen caught him a rush. The two of them couldn't stand up on the slope and the both of them rolled down for about sixty or seventy feet; luckily a tree managed to block their path.

Huang Rong was in the house when she heard a sound far away, and followed the sound quickly to "Practicing Sword Peak", only to see a field of dirt and sand, her daughter hidden in the grass, so frightened that she couldn't cry, and the Wu brothers' heads and faces full of blood. Huang Rong picked up her daughter and asked, "What happened?" Guo Fu buried herself into her mother and cried. After she finished crying she explained that Yang Guo had hit her for no reason, and when the Wu brothers helped her, Yang Guo wanted to roll a stone on them to kill them. She pushed all the blame onto Yang Guo. She didn't say anything about her squashing his cricket, or the Wu brothers beating Yang Guo. Huang Rong listened, and saw the red mark left on Guo Fu's face, the slap must have been strong, and she sympathized with her and comforted her.

Guo Jing also hurried to the scene, and saw the Wu brothers hurt and asked what happened. He was angry but also concerned about Yang Guo, and hurried up to the peak; he searched around but couldn't see a trace of him. He raised his voice and called out, "Guo'er, Guo'er." The loud voice resonated out for miles, but he did not see Yang Guo, nor did he hear a reply. Guo Jing waited a while becoming increasingly concerned and eventually descended down from the peak. He rowed around the island in a boat, searching for him until it was dark but still he couldn't see a trace of Yang Guo.

When Yang Guo pushed the stone and saw the Wu brothers roll down the peak, he had seen Huang Rong coming, and knew he would face a heavy punishment and so hid himself among the rocks in the cliff. He heard Guo Jing's call but did not reply. Yang Guo was hungry but he did not move from his hiding place among the rocks. He saw it was approaching dusk, the sea beginning to darken, and there was no sound of people anywhere nearby. After a while, the sky was lit up with stars, a cool wind was blowing; he felt cold and came out of his hiding place and gazed down the mountain. He saw clearly a light coming out from the window, and imagined the Guo couple, Ke Zhen'E, Guo Fu and the Wu brothers, eating a meal around the table; chicken, duck, fish and meat filling the table, and couldn't stop by drooling. But he thought of how they were talking about his punishment behind his back, and couldn't help but be furious. He stood there at the foot of the mountain, in the sea breeze he thought about how he had been bullied all his life, everyone looking at him coldly; he was filled with a feeling of indignity.

In reality, when Guo Jing could not find Yang Guo, how could he eat? When Huang Rong saw that her husband was troubled, she knew he wouldn't listen to her so she did the same as him, and accompanied him in his torment. Before the next day was bright the two went out searching again. Yang Guo had endured hunger for a day and a half now, and on the second morning he gave in, descended the peak, and went to a stream and caught some frogs. He peeled off their skin and picked up some dry leaves, wanting to roast them on a fire. He was by the streamside and wanted to cook the frogs immediately to cure his hunger but thought that Guo Jing and Huang Rong might see the smoke, so he went into a cave and prepared the fire. As soon as the frog's legs were golden, he ate straight away, eating a leg in one big bite. He suddenly heard Guo Jing's voice calling out, "Guo'er, Guo'er!?" He thought, "You want me to come out so you can beat me, I'm not going to come out."

That night he slept in the cave and after he had slept for a while, he awoke suddenly and saw Ouyang Feng come into the cave. He said, "Son, I've come to teach you kung fu in order for you to avoid getting beat up by the two little Wus." Yang Guo was happily surprised and followed him out of the cave, only to see him crouch on the ground, and gave out a few "gu" sounds before pushing out two palms. Yang Guo tried to follow, but his palms and kicks weren't the same. Ouyang Feng curled his hand into a fist and threw it out, Yang Guo couldn't avoid it and it landed on top of his head, the pain was severe and he got up.

After being hit on the head, he woke up; it seemed it was all just a dream. He felt his head, and came across a bump. It ached severely and he sighed repeatedly, thinking, "It looks like father has recovered and has escaped from the bell. When is he going to come and collect me, and teach me kung fu so I can avoid being bullied by others?"

He went out of the cave, and looked up at the sky, and saw many stars hanging within the branches of the trees, and remembered that Ouyang Feng had taught him kung fu. He had forgotten about this; he crouched down, gave out a few "gu" calls; he wanted to use the formula of the "Toad Stance" that Ouyang Feng had taught him in Jiaying. He tried to use his fists and legs, but whatever he did, he couldn't do this stance. He searched his mind, and threw out two palms, like he did in his dream, but that was a completely different thing. He was alone at the foot of the peak, and stared out at the sea, the lonely feeling in his heart was stronger than ever. Suddenly he heard a gentle voice from the sea calling, "Guo'er, Guo'er." He immediately replied, "I'm here. I'm here." He ran down onto the beach where Guo Jing could see him from faraway. In high spirits Guo Jing rowed quickly to the shore, and jumped onto the beach. The stars shone on the two as they rushed to each other. He picked up Yang Guo into his chest and just said, "Come back and have supper." He was emotional, his voice almost crack-

ing. When they reached the house, Huang Rong had prepared supper for them. They never mentioned what had happened again.

At dawn the next day, he called Yang Guo, the Wu brothers and Guo Fu out the hall, and invited Ke Zhen'E as well. He instructed the four disciples to kowtow to the six Jiangnan Freaks headstone, and then said to Ke Zhen'E, "Senior Master, I request your permission to take in four grand apprentices."

Ke Zhen'E was delighted and said, "That will be for the best, I congratulate you." Guo Jing then instructed Yang Guo, the Wu brothers to first kowtow to Ke Zhen'E and then underwent the ritual of a new disciple to a master towards the Guo couple.

Guo Fu smiled and asked, "Mother, I need to do this as well?"

Huang Rong replied, "Of course."

Guo Fu gleefully kowtowed to the three.

Guo Jing said seriously, "From today onwards, you four are apprentice brothers."

Guo Fu interrupted, "Wrong, its apprentice brother and sister."

Guo Jing gave his daughter a look and said, "When father has not finished speaking, don't open your mouth." He waited and then said, "From now on you four must treat each other with love and respect, share in good fortune and suffer in misery together. If there are any disturbances or conflicts, I won't look lightly upon it." He looked at Yang Guo when he said this. Yang Guo thought, "As long as you treat your daughter the same, then I won't push her around."

Ke Zhen'E took over, and passed on the rules and regulations of their school, it was the usual don't bully the weak, don't harm the innocents. The Seven Freaks had numerous rules but Ke Zhen'E couldn't remember all of them so just said the main ones. Guo Jing said, "I have learned a variety of skills, apart from the skills of the Jiangnan Seven Heroes (this is what Guo Jing called them.). The Quanzhen Sect's internal energy, the Peach Blossom Island and Beggars Clan's skills; I have learned a bit of all of them. You mustn't forget your roots so today I will teach you Grand Master's skills first.

As he was about to pass on the formula, Huang Rong saw that Yang Guo's head was down and his body was sticking out, his face had an indescribable aura, like Yang Kang's. Her heart was troubled, and thought, "Although his father didn't die directly by

my hands, it could be said that I caused his death. If I don't watch over him, he will become trouble in the future." She smiled as she thought of a plan, "Teaching four of them will be hard work. I'll teach Guo'er." Before Guo Jing could agree, Ke Zhen'E clapped his hand and said, "What an excellent idea! Your intelligence is incomparable; you can definitely make something out of this disciple." Guo Jing was pleased in his heart, he knew his wife was infinitely cleverer than him, her methods must exceed his. He didn't open his mouth to object.

Guo Fu was afraid of her father's strictness and said, "Mother, I want you to teach me."

Huang Rong smiled, "You want me because you can cause trouble and you won't be able to learn any kung fu. It will be better if your father teaches you." Guo Fu sneaked a glance at her father, and saw him staring at her; she turned around and didn't dare speak out again.

Huang Rong spoke to her husband and said, "We will set a rule: you mustn't teach Guo'er and I won't teach your three. The four of them can't pass on skills to each other, just in case they practice incorrectly, there is no need to get hurt for no reason."

Guo Jing replied, "Of course."

Huang Rong said, "Guo'er, follow me."

Yang Guo loathed Guo Fu and the Wu brothers, when he heard what Huang Rong had said, about not mixing with the other students, it was what he wanted, and followed her into the inner hall. Huang Rong led him to the study, and picked up a book saying, "Your teacher had seven teachers, their names were the Jiangnan Seven Freaks, first master is Grandpa Ke, second master was the Swift Hand Scholar Zhu Cong, now I will teach his skills to you."

As she said this she opened the book and read clearly, "Zi Yue: When practicing what you are taught, can you change? If you've got friends all over, is it extreme?" (N.B. Sorry about this translation, it's supposedly from "The Analects of Confucius", my Chinese is not at the level where I can decipher old sayings and writings.) The book that she picked was "The Analects of Confucius". Yang Guo thought this was strange but didn't dare to question her, and just repeated what she read and wrote down what she said. Throughout the day, all Huang Rong taught him was reading and writing, and refused to mention teaching kung fu.

One day after Yang Guo finished studying, he went to the back of the mountain to take a walk, and remembered Ouyang Feng. He didn't know where he was, he thought of fond memories, and at that moment flipped his body upside down, and copied the movements of Ouyang Feng. After a while, following the formula for contrary blood flow, he felt the more he stayed upside down the smoother it felt. He flipped upright and after a loud "gu" call, pushed out his two palms. He felt his body was smooth and relaxed, the gracefulness incomparable, and his body was covered with sweat. He didn't know that after a session of practicing, his internal energy had increased a level. All Ouyang Feng's kung fu was dangerous; the most lethal types of the higher set of skills. Yang Guo's intelligence and comprehension was high. Although he had learned very little in the past few days, now that he had begun to practice, his internal energy improved.

From now on, he would study and recite books and manuscripts with Huang Rong every day, and whenever he had spare time in the evenings he would go to the secluded mountainside and practice his martial arts. He didn't intend to practice in order to learn the frightening skill; it was because every time he practiced, his body would be filled with a relaxed feeling. After he has achieved this then he would stop.

He secretly practiced and Guo Jing and Huang Rong didn't know. Huang Rong taught him literature, and within three months she had taught him the whole of "The Analects of Confucius". Yang Guo was able to memorize the texts quickly. Yang Guo was able to memorize the texts quickly. Though he disliked learning texts and manuscripts, he didn't raise any objections.

In reality, Huang Rong was not happy just teaching him how to read and study, but thought, "His intelligence is not below mine and if his character is like his father's and he learns kung fu he could definitely cause a lot of trouble in the future. Why not teach him to study, and shape him into a worthy and honest person. That had its good points." That's why she picked "The Analects of Confucius" and now she would follow it with "Meng Zi".

A few months past and Huang Rong had still not passed on any martial arts, nor had Yang Guo asked about it. Ever since the fight with the other children, he had not tried to mingle with them, and kept himself to himself, becoming even more of a loner. He thought that although Guo Jing had taken him in as a student, he didn't have the intention of passing any skills to him. He already wasn't a match for the Wu brothers. If he had a fight with them after a year or so under Guo Jing's teachings, it would be difficult for him not to die at their hands. He made a decision, when there was a chance to leave the island, he would take it.

One afternoon when Yang Guo was supposed to study a few passages of “Meng Zi”, he slipped out of the library and went out for a walk on the beach. He looked out at the sea, at the white waves and foam, and thought, “When will I be able to leave this place, and happily leave the others where they are.” As he was gazing, he suddenly heard some wind sounds from the Peach Blossom forest. Curious, he went over to have a look, and eventually found his way. From a distance could see it was Guo Jing in the forest teaching the Wu brothers some fists and kicks. He was teaching them a stance of the “Trapping Hand”, “Holding the Bridge”, “Changing the Pillar” (tuo liang huan zhu). Guo Jing gave them pointers, and then demonstrated it, instructing the Wu brothers to copy him. Yang Guo just took a glance, and recognized the essence of the stance immediately, but the Wu brothers practiced and practiced but couldn’t quite get it. Guo Jing himself wasn’t the best at picking things up immediately, and knew how hard things could be, so did not lose his temper with them and repeated this move again.

Yang Guo sighed and thought, “If Uncle Guo was willing to teach me, I wouldn’t be as stupid as them.” Feeling unhappy, he returned to his room and slept. After supper he read a few more books, but thought this was a waste of his time and so he went to the beach again. He practiced the punch and kicks that Guo Jing taught, and went over it a few times before he started to feel troubled and thought, “If I secretly practice their skills to a much better standard than the Wu brothers, I won’t have to be scared of them.” This idea initially was good but as he thought about it he changed his mind. “Uncle Guo doesn’t want to teach me so why should I learn it in secret? Hmm... even if he decides to teach me, I won’t learn it. I may get beaten to death but who cares?” As he thought about this, he felt pride but also sadness. He sat and leaned on the cliff face; the soothing sound of the waves of the sea eventually sending him to sleep.

In the morning, Yang Guo did not go for breakfast, nor did he go to the library to study, he was by the sea and managed to gather several large clams which he roasted on a fire and ate. He thought, “Even if I don’t eat Guo food, I won’t starve to death.” He saw a large boat and a small boat by the shore. “I won’t be able to operate that large boat, and I can’t row far in that small boat, how can I escape from this island?” He thought about this for half a day, having nothing to do, he went beside a large cliff face and flipped his body, and practiced the internal energy that Ouyang Feng taught.

At the point where his blood was beginning to flow quickly, where his body felt lucid and smooth, he suddenly heard a shout from behind. He was caught unawares and fell down, his legs and arms numb, he couldn’t get back up. It was Guo Fu and the Wu brothers arriving on the scene. Behind the cliff face was an extremely quiet and peaceful area, with no one around. Because the paths of the island were designed to follow the five changes, Guo Fu and the brothers didn’t dare to run about blindly. They were

looking for a place to play and followed a path, eventually winding up here where Yang Guo was practicing. It was fortunate that Yang Guo's internal strength was shallow; otherwise the interruption by the three would have scrambled his veins and meridians, causing him to suffer paralysis.

Guo Fu clapped her hand and said, "What are you doing here?" Yang Guo supported himself on the cliff face and slowly pulled himself up, gave Guo Fu a stare, turned around and walked away.

Wu Xiuwen called out, "Hey, apprentice sister asked a question; are you pretending to not care or are you ignoring us?"

Yang Guo coldly said, "How can you take charge in this matter?"

Wu Xiuwen was offended and said, "We only care about having a good time, not greeting mad dogs."

Yang Guo replied, "You are right, mad dogs will bite when they see people, three mad dogs have just come, barking and howling madly."

Wu Dunru angrily said, "You said three mad dogs? You abuse people?"

Yang Guo laughed and replied, "No, I only scold dogs, not people."

Wu Dunru could not take anymore and curled a fist and threw it out at Yang Guo, who managed to avoid it. Wu Xiuwen remembered what their teacher had said about not fighting amongst each other. If news of this ever got to teacher, they would be punished, so he grabbed hold of his brother's arm and laughed coldly at Yang Guo saying, "Big brother Yang, you've been under the care of master wife learning martial arts, we three from master. A few months have passed but we don't know who has advanced the most. How about sparring with each other, comparing skills, do you dare?"

Yang Guo was aggravated and originally wanted to say, "I don't have your luck. Master wife has not taught me any kind of martial arts." But when he heard the four words "do you dare to", he extinguished his angry feelings and prevented himself from saying what he intended to. He gave out a grunt and stared coldly at him.

Wu Xiuwen said, "We are here to test each others skill, no matter who wins and who loses, no one is allowed to tell master or master wife. Even if your head is cracked open, you must say you fell. If the loser complains about the winner, then they are born of

dogs, a bastard; big brother Yang, do you dare?” As he said the words “do you dare” his eyes went blank, as Yang Guo threw a heavy fist into Wu Xiuwen’s left eye. Wu Xiuwen jumped back to prevent himself falling over.

Wu Dunru said, “You don’t care about face do you with a punch like that.” He then used the punches and kicks that Guo Jing taught him, and attacked Yang Guo in the abdomen. Yang Guo could not avoid this punch and got hit. Then he saw Wu Dunru throw out a kick at him, and then he suddenly thought of something and he remembered the moves that Guo Jing taught to the Wu brothers yesterday. He bent his right leg, and with his left hand pushed the incoming right leg, it was the “Secret Hero in the Noisy City” Quan Jinfa’s “Trapping Hand”, the stance of “Holding the Bridge, Changing the Pillar” (tuo liang huan zhu), though it wasn’t a very special move, it is useful when facing an enemy. Yesterday when Guo Jing repeated the move, the Wu brothers learned it, but when it was put in use for real, it didn’t compare with the Yang Guo’s, who only had a glance at it and just went over it once. Wu Dunru fell over after this move by Yang Guo.

Wu Xiuwen was already aggravated with the punch he received in his eye, but when he saw his brother fall he picked himself up and threw out a left punch. Yang Guo dodged to the left, but he only knew very little of the stances of the punches, so he couldn’t compete as a right fist of Wu Xiuwen hit him squarely on the right side. Wu Dunru picked himself up and the brothers attacked from both sides. The brothers’ martial arts foundation was already stronger than Yang Guo’s, and he wasn’t a match. Added to the fact that the Wu brothers had been training under Guo Jing for a few months, how would he be able to stand up against them? After a while, seven, eight punches had landed on Yang Guo’s head, back and waist. Yang Guo flared up and thought, “Even if I get beaten to death by you, I won’t try to escape.” He wildly threw some punches out; they weren’t at all from any set of orthodox skills.

Wu Xiuwen saw the state that Yang Guo was in and was slightly afraid. They had already taught him a lesson and didn’t want to carry on. He said, “You’ve already lost, we’ll let you go, there’s no need to fight more.”

Yang Guo shouted, “Who wants you to ease off?” and dashed at him, attacking fiercely. Wu Xiuwen stretched out his left hand and with his right hand grabbed hold of his chest, trying to pull him forward in a rush. At this time, Wu Dunru threw two punches at Yang Guo’s back. Yang Guo couldn’t stand steadily, and fell forwards. Wu Dunru held his head with two hands and said, “You ready to give up?”

“Who wants to give up to you mad dogs?”

Wu Dunru was offended and pushed Yang Guo's face in the sand and said, "If you don't give up then suffocate to death."

Yang Guo's eyes, nose, and face were full of sand and dirt; he couldn't breathe, after a while, his body felt like cracking. Wu Dunru was holding his head with two hands, Wu Xiuwen was on his back, Yang Guo could not escape and as he was finding it difficult to breathe, the internal energy of the "Toad Stance" that he has been practicing over the last few days suddenly became fluent; a warm chi was flowing through his "dan tian". All of a sudden, his body was full of energy as he leapt up fiercely, his eyes closed when he threw out two palms. It hit Wu Xiuwen in the lower abdomen; Wu Xiuwen gave out a cry before falling to the ground unconscious. The palm's power came from Ouyang Feng's "Toad Stance", the power of it of course could not compare to Ouyang Feng's, and Yang Guo had not intentionally used it. But since he was in danger he involuntarily used it, and Wu Xiuwen could not withstand it.

Wu Dunru jumped back but when he saw his brother didn't move and his eyes were rolled back, he knew that Yang Guo had killed his brother. He was startled but shouted out, "Master, master, brother has died!" He sobbed as ran to take the news to Guo Jing. Guo Fu was scared, and followed.

Yang Guo spat out the sand and dirt, and rubbed the sand off his face, but felt he didn't have an ounce of strength left in his body; it was extremely difficult for him to even move one step. He saw Wu Xiuwen in front of him, not moving, and heard Wu Dunru cry out, "My brother is dead!" and knew something was wrong but he didn't have the strength to run away.

Some time passed before he saw Guo Jing and Huang Rong hurriedly leaping to the scene. Guo Jing picked up Wu Xiuwen and placed his palm on Wu Xiuwen's chest. Huang Rong ran to Yang Guo's side and asked, "Where's Ouyang Feng? Where is he?" Yang Guo did not reply. Huang Rong asked, "When did he teach you the "Toad Stance"?" It looked like Yang Guo was listening, but it also seemed that he wasn't, his eyes losing their focus, just staring in front, his mouth tightly closed, scared of letting one word slip out. Huang Rong saw that he didn't care, so held his two arms and said, "Tell me! Where's Ouyang Feng?" Yang Guo still did not move.

After a while, Wu Xiuwen regained consciousness after Guo Jing had channeled his internal energy into him. Guo Jing then brought Ke Zhen'E and Guo Fu to the scene. When Ke Zhen'E heard from Guo Fu that Yang Guo flipped his body, and heard that he had killed Wu Xiuwen, he knew that Yang Guo was Ouyang Feng's heir. Full of hate and revenge, he rushed to Yang Guo's side, hearing Huang Rong ask, "Where is Ouyang

Feng.” But Yang Guo still didn’t care. He walked up to Yang Guo and held his iron staff high, and shouted out, “Where is Ouyang Feng that scoundrel? If you don’t tell me, I’ll kill you with one strike!”

Without care for his life he shouted back, “He’s not a scoundrel, he’s a good person. You can kill me if you want, but I won’t say a word.”

Ke Zhen’E was angry and raised his weapon, ready to strike down. Guo Jing shouted out, “Senior Master, don’t! Only to hear a thudding sound, as the staff evaded Yang Guo’s body and struck into the sand. Ke Zhen’E had wanted to scare him into saying something but as the weapon reached his head, there was still no reply so he let his weapon slip.

Ke Zhe E shouted out, “You refuse to speak?”

Yang Guo shouted back, “If you’ve got guts go ahead and kill me, I’m not scared of you blind man.” Guo Jing rushed over, and slapped Yang Guo across the face fiercely. “You dare to be disrespectful towards your Grand Master!”

Yang Guo did not cry, and calmly said, “You people won’t raise your hands to kill me, fine. I’ll do it myself!” He turned around and rushed towards the sea.

Guo Jing shouted, “Guo’er, come back!” Yang Guo walked even faster. Guo Jing went over to stop him but Huang Rong said, “Stop.” Guo Jing stopped only to see Yang Guo enter the sea, heading into the waves.

Guo Jing gasped and said, “He can’t swim well, Rong’er, we need to save him.” and went to rescue Yang Guo.

Huang Rong said, “He’s not dead yet, there’s no need to rush.” After a while, Yang Guo had not returned. She admitted defeat to Yang Guo’s pride, and went into the sea. She was a good swimmer, rescuing someone close to the shore was easy for her, she dived into the water and pulled up Yang Guo and carried him back to the beach. She put him on the cliff side rocks, letting him spit out the sea water by himself and slowly regain consciousness.

Guo Jing looked at his master, and then his wife and asked, “So?”

Huang Rong replied, “He learned his kung fu before arriving on the island; even if Ouyang Feng did come, we would know about it.” Guo Jing nodded. She asked, “How’s

little Wu's injury?"

Guo Jing replied, "It looks like he'll need at least two months rest."

Ke Zhen'E said, "Tomorrow I'll leave for Jiaying."

Huang Rong and Guo Jing looked at each other, understanding his intentions; he would never live with someone who was related to Ouyang Feng in any way. Huang Rong said, "Senior Master, this is your home, why do you give in to the child?"

That night Guo Jing summoned Yang Guo to his room and said, "Guo'er, all that has happened is in the past, we won't mention it. You were disrespectful to Senior Master, I cannot allow you to stay with my school, from now on, call me Uncle Guo. I'm afraid that Uncle Guo's inability to teach you will lead to your future failures. In a few days, I'll take you to Mount Zhongnan to Chongyang Palace and request Quanzhen sect's elder Changchun Zi (Eternal Spring) to accept you into their sect. Quanzhen sect is famous for its martial arts, I hope you take this opportunity in Chongyang Garden to hone your skills and reflect on your character, and so, hopefully, you will become a gentleman."

Yang Guo replied, "Yes, Uncle Guo." He changed his greeting, and didn't regard Guo Jing as his teacher anymore.

Guo Jing got up early in the morning and prepared money and luggage; he said good-byes to his wife, his master, his daughter and the Wu brothers. He left with Yang Guo by boat. They arrived at Zheijiang's Red Sea. Guo Jing bought two horses, and he and Yang Guo traveled north. Yang Guo had never ridden a horse before, but now his internal energy has some foundation, and after a few days of adjusting, he could freely control the reins. He was young and eager, always riding ahead of Guo Jing.

The next day, the two passed the Yellow River (Yangtze) and arrived at Xiaxi. Ever since the Jin lost to the Mongols, everywhere north of the Yangtze was under the influence of the Mongols. In Guo Jing's younger days, he once was a general in the Mongol army. If he met any one who knew him, he knew there would be trouble so he changed his two horses for two rough looking mules and changed into old torn clothing; he disguised himself as a troubled villager. Yang Guo also changed his clothing and wore a blue green hat, and then got on the mule. The mule was bad tempered, and it was slow, Yang Guo spent the next few days trying to break its temper.

One day they arrived at Cage Village (Fanchuan); it was in the area of Mount Zhongnan. The village got its name from the Kai General Fan who had successfully captured a city. Along the way they passed winding mountain ranges, pine forests, fields of vegetables and cotton; its scenery not unlike that of Jiangnan.

After Yang Guo left Peach Blossom Island, his feelings towards the events on the island were still there but he would not mention them. He couldn't hold onto this stance, and it slipped out, "Uncle Guo, this place is quite similar to our island."

When Guo Jing heard him say "our island" he was pleased to no end and said, "Guo'er, we are not far from Mount Zhongnan, remember to take this opportunity at Quanzhen and learn from their teachings. A few years later on, I will come back for you and take you back to the island."

Yang Guo shook his head and said, "I will never go back to the island." Guo Jing forgot about Yang Guo's young age, the words that he said came straight from his heart. Guo Jing had no reply to this. After a while he said, "You are angry with Uncle and Auntie Guo?"

Yang Guo replied, "How can I dare to? It's you that should be angry with me." Guo Jing gave up, and didn't open his mouth again.

The two of them went up a hill, and in the afternoon, they arrived at a temple on the hill's peak. Guo Jing saw three words were written on top of the doors, "Light Everywhere Temple". He tied the mules to a pine tree outside the temple and went inside for a meal. Inside the temple were seven or eight monks, when they saw he was plainly dressed, the monks calmly gave them two bowls of noodles and seven or eight buns for them to eat. Yang Guo and Guo Jing sat on a rock underneath a pine tree to eat their noodles; they glanced around and saw there was a large stone slab behind the pine tree. Tall grass was concealing what was on the slab, only two words could be seen, "Changchun". Guo Jing was moved, and went over to take a closer look. It was Changchun Zi Qiu Chuji's writing, and on it was a poem left by him; "The gloomy sky has come to earth, why doesn't it teach ten thousand souls to be bitter? The ten thousand souls want to be delayed; the cries of the dead have no sound. Shouting up to the sky but it won't reply, their fragmented slender forms toil. The thousands are confused in peace, teaching the living to live their soul."

When Guo Jing saw this poem, it reminded him of the events ten years ago when he was on the plains of Mongolia, touching the stone slab without saying a word, reminiscing about the time when he first met Qiu Chuji.

Yang Guo asked, “What is written on the stone slab?”

Guo Jing replied, “It is a poem written by your Grand Master Qiu. He has seen the troubles of the world and was extremely sad.” He then explained the poem to Yang Guo and said, “Elder Qiu’s martial arts are outstanding; he cares about the common people and is a respected teacher. Your father was an able student of elder Qiu. I’m sure that on your father’s behalf, he will treat you especially well. Do your best at studying the martial arts there and you will definitely become something in the future.”

Yang Guo asked, “Uncle Guo, I have one question I want to ask you.”

“What is it?”

“How did my father die?”

Guo Jing’s face lost its colour, as he remembered the events of the Iron Spear Temple, his body trembled, unable to speak.

“Who caused my father’s death?” Guo Jing did not reply.

Yang Guo remembered when he asked his mother the same question, she responded the same way. Although Guo Jing treated him like his own son, Huang Rong was neglectful of him. Although he was young, he felt that there was a hidden secret to this matter. He couldn’t hold back and shouted, “My father’s death was caused by you and Auntie Guo wasn’t it?”

Guo Jing was shocked, and slammed down his hand on the stone, and bellowed angrily, “Who told you these lies?” The power in his palm was great; because of his angry reaction the stone slab continually shook. Yang Guo saw his anger and said, “I’m sorry, I won’t ever say these sorts of things again, don’t be angry Uncle Guo.”

Guo Jing loved him very much, and when he heard Yang Guo’s apology, his feelings dissipated and he was about to comfort him when he heard a “hey” shout from behind, the voices behind it were startling. He turned around, and saw that it was two middle aged Taoists standing at the entrance to the mount; their eyes fixed on him, their faces with a furious expression. They were taking great interest in the stone slab and wanted to take a closer look at the two. The Taoists took a glance and then moved. Guo Jing saw that their steps were light; they possessed martial arts. He thought that since Mount Zhongnan is not far; the places around here should be filled with people from the Chongyang Palace. The two Taoists were about forty, and were the students of the

Quanzhen Seven Masters. For as long as Guo Jing had lived on Peach Blossom Island in seclusion, he hadn't sent news to Ma Yu. He wasn't familiar with the students of Quanzhen, and only knew that Quanzhen had become famous so that Ma Yu, Qiu Chuji, Wang Chu must have accepted many students. Their name in Wulin had become increasingly famous; they had done heroic deeds, solved troubles and disasters, done countless good deeds. Whenever someone hears the name Quanzhen in Wulin, they could only admire it. He wanted to ascend the mount and greet Qiu Chuji, and it was luck that he could be accompanied by two of their students.

He stepped up his pace to the entrance of the mountain, only to see the two Taoists step up their pace to about one hundred feet in front of him, not turning back. Guo Jing called out, "Please wait Taoist brothers, I have a request." His voice was clear and strong, his voice could be heard near and far but the two Taoists did not stop but sped up again. Guo Jing thought, "Could those two be deaf?" He increased his efforts and within a few steps he was in front of them. He turned around and said, "Greetings." He said this while carrying the luggage.

The two saw how swift his movements were and their faces changed. They saw he was carrying luggage, and thought he was going to circulate his chi and ambush them so they took a few steps and one evaded right, the other left then turned around and asked, "Who are you?"

Guo Jing said, "Are you two the students of Mount Zhongnan's Chongyang Palace?"

The leaner of the Taoist replied, "Why are you here?"

Guo Jing said, "I'm an old friend of elder Qiu, I've come to see him, sorry for the trouble."

The other shorter Taoist replied, "If you've the nerve go, why don't you move!" As he said this he struck out a palm quickly. Guo Jing had to move right to avoid it. The two Taoists moved into position immediately after the palm moving left and right, wanting to attack together. Guo Jing was cut off in the middle. The two moves were called "Cutting off the Door". It was the refined skills of the Quanzhen sect, how would Guo Jing not know it? He saw that the two Taoists did not ask for an explanation and had already used force to try to harm him. He was slightly startled, wondering whether there was a misunderstanding, he didn't try to clear it up, nor did he try to evade as he heard two sounds, as two palms landed on the side of his body from the two Taoists.

From the two palms, Guo Jing already knew how strong they were. Guo Jin felt that the two Taoists internal energy was able, confirming that they were the students of Seven Masters of Quanzhen, and thought that he could be classed in the same generation as them. When the two palms were coming at him, Guo Jing had already circulated his chi for defense so all he needed to do was bring his internal strength up to the right level and he wouldn't be hurt. But he also didn't return the power in the palms, causing the Taoists palms to hurt and swell. It wasn't serious; after some initial pain the feeling dissipated.

The Taoists had practiced that move for ten years, but the move didn't even seem to affect him one bit, and they were astonished. They both gave a whistle; they leapt up and ferociously kicked out at Guo Jing's chest. Guo Jing thought this was odd, "The students of Quanzhen have been taught the values of Taoism, and they treat people with great respect, why have these students started to use violence for no reason?"

He saw that the two used "The Mandarin Duck's Looping Kick" (yuan yang lian huan tui) set of stances, but still his face did not change and he ignored the attack. He heard numerous crashing sounds as several footprints were left on his chest. The Taoists kicked out six times in all, as if they were kicking a sand bag. They relaxed only to see the enemy motionless, not even being harmed one bit. They were astonished since they had attacked harder than last time by several levels. They thought, "How come this crook is so powerful? Even our teacher and his apprentice brothers do not have this amount of skill." They carefully studied Guo Jing; he had dense eyebrows and large eyes, a sturdy body, clothed in rough clothes, like a villager, he had no intention of leaving and stood there, without making a sound.

Yang Guo saw that the Taoists were punching and kicking Uncle Guo but Guo Jing did not retaliate. He couldn't stand it and shouted out, "You two smelly Taoists, why are you hitting Uncle Guo?"

Guo Jing quickly said, "Guo'er, keep your mouth shut. Come over here and greet the two Taoist brothers."

Yang Guo walked forwards and thought, "What's the matter with you Uncle Guo, why are you protecting them?"

The two Taoists gave each other a glance, and after two "sha" noises, they withdrew their swords from their waists. The short Taoist used the stance "Scour the Ocean to Slaughter the Dragon" (tan hai tu long) and aimed for Guo Jing's lower body, the other

used “Starry Wind Sweeping Leaves” (gang feng sao ye) and aimed to cut down Yang Guo’s right leg.

Guo Jing did not pay attention to the sword that was coming in at him, but instead looked at the skinny Taoist who was unleashing a lethal move and thought, “The child has not done anything to you, so why such a lethal move? How can it be that the sword is aiming to cut his leg in half?” He then moved his body, his left hand placed on the short Taoist’s sword handle, “Smoothly Pushing the Boat”, and lightly pushed to the left. The short Taoist turned his sword around involuntarily, and after a clashing sound, the skinny Taoist’s sword was intercepted, stopping his stance. Guo Jing used the enemy to fight the enemy, the move coming from the “Empty Hands Entering A Hundred Blades” set of kung fu, right now there are only two enemies, even if there was eight or ten people attacking at once, he could still use the enemy’s knife to attack the enemy’s sword, the enemy’s spear against the enemy’s whip, utilizing the enemy to attack the enemy, one beating many.

The two Taoist felt their wrists were getting numb, and starting to feel pain; they slanted their bodies and jumped away, turning their bodies. They stared at Guo Jing, frightened but also admiring him at the same time, they whistled out again and their swords were thrust out, once again.

Guo Jing thought, “You two have just learned the “Big Dipper Formation”. Though it is a higher set of sword skills, there are only two of you, your foundation for sword skills is not yet good enough, what use is it?”

Afraid that their swords would strike Yang Guo, he moved his body and evaded the two swords, and picked up Yang Guo with his right hand. He shouted out, “I am elder Qiu’s old friend; there is no need for this.”

The skinny Taoist said, “Even if you are elder Mao Chongma’s old friend it wouldn’t matter.”

Guo Jing said, “Indeed; Elder Ma has taught me kung fu as well.”

The short Taoist angrily replied, “You lying crook; the next thing you are going to tell me is that ancestor Yang has taught you kung fu.” They straightened their swords and aimed for Guo Jing’s chest.

Guo Jing saw that the two did belong to Quanzhen sect, but he could not believe that they are treating him as an enemy. His relationship with the Seven Masters of

Quanzhen wasn't anything ordinary, and he wanted Yang Guo to learn martial arts at Chongyang Palace; he couldn't be rude to the Palace's Taoists so he just evaded and did not attack.

The two Taoist were frightened. They had known long ago that their opponent was superior to them, and they wouldn't be able to hit him, so they made a hand signal, and changed their sword style. They sent out many strokes, now all aimed at Yang Guo's chest, sides and back. Every stance they used was intended to kill.

Guo Jing saw that Taoists did not hold anything back with their sword strokes towards a child; he couldn't hold back his anger for any longer. The short Taoist came in with a ferocious stroke, Guo Jing suddenly shot out his right hand; the first and second fingers opened, and held the blade of the sword. He twisted his wrist inwards, his elbow now facing the short Taoist's nose. The short Taoist used his strength to pull free, but couldn't move his long sword, he saw that Guo Jing's elbow coming towards him, and knew that if he didn't die from it he would be seriously hurt so he let go and jumped back.

Guo Jing's martial arts were at a level where he could do what he wanted. It didn't matter if he lifted his hand or raised his foot; the result would be the same. He moved the fingers of his right hand, the sword now stood erect, the handle flicking upwards. The skinny Taoist was aiming for Yang Guo's neck, his sword tip was struck but the sword handle moved, and after a clashing sound, his right arm grew hot, his body was shaking and he could do nothing but let go.

The two said together, "The perverted scoundrel is too powerful, let's get away!" They turned around as they said this.

Guo Jing had been insulted many times in his life, he has been called, "fool", "idiot", even a "crook", but this is the first time that someone has called a perverted scoundrel. He didn't put Yang Guo down, carrying him he hurried after the two, after one step with his right foot, he leapt over the two Taoists then he turned around and shouted, "What did you call me?"

The short Taoist was frightened, but managed to say, "If you don't want to marry the one named Long, then why have you come to Mount Zhongnan?" As he was speaking, he was afraid that Guo Jing would attack and retreated three steps at the same time.

Guo Jing stopped and thought, "I want to marry the one named Long, who is this girl named Long? Why do I want to marry her? I've already have Rong'er, why would I

want to marry someone else?” He stood there as he thought about what was going on. The two Taoists saw that he was standing still, he seemed to be distracted; they glanced at each other and quickly ran past him, hurrying up the mountain.

Yang Guo saw that Guo Jing was not fully aware; he lightly came down to the ground and said, “Uncle Guo, the two smelly Taoists have escaped.”

Guo Jing woke from his daydream and grunted, before saying, “They said I wanted to marry the girl named Long, who is she?”

Yang Guo said, “I don’t know, the two didn’t even try to clear things up before using force, they must thought you were another person.”

Guo Jing smiled, “It must be, how come I didn’t think of that? Let’s go up the mountain!”

Yang Guo picked up the two swords that the two Taoists abandoned. Guo Jing looked at the sword handle; “Chongyang Palace” was imprinted on the handle. The two went on their way. After about an hour they came to the Golden Lotus Chamber and without stopping carried on through the rugged terrain. They stepped on some loose rocks as they reached Mao Yuan Cliff (Hanging Brave Cliff), then the two ascended up it. As they passed the Sun and Moon Cliff (ri yue), the sky was getting dark; when they got to Holding Son Cliff (bao zi), the new moon came out. The appearance of the Holding Son Cliff was peculiar, like a mother holding her son. The two traveled for a while, before Guo Jing said, “Guo’er, are you tired?”

Yang Guo shook his head and said, “No.”

Guo Jing said, “Okay, we’ll continue on our way.”

They walked on, only to see a large rock formation blocking their way. The impression of the rocks was like being in a haunted forest, with one looking like an old woman bending over them. Yang Guo was slightly frightened, and then heard a sound from behind the rock, and four Taoists leapt out, blocking the way and standing motionless.

Guo Jing placed the luggage in front of him and said, “I am Peach Blossom Island’s Guo Jing, and I am here to see elder Qiu.”

A tall Taoist stepped forward and chuckled, “Hero Guo is known by everyone, he is also senior Huang’s son in law; how can you be so shameless and pretend to be him? Leave

quickly!”

Guo Jing thought, “How am I shameless?” He held his temper and said, “I am indeed Guo Jing, could you request elder Qiu to sort this matter out.”

The tall Taoist retorted, “You’ve come to Mount Zhongnan with force, you must be tired of your life. I don’t care how powerful you are, you are incapable of reaching Chongyang Palace.” As he was speaking the short and skinny Taoist thrust out a sword, and as soon as he finished his sentence he stepped up, ran along the peak of the rock and used the “Separating the Flower, Brushing Away the Willow” (fen hua fu liu) aiming at Guo Jing’s waist.

Guo Jing thought, “I haven’t been in Jianghu for ten years, have the rules changed?”

He moved his body to evade the strike, and as he was about to speak, the other three Taoists extended their swords, surrounding Guo Jing and Yang Guo.

Guo Jing said, “What can I do to convince you four that I am Guo Jing?”

The tall Taoist snorted, “If you could remove my sword from my grasp.” As he said this, he performed another move, this time the sword heading straight for the chest. The sword that was coming at him was light, the tip of the sword swaying. It wasn’t like an ordinary sword hacking downward and he wasn’t showing any respect to Guo Jing; he performed this move casually.

Guo Jing chuckled and thought, “How hard will it be to remove your sword?” As he saw the tip coming towards him, he held his second finger with his thumb and flicked out at the sword tip, after a “weng” noise, the Taoist couldn’t hold on to the sword, and sword was released in midair. Guo Jing didn’t wait for the sword to come down, three more flicks followed by three “weng” noises, and the handles of the other three long swords were up in the air, the blades brightly shining in the moonlight.

Yang Guo shouted out, “Are you convinced now?” Normally Guo Jing would aim to keep the opponent standing, but he was offended by the tall Taoist’s lack of respect in his stance so he used the “Divine Flicking Finger” skill. This was Huang Yaoshi’s most refined skill; Guo Jing had lived on Peach Blossom Island for a few years and was taught it by him. His internal energy is profound and when he used the skill; it was something out of the ordinary.

The four Taoist's swords were forced from their hands, and they didn't know what move the enemy used to do this. The tall Taoist shouted, "The scoundrel uses witchcraft, let's leave." As he said this he jumped behind the Old Woman Cliff, and hurriedly escaped. The other three followed and disappeared into the night.

Today, Guo Jing heard someone call him a "scoundrel" for the first time, and now someone said he uses witchcraft; he didn't know whether to be angry or to laugh. He said, "Guo'er, place the swords neatly on a rock near the path."

Yang Guo said, "Yes." He picked up the swords, and along with the two he was holding, placed them on a green rock. He was in awe of Guo Jing's skills, his mouth wanted to open up and say the words, "Uncle Guo, I don't want to learn from the smelly Taoists, I want to learn from you." Then he remembered all the events of Peach Blossom Island and he swallowed the words.

The two turned around two bends and eventually wound up at what seemed to be a large area of wilderness. Suddenly, the sound of weapons unsheathing could be heard; seven Taoists leapt out from the pine forest, each one holding a long sword.

Guo Jing saw that they had leapt into a formation, four to the left of him, three to the right; it was the "Big Dipper Formation". His heart shivered, and thought, "There will be some difficulty in facing this formation." He didn't dare to be over confident, and quietly whispered to Yang Guo, "Go back to the rock behind us and wait for me there, go as far as possible so I won't be hindered by looking out for you."

Yang Guo nodded. He didn't want them to look weak in front of Taoists, so he loosened his pants and called out, "Uncle Guo, I'm going to the toilet." After he said this, he turned around and hurried to the rock. Guo Jing was pleased, "The child is very clever, catching up to Rong'er, but I hope he goes on the righteous path and learns well."

Guo Jing turned around to face the seven Taoists. The seven had their backs facing the moon, he couldn't see their faces that clearly, but he saw that the first six had long beards, they were not young, the seventh was smaller, and his age must be lower compared to the others. He thought, "The most important thing is to go up the mountain and explain any misunderstanding to elder Qiu, why should I tangle with these people?" He shifted his body, and shimmied to the left, assuming the "Northern Star Position".

The seven didn't hear him say anything, only seeing him hurriedly moving to the left, and didn't know what he was up to. The Taoist in the "Tian Quan" position whistled, or-

dering the six others to the left, wanting to encircle Guo Jing. Guo Jing knew they would move together so he moved right two steps to force the enemy to move again, still assuming the “Northern Star Position”. The Taoist in the “Tian Quan” position wanted three of them to attack, but saw Guo Jing’s position was strange; the three of them weren’t able to attack him. Instead, the seven of them were open to attack; the seven weren’t able to defend each other and each of them suffered a sudden attack. Their left hands waved, and then they turned their formation around. As they were moving their feet, Guo Jing moved two steps forward maintaining the “Northern Star Position”, spreading the position of the “Big Dipper Formation”. The seven were in an ineffective position; it was hard for them to attack and hard for them to defend.

The “Big Dipper Formation” was the Quanzhen sect’s highest kung fu. At its most refined state, when seven people of extremely high martial arts combined together, it could be said that it has no match under heaven. Guo Jing knew the essence of the formation; only by assuming the “Northern Star Position” was he able to drive the position, and control its movements, not allowing it freedom. However, because the seven of them weren’t fluent with the formation it allowed him to do this. If it was Ma Yu, Qiu Chui Ji who was controlling the formation, the enemy would not be allowed to so easily to assume the “Northern Star Position”. The seven of them changed positions a few times, Guo Jing dominated the formation and he didn’t make a sound, just concentrating on maintaining the important position.

The Taoist in the “Tian Shu” (Hanging Sky) position was experienced and noticed that something wasn’t right and called, “Change formation!” The seven Taoists scattered, heading right and swerving left, hurrying from east to west, wanting to jumble up the formation, trying to confuse the enemy. After a short while, the seven Taoists were in formation again. The Taoists had changed positions amongst themselves, and now they had moved from a western position to a southeast position where they arranged the formation. Once they were in position, the Taoists in the “Tian Xuan” (Jade Sky) and “Yu Heng” (Weighing Jade) positions pointed their swords and rushed forward, seeing the enemy in a northern position from their rearrangement, his feet motionless and his palms uneven, a smile crept upon their faces. However they suddenly realized, “If us two go and rush forward, the positions “Kai Yang” (Opening Sun) and the “Tian Xuan” (Jade Sky) will be in great danger.” As they stopped, the Taoist in the “Tian Shu” shouted out, “Don’t attack, quickly retreat!” After a motionless while, the startled Taoist in the “Tian Quan” position ordered the other six to change formation.

Yang Guo didn’t understand, only seeing the Taoists moving around wildly. Guo Jing would either move east, west, south or north a few steps, the seven Taoists still could not unleash even half a move. The more he watched, the more interested he became,

and suddenly Guo Jing clapped his palms together shouting, “Apologies!” and moved left two steps.

The “Big Dipper Formation” was now in Guo Jing’s control, and he rushed to the left. If the seven Taoists didn’t follow, their backs will be exposed with no way to defend. In martial art terms this was extremely serious and ominous so the seven Taoists had no choice but to follow to the left. After a while, the seven Taoists fell into Guo Jing’s trap, unable to hold the formation. When Guo Jing ran fast, the seven Taoists ran fast, when Guo Jing slowed down, the seven Taoists slowed down. The young Taoist had the weakest internal energy and after being forced to circle around over ten times in an urgent manner by Guo Jing, his head spun and his breathing was ragged. He felt like he could collapse at any minute but he knew that if the “Big Dipper Formation” had one less person, the whole formation would break down; he could only grind his teeth and exert all his energy to hold on.

Guo Jing wasn’t young, but since he had lived on the island with Huang Rong and he had little contact with the outside world, he had lost little of the young Guo Jing. When he saw the seven Taoists were rushing around amusingly he thought, “Today I have suffered insults for no reason at all; not only did they call me a perverted scoundrel, they said I used witchcraft. I didn’t use any witchcraft for you to see; then doesn’t that mean I’ve been insulted in vain?” He then loudly called out, “Guo’er, watch me use some witchcraft!” He suddenly leapt up to the tall rocks. The seven Taoists were under Guo Jing’s control, they of course had to follow; if they didn’t follow, the weakness of the formation will be revealed. As a few of them hesitated, the Taoist in the “Tian Quan” position quickly ordered everyone to leap up, bringing the formation onto the cliff. Before their legs had steadied themselves, Guo Jing swiftly moved onto the top of a pine tree. Although they were at a distance from each other, it was neither too far nor too close; he was still maintaining the “Northern Star Position” and it would be convenient for him to attack from above.

The seven Taoists all secretly feared the worst and thought, “Where on earth did this tyrant appear from; today our sect will lose face.” With these thoughts in their minds, they couldn’t afford to stop and each one leaped up to a tree branch.

Guo Jing laughed, “Come down!” He leapt down from the tree and stretched out his hand towards the Taoist in the “Kai Yang” position and grabbed his leg.

The strongest aspect of the “Big Dipper Formation” is being able to respond from the left and right, mutually aiding each other. As Guo Jing attacked the “Kai Yang” position, the “Yao Guang” (moving light) and “Yu Heng” position could not come down and help.

If the two did come down, the “Tian Shu” and “Tian Quan” positions would have to come down with them; the whole formation will be pulled down. Yang Guo was watching closely from the side, being surprised endlessly, thinking, “If I could reach the level of Uncle Guo in the future, I wouldn’t mind suffering a lifetime of hardships.” But then he changed his thoughts, “How can I ever achieve the level that he is at? Only Guo Fu and the Wu brothers have that sort of luck. Uncle Guo knew that the rotten Taoist’s kung fu couldn’t compare with his and that is why he sent me here to learn martial arts.” The more he thought, the more troubled he became, he almost cried. He turned his head away from Guo Jing battling the seven Taoists. He was still a child, and eventually could not resist turning his head back to the fight.

Guo Jing thought, “By now, you should believe that I am Guo Jing. One mustn’t overdo things; it wouldn’t look good for elder Qiu.” He saw that the Taoists were turning around quickly but he stood still and folded his arms in salute and said, “Taoist brothers, I have offended you many times and apologize, please give way.”

The Taoist in the “Tian Quan” position was hot tempered, he saw that the opposition was highly skilled, knew the “Big Dipper Formation” and assumed he had nothing but evil intent towards his sect. He clearly shouted, “Scoundrel, you’ve carefully studied our sect’s formation, your intent is ruthless. You’ve come to Mount Zhongnan to cause trouble, our Quanzhen sect regards all evil as our enemy, and we can’t wait around and do nothing.”

Guo Jing was startled, and asked, “How have we caused trouble?”

The “Tian Shu” Taoist added, “Judging from your kung fu, you do not belong with the dirty scoundrels. I can give you some advice; you better leave the mountain quickly.” His tone reflected his respect of Guo Jing’s skills.

Guo Jing said, “I have come from thousand of miles to the south up here to the north; I have a matter which I want to discuss with elder Qiu. If I can’t see the elder, then how can I leave?”

The “Tian Quan” Taoist said, “You persist on seeing elder Qiu, what do you want?”

Guo Jing said, “I am in the debt of elder Ma and elder Qiu. I haven’t seen them in ten years and long to see them. Apart from paying my respects, I also have another matter to request of them.”

The “Tian Quan” Taoists hate for the enemy increased when he heard this; his face changed colour as if he had something on say. In the world of Jianghu, the words debt and revenge are not looked upon lightly. Sometimes when one has made enemies and they say they have come to pay their debts, in reality they have come for revenge. The Taoist said, “Twenty years ago I chopped off someone’s upper arm, the debts that I have to pay cannot be forgotten? Today I am going to receive what I am owed.”

A request in these cases seems to have evil intent, and after being beaten by someone stronger, they would normally reply, “We brothers are short of food and clothing, and want the old man to help, to spare us some money.” But today, Quanzhen sect is facing enemies and the “Tian Quan” Taoist knew this. Guo Jing’s polite words were turned around and interpreted the other way by the Taoist, and he calmly said, “I’m afraid that my defeated teacher elder Yu Yang is also indebted to you.”

As Guo Jing heard this, he remembered the events years ago at King Zhao’s palace, Yuyang Zi Wang Chu wasn’t concerned about danger, and faced a number of enemies and helped to save his life, his debts to him were not trivial. He said, “So Taoist brother is under the teaching of elder Yuyang. Elder Wang has also been kind to me, if he is at the palace, then that will be good.”

The seven Taoists were all disciples of elder Wang and after hearing this they extended their swords. The seven swords were all moving at the same time towards Guo Jing’s body. Guo Jing raised his eyebrows; the more respectful he was, the fiercer the enemy’s reaction, he didn’t know what the reasons were for this. It is a pity that Huang Rong was not here; if she was she could sort out the misunderstanding in the blink of an eye. He slanted his body and moved forwards, and stood in the “Northern Star Position”. In a clear voice he said, “I am Jiangnan’s Guo Jing, I have no evil intent on this sacred mountain, how can I make you believe me?”

The “Tian Quan” Taoist said, “You have already removed six swords from Quanzhen sect’s students, can you take our seven swords?” The Taoist in the “Tian Xuan” position had not said anything so far, he broke his silence and said, “Scoundrel, you have come here for the girl called Long, does that mean you think its good for you to provoke our sect?”

Guo Jing said, “Who is this girl named Long, I have never seen her before.”

The “Tian Xuan” Taoist laughed and said, “Of course you have not seen her. What man under heaven knows her? If you’ve got guts, loudly insult her and call her a little bitch.”

Guo Jing was startled, he didn't know who this Long girl is so how can he, for no reason, slander her? He said, "Why should I insult her?"

Three or four Taoists said at the same time, "Why don't you confess?"

The Taoists had accused Guo Jing innocently, the more he heard, the stranger it sounded. He thought that if he breaks into Chongyang Palace and sees elder Ma, elder Qiu and Wang Chu, everything would become clear. He calmly said, "I must go up to the mountain, if everyone here tries to stop me, don't blame me for offending you."

The seven Taoists extended their swords, and leapt forward two steps. The "Tian Xuan" Taoist loudly said, "Don't use your witchcraft, we will just use our kung fu to compete."

Guo Jing smiled, he had already thought of something, and said, "I want to use some witchcraft. You watch, my hands will not touch your weapons, but I will still be able to take your long swords out of your hands."

The seven Taoists all looked at each other; their faces had a look of disbelief, and thought, "Although your skills are high, can it be that without using your hands you can rid us of our weapons? Even if you've reached the peak of "Empty Hand Entering a Hundred Blades" kung fu, you still need your hands."

The "Tian Shu" Taoist said, "Fine, we will see how good your kicking kung fu is."

Guo Jing said, "I will also not use my legs. If I touch your weapons with my hands or legs, then I admit defeat. I will turn around and immediately leave, never entering your sacred mountain again."

The Taoists heard his wild claims, and they mulled over it. The "Tian Quan" Taoist waved his sword, and led the formation.

Guo Jing slanted his body and rushed forward, again assuming the "Northern Star Position", ready to move to the left of the "Big Dipper Formation". The "Tian Quan" Taoist knew they would be in danger and led the formation quickly to the right. Whenever two enemies fight each other, they must face the opposition, if the opponent moves behind you, turning around to face your enemy is something that shouldn't be done. Right now, Guo Jing was heading for this position, wanting to aim for the back of the formation; he didn't need to attack. The seven Taoists would have to move the formation and attack, so that they could face each other. But Guo Jing just kept on heading left, and didn't turn back. Sometimes he would move fast, sometimes slow, sometimes

straight and sometimes in a crisscross, but he kept on hurrying to the left. He was in the “Northern Star Position”; the seven Taoists could do nothing but follow him to the left.

The more he hurried, the quicker he became; eventually his speed surpassing that of a horse, his form a blur, he had ran for tens of feet. The seven Taoist's kung fu was not ordinary; although they were facing adversity they managed to stay in formation. The “Tian Shu”, “Tian Xuan”, “Tian Ji” (Sky Pearl), “Tian Quan”, “Yu Heng”, “Kai Yang”, and “Yao Guang” Taoists held their positions, but they were being forced to hurry around not of their own accord.

Guo Jing could not help but think, “Sure enough, the students of Quanzhen are not ordinary.” He took a deep breath, and increased his speed; it appeared that his legs were not even touching the ground.

At first the Taoists could just about manage to keep up by exerting all their strength, but as time passed, the difference in each one's lightness kung fu could be seen. The “Tian Shu”, “Tian Quan” and “Yu Heng” Taoist's lightness kung fu was the highest, and they moved quickly, the others slowly fell behind and the “Big Dipper Formation” cracked. They were all afraid and thought, “If the enemy attacks the formation now, I'm afraid we will not be able to defend.” They couldn't keep up with him, and could only use their internal energy to try to go around and hit him.

One game that children play is sling throwing. A rock is threaded onto a string, spun around and then at its fastest point, the sling is released, the stone taking the string with it faraway. At the moment, the formation was winding around hurriedly, it was similar to a sling spinning around, the seven Taoists were scurrying around Guo Jing, their swords held above their heads, the faster they went, the harder it was for them keep the sword still. It was as if a strong force was pulling the swords outwards, wanting to pull the swords out of their grasp.

Suddenly, Guo Jing shouted out, “Let go!” as he flew away to the left. The seven Taoists were caught unaware, and could only follow him quickly. They didn't know what happened as the seven swords flew out of their hands, like seven silver snakes, and flew into the surrounding pine forest. Guo Jing stopped, and laughed as he returned.

The seven Taoist's faces were grey, and stood there without moving, but each one was still holding their position, the formation still held. Guo Jing saw that after being forced to hurry and rush around madly, they still kept the formation and didn't allow it to get out of shape and he knew they spent a lot of time practicing their skills. The “Tian Quan” Taoist gave a sigh of resignation and the seven Taoists escaped behind a cliff.

Guo Jing called out, “Guo’er, let’s go up the mountain.” He called out twice, but there was no reply. He searched around, but he couldn’t see him anywhere but behind a tree he saw a small shoe. Guo Jing swallowed, “Besides the seven Taoists there was another one hiding nearby, he must have taken him away.” But then he thought that the group of Taoists had just mistaken him for someone else, and though they had a misunderstanding, the Quanzhen sect has always been righteous and done good. They would never dare to harm a small child; there was no need to be alarmed. He then took a breath, and hurried up the mountain. He had resided on Peach Blossom Island for ten years, though he practiced martial arts every day, he has not faced an enemy for a very long time, and sometimes he felt lonely. Today, having fought with a crowd of people and being able to respond to every move, he could not help but be satisfied.

The mountain was now rugged and steep. Sometimes he had to lean his body over to pass an obstruction, and after traveling for less than half an hour, the moon was covered and the mountain became dark. Guo Jing thought, “I don’t know these paths well and these Taoists are sneaky, I must be on my guard.” He then eased up and slowly made his way.

Another while passed and the moon came out again, the mountain lit up, he had only one thing on his mind. Suddenly he heard the breathing sounds of a crowd of people coming from nearby. Though the sounds were quiet, there were many people; Guo Jing had already noticed this. Guo Jing tightened his belt, and turned to the path. In front of him was a large plain, the four sides surrounded by the mountain, at the foot of the mountain was a large pond, and the surface of the water reflected the moon, the silver light shimmering. In front of the pond were about one hundred Taoists, wearing yellow hats and dressed in grey gowns, a long sword in their hands, the swords shone brightly to the eye.

Guo Jing looked on, the crowd was made up of groups of seven, and formed fourteen sets of the “Big Dipper Formation”. Each group of seven sets of the “Big Dipper Formation” formed one single large “Big Dipper Formation”. From the “Tian Shu” to the “Yao Guang”, the force of them was extraordinary. The two large “Big Dipper Formations” were different from each other, one normal, one odd, opposing each other, forming the angle of a wing. Guo Jing gasped, “I have never heard of this type of “Big Dipper Formation” from elder Qiu, presumably this formation has been created within the last few years. Compared to the original one that ancestor Yang created, this is another level.” He slowly made his way forward.

He heard a whistle from a person within the formations, ninety-eight Taoists scattered, moving forwards and backwards, the formations changed irregularly, and circled Guo

Jing. Each one pointed their swords to the ground; their eyes fixed on Guo Jing and didn't make a noise.

Guo Jing folded his hands in salute and turned around once and said, "I have sincerely entered this sacred mountain to meet elder Ma, elder Qiu and elder Wang, I plead with you please do not block my way."

A long bearded Taoist from the formations said, "Our guest here has excellent martial arts, so why do you not use it for good, instead of causing trouble with the evil ones? I offer you some good advice: a woman can cloud someone's mind and your skills that you have trained hard for over the last ten years could be threatened and lost in a single day. Our Quanzhen sect has never met you, and we have no quarrels, so why have you come to our mountain and caused so much trouble over this witch? If you leave immediately now, we could still meet again another day." He spoke with a deep voice, but every word was crystal clear, it was clear that his internal energy was profound, his advice was sincere.

Guo Jing was angry but was also laughing, he thought, "I don't know whom the Taoists have mistaken me for, if Rong'er was by my side, then there wouldn't be any of this misunderstanding. He said, "I know nothing of being clouded by women or witches, if you allow me to see elder Ma, elder Qiu and elder Wang, then everything will become clear."

The long bearded Taoist coldly said, "You still do not heed the advice and persist on wanting to see elder Ma and elder Qiu and try out your skills on them, well first you are going to have to break our large 'Big Dipper Formation'."

Guo Jing replied, "I am only one person, my skills are of a low level, how could I dare come up against your sect's greatest skill? Please release the child that came with me, and allow me to see your sect's master and elder Qiu."

The long bearded Taoist shouted out, "You have come here, caused trouble, and put on a show in front of Mount Zhongnan's Chongyang Palace; how can we let such a scoundrel be so rude." As he said this, he waved his sword in the air, the blade pierced the wind, the sound of the blade lingered. The crowd of Taoists waved their long swords, ninety-eight blades swept across, a wind was created, and the swords resembled a shiny net.

Guo Jing was secretly worried, "The two large formations are the opposite of each other; how can I maintain the "Northern Star Position" by myself? Today's matter is re-

ally troublesome.”

Before Guo Jing made up his mind, the ninety-eight Taoists merged together from the left and right, the light from the swords weaved about, he was trapped like a fly and it would be difficult to escape. The long bearded Taoist said, “Pick up a weapon! Quanzhen sect will not harm an empty handed person.”

Guo Jing thought, “This formation may be hard to break, but you may still not be able to harm me. The formation has many people, its power great, but each one’s skill varies. There will definitely be a weakness; I’ll study this formation first before I decide on anything.” He slowly turned around, and then quickly moved in a northwest direction and used the “Eighteen Subduing Dragon Palms”, the stance “Hidden Dragon Has No Use” (qian long wu yong), one palm out and one in, as he pushed off against the ground. Seven young Taoists swapped their swords into their left hand, each one joining together and stretched out their right palm, using their strength to repel his palm. The palm skill that Guo Jing used had been practiced and refined, and has now reached its peak; the force he generated was extremely strong, and he had more powerful moves hidden. Each one of them used all their strength to block this fierce attack but they didn’t expect a strong force pulling them forward. The seven could not stand still, and all of them fell onto the ground; though they got up straight away, each one of them had dirt on their face, and was slightly embarrassed.

The long bearded Taoist saw that Guo Jing had unleashed a powerful stance; in just one move he had caused seven Taoists to fall onto the ground, he was slightly frightened. He gave a whistle and led the fourteen “Big Dipper Formations” and merged them. Even if the enemy’s palm strength was ten times stronger, it would be difficult for him to push away ninety-eight people.

Guo Jing remembered the battle that he had on Jun Mountain (Lord Mountain); he and Huang Rong were battling the beggar clan, although individually they were weak, but once they united they were hard to defend against. He didn’t dare to use force to overcome them; he could only use his lightness kung fu and escape from the formation, and try to find its weakness.

He hurried to the east and leapt to the west, and drew the formation with him, in just a short while he realized that if he wanted to break the formation by himself, it would be a difficult task made harder. One, he didn’t want to hurt anyone; two, the formation’s defense was second to none. There wasn’t a single weakness; thirdly, Guo Jing is not the most astute person; the formation changed quickly so even if there was a weakness, he would not pick it up in such a short period of time.

Under the light of the full moon, the light from the swords resembled water, the scene like a wave, there was no point in trying to run away again.

They fought for a period of time, the formation was getting tighter, and it was becoming increasingly difficult to dodge within the gaps. Guo Jing thought, "Why don't I rush through the formation and make a dash for Chongyang Palace and see elder Ma and elder Qiu?" He raised his head and faced west; he saw there were twenty or thirty buildings and a few of them had large open spaces. He thought that Chongyang Palace must be one of them; he then hurried rapidly to the east, and after a few leaps, he turned and ran towards the west.

The multitude of Taoists saw that he was increasing in speed; a grey blur was within the formation like a falling star rushing through the sky. It was almost impossible to see where he was, they were dazzled or dazed, and they slowed down. The long bearded Taoist called out, "Everyone be careful, don't fall into the scoundrel's trap."

Guo Jing was angry, he thought, "They still call me a scoundrel. If this spreads out throughout Jianghu, how would I be respected again?" He had another thought, "The formation is led by him and if I aim for him, I then could set up a way to break the formation. He separated his palms, and headed straight for the long bearded Taoist. One thing the formation tries to do is to lure the enemy to attack the one leading the formation, each small formation will use this and come from the east and west, the south attacking the north, the enemy would then fall into their trap. Guo Jing rushed seven, eight steps, before he felt something was wrong, the force pressing him from behind suddenly increased, the two sides were flooding in and coming to attack. He turned around and dodged to the right, the two small formations in front of him all attacked with their swords. The fourteen swords were placed so that the enemy will be forced into a harmful position; there was no place to run, no place to hide. Guo Jing was faced with danger all around him, but he did not panic, only his anger began to rise, he thought, "You still mistake me for some scoundrel, some evil person. Taoists are supposed to be enlightened and merciful, so why is every stance that is used aiming to kill the opponent? Unless you must have my life at all costs? And what is this about? Quanzhen sect never harms an opponent without a weapon?" He slanted his body and escaped, his right leg came out, his left hand came in search of something, he kicked a young Taoist and took his weapon, he saw seven swords came in to his waist from the right, he waved his left hand out, the eight swords clattered, after a sound, each one of the seven swords broke into two pieces, the sword in his hand was still in perfect condition. The sword that Guo Jing took wasn't an especially sharp blade, but because he distributed his chi throughout the sword, he was able to use it to shatter the seven swords.

The seven Taoists gasped, the expression on their faces darkened and they stood still for a while. The two formations at one side came in immediately and raised their swords protecting each other. Guo Jing saw that the fourteen Taoists were using their left hands to hold on to the right shoulder of the Taoist next to them, the fourteen united the energy into one. He thought, “You want to see how strong my internal energy is exactly?” He waved his long sword, and placed the sword onto the fourteenth Taoist’s sword.

The Taoist tried to pull away quickly, but the sword in his hand felt as if it were welded to a copper anvil, and was unable to pull it free. The remaining thirteen Taoists circulated their chi, wanting to use the combined force of the fourteen to repel the enemy. Guo Jing wanted them to do this. As soon as he felt the force trying to pull free increase, he shouted out, “Take care!” His right arm rose, after an interlude of sound, twelve swords broke as a result of seemingly pushing against a large object. The remaining two swords flew into the air. The fourteen Taoists gasped and were frightened; they quickly jumped away. Guo Jing secretly sighed, “My internal energy has yet to reach its peak, but there were still two swords that I was unable to break.”

After this, the Taoists became even more wary of him and they were more careful in unleashing their moves. Although twenty-one Taoists had lost their weapons, they resorted to using their palms; they were able to generate a wind force with their palms, and their power was not weak. While Guo Jing was shattering swords, he wasn’t able to do what he wanted and now he felt the formation’s defense becoming increasingly tighter. He didn’t know what new techniques and formations for the “Big Dipper Formation” that elder Ma and elder Qiu had devised. If the enemy had more advanced formations, it would be difficult for him to deal with. He was afraid that he would not be able to escape the clutches of the Taoists, so he decided to act right away and shouted out, “My Taoist brothers, if you still won’t give way, then forgive me if I don’t hold back.”

The long bearded Taoist looked on, he knew that Guo Jing was skilled, and thought that even if Guo Jing was able to shatter all ninety-eight swords, he still wouldn’t be able to escape from our formation. When he heard what Guo Jing said, he laughed coldly and did not reply, and made the formation even tighter.

Guo Jing crouched his body against the ground and leaped to the northeast, but he saw the two small formations from the southwest coming towards him. He then pointed his sword towards them. In the blink of eye he had unleashed fourteen moves; all fourteen moves made at the same time and each stance pierced a Taoist’s right wrist on the “Positive Valley Point” (yang gu yue). At the highest levels of swordsmanship, the sword

is able to move like wind and flash like lightning, every move accurate to the millimeter. It would be no different than fourteen different concealed weapons thrown at the same time. He unleashed the moves lightly, each Taoist had a numb feeling in their wrist, there were no strength in their fingers; the fourteen swords fell onto the ground. With this shock, the Taoists jumped back quickly, and examined the wounds on their wrists. Each saw the wound on the “Yang Gu Yue” was slightly red but there wasn’t a drop of blood. They knew their opposition had used the sword tip to touch this pressure point only, their skin was not pierced. The Taoists gasped, and thought that although the scoundrel was offensive, he was not ruthless; if he hadn’t held back, he could have harmed our palms without using the slightest effort.

During this time, thirty-five swords had been forced out of their hands. The long bearded Taoist was very angry; Guo Jing had not even used his best kung fu, yet he had already made their sect lose so much face. If he managed to break into the palace, the effects would be disastrous. He then gave out an order, “Defend the formation closely.” He wanted the ninety eight Taoists to surround him, and slowly crowd him to death.

Guo Jing thought, “That Taoist does not know how to repay kindness; it’s unspeakable. I can only teach them a severe lesson.” He hid his left palm, and pushed his right palm to the left. A formation came and faced the palm.

Guo Jing quickly went into the “Northern Star Position”, but another formation came to attack. There were fourteen “Big Dipper Formations”, there were also fourteen “Northern Star Positions”, and Guo Jing had no way to separate himself, and could not stand in all of the fourteen important positions at once. He used his lightness kung fu, as soon as he had stepped in the “Northern Star Position” of one formation, he immediately leapt to another “Northern Star Position”; he did it a number of times and the formations became disorganized.

The long bearded Taoist knew something was wrong and gave out an order quickly; he ordered everyone to scatter and reorganize the formations and keep calm. He knew that if everyone went and chased Guo Jing wildly, the way he was moving, he would definitely create worse disturbances in the formations. But if they didn’t move and just held their position, the fourteen “Northern Star Positions” would be far away from each other. Even if Guo Jing was faster, he would not be able to assume every position.

Guo Jing gathered himself and thought, “That Taoist knows the important aspects of the formation and sure enough he saw the danger quickly. Now that they are standing still, I could head for the palace.” He then changed his mind, “Actually, better not, elder Ma and elder Qiu are not usually in the palace, otherwise how can it be that I have fought

these Taoists for so long and they haven't noticed? He lifted his head towards the palace, and saw sparks flying around in the corner of the building. Someone was fighting with weapons, but because he was far away, he could not see clearly who was fighting and the sounds of the weapons clashing was also too far to hear.

Guo Jing suddenly became alarmed, "Who would have the guts to raise their hands in Chongyang Palace? There must be some reason behind tonight's events." He wanted to rush over there to take a close look, but the fourteen "Big Dipper Formation" came in closer and closer. He was in a rush, and with his left palm he unleashed "Seeing the Dragon in the Field" (jian long zai tian) and with his right he used "Overcoming the Dragon with Regret". He used the "Mutual Left Hand Right Hand Combat" technique to do this, and used two separate attacks to the left and right. He saw that the forty-nine people in the "Big Dipper Formation" on the left were blocking this attack; the other forty-nine people in the other "Big Dipper Formation" on the right also blocked his attack. Before he has finished unleashing the two moves, he changed them around, the left hand had changed from "Seeing the Dragon in the Field" to "Overcoming the Dragon with Regret", his right hand changing from "Seeing the Dragon in the Field" to "Overcoming the Dragon with Regret".

With the "Mutual Left Hand Right Hand Combat Technique", he was able to do the hard task of using two different stances at the same time, and then to interchange them in the middle of it. This was something that the Taoists have never seen nor heard of. Originally the formation on the left side was able to resist the "Overcoming the Dragon with Regret", the right was able to resist "Seeing the Dragon in the Field", when the two stances were swapped around, the Taoists on both sides were resisting, they didn't know that Guo Jing could swap his stances around so easily. They then saw a flash of movement as Guo Jing escaped from the formation. The forty-nine people on the left and the forty nine people on the right were pushing forward with all their might, and at this moment how could they keep their legs in check? There came a loud noise as the two formations collided with each other, swords wounded some from behind, some knocked their noses against those in front and thirty of them fell onto the ground.

The long bearded Taoist who was leading the formation managed to dodge quickly and evade harm from the other Taoists. He couldn't bear what had happened and quickly whistled again, rapidly setting up the formation again. He saw that Guo Jing was heading rapidly for the pond at the foot of the mountain, the Yu Qing Pond (Pure Jade). He led the fourteen formations and chased after him. The Quanzhen sect's kung fu was based on calmness and tranquility, using softness to overcome hardness, letting anger control your actions is breaking one of the major rules of the sect; with his anger and

fury, it could be said that he was not considering the enemy carefully, he was just reacting to their actions.

Guo Jing quickly reached the Jade Pond, in front of him the water glistened, as he lifted his sword up with his right hand, and chopped a coarse branch off a willow tree that was by the pond. He threw away the sword and picked up the branch with both arms, and flung it faraway into the pond. He increased the strength in his legs and his body soared into the air, his right foot touched the branch once and it sank, he used it to reach the shore on the other side. The crowd of Taoists rushed to the pond but they couldn't stop in time. A splash followed another, as forty or fifty people fell into the pond. The last ten either stepped onto the back of those who had fallen in or managed to stop themselves. A few of the Taoists couldn't swim, and began to struggle in the pond. Those who could swim hurried over to rescue them. At the Pure Jade Pond, the Taoists made a commotion, as they were drenched with water and mud.



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