The Flower Guarding Bells

Life and Death, Love and Hatred, Affection and Feud,
Benevolence and Vendetta.
In the eyes of the people in the Pugilistic Fraternity, these are like sharp blades; their differences separated only by a very thin line.

Chapter One
Between Life and Death

The night sky was devoid of clouds. Amidst the fog stood a demure, alluring and extremely beautiful young maiden. One hand held her flowing hair and the other hand her soft outer garment. Yet without slowing her pace, she continued on.

Along the treacherous mountain trails, there appeared several people. The young maiden raised her eyebrows and gave a faint laugh, a laugh that seem to warm the frosty air but filled with poisonous intentions; it was hard to believe that such a laugh would come from this demure beautiful maiden.

As the laughter traveled, those walking on the mountain trails sprang forward. In a blink of the eye, they were already in front of the young woman. The extremely beautiful young woman looked knowingly with her eyes and coldly said, "Come with me!" As she turned her slim body and moved several yards, never once looking back. She leapt several times, and soon she was on top the Southern Peak!

There were five people following her. One of them was a big man in black carrying a sheathed sword that was laughing and saying to an older woman in the group. "What an arrogant little girl. I'm afraid she is three times more obnoxious than you when you were younger!"

The older woman gave a gentle laugh, replying. "Really?"

The big man in black kept laughing and said. "Truly! Whoever marries her, will surely feel more tortured than me, Long Fei!"

The laughter stirred the Four Corners of the mountains. It was filled with love as the older woman leaned against his chest, his laughter and hers becoming unison.

The lad behind them suddenly gave a shout. "Mentor Master has arrived." Their laughter ceased. Behind them was an old man dressed in cotton garments with a cloth over his head and walking in broad strides.

Each one of the old man's steps was a yard apart, and his garments seemed to flutter and float as he moved. Behind him were two men who seemed to be carrying something on their backs although no one could see carefully what the

objects were.

The old man asked, “Where is it?”

Another man answered, “Gone up already!”

The old man said sternly. “Follow!” as he took big steps towards the peak. The winds revealed a sword scabbard underneath his cloak.

The older woman said with melancholy, “Today, Father…” Her lips moved halfway, the sentence she was trying to complete was unable to continue.

A thin young man turned back and looked at a young man and a young maiden, pausing awhile before sighing. “Fourth Sister and Fifth Brother, you should remain at the mountain slope. After he finished speaking, he sprang up to join Long Fei and his lady.

The young man and woman both exchanged glances. For a long time, none spoke.

Southern Peak was Mt. Huashan summit. The beautiful young maiden appeared and said in a low voice. “You have come.” There were four other women behind her.

Below the summit, a voice was heard. “This ten-year promise Long Bushi has not forgotten. Why is the Lady not here to welcome an old friend?” His voice was not high pitched yet when every word was traversed up, it was heard very clearly in the ears.

The extremely beautiful young maiden gave a cold smirk in response.

The old man asked. “Is this the Huashan summit? Are you Danfeng’s (Phoenix) follower?”

The extremely beautiful young maiden coldly replied “That’s right!”

The old man said solemnly. “Where is Danfeng Ye Qiubai?”

The extremely beautiful maiden looked thoughtfully at the old man, sizing him up, and replied, “You are ‘Immortal Divine Dragon’, Long Bushi?”

The old man looked stunned. Suddenly, he burst into laughter and in a clear voice said, “Marvelous, marvelous! Never did I expect someone in the Pugilistic Fraternity to address me by my title to my face!”

The extremely beautiful young maiden smiled sarcastically and glanced at the sky. “Marvelous, marvelous! Never did I expect someone to use my Mentor Mistress’ title to my face.”

The old man turned to the older woman who was with him and, pointing to the beautiful young maiden and her four followers, asked, “This is Ye Qiubai’s disciple?”

Four pairs of eyes sparkled and flickered over his body, and the green gowned women said in unison together, “That’s right!”

Long Bushi turned back in anger and said, “Your Mentor Mistress and I had

an agreement ten years ago to meet here. Why has she not arrived? Why has she sent you here to be rude to your elders!"

The extremely beautiful young maiden coldly replied, "Even if there is an emergency, my Mentor Mistress will still be unable to honor it!"

Long Bushi asked angrily, "How come?"

She replied, "Three months ago, my Mentor Mistress passed away. Before she died, she had ordered me to come in her stead. However, she said nothing about you being any elder of mine!" Her speech was slow and soft, the tone icy cold but with no hint of resentment. It did not seem at all likely that she was delivering her Mentor Mistress' last will and testament.

Long Bushi was stunned and shook with uncontrollable rage.

The rest of the group was silent as well.

Only Long Fei step forwards and asked in a low tone, "Father, what is it?"

Long Bushi was stunned momentarily. He sighed, "Ye Qiubai is dead!" His eyes looked up to the heavens, and then he began a stroll down the mountain.

From the coldness in the extremely beautiful young woman's eyes, there appeared suddenly a strange glow. She gave a sarcastic smile and said, "A pity, a pity. To think that the legendary number one warrior of our Pugilist Fraternity, the Immortal Divine Dragon, is just an ordinary man."

Long Bushi was frozen on the spot while Long Fei angrily demanded, "What did you say?"

The extremely beautiful young maiden replied just as coldly as before, "What I say is not your business. What conspires here, you have no say whatsoever."

Long Fei's eyes were filled with turbulence at her reproach. Then, Long Bushi turned around and demanded, "What did you say?"

The extremely beautiful young maiden replied, "Ten years ago, my Mentor Mistress and you made a life and death agreement. What did it entail?"

Long Bushi's eyes became withdrawn, and he said gravely, "The winner shall dominate the Pugilist Fraternity; the loser…" he paused with a sigh, "Ye Qiubai has already passed away. Long Bushi now dominates the Pugilistic Fraternity…"

The attractive beauty coldly interrupted, "Although my Mentor Mistress may have become a saint, I'm afraid you may will not dominate the Pugilistic Fraternity for long!"

Long Bushi gravely replied, "Are you thinking of exchanging blows with me?"

The extremely beautiful young maiden smiled coldly, "Although I have this desire, I suspect you do not wish to fight me. Am I correct?"

Long Bushi replied, " Indeed!"

The extremely beautiful young maiden asked, "For decades, my Mentor Mistress and you have been fighting. How many times were there altogether?"

Long Bushi said, "Many times. Hard to determine how many times I won."

The extremely beautiful young maiden asked, "Did you beat her by more than one stroke?"

Long Bushi replied, "However, I have never lost before."

The extremely beautiful young maiden said, "Victory is yet undetermined, but you are already thinking you've dominated the Pugilist Fraternity. Does such fortuity exist in this world?"

Long Bushi was taken aback. "Ye Qiubai has passed away. You expect me to fight the dead?"

The extremely beautiful young maiden smiled coldly, "My Mentor Mistress may have died, but she had left behind a swordplay. If you cannot defeat this swordplay, I suggest that you commit suicide on this Huashan summit. Furthermore, all protégés from Zhijiao Manor shall henceforth be forbidden to partake in the Pugilistic Fraternity."

Long Fei suddenly laughed, "What if my father wins? What happens then?"

The extremely young woman did not even glance at him out of the corners of her eyes, much less a look at him. It was as though his words never reached her ears.

Long Fei roared with laughter, "If my father loses, he has to commit suicide, but if he wins, don't tell me you are going to ask that Danfeng Ye Qiubai die once again? Moreover, you know that my father will not fight with just anyone that does not have seniority. Ye Qiubai may have left behind a swordplay, but what use is it?"

Unexpectedly, Long Bushi intoned, "Silence!" He walked up to the extremely beautiful young maiden and asked, "In the past ten years, she created a new swordplay?"

The extremely beautiful young maiden replied, "Indeed!"

His eyes glowing, Long Bushi gave a sigh, "Since this is an extraordinary swordplay yet no extraordinary internal force that enables anyone to use it, how could it possibly defeat me?" He was greatly depressed by the matter and seemed forlorn.

The extremely beautiful young maiden smiled coldly, "What if there was someone with a similar internal force as you who knew the swordplay that my Mistress Mentor left behind? Would it not be the same as fighting my Mentor Mistress?"

Long Bushi looked even more forlorn, "Sixteen years ago, all the best

fighters in the Pugilistic Fraternity, except your Mentor Mistress and me, perished on Mt. Huangshan. In this whole wide world, were I to find someone with the same internal force, I would have to wait another three to five years, even ten!"

The extremely beautiful young maiden said, "Although a refined swordplay can replace a lack of internal force, internal force does not have the flexibility of a swordplay, wouldn't you agree?"

Long Bushi said, "Naturally, you are not wrong!"

The extremely beautiful young maiden continued, "The strokes of a swordplay can advance and be used like a shield. A strong internal force can never replace the ingenuity involved. Do you agree?"

Long Bushi said, "Indeed!"

The extremely beautiful young maiden continued to explain, "But swordplay and internal force are interdependent. Lack one aspect and the person will never become a top pugilist fighter. Although this reasoning is very obvious, ever since the Huangshan meeting, there has been no one in the Pugilistic Fraternity who can contest with "the Phoenix and Dragon". This is because out of the ranks of the new pugilist fighters, even if one had the fortune to recover a once-lost set of martial skills, no one has the necessary internal force to match "the Phoenix and Dragon". Do you agree?"

Long Bushi said. "Indeed."

The extremely beautiful young maiden asked, "Ten years ago, were the internal forces of my Mentor Mistress and your own evenly matched?"

Long Bushi replied, "There were differences, but only in theory; it did not matter!"

The extremely beautiful young maiden asked, "These past ten years, my Mentor Mistress never for one moment forgot about this life and death agreement and trained hard everyday."

Long Bushi sighed, "As did I!"

The extremely beautiful young maiden said, "So judging from these circumstances, ten years ago, both of your internal forces were almost even. Ten years later, will there be any difference?"

Long Bushi said, "Unless during these ten years, she obtained a miraculous herb that could aid the growth of internal force, she could not have beat me."

Suddenly he sighed and turned his head, "Fei, do you know that the growth rate of one's internal force is like a sparrow building its nest? It must be slow and cannot be forced. Taking shortcuts, greedy for faster growth can only strengthen it temporarily and is not stable. It is not recommended because internal power requires up to one hundred years to cultivate. Miraculous herbs that can aid in the growth of internal force are also almost impossible to find. Strangely, so many

people in the Pugilist World actually believe in them; this has lead to many tragedies!"

Long Fei nodded in agreement.

The extremely beautiful young maiden said, "Therefore, you are saying the internal powers of my Mentor Mistress and yourself cannot be disputed and that what is contestable is the flexibility and changes in strokes, correct?"

Long Bushi said, "When top fighters are fighting, timing, terrain, the human factor are also important factors!"

The extremely beautiful young maiden asked, "If my Mentor Mistress really created an invincible swordplay, will it be able to defeat you?"

Long Bushi replied, "There is no unbreakable martial arts in this world. If your Mentor Mistress' swordplay has such power and I'm unable to find a weakness, if such a thing exists that I'm unable to counter, then you win."

The extremely beautiful young maiden said, "My Mentor Mistress and you have a life and death agreement, and there is as yet no victor. But although my Mentor Mistress passed away, she died with regrets."

Long Bushi said regretfully, "Do I not feel regret over this matter as well?"

The extremely beautiful young maiden looked at the sky and said, "Before she died, my Mentor Mistress warned me that during these past ten years, you may have also created a form of martial arts to defeat her."

Long Bushi looked at the sky and laughed, "Ye Qiubai is indeed my bosom friend." However, his laughter betrayed signs of sadness.

The extremely beautiful young maiden smiled coldly, "However, you don't have to worry about the skills that you created having no chance to show off their martial prowess. Before my Mentor Mistress passed away, she came up with a solution to determine the winner between the two of you."

Long Bushi laughter suddenly ceased and his eyes shone, but the extremely beautiful young maiden took no notice and said, "If you would allow me to seal off three accupoints, the 'Que Peng' at the back of your head, the 'Shen Cang' on your back, and the 'Yang Guan' of your lower back, so that your energies cannot flow through these two main energy meridians and thus not eliminating your internal force but diminishing it to seventy percent capability, then my internal force will match yours. I could then use my Mentor Mistress' swordplay against you, and the fight would seem not different from you fighting my Mentor Mistress directly."

She went through all the trouble to state this point. Her intentions became very clear, and Long Bushi could not help but feel a chill. The extremely beautiful young maiden sighed, "This method is what my Mentor Mistress devised before she passed away. If you do not agree, I can do nothing."

Long Fei face became wrinkled, and he said solemnly, "This matter sounds

like a play-acting. It is certainly impossible. I can't believe you actually voiced it."

Standing far away was Long Fei's wife, who suddenly dashed towards them and gave a cold laugh, "So that means, if I use my father's martial art skills to fight with you, it would be the same?"

The extremely beautiful young maiden smiled coldly and turned her head away. Suddenly, she sighed as she looked to the heavens, "Mentor Mistress, oh my Mentor Mistress, I have already said that he would not agree, but you did not believe. It seems that you are wrong." She walked to the shade of a tree toward her followers and said coldly, "Let us go, then. Let Zhijiao Manor dominate the Pugilistic Fraternity, what does it matter?"

Long Bushi thundered, "Hold on!"

The extremely beautiful young maiden laughed coldly, "If you are not willing to keep a promise to the dead, I will not blame you. Just let it seem that no such agreement was made ten years ago between my Mentor Mistress and you."

Long Bushi roared with laughter at the heavens and said exuberantly. "For decades, I have experienced many near-death experiences but always came back fighting. I have never feared death. Furthermore, I have never backed off from any promise. Although Ye Qiubai is now dead, the agreement remains sacred. Since she has left behind a stratagem to continue our fight, how can I disappoint her?"

Long Fei and his wife were shocked, "Father…" They exclaimed together.

Long Bushi gave another roar and raised his hand to remove the lining from his face. The extremely beautiful maiden's eyes widened, her heart shaken. She could see his face was scarred. She shivered unconsciously.

Long Bushi laughed and said solemnly, "I have undergone countless fights big or small, ever victorious. Many years ago, I encountered many opponents of superior martial arts caliber that I still managed to wound with my sword. This is because my heart harbored no guilty conscience or fear. If I had even once broken my word to another, I will not have this heart and would have died a hundred times already!"

"Forty years ago," he muttered, "Emei Sect's number one fighter "Heartless Sword" Gu Xiaotian fashioned this scarred face with a stroke, 'Heaven Startling Hues'." Even as he felt the scar, he could still feel the piercing sword blade that tore open his flesh; he could still feel the sensation of pain.

He suddenly laughed loudly and then gave a long sigh as he said aloud to the heavens, "Gu Xiaotian, alas Gu Xiaotian, even though I cannot defend myself against your 'Heaven Startling Hues', you cannot escape from my sword either…"

His mind flashed back to his glorious past as he muttered again, "Five Tigers Crushing Through, Returning Dance of the Gentle Wind, Demonic Divine Hook. This one blade, one sword, one hook; he recalled his many scars and the memories

of his youth, when he traveled with his sword across the realm, crossing Bashan, visiting Pengmen and Shaolin, facing terrible blade wounds, swords that pierced so deep his soul stirred, narrowly escaping death and against all odds, surviving. Many times he thwarted certain defeat. The nickname "Immortal Divine Dragon" derived from his numerous fights thirty years ago. Thinking back, he gave a sudden smile.

His hand moved down below his long beard to his chin as he felt another scar. That was inflicted by Tianshan (Mt.Heaven) Triple Divine Sword. This sword wound was the smallest yet the most life-threatening.

" 'Ninth Wing Flying Eagle' Di Mengping, he was indeed a rarity that I have seldom saw in my entire life…"

His hand touched another scar, but this sword scar appeared to be curved and uneven and did not appear to have been inflicted by a single sword but three swords combined as one.

He gave a broad smile. "This is from the renown Triple Flower Swordplay, the 'one sword piercing three flowers, regardless if you are Immortal or Spirit' that is so famous across the realm. But the triple flower swordsman nevertheless could not escape my sword!"

He showed more scars. There was one on his left eye, from such an amazingly swift sword stroke that it seemed he was slashed from top to bottom. This scar was the result of the swift and powerful Kunhe Swordplay. It happened during a snowfall, amidst the misty fog atop the Kunlun summit. He shook to the core as he recalled that frightening episode. Each of his memories shook him badly, but still he survived!

There was also Wudang Equilibrium Swordplay and their Ninth Palace Divine Swordplay, and he pointed to three other scars beneath his clothing.

"Wudang swordsmen, their hearts are more or less kindly: they only attack the body and not the face. Therefore, I did not kill them," he muttered, "but who would expect that the three elders of the Pugilist Fraternity, who were benevolent and soft-hearted, would also perish at Huangshan!"

Long Bushi gave a long sigh. The Huangshan gathering that caused so many of the Pugilistic Fraternity best fighters to sacrifice themselves as they fought each other did not cause him much bodily injury. Why was that?

"It is because I had already had experience with all the known and unknown martial arts of the Martial Fraternity. In this world, there are no more martial arts that can hurt me!"

He looked at the clouds on the distant peaks, and his heart gave way to an unspeakable sense of loneliness. No more victory to be gained, this was sad. No more defeats to be experienced, why sigh? The memories of old were like a

fleeting cloud that fluttered past the mountain, gently fluttering through his heart. Just like the cloud would not stay enveloped on top of the mountain, his memories would also not remain forever in his heart …

The extremely beautiful maiden looked coldly yet piercingly at him. It was hard to know whether it was a look of expectance, a look of respect, or just a normal look.

Suddenly, the Immortal Dragon Long Bushi tore off his outer garments and laughed.

Long Fei's eyes contracted, "Father, what are you doing?"

Long Bushi laughed exuberantly, "If I do not test Ye Qiubai's swordplay, she will not die in peace, and I will regret it the rest of my life."

The extremely beautiful maiden smiled.

Long Fei insisted, "Father, this matter is not fair…"

Long Bushi stop laughing. "What do you know?" He laughed again. "During my lifetime, my nickname has been 'Immortal'. If I may die under the sword of another, it is a joyous thing."

Long Fei moved back three steps as he watched his father remove his clothing and toss it three yards away.

The extremely beautiful maiden said coldly, "Que Peng, Shen Cang, Yang Guan…"

Long Bushi turned and coldly instructed Long Fei, "Fei Zi, do you still remember He Zui Jin hand accupoint skill?"

Long Fei shuddered and replied, "I…I remember."

Long Bushi said, "You will use the He Zui Jin accupoint skill to seal my Que Peng, Shen Cang and Yang Guan accupoints."

Long Fei begged, "Father…Father…"

Long Bushi furrowed his brow and bellowed, "Quickly!"

Long Fei was momentarily stunned but clenched his jaws, and with a broad stride, positioned himself behind his father. He exhibited the He Zui Jin stance and prepared to seal his father's Que Peng accupoint.

His wife gave a moan, turning her head away. But soon she turned back again, only to see Long Fei still hesitating, his hands shaking. He still could not bear to do it.

Long Bushi turned around and shouted, "Useless…thing!" His voice softened as he uttered "thing".

Long Fei gave a long sigh and said, "Father, I've been thinking: this matter does not seem right…"

Before he could finish, a thin young man came from behind.

Long Fei said, "Fifth Brother, what are you doing here?"

The thin young man said, “Since Big Brother is unable to do it, your Little Brother will assist you. Would that be alright?”

Long Fei’s eyes narrowed, and he cried, “Are you crazy?”

The thin young man remained expressionless. The Immortal Divine Dragon turned and looked at him. He assessed him and sighed, “I always thought you were weak, useless and lacking in courage. But to find that your heart and will are both strong. You’re almost like me when I was young. If today I could…” He sighed several times more and said, “You know He Zui Jin as well, be quick about it.”

Long Bushi retreat three steps, and bowed his head unwilling to look at anyone.

There were three sounds of crackle.

Extremely beautiful young maiden gave a cold giggle.

Long Fei sighed and clear his throat.

Long Fei’s wife muttered to him, “What are you feeling sad for? Father is not going to lose!”

Long Fei lifted his head, as though he wanted to say something, but in the end, he did not say it.

Just then, the extremely beautiful young maiden took a long sword from one of the four women behind her. She extended two fingers and gently struck the tip of the sword blade. A ringing sound echoed throughout the surrounding mountains!

Long Bushi in turn stared at his long sword like a proud mother to her child, gently and lovingly.

Then he turned toward the thin young man, and in a solemn and stern manner, said, “From now on, this Fallen Autumn Leaf shall be yours!”

Thin young man’s eyes shone as he reached for the sword and scabbard, moving back three steps before kneeling down and respectfully making three bows.

There was a change of expression in Long Fei’s face, but as he opened his mouth to speak, his wife tugged gently at his shirt. They looked at one another and bowed their heads!

Long Bushi sighed and said, “Do not let this sword down, ever!”

The thin young man got up, walked to the box that was covered with a thick cotton cover and lifted it up with his sword sheath. Underneath was a purple coffin!

Long Bushi asked him, “Do you have anything to say?”

The thin young man’s face was expressionless. All of a sudden, he kneeled and bowed respectfully three times to the coffin. Suddenly, he turned his wrists and from his sleeves appeared a shining dagger with a dragon figurine on its hilt. He

then proceeded to make a cut on his middle finger and dripped his blood on the top of the purple coffin.

Long Bushi appeared to be very satisfied, and he smiled. “Good! Good!” And then turned towards the rare beauty.

The young rare beauty smiled gently, “You have carted a coffin here because you feared defeat. “The Immortal Dragon” is indeed the Pugilistic Fraternity’s number one warrior.” She laughed for the first time. Her laugh was like a flowering peony, a blossoming lily…even an experienced poet would have trouble describing it.

The thin young man sheathed his dagger and tucked it inside his waist belt. He stared coldly at the extremely beautiful young maiden. And he walked step by step towards her!

“What are you trying to do?” Long Bushi asked. “This matter no longer concerns you, go back!”

The thin young man did not even blink and, without saying a word, suddenly stretched forth his palms, his left palm towards the rare beauty’s right side and his right palm towards Long Bushi’s left.

It happened so fast and the timing so wondrous that both the rare beauty and Long Bushi were stunned – neither expected him to suddenly attack them!

The young rare beauty smiled coldly. Her left palm came down and there was a “Pa” sound as the thin young man’s right palm came into contact. Long Bushi gave a howling sound, twisted his waist and stretched his left palm—“Pa”! -- and made contact with the thin young man’s left palm!

Four palms impacted on one another and simultaneously produced two sounds. Long Fei sprang forward in surprise and shock and yelled. “Fifth Brother, have you lost your mind?”

Suddenly, the thin young man withdrew his outstretch palms and gracefully moved back three feet, saying, “Mentor Master, this girl did not lie to you!”

Long Bushi exclaimed, “What you mean is that now her internal power is the same as mine.” Looking at the sky, he laughed and continued, “Excellent, excellent! Today I do indeed have someone with the same internal power as me and as my opponent!”

Long Fei was stunned. “You were trying to test her internal power to see if it was the same as our Mentor Master?”

The thin young man replied, “Indeed…”

Long Bushi laughed cheerfully. “If Ping Er did not have the intention to make the test, how would he have dared to strike me? You are stating the obvious!”

This old man, who was soon going to face a vicious battle, was in a happy

and light mood. Was he happy to have finally found a worthy opponent or a worthy disciple?

Long Fei looked guilty and began to slowly retreat backwards, but he shot a glance at Nangong Ping.

Long Fei's wife gave a gentle smile and said, "Fifth brother may be young, but no one knew of his intelligence and internal power. Indeed, who would have expected it!"

Long Bushi said, "Only time will reveal a person's heart. A person's intelligence and personality must also wait until a time of crisis to surface. Only then can you tell!"

He seemed pleased and proud as he looked at Long Fei's wife, then back at Nangong Ping, who bowed his head now, and finally the rare young beauty.

The rare beauty only now glanced away from Nangong Ping. She said coldly, "Since you have made the test, can we fight now?"

Long Bushi answered, "Certainly!" He drew his long sword, which emitted a piercing echo. A sudden breeze rained leaves upon the four waiting-women. Although he had but one third of his internal power, his sword still radiated such power as to silence the four women.

The young rare beauty seemed not to notice this stunning display and coldly said, "Since you are ready to fight, please come with me!"

Long Bushi asked in surprise, "We are not fighting here?"

The young rare beauty replied, "That is right. This is not the place to fight." And she turned away!

Long Bushi cried, "Why not?"

The young rare beauty replied coldly, "Because the swordplay that I will be using cannot be seen by others!"

Long Bushi asked, "Why not?"

The young rare beauty replied, "If I kill you, your disciples will certainly seek me for revenge. Zhijiao Manor is very influential in the Pugilist Fraternity. I am my Mentor Mistress' only disciple. If they come after me, I certainly cannot defeat them, don't you agree?"

Long Bushi said, "Naturally, you could not overcome them!"

Long Fei's wife interrupted. "Do you think with your flimsy martial arts, you can even beat my Mentor Master?"

Long Bushi glanced at both of them and secretly sighed. He said aloud, "That is right. If you are able to kill me, my disciples will for certain seek you for revenge, and you are certainly not their match. So, you are depending on your swordplay for self-preservation!"

The young rare beauty said, "That is right. When my Mentor Mistress taught

me this swordplay, not only did she ask me to kill you, she also asked me to kill the others as well. If I let them witness my swordplay, they will study it for loopholes!"

Long Bushi nodded. "Indeed. If I created a swordplay, I would not want too many to witness it either." Suddenly, he gave a long sigh and looked at the young rare beauty. His voice was heavy as he asked, "Before she died, your Mentor Mistress really hated me that much?"

The young rare beauty jeered, "If hatred is engraved in the heart, what difference does life or death make?"

Long Bushi felt a chill in his heart and muttered. "If hatred is engraved in the heart, what difference does life or death make…" He shuddered. "Where do we fight? I will follow you!"

The young rare beauty did not say anymore but turned away.

Long Fei yelled. "Wait!"

But the young rare beauty did not slow her footsteps. It was as though she did not hear. There was a breeze, and Nangong Ping was in front of her, blocking her. Her eyebrows furrowed, and she turned to glance coldly at Long Bushi.

Long Bushi sighed. "What are you all trying to do?"

Long Fei's wife tried to smile as she answered, "Be wary of those that seek to harm. If they have set an ambush over there, Mentor Master, you will be attacked."

Long Bushi was speechless and lift his head to look at the young rare young beauty, who said, "To go or not to go, it is up to you…"

Long Fei's wife had a pair of alert eyes. She stole a glance at Long Bushi and saw the mood of his expression; she continued, "This young woman, we don't even know your name yet. Please forgive us for our impudence!" Her words and expressions were gentle, and she said them smilingly, so it was hard to rebuke her.

The young rare beauty, although masked in a cold aura, replied briefly, "Ye Man Qing."

Long Fei's wife smiled gently. "What a gentle name. My name is Guo Yu Xia. My name is so common but...alas, what can I do about it?"

At the moment, Guo Yuxia tried to draw her into a conversation. Long Bushi grew impatient, but because he doted upon her, he did not say anything. Nangong Ping who was expressionless was however filled with admiration for his sister in law.

She continued, "Maiden Ye, although we have never met before, we have long heard of your Mentor Mistress' renown. Moreover Maiden Ye, you are so beautiful and adorable, that why I am talking to you and there is no stopping me from listening to you!"

The young rare beauty, Ye Manqing gave a “hum” sound.

Guo Yuxia hastened to add, “But Maiden Ye, the condition that you mentioned, we don’t think it is appropriate…”

Ye Manqing said coldly, “Why is it not appropriate? This matter does not concern you. Why must you be a busybody?” Her attitude was chilling and her words piercing. She seemed determined to maintain a distance with them.

But Guo Yuxia maintained her posture and smiled. “If Maiden Ye really does not want us to see your Mentor Mistress’ secret swordplay, you should have said so earlier instead of insisting now. It is for this reason that I really cannot comprehend!”

Ye Manqing looked at her for awhile and coldly asked, “Do you really want me to explain?”

Gu Yuxia smiled gently. “I am asking for this reason in hopes that you will tell us, else why would I bother to ask?”

Young rare beauty Ye Manqing pondered as she gazed into the eyes of each person on the mountain and said coldly, “I did not speak of this until now because I was sure there was none here can find any weakness in my swordplay!”

Guo Yuxia smiled. “Then why do you say it now?”

Ye Manqing focussed on Nangong Ping, seemingly with intent yet seemingly without. “I am now suggesting a different place to duel because I have suddenly discovered that not all the disciples of the Immortal Divine Dragon are fools. One, at least, is intelligent!”

Guo Yuxia expression faltered slightly, but she remained smiling. “Thanks for the praises, Maiden Ye. To have such a good disciple like you, it’s no wonder your Mentor Mistress could die so early and peacefully!” Not only could she insult others without seeming malice, she did it with such an air of sweetness and nonchalance. Even her smiles seemed gentle.

Ye Manqing’s expression changed, she smiled coldly and turned away!

Guo Yuxia smiled to herself and was proud to have outsmarted her with her words. However, the moment was interrupted by Long Bushi, who gave a sigh and said to her, “If only Fei had half your cunning...”

Guo Yuxia bowed her head and smiled. Long Bushi continued, “It’s a pity that you are too smart!” He shouted, “ Maiden Ye, please wait!”

Ye Manqing halt her footsteps once again and, without turning her head, said, “To go or not to go, it is up to you. Why all this talk!” She finally managed to convey what her eyes already said.

Long Bushi said. “Ye Qiubai’s disciple will never be a liar!”

Ye Manqing gave a cold laugh but did not turn her head.

Long Bushi said, “I have never known fear. Even if that place is ambushed,

what does it matter!"

Ye Manqing suddenly turned her head. Although her facial expression was like an iceberg, it bored a grudging respect.

Long Bushi added, "This sword that is now in my hand has been with me for decades. Although it is not any exceptional or godly weapon, it has felled many great fighters!" His proud face showed a tinge of sadness before smiling. "If I do not return, I wish that Miss will return and give this sword to my disciple, Nangong Ping!"

This expression, none of his disciples had ever seen before.

Long Bushi naturally sensed that they were all looking at him. Nevertheless, he put up a strong front to hide his sighing heart. "Am I really getting old?…This vast Pugilist Fraternity, maybe it is time for the next generation to demonstrate their worth and feel its glory!" As his heart distracted him, he heard Ye Manqing say, "If I do not return to this place, I wish that you will hand this 'Mighty Echo of the Dragon' in my hand to them!" Her white hand pointed toward the four women dressed in green.

Long Bushi said. "I give my word!"

Ye Manqing turned her head and said in a low voice, "Let's go!" But her eyes were upon Nangong Ping!

Long Bushi replied, "Let's go!" When he flashed past Nangong Ping, he pat him lightly on his shoulder, seemingly wanting to tell him something, but he did not and could only give a weak smile, and then with a sigh, he disappeared into the fog!

Nangong Ping remained motionless until Long Bushi disappeared from view. He was left staring at the clouds that drifted by. Although his expression was that of a wooden man, his eyes reflected his inner turmoil

Guo Yuxia muttered, "Fallen Autumn Leaf…Mighty Echo of the Dragon…who would believe Mentor Master and Danfeng Ye Qiubai really had…"

Long Fei coughed and said, "Mentor Master's personal matters are his own affair. We shouldn't discuss it!" He took a broad stride towards Nangong Ping but did not say anything for some time. Suddenly, he turned back and sat on a rock ledge, looking longingly at the clouds above in a daze.

Guo Yuxia brushed her hair, eyed Nangong Ping for awhile and suddenly waved her hands and said, "Come here, Fourth Sister."

The young maiden, who was standing at a far distance, bowed her head and walk forward. Her steps were extremely light, betraying her martial arts skills. But in between her movements, she seemed to always carry an air of self-

consciousness. She looked like she was a maiden that had never stepped out of the house; she was so unlike someone who was from the Pugilist Fraternity, from the renowned Zhijiao Manor! Her pair of white hands constantly shifted beneath her belt with unease. She asked, “You wanted me, Sister in law?”

Guo Yuxia smiled. “Fifth Brother joined our sect the last but has obtained the sword ‘Fallen Autumn Leaf’. Are you happy?”

The shy maiden was feeling embarrassing now. Her pale cheeks were blushing and her head bowed even lower.

Another thin young man, who had remained silent until now, suddenly intoned, “Not only is Fourth Sister happy, I am happy as well!”

Guo Yuxia looked at both of them, all the while smiling. “The two of you are a perfect match. Even your thoughts coincide. No wonder the people in the Pugilistic Fraternity call Shi Chen and Su Su the Two Swords of the Dragon Gate. Unfortunately...” Her voice became low, and her eyes glanced towards Nangong Ping.

Shi Chen followed her glance to Nangong Ping, and his face suddenly turned ashen. His brows betrayed his jealousy, but he answered with a carefree manner, “From now on, with the additional of Fifth Brother, the people in the Pugilistic Fraternity will hail us as the Three Swords of the Dragon Gate!”

Guo Yuxia smiled. “This you may not know. Although Fifth Brother has just joined our sect not too long ago but in Jiangnan, Nangong Aristocratic Family whose wealth is known to all, the pugilists in the Fraternity have already nicknamed Fifth Brother the Wealthy Divine Dragon!”

Shi Chen gave a forced smile, “Sister in law is indeed knowledgeable. As for me, I seldom walk in the Pugilistic Fraternity, so my knowledge is limited. Compared to Sister in law, I’m practically ignorant.”

Long Fei interrupted, “I have heard of the nickname Wealthy Immortal Dragon before, but this nonsense sprouted from the mouths of the Nangong business associates and the Escorts. So what does it matter?”

Guo Yuxia’s facial expression changed. “Fine, fine. You know. I don’t know!”

Long Fei did not say anything more but one look at his wife countenance silenced him.

All of a sudden, silence became absolute in this place where only the mountain wind blew and tree leaves fluttered through the air. The clouds floated by and then away, like the dangers in the Pugilistic Fraternity.

The four green gowned women with gray hair remained standing under the ancient pine tree. But they stared at the five members of Zhijiao Manor. Their eyes had seen and understood the differences and the conflicts dividing them. And they

were obviously very happy to see that!

Long Fei sighed and got up. “Mentor Master…Alas, he has been gone an hour already!”

Guo Yuxia rolled her eyes and said coldly, “You are always so impatient. No wonder Mentor Master refused to give the Fallen Autumn Leaf to you. Look at Fifth Brother, he doesn’t seem a bit worried!”

Long Fei’s expression changed. “We are all brothers. Is there a difference who it is passed to?”

Guo Yuxia smirked, “Naturally, it is all the same!”

Nangong Ping was calm. He smiled gently and walked towards Guo Yuxia. “Sister in law, do you know why I am not worried?” Although he was smiling, but his mannerism was full of convictions and confidence; he radiated an aura of charisma that compelled an answer.

Guo Yuxia laughed aloud. “This...How should I know?”

Long Fei said, “How do you know that Fifth Brother is not worried? No one knows if our Mentor Master will be victorious or not. Everyone is worried for sure!”

Nangong Ping laughed. “Everyone is worried, but I really am not!”

Shi Chen and Long Fei expressions changed. Guo Yuxia laughed while Wang Susu kindled her eyebrows. Nangong Ping continued, “My heart is not troubled. I have utmost confidence that our Mentor Master will definitely not be defeated!”

The four women in green gowns laughed together and turned their heads away, no longer looking at him!

Guo Yuxia laughed again. Long Fei asked, “What makes you so certain that after our Mentor Master has his power reduced and that he can win for sure? Moreover, that Ye maiden is acting so strangely!”

Shi Chen countered, “Fifth Brother always has his own unique ways to discern matters. But what he said just now is hard to accept!” He said it in a slow manner as if he was afraid to say something wrong.

Nangong Ping explained, “Earlier when I dealt out a blow. Not only have I ascertained that the Ye maiden did not deceive our Mentor Master, I have also found out that our Mentor Master’s reflexes are better than hers.”

He continued, “At that time, when both my palms struck at the same time, the Ye maiden was standing on my right. Her right hand was holding her sword, but when my right palm went towards her, her body did not move and she immediately used her left palm to parry my right palm!”

He showed his left palm and waved, continuing, “But our Mentor Master was standing on my left side. Although his right hand was holding to his sword,

when my palm struck, our Mentor Master naturally would not have used his right hand that was holding his sword to parry mine. So, he turned his body and used his left palm to ward off my attack!"

His voice was calm and his speech clear. When he made his point, the four women in green gowns turned their heads toward him, their faces filled with uncertainty!

Nangong Ping continued, "From the circumstances, when our Mentor Master countered the attack, it was obvious that he made an additional movement. Therefore, when our palms made contact, they should have done so after the Ye maiden's palm and mine touched, yet from the clapping sound, the actions were simultaneous. Therefore, when counter-attacking, our Mentor Master is faster than the Ye maiden!"

"Although the difference in timing was not great, but when top opponents fight, even the slightest difference can determine who is the victor. Moreover, our Mentor Master has been through many battles, big or small; he is a veteran. His experiences exceed that of the Ye maiden. No matter how one looks at it, there is no reason for Mentor Master to lose!"

Wang Susu suddenly felt more cheerful after hearing Nangong Ping's explanation. Shi Chen nodded while Guo Yuxia seemed to be lost in thought, speechless. Long Fei clapped his hands and laughed heartily, "That's right. That's right! No matter how one judges it, there is no reason for our Mentor Master to lose." And he patted Nangong Ping on his shoulder. "Fifth Brother, I must really hand it to you. Now your Big Brother is not anxious anymore!"

The four women also laughed. The one on the extreme left turned to the one that was nearest to her and asked, "Ning Zi, are you anxious?"

Ning Zi shook her head and turned to the woman on her other side and asked, "Yue Zi, are you anxious?"

Yue Zi laughed, "I am not anxious either!"

Ning Zi asked, "Then, He Zi, I suppose, is not anxious as well."

He Zi nodded her head and laughed. "I am not anxious at all. An Zi, are you anxious?"

The woman to the extreme right, An Zi, laughed. "I too am not anxious, but as to the reason why I am not anxious, I'm not going to tell you!"

The four of them looked at one another and suddenly they burst out in laughter!

Long Fei's eyebrows puckered, and he hummed loudly, "If you were not women, I'll teach you all a lesson!"

The women laughed even louder. An Zi said coldly, "If you were not a man, I'll teach you a lesson!"

Long Fei was taken aback. He was so angry that he turned around and smashed a green colored rock with his palm. There was a “Hong” sound as the rock split asunder, its debris flying in all directions. A rock that was so hard yet it was smashed to bits.

An Zi laughed sarcastically. “Very good palm technique, very good palm technique.” Suddenly, she turned her wrist and drew out a long sword from her scabbard!

There was a glint from her sword as she moved toward a rock, her wrist loosening slightly as she thrust the sword seven inches into the rock with the ease of a bamboo plunging into a pool of mud.

Long Fei narrowed his eyebrows, stupefied. He heard An Zi exclaiming, “Oh I see, all the rocks here are soft!”

Guo Yuxia smiled gently. “Very good swordplay, very good swordplay!” And she walked towards An Zi smiling, saying softly. “Big sister, will you let me try as well?”

For a moment, An Zi was stunned by that request but before she could reply, Guo Yuxia suddenly attacked her waist with her five orchid-like fingers. An Zi in a moment shock immediately retreated three feet backwards. Although she had avoided this attack, she did not have time to pull her sword out, leaving it in the rock!

Guo Yuxia smiled. “Thank you very much. After I have tried it, I will return it to you.“ Her voice ever so peaceful, her mood natural. It was as though she had not made that vicious attack earlier!

She pulled the long sword out, examining it carefully. Although her eyes were focussed on the sword, she was actually looking at the rock beneath!

Suddenly, she smiled broadly and thrust the sword halfway into the rock.

The women in green gowns turned pale.

Guo Yuxia gently laughed. “Indeed, the rocks around here are soft!” She withdrew the long sword and surrendered it back its owner.

An Zi was very pale, her heart pounding hard. Speechlessly, she took back the sword and walked back to her friends.

Guo Yuxia laughed again. “You do not have to feel bad. Although just now I thrust the sword deeper than you by one inch, actually my swordplay and internal power may not be many times stronger than you!”

An Zi turned her head, her eyes filled with hatred.

Guo Yuxia laughed gently again. “Don’t hate me and think that after I have bested you, I am laughing at you. This type of sword thrusting requires skill. If one does not have the technique, one’s internal power, no matter how strong, is useless. The trust will be harder and harder. Every inch deeper corresponds to a ten-fold

increase in difficulty. It becomes not a matter of how powerful your internal power is or what you are capable of doing. Therefore, when you saw that my sword was able to thrust much deeper than yours, you were shocked and hurt!"

She said it in a manner of a teacher lecturing her student, without any trace of anger or resentment.

An Zi was taken aback. Guo Yuxia continued, "But you did not see the technique that I used. Just now when you thrust your sword, the rock had already cracked. Naturally what I did, was thrusting in the exact spot!"

An Zi lifted her eyes and at the same time, "Ah!" She began to understand.

Guo Yuxia smiled gently. "At this moment, you must be feeling upset that you have conceded too early, am I right?"

An Zi coldly breathed, "Humph." That was her only reply.

Guo Yuxia said, "But at that short moment's notice, I was able to map out the small crack upon the rock and also see the deepest portion of the crack. My eyesight is more superior when compared to yours. Do you deny it?"

An Zi eyes once again lowered. Although she did not say anything, her heart already admitted the truth.

Guo Yuxia laughed. "I just plunged the sword carelessly into the rock, but the sword carried my energy and thrust two inches deeper into the rock. Although I have used the same technique, my internal power is obviously greater than yours are. This is an undeniable fact. In Swordplay, eyesight, accuracy, internal powerful are the three most important factors in winning. For each factor, you are my inferior. If we were to fight, I have full confidence that I could defeat you in twenty strokes."

She gently smiled and continued. "If you are dubious, you can challenge me!"

An Zi was left stunned. She sighed and turned her head away. But there was a "Ding" sound from her hands and the powder of a pearl was seen dripping down.

Guo Yuxia laughed softly. It was a proud laugh and was totally different from the gentle laughter earlier.

An Zi slowly clenched her fist. Her face was green and pale as she looked at a passing cloud. Then, her eyes shone. Suddenly, she turned back and said coldly, "That is right. Your martial art skills are indeed much higher than mine. But your Mentor Master...ha, there is no need for all of you to wait for him anymore."

Nangong Ping, Long Fei, Shi Chen, Guo Yuxia and Wang Susu all turned pale.

Long Fei was in front of her in a flash and asked menacingly, "What did you say?"

An Zi was about to say something when the other three women shushed her

and took her away.

Long Fei angrily said. “If you do not explain the rubbish that you have just said, you will not leave this peak alive!”

Among the women, the youngest was Yue Zi, but she was also the calmest. She pulled An Zi away while turning her head. “What she said is rubbish, so why is there a need for explaining!”

Long Fei was slightly taken aback.

Guo Yuxia laughed gently. “There is indeed no need to explain rubbish but it is punishable, is it not?”

She cast a look at Long Fei, and jumped toward An Zi, attacking them in the fray.

An Zi eyes were bewildered, her face pale. She regretted her rash words. When Guo Yuxia attacked her, she did not dodge. Yue Zi therefore stretched her hand and executed a move ‘Golden Scissors Severing Silk’ and to counter.

Guo Yuxia laughed softly, “All of them still dare to retaliate?” Her right hand continued her attacks upon An Zi’s back while she stretched her two fingers to hit Yue Zi’s Ma Jin accupoints!

This stroke had two purposes: using an attack to neutralize an attack and using an attack as a form of defense. Yue Zi immediately dodged away but An Zi still remained stunned, staring blankly.

Yue Zi was shocked, and her right hand pushed An Zi away several steps.

Suddenly there were two “Qiang” sounds as the reflection of two swords attacked Guo Yuxia from both her left and right. Yue Zi drew her sword as well and by now, An Zi recovered enough to draw her sword too.

Guo Yuxia countenance immediately changed as she tried to dodge the four incoming attacks at the same time!

Long Fei shouted. “Stop it, all of you!”

The shout was loud and explosive. He was obviously becoming very anxious. There were echoes from the mountains: “Stop it…stop it…”

In between the echoes, Guo Yuxia had parried several attacks, and beads of perspiration appeared on her forehead. Long Fei was very pale and shouted. “Never in my life will I fight with women. Why don’t the rest of you lend your Sister in law a helping hand!”

Wang Susu softly muttered an acknowledgement and attack Yue Zi from behind with her hand.

But who could have expected that Yue Zi and He Zi could maneuver so fast that she found herself trapped in the sword formation. And An Zi was thrusting her sword towards her throat!

Shi Chen continued to move forward and said gravely, “Our Mentor Master

forbade us from carrying our swords up the mountains. I suppose he did not want us to be involved in any fighting. If our Mentor Master blames us, what shall we do?"

Long Fei was shocked and taken aback. There were flashes of sword rays all over. Guo Yuxia and Wang Susu were trapped in a sword formation that was very fast and formless. Although for the moment, they were undefeated, there was no hope for a victory!

Long Fei asked. "Fifth Brother, what do you suggest we do?"

Nangong Ping bowed his head and looked at his scabbard and said, "I will follow Protégé Brother orders."

But Long Fei appeared to be even more vexed.

But Nangong Ping continued, "If others use a long sword and aimed it at our throats, surely we can fight back?"

Long Fei's eyes shone. He yelled. "Indeed. If women want to harm me, don't tell me we cannot fight back? Third Brother, Fifth Brother, go!" And he sprang forward as well.

Suddenly there was a haughty laughter behind them. "Four fighting against two is not good. Five fighting against four doesn't seem to be any better. Disciples from the Danfeng and the Divine Dragon sects like to win by outnumbering opponents!"

Nangong Ping turned and saw that beside the purple coffin, there appeared a tall priest with long white hair from nowhere.

Although this laugher was soft, it caused Guo Yuxia, Wang Susu and the four women to cease their fight!

Long Fei turned and asked, "Who are you?"

The tall priest said coldly, "Who am I? Humph, you don't even know who I am?" He said as he walked toward the purple coffin. Then, he suddenly brushed aside the big hulk carrying the coffin that stood in his path. But unexpectedly, Nangong Ping sprang forth and was at the coffin before him. The tall hair priest coldly laughed and stopped in his path. He eyed him and said, "What do you want?"

Nangong Ping replied coldly, "What do you want?"

The long hair priest chuckled. "Good, good!" Suddenly he turned away and walked to Long Fei. "Your Mentor Master and Danfeng Ye Qiubai had a pact to fight again after ten years. Has it finished yet?"

Long Fei was stunned. "How did you know?"

The long hair priest laughed. "Of your Mentor Master's matters, is there anything I do not know?" Then he looked around and asked. "Where did the two of them go?"

Long Fei said, “You don’t need to know!”

The long hair priest kept laughing. “Good, good!” and walked towards Shi Chen. “Then who is the loser, who is the victor?”

Shi Chen was filled with suspicious but replied, “Don’t know!”

The long hair priest laughed. “Good, good!”

He moved and reached the four women in a single step and asked. “Did your Mistress win the Immortal Dragon?”

The four women glanced at one another.

Guo Yuxia suddenly laughed softly.

The long hair priest turned and asked. “What are you laughing at?”

Guo Yuxia laughed. “Ye Qiubai finally accomplished something one step ahead of our Mentor Master!”

The long hair priest asked. “What is it?”

Guo Yuxia rolled her eyes and said. “She finally died before our Mentor Master!”

The long hair priest was shaking all over. He was stunned for some time.

“Ye…Qiu…Bai…has…died...already…really…?”

Guo Yuxia said. “Indeed!”

The long hair priest sighed heavily. “Twenty years ago, the Heavenly Crow Priest predicted this just before he died!”

Long Fei interrupted. “What do you mean?”

The long hair priest bowed his head and said. “The Dragon shall triumph over the Phoenix…”

An Zi suddenly laughed. “Although Mistress Ye has died, the Immortal Divine Dragon did not triumph!”

The eyes of the long hair priest shone, and his spirits rose again. “The Immortal Divine Dragon did not win? Did the both of them die together?!”

Long Fei angrily said. “Bull...rubbish!”

The long hair priest stared at Long Fei and ground word by word. “Bull what?”

Long Fei replied. “Bullshit!”

The long hair priest gave a loud yell and drew out his sword. But when his long sword was halfway unsheathed, he loosened his hand. “Although you are rude, I can’t be bothered with you!”

Long Fei answered, “Huh… hehe…” And laughed.

An Zi responded coldly, “Some people will not par with their juniors but…the Immortal Divine Dragon is now fighting with Mistress Ye’s disciple!”

The long hair priest asked. “Immortal Dragon will fight with a junior?”

An Zi replied, “Indeed!”

Long Fei intoned cuttingly, “Although our Mentor Master is fighting with Ye Qiubai’s disciple, he had sealed off his two main energy meridians and reduced his internal power by seventy percent. This noble act deserves to be applauded. Where can you find such an act in the world!”

The long hair priest secretly smiled but replied, “He reduced his internal power to fight with someone.…”

Long Fei said, “That’s right. Although our old man reduced his internal power, he is still bound to win!”

The long hair priest asked, “Really?”

Long Fei answered in a loud voice. “Of course…” his voice weakened. “Really!” Actually in his heart, he was not at all sure, and he was anxious.

The priest pondered awhile then looked from Long Fei to Nangong Ping, who was standing besides the purple coffin. “Which one of you is the eldest disciple of the Immortal Divine Dragon?”

Long Fei rebuked him, “Why should you care!”

Suddenly, the priest laughed. “It has to be you!”

Long Fei replied. “So what if I am?”

The priest pointed to Nangong Ping’s empty scabbard. “Since you are Zhijiao Manor eldest disciple, why is the ‘Autumn Fallen Leaf’ ended up with him?”

Long Fei was taken aback. He took a quick glance at Nangong Ping and turned back his head to say, “Why do you care!” He seemed to lose the luster that he had just displayed.

The priest sarcastically said, “If today, your Mentor Master fails to return, who is going to be in charge of the Zhijiao Manor that is so renowned throughout the Pugilistic Fraternity?”

Long Fei was stunned for a while before he shouted, “Who says my Mentor Master is not going to return! Who can defeat our old man! The Immortal Divine Dragon will never die!”

His voice echoed back. “Immortal Divine Dragon will never die…will never die…” As his echo died down, a piercing laugher shook the surrounding mountains.

It was a chilling laugh that caught the attention of Nangong Ping, Long Fei, Shi Chen, Wang Susu and Guo Yuxia. They turned and saw from the misty fogs, the figure of Ye Manqing appearing like a fairy as she descended upon them. In both her hands were two shining long swords. One of the swords was the ‘Fallen Autumn Leaf’, the sword that never left the Immortal Divine Dragon for a single moment in decades!

Long Fei eyed Ye Manqing and nervously yelled to her, “Where is my Mentor Master? Where is my Mentor Master?”

Ye Manqing coldly replied, “You should have already guessed where is your Mentor Master is by now!”

Long Fei was shaking all over.

Nangong Ping paled.

Shi Chen was left stunned and shocked. Wang Susu fainted beside him without him realizing.

Guo Yuxia’s countenance was discolored.

And the four women in green sprang besides Ye Manqing with their swords.

The priest held his sword and muttered. “The Immortal Divine Dragon is finally dead!” And turned back to eye the purple coffin. “The Immortal Divine Dragon is finally dead…” His voice was low, so it was difficult to tell if he was actually happy or sad.

Ye Manqing was looking at them all the while tranquil and calm.

Long Fei suddenly shouted, “You killed my Mentor Master! Give back my Mentor Master’s life!” And he ran forward in a craze.

Shi Chen and Guo Yuxia sprang forward as well. Nangong Ping was about to do the same but after taking a few glances at the priest, he fell back to the purple coffin in tears!

Long Fei attacked Ye Manqing, one hand directly towards her front, the other at the swords in her hands!

But Ye Manqing coldly laughed and stepped backward while her four followers raised their swords and blocked Long Fei like a mirror reflection.

She clenched both her hands together and took both swords in her right hand. At the same time, her left hand reached into her dress and took out an abject. She exclaimed loudly in a cold voice, “The Heavenly Golden Dragon!” The object was a dagger with a golden dragon on its hilt.

She placed the dagger in front of her and said. “Orders for the Dragons!”

Long Fei clenched his fists. He was too shocked for words, and his heart was struggling with his inner demons.

The priest eyes shone, and he muttered. “The Decree of the Golden Dragon has finally appeared in the Pugilist World…hehe!”

Long Fei took three steps back and then he knelt and bowed down on the ground. He masked a terrible resentment. He was obviously unwilling but was forced to bow!

Ye Manqing laughed coldly, and the four women lowered their swords.

Guo Yuxia walked to Long Fei and said, “The Decree of the Golden Dragon may be with her but…”

Ye Manqing looked at Guo Yuxia coldly and pointed the dagger at her, "You don't submit?"

Guo Yuxia eyed the dagger, "What if I do, what if I don't?"

Long Fei's face was ashen as he looked at his wife from his kneeling position. "My dear, how can you…"

Long Yuxia said aloud, "She has killed our Mentor Master and stolen the Decree of the Golden Dragon from our old man. Why do we have to listen to her orders!"

Shi Chen looked at Wang Susu who had fainted. Suddenly, a shadow sprang in front of him. It was Guo Yuxia. "Third Brother, Fourth Sister, tell me, do we need to listen to her orders?"

Shi Chen seemed to be looking far away but when he looked at the golden dagger, he bowed his head and was speechless.

Guo Yuxia bit her teeth and went beside Nangong Ping, who was besides the coffin. "Fifth Brother, you know how to discern matters. Although the "Decree of the Golden Dragon" is Zhijiao Manor's prized treasure, but under circumstances, if we listen to her orders, is there any justice at all?"

Nangong Ping remained immobile, staring fiercely at Ye Manqing!

Ye Manqing looked at Guo Yuxia and said acidly, "I have shown the Decree of the Golden Dragon, and you still want to defy orders. Don't tell me that once the Immortal Divine Dragon is dead, all of you decide to defy the blood oaths that you have made when you first became disciples of your Mentor Master?"

Beads of perspiration were beginning to form on Guo Yuxia's forehead. She was usually very calm and could wriggle from any situations by talking. But now she was scared. It was as though anything that Ye Manqing said would place her in an awkward and difficult position.

Long Fei glanced at his wife, but sighed and said, "The Decree of the Golden Dragon is with you. I have nothing more to say!"

Ye Manqing laughed coldly, "At least you did not forget the teaching of your Mentor Master!"

Long Fei said, "I only acknowledge the Decree, not the person…But you killed my Mentor Master, I…" He never finished his sentence, he was too angry for words.

Nangong Ping said, "The ancients say if a general is on the field, he can choose not to follow orders from his lord. There should be flexibility involved and not because of blind loyalty thereby destroying righteousness."

Guo Yuxia narrowed her eyebrows and exclaimed. "That is exactly what I am trying to say!"

Long Fei loudly exclaimed, "Indeed! Indeed!"

Ye Manqing had a puzzling look on her eyes as she said, “Do you all know that I want…”

But Nangong Ping interrupted her. His speech was calm and his voice clear, and it carried an irresistible force that made others listen to him. “Although the Decree of the Golden Dragon has fallen in your hands, I believe that there must be a reason, otherwise, judging from our Mentor Master’s character, he would rather have it destroyed than to have it fallen into the wrong hands. Why don’t you reveal what he wants to say to us!”

Ye Manqing sighed, “It seems that only you understand the Immortal Divine Dragon’s intentions!”

Guo Yuxia said aloud, “Only words but no proof. Why should we believe your words? We don’t even know which is true or false...Third Brother, Fourth Sister, this girl harmed our Mentor Master. If we don’t avenge for our old man, can we still be considered human?”

Shi Chen lifted his head and clenched his fists.

Ye Manqing laughed coldly, “Only words but no proof…” She held the dagger between her teeth as she took a letter from her dress and threw it in front of Long Fei.

Guo Yuxia said. “Let me see!”

Just as she about to pick the letter up, she felt numbness spreading below her waist.

Ye Manqing had hit her on her “Cang Xue” accupoint with the dagger hilt. “What are you doing?”

Guo Yuxia said, “Don’t you tell me as my Mentor Master’s disciple, I cannot even read his last will and testament?” Although her speech was defiant, she dared not move.

Ye Manqing said, “You will first move back seven steps!”

Guo Yuxia angrily replied, “Who are you to order me around!” But before she could finish, she felt a painful sensation in her right lower. Unconsciously, she moved back and altogether, she had move back seven steps.

Chapter Two
Decree of the Golden Dragon

The only reason why Guo Yuxia was surprised by Ye Manqing was because she was too anxious to get hold of the letter. Now she felt resentment and anger within her. She wanted to say something but could not! She was just too upset for words!

Long Fei loved his wife and held her hand. It was cold when he touched her. “My dear, how are you feeling?”

Guo Yuxia tried to force a smile. “I…I…feeling fine!” Suddenly she whispered in his ears. “Hurry and take a look at the letter. If it not to our advantage, don’t read it out!”

Long Fei was taken aback and looked at his wife for a while. It was only today that he started to begin to understand his wife.

Ye Manqing coldly laughed. “Refusing to look at your Mentor Master letter and instead comforting your wife who only knows how to act, heng, heng...“

Long Fei flushed and turned his body and was about to pick the letter when Ye Manqing pierced the letter with the sword point of the Fallen Autumn Leaf!

Long Fei asked. “Why are you doing this?”

Ye Manqing coldly said. “If you are not willing to read, I will take it to the others to read!” Her eyes looking at everyone present and looked carefully at each of everyone as though she was looking for the right person to read the letter. And she walked to Wang Susu. “Take this letter and read it aloud!”

Wang Susu paled immediately. She had just fainted earlier and had not recovered from the shock. She secretly took a glance at Guo Yuxia and said in a low voice. “My Mentor Master last will, why did you want me to read!” She took the letter from the sword point, and hesitated for awhile, looking at Shi Chen, Nangong Ping before she finally tore open the letter.

Ye Manqing said. “Read it aloud, not a word less!”

Guo Yuxia and Long Fei looked at one another. And he noticed his wife hand was getting colder and colder. He sighed and said in a low voice. “Everything depends upon heaven’s will, why are you so nervous and worrying about!”

Guo Yuxia almost cried out.

Long Fei clenched his fists while Wang Susu read it in a clear crystal voice. “The swordplay match between Ye Qiubai and I have finally come. This ten year of preparation, the victor shall live, the loser shall die, both sides have no complaints whatever so. There is no hatred. If one shall fall, it is of one’s own will.

All of you must not seek revenge upon Danfeng's disciples. Or else the holder of the Decree of the Golden Dragon have the right to expel any disciples from the Clan!"

Maybe Susu was feeling nervous or overtly aggravated as her voice was shaking now. When she had read that part, she began to sigh. When she had calmed down, she continued. "Among all my disciples, Long Fei is the first to join the clan and he is also my nephew. Not only is he honest, loyal and also straightforward. But his heart is too soft and will prove fatal to him one day. So he can never accomplish great things." She rolled her eyes to take a glance at Long Fei who lowered his head!

Wang Susu closed her eyes, hating herself for taking that look. She continued reading. "Shi Chen is perseverance, Susu is gentle and caring…" She flushed. "…Only PingEr, is borne from a noble family. Although he is used to good food and banquets but he has never complaint. What is most notably about him is that he is extremely talented, therefore I have decided…"

Suddenly Guo Yuxia interrupted by crying out. Long Fei sighed and gently held her in his embrace. She cried even louder. "I have help Zhijiao Manor in so many ways and matters…But our old man did not even mention anything about me."

Long Fei sternly said. "My dear, what is going on today with you!"

Guo Yuxia lifted her head, her tears flowing. "I…I am really too…upset. All these years, I have worked hard for our old man but…but what did we gain? What did we gain…"

Ye Manqing who was standing near to Wang Susu could not help turned her back and laughed coldly.

Wang Susu seemed to be taken aback by the interruptions. She melancholy sighed and continued reading. "Therefore I have decided to give the "Fallen Autumn Leaf" that is constantly by my side for decades and the task to guard the heavenly coffin to PingEr till the coffin is destroyed and the person dead."

She furrowed her eyebrows as although she did not understand and repeated again. "Till the coffin is destroyed and the person dead!"

Wang Susu continued. "I have three unfulfilled wishes. Therefore I will task it upon PingEr to finish for me. These three wishes I have already handed over to Maiden Ye Manqing." She stopped and lifted her head to look at Ye Manqing.

She continued. "The Pugilist Fraternity have been in turmoil for several decades, even I cannot avoid the bloodshed. But I can safety say that I am above board in all matters and have never done a single harmful thing. But from now on, I am unable to meddle in the affairs of the mortals. Therefore I will hand over Zhijiao Manor which is my hard work to..." She took a deep breathe and there was

a surprise look on her face.

Ye Manqing interrupted. “Hand over to who?”

Wang Susu turned to look at her and asked softly. “You have not seen this piece of paper?”

Ye Manqing furrowed her eyebrows and said in a clear voice. “Will the disciple of Danfeng be so despicable and do such despicable acts?”

Wang Susu melancholy sighed. “I have thought you have read it beforehand. If it to your advantage, only then will you hand over to us. If it not, you will not let us read!” Her rebuke was so gentle and lovely and that no one would have the heart to rebuke her!

Guo Yuxia crying had become weaker by now. She lifted her head and asked. “Is the handwriting our Mentor Master?”

Wang Susu nodded her head.

Guo Yuxia wiped her tears and asked again. “Do you recognize Mentor Master handwriting?”

Wang Susu melancholy sighed. “For the past few years, Mentor Master have been practicing his writing every night, I…I had been by his side preparing the ink!” Before she finished, tears began to form in her eyes. Her eyes were wet with tears and just as she was about to use her hand to wipe her tears away, there was a soft tap on her shoulder. It was Ye Manqing who hand her a soft handkerchief!

Guo Yuxia was silent for awhile before she let go a long sigh. And said in a deep voice. “Who is the person that our old man has hand over Zhijiao Manor?”

Wang Susu wiped her tears, hand over the handkerchief back to Ye Manqing and gratefully smiled at her. She held the letters again and said. “From now on it will be hand over to the couple Fei and Yuxia!”

Guo Yuxia straightened her back and eyed the heavens. She felt ashamed.

Long Fei softly said. “My dear, our Mentor Master has never forget about you!”

Ye Manqing once again coldly smirked. “Till now, you have remembered your Mentor Master and feel sad for him!”

Guo Yuxia cried even louder and Long Fei lowered his head!

Wang Susu continued reading. “Matters concerning Zhijiao is not something that Fei can handle with his honesty and straightforward character. It is not enough to command respect from all the heroes of the world. If there is no Yuxia who is smart and without her quick thinking, Zhijiao Manor will never last a hundred year of fame.”

Nangong Ping sighed. He was very impressed with his Mentor Master thoroughness. He took a glance at Wang Susu who seemed to stare blankly at the letters.

Even Shi Chen had noticed it. He asked. “Fourth Sister, why don’t you read it?”

Shi Chen exclaimed. “Our Mentor Master’s will, must be read!” His eyes were on the letter but he failed to notice that Wang Susu was looking shyly and at the same time disappointed.

Wang Susu wiped her eyes with her fingers, lifted her head and read. “The Decree of the Golden Dragon is the sacred treasure of our sect. From now on, it will be hand over to ShiEr…ShiEr and Susu. Both of them will hold it together. With Shi Chen righteousness and Susu kindness, surely they will not abuse the Decree. With the Two Swords of the Dragon Gate, their combine martial art skills will not let the Decree loses it glory!

Everything had been handled in the Manor therefore PingEr need not worry. End of March, he is to meet Maiden Ye Manqing at the foot of Huashan and to discuss my three unfulfilled wishes with her. But he is forbidden to leave too far from the heavenly coffin, please remember!” Wang Susu had read faster and faster. With a single breath, she had read to this part.

Guo Yuxia whispered to Long Fei. “Mentor Master knows everything except Fourth Sister feeling!”

Long Fei was taken aback. “What feeling?”

Guo Yuxia said. “She would rather be with Fifth Brother to explore the Fraternity than to share the Decree with Third Brother!”

Long Fei softly said. “You seem to know everything!”

Guo Yuxia’s face suddenly became blank, bowed her head and sighed deeply. “I seem to know everything?…”

Wang Susu read. “In my life, I have done nothing wrong. I have my friends, my disciples are useful, even if I have died, I will be glad.” When she had finished, her voice was stuttering. She folded up the letters and saw Ye Manqing placed the golden dagger to her hands and said. “Please take care!”

Wang Susu blinked her eyes and said. “Thank you!”

Ye Manqing gently smiled but Wang Susu suddenly whispered to her. “I hope that from now on, you will take care of him!” Her eyes turned red and she walked off.

Ye Manqing was taken aback and stood unmoving for several moments. She finally turned and walked to Nangong Ping and without a word, thrust the “The Autumn Leaf” into the ground and coldly said. “On the sword hilt, there is yet another letter, you may read yourself!” She was pointing to the yellow silken handkerchief that was tied to the sword hilt. After saying, she walked away!

Even before Wang Susu had finished reading the Immortal Divine Dragon Will, Nangong Ping was already pondering. At this moment, although he had

pulled the long sword from the ground but he was still thinking! Till Ye Manqing had already gone far. He suddenly yelled. “Maiden Ye, please halt!” And ran to her side.

Ye Manqing turned her head and coldly said. “What is the matter? Do you wish to kill me and avenge for your Mentor Master?”

The calm posture on Nangong Ping’s face began to fade as he asked. “My Mentor Master is not dead right? Where is he now?”

Ye Manqing was taken back but regained her posture. “If the Immortal Divine Dragon is not dead, why is that he has not returned?”

Nangong Ping coldly replied. “That have to ask you!”

Ye Manqing speech became even more unfriendly. “This you have to first ask yourself, that is more appropriate.” She did not even turn her head anymore and she walked to the four waiting women. “Go!” And the five of them move swiftly down the southern peak!

Long Fei, Guo Yuxia, Shi Chen and Wang Susu all came to Nangong Ping and asked together. “How did…”

While the other three became mute, only Guo Yuxia continued. “How did you surmise that our Mentor Master may not have died?”

Nangong Ping seemed to be in thoughts before he replied. “If our Mentor Master has died, why did he in the letter, say “If he have been defeated and died, and even if he have died”. Moreover…even if our Mentor Master have been defeated and died, judging by his fury character, how could he have the calmness to write such a detail and thoroughness Will?”

Wang Susu suddenly said. “The handwriting on the will, is very straight, exactly the same style as what Mentor Master writes in slow pace!”

Nangong Ping eyes shone. “That is right. Under that condition, even if Mentor Master did not die immediately, he definitely will not write in such a style in his Will. There must be a secret…” But his eyes discolored, and he sighed. “If…he did not die, why did he not return here?”

Everyone was listening intensely, even the two men that were carrying the coffin.

Under this circumstance, no one would give the priest who was still present much attention. So he charged to the other two men who were the coffin carriers, and stretched both his hands and hit them at the back of their head. The two men did not have much time to react and could only feel themselves in a daze before collapsing onto the ground!

The priest did not even bother to look at them, certain that the two men would not be unable to get up. He then carried off the purple coffin and ran down the peak!

Nangong Ping was stunned as he was in deep thoughts earlier. Wang Susu shouted to the running priest. “You…You, what are you doing?” She was surprised as well. She had never thought a person would risk his life just to steal a purple coffin. Therefore she remained rooted to the ground in confusion.

But her shout had already alerted and interrupted Nangong Ping from his thoughts and shouted at the priest as he quickly sheathed Fallen Autumn Leaf into the scabbard, as he chased after him! And his speed was astonishing!

Wang Susu paled and exclaimed. “Big Brother, Third Brother…”

Long Fei shouted. “Hurry and chase!”

Guo Yuxia said. “Why hurry and chase?…”

Long Fei furrowed with his eyebrows. “Naturally we have to hurry and chase!”

Guo Yuxia said. “A piece of coffin wood, although it is dyed in purple, how much can it worth?”

Long Fei angrily replied. “How can we ignore the plight of Fifth Brother? He could be in danger!”

Guo Yuxia coldly laughed. “But what about our Mentor Master? Do we ignore the plight of our Mentor Master then?”

Long Fei halted in his steps and turned back. “What are you saying?”

Guo Yuxia gently sighed. “Just now what Fifth Brother have said, set me into thinking that it is a very good deduction. No matter if our Mentor Master is alive or dead at this moment, we should follow up and check. If he is not dead, then we should really give thanks the heavens!”

Long Fei asked. “What about Fifth Brother then?”

Guo Yuxia asked. “You seen Fifth Brother using that ‘Dragon Flying through the Cloud’ swiftness movement skill. How is that compared to you?”

Long Fei was stunned and stunned, said. “It is…”

Guo Yuxia slowly smiled. “It is…Just based on Fifth Brother martial skills, if he wants to win, it is not difficult. But if he want to use it for self-preservation, it is easy right?”

Long Fei sighed. “This conclusion…is also reasonable!”

However Wang Susu was anxious. “But that priest is willing to risk to steal that coffin. The coffin must have a secret...”

Guo Yuxia gently patted her on her head and gently said, “Fourth Sister, you are still young. There are many things that you do not understand yet. That priest is willing to risk the gamble to steal the coffin for the sake of trying to garner fame in the Pugilist Fraternity.”

Wang Susu asked. “If the coffin have no secret, why then did our Mentor Master asked him to protect the coffin with his life?”

Guo Yuxia became grave and said. “Even if the coffin have a secret, is the secret more important than the life of our Mentor Master?”

Wang Susu folded her hands behind her back. Although she did not agree with Guo Yuxia but she did not know what to say.

Long Fei said, “Fourth Sister, your Sister in law is right too. I think the priest martial art skill is not that high. Therefore Fifth Brother will not come to misfortune. Looking for our Mentor Master is much more important!”

Shi Chen had a heavy look on his eyes as if he wanted to say something but when he glanced at Wang Susu, he kept silence.

Guo Yuxia smiled and patted Wang Susu again. “Listen to Sister in law, you won't get wrong. If something happen to Fifth Brother, I will take responsibility. So don’t be anxious anymore alright?”

Guo Yuxia continued. “Third Brother, Fourth Sister, go. Let us go and find our Mentor Teacher!”

Wang Susu nodded her head and followed Guo Yuxia but her eyes were looking at the direction where Nangong Ping had vanished.

Shi Chen said, “If Fourth Sister is not willing to look for our Mentor Master, the three of us are sufficient too!”

Guo Yuxia laughed. “Third Brother, how can you say such a thing. Fourth Sister has always been the most filial to our Mentor Master and Mentor Master has always doted on Fourth Sister the most. How will she not be willing to search for our Mentor Master?”

Long Fei said, “Indeed, indeed. There is no reason why Fourth Sister is not willing to search for our Mentor Master!”

Suddenly there appeared a mountain bird that came forth from the clouds and it screamed aloud as though it was mocking the human race, mocking at Long Fei’s stupidity, Guo Yuxia’s cunning, Shi Chen’s jealousy and Wang Susu vulnerability.

Then it crashed on the side of the mountain cliffs!

Long Fei sprang forward and was the first to see the dead bird. He turned his head around and said to everyone. “This bird is really stupid!”

Shi Chen said, “The lonely bird lost its partner, rather than be lonely, killed itself. Isn’t it better in this way!”

Wang Susu melancholy sighed. “If it is me, I would rather let myself be killed by humans!”

Guo Yuxia slowly smiled. “You are all wrong. This bird is not stupid or lonely. It crashed to death because it had flown too high and was careless!”

Long Fei sighed. “Flying high will crash to death, flying too low will let hunters catch it. Come to think of that, being a human is hard enough, being a bird

is not easy too!”

Nangong Ping was now very anxious. He had used all the internal power of his body just to tail the priest. Although the priest was carrying a coffin, he showed no sign of slowing down!

Nangong Ping knew that it was some time before he could even catch up with him. He really could not fathom why this priest would want to risk for a coffin and why his own Mentor Master would want him to use his life to protect a coffin!

Old tales of pugilist secrets began to stir his thoughts. Was it because the coffin hid several secrets. And one of the secrets was the whereabouts of a massive treasure, or a super sharp godly weapon, or a book on martial skills foremost secrets?

Those thoughts began to flash in his mind till the priest began to slow down. And he suddenly turned back to take a look only to see no one was following him. He could not guess why his fellow disciples did not come to lend him a helping hand. Could something have happened to them?

But at this moment, he could not afford to think about it first, and lifted his vital energy within him, as he tried to narrow the distance between the priest and himself.

Suddenly a dark shadow moved towards his shoulder. He sensed something behind him and hit back but carelessly dropped his scabbard down the steep cliffs below. It was a dead bird! Musing to himself as he thought. “The world is so big yet a small bird will fall into his hands, it may be fate.” And he picked the dead bird and hid it in his clothing. Now he was just two meters away from the priest.

The priest was carting the coffin with his right hand in front and his left hand at the back. Although he had very strong internal power but he was carrying such a heavy coffin and to and forth on this treacherous mountains. It came to no surprise that his strength had faltered by now! A voice shouted behind him. “Stop!” He turned his head and saw a beaming reflection of a long sword that was less than one meter behind him!

Suddenly an air of malevolent air was seen from the eyes of the priest and with a shout, he hurled the coffin upon Nangong Ping’s head!

This coffin was originally very heavy and the priest imbued it with his internal force, when it came down upon Nangong Ping, the force was more than a ton!

Nangong Ping was moving very fast and when it came crashing down, he could not stop and slashed against the coffin with seven hits of his sword. Each hit

seemingly reduced the amount of force. This counterattack used technique to overcome the strong. This was a form of superior form of internal swordplay that replied heavily upon technique till his sword now carried the weight of the coffin.

But the priest continued to press the coffin upon Nangong Ping. Although now the force had become balanced but in their hearts, both knew they could not afford to be careless as one false move and mistake would send them plunging down the steep cliffs.

Both of them remained like statues unmoving. Nangong Ping did not dare to pierce his sword into the coffin lest it will send the coffin toppled over to him as he held off the weight of the coffin with his sword now. Now he could felt his icy cold sword slowly turning warmer! His eyes had by now become dazed as he had already expended all his vital energies!

The priest smiled from the corner of his mouth and shouted. “Why don’t you go down!”

Nangong Ping lifted his chest and shouted. “I afraid not!”

Both of them when they spoke did not dare to use the strength from their abdomen but only from their throat. Although they were shouting but it was fuzzy and unclear.

The priest coldly said, “Afraid not…hehe. I afraid it is not far!”

Nangong Ping clenched his teeth and refusing to say more!

The priest coldly said, “You are still young and if you died, then there be no one to collect your corpse. I feel so pitiful for you!”

Nangong Ping replied word by word. “I afraid the one that is going to die is going to be you!” But in his heart he sighed. “Alas, I don’t even have anyone to collect my corpse…” He wished now when he had turned his head and saw his fellow disciples right at the back “Why did they not come?” He thought.

His glances incidentally saw the long sword that his benefactor teacher had left behind for him and a feeling of loneliness overwhelmed him!

“Why did they not come, unless…” He thought. Suddenly he felt the weight of the coffin getting heavily and heavily. His heart jumped and he quickly focused his thoughts again. “This priest is trying to disturb my thoughts with doubts, how can I be allowed myself to be tricked by him!”

His thoughts refocused and under the shadow of the coffin, he could see the priest sweating now. He suddenly had a thought. “This priest is trying to use words to distract me because his strength is reaching his limits as well! If I will just endure a little longer, surely I can change defeat to victory!”

When experts fought, not only was internal power a must, perseverance, patience also came into the factors. Victory and defeat, life and death were always at a moment notice. Whoever could endure till the last instant would have the final

victory. Whoever lost their morale first, naturally would be bound to lose!

Nangong Ping calmed himself down, said. “You have mustered all your strength, yet you trying to hoodwink me, do you think I do not know!”

The priest had by now turned green, and his hands on the coffin started to weaken. Nangong Ping inhaled a deep breath, jacked up his long sword and said. “Maybe your internal power is greater than me but you have carried such a heavy object for a great many distances. The internal power that you have expended far exceeded that of mine. Now you are near your limits!”

The priest pale hands had by now become red from white. And from red to purple now.

Nangong Ping secretly felt relief inside him. And continued. “If you and me continued further, although I may be in danger but you may be unable to escape death.”

He purposely emphasized the word “Death” by dragging his speech. “Just because of a non living thing, useless coffin, you lose your life. It is definitely not worth the effort. Your martial art skills are not weak and your experiences I suppose are not easy to attain. For the sake that we are pugilists, if you would let go, I will not pursue and let you go!”

Although what he said were for the sake of weakening the morale of the priest and to boasted his own morale at the same time. But some of it, really came from the bottom of his heart.

Unexpectedly, when he finished. The priest suddenly coldly laughed and said, “You want me to die alone, I afraid it isn’t that simple!” And he used his last ditch effort to hold the coffin with both his hands.

Nangong Ping was disappointed with his response.

Suddenly the priest kicked him with his right leg. Most of his strength had been concentrated on both his hands, this kick was not powerful. But the kick was directed towards Nangong Ping “Shu Qi” accupoint. (In between the leg)

If Nangong Ping avoided this kick and moved, he would have been crushed by the coffin. If he did not avoid it, how could he have endured it? In his anger, he made a yell and parried the kick with his left hand. Lucky the timing of his left hand was perfect or he would have been crushed.

But the priest withdrawn his right leg, and kicked again, this time using his left leg.

Nangong Ping parried it in time with his hand again but his head had a frightening thought. The priest obviously wished to die together with him.

Then the priest kicked again with his right leg, all the while Nangong Ping's right hand was holding his long sword, and his left hand had to hold the coffin and to parry at the same time!

Altogether, the priest had kicked three times. And his right wrist could not hold the coffin anymore and his left hand was unable to cope with the lightning pace kicks anymore!

Should he let go of the sword in his hand and suddenly jump backwards, possibly he could still escape with his life. But under this life and death situation, he remembered his Mentor Master last will. “Therefore I have decided to give “Fallen Autumn Leaf” that is constantly by my side for decades, and the task to guard the heavenly coffin to PingEr till the coffin is destroyed and the person dead…"

He secretly sighed. For he no longer could think of anything that made that coffin so special. But he rather died than betrayed his Mentor Master last will and also he refused to live with the memories of humiliating defeat.

“Till the coffin is destroyed and the person dead…sacrifice himself…” He once again secretly sighed and muttered. “Is it worth it…” By now, he focused on holding the coffin and ignored the kicks of the priest. He had now put his life above self.

The priest turned pale and laughed hilariously. “Good, good. Let the three of us die together.”

Nangong Ping was taken aback. “Three people! Where is there three people?”

The priest looked at the coffin. “This is the third person!” and kicked Nangong Ping on his chest!

Nangong Ping sighed. “Never mind!” He had by now prepared to sacrifice himself with the priest together with the coffin!

Unexpectedly, something near miraculous happened...

When he said “Never mind.” The long sword that was in his hand felt light. It was because the purple coffin had suddenly become as light as a feather.

When the coffin became light, the situation changed. The priest could feel that the coffin had a strange force that was pulling in all his internal force from his hands. Although he had all his internal power concentrated on the coffin, he felt no weight or gravity from the coffin. He was too shocked that he leapt back three feet!

Nangong Ping was taken aback too and he too leapt back three feet!

The two of them retreated backward at the same time.

The priest although he was green from exhaustion but he stared unblinkingly and clenched his fists. His eyes were like fire staring at the purple coffin. But both his legs were shaking!

Nangong Ping held his sword with his right hand, and he clenched his left fist. He was shocked but at the same time was relief but he was looking at the purple coffin too!

The purple coffin was still floating in mid-air even after the two of them had retreated backward. They watched it as it floated gently on the ground. It was as though there was a invisible man that was holding the coffin and guiding it to the ground. When that heavy coffin came to the ground, it was without a sound!

Nangong Ping felt a chill arising from his toes and overwhelming his entire body. He came from a noble family and had a reputable teacher. What he had seen and heard naturally was not less but he had never saw such a weird thing that happened today. If it were not for the fact that it was still daylight, he would have thought he was dreaming!

The priest was now frightened beyond words but his stares were still upon the purple coffin.

Nangong Ping was rooted to the ground. He took a deep breath and slowly walked to the coffin.

Suddenly the priest made a dry laugh. “Good…Good, so you really…did not…die!” His voice was filled with terror, fright, consolation and relief! All those different feelings when it was mixed in a single sentence caused that sentence to be exalted in a strange manner, yet filled with a mysterious feeling of terror!

Suddenly the priest flew in front of the coffin, raised both his hands to attack the ordinary purple coffin!

Nangong Ping was shocked yet he did not have anytime to think. He shouted. “What are you doing?” As he raised his long sword and purge forward as well.

As he was young, his strength recovered very fast. That made up his lack of internal power. At that moment when he attacked with his sword, it carried all the essence of his best martial arts.

The priest felt a chilling feeling entered into his bones and a flash of light flew towards him. With a look, he could tell that the swordplay had no weakness and opening for him to exploit. If he did not withdraw both his hands, he would have invite disaster upon his life.

Nangong Ping shouted. “Retreat back!”

The priest responded by moving back seven feet while Nangong Ping was standing in front of the coffin.

The priest stared at Nangong Ping’s long sword before both their eyes locked on one another and they stood unmoving on the spot.

After awhile, the priest let go a sigh and said. “You and I have no feuds, why did you want to treat me like that!” And sighed even heavily.

Nangong Ping was surprised, as he did not expect the priest to ask something like that.

The priest continued. “You and I don’t even know one another, let alone any

feuds? You and I have no feuds, why then you go through all that troubles just to stop me!"

The priest continued. "If you will hand this coffin over to me, from this day on, you will be my benefactor. As long as I am alive, I will repay your kindness!

Nangong Ping looked at him for awhile before he laughed coldly. "Is it because you fail to take by force, you are trying a soft approach by begging me?"

The priest lifted his chest and said loudly. "I don't beg from anyone in my entire life!"

Nangong Ping said. "Even if you have begged me, I will not let you approach the coffin a single step!"

The priest sighed. "Why bother…why bother…" Suddenly he sprang forwards like a bow and attacked with both his legs. Altogether he made four strokes toward Nangong Ping's head, throat, waist and lower body, the four main vulnerable point!

Nangong Ping smiled, unmoving and swung his right hand with his long sword and cut from up to down, forming what was like a mirror wall. Although this stroke looked simple and easy, it was actually a superior attack stroke that also defends at the same time! Unbreakable and at the same time incomparable excellent!

One must know that the Immortal Dragon had undergone many big and small battles, life and death situations. Needless to say about his internal power but if one was to compare his experience on fighting, it was already incomparable in the entire Pugilistic Fraternity. Later when he retired to Zhijiao Manor, he collected the knowledge of his fighting experiences and the martial art skills that he had seen and created a set of ordinary, yet extraordinary swordplay. That was because according to his wealthy experience, he knew that flowery swordplay although can confuse opponents but once it is set against a top exponent, it become useless! Therefore the swordplay he created may look ordinary by appearances and look easy, but it was to let the guard of the opponent down and when he discovered it, it would already be too late!

Nangong Ping might look hapless but in his heart, he was already on guard. He knew the priest if he failed on soft approach might try to use the hard approach. Therefore he had already secretly infused his inner energy upon the sword. When he swung the sword, it fended off the four deadly attacks of the priest!

The priest stood unmoving on the same spot, appearing to be considering. Then he attacked again with both his hands. Left hand upon Nangong Ping's chest "Jiang Tai", right hand on his artery channels.

But Nangong Ping retaliated by jolting his sword and pierced the priest on two main accupoints on his shoulder. The priest flew backwards and then moves

back another seven steps.

"Good sword! Very good swordplay!" The priest said.

Nangong Ping lowered his sword and said. "If the sword is not good, it is still the same!"

The Priest coldly said. "If the sword is not good, I have already broke through your sword shield and pierce through your chest!"

Nangong Ping remained calm. "If the sword is not good, just now when my sword have hit your accupoints, although your right hand have blocked the length of my sword but how do you know that I am not hiding any more powerful strokes as reserve!"

The priest coldly said. "You can try again!"

Nangong Ping remained calm, refusing to be angered. "Though I am fighting you now, I shouldn't have used such a good sword and moreover shouldn't have use weapon against your bared fists." He laughed awhile before continued. "But when I am following my benefactor teacher to protect the coffin. If you still insist on pestering me, I will even use secret projectiles!"

The priest narrowed his eyebrows. In between his eyebrows, he was disappointed. He had used hard approach, soft approach and taunting tactics but he still failed to impress upon this young man's iron steel heart!

He no longer had any idea how he was going to shake his steel like willpower. He knew that his internal power was unable to defeat him at this moment. And he felt a terror that arose from his disappointment that was spreading upon him.

Nangong Ping stared at him as though he had already see through the priest what he had been thinking in his heart.

Suddenly the priest asked. "Your Mentor Master asked you to protect this coffin with your life, do you know the reason why?"

Nangong replied. "Don't know!"

The priest asked again. "Is it worth it?"

Nangong Ping said. "Don't know!"

The priest said. "While you and I are standing here unmoving, my internal power is slowly by slowly recovering. When my internal power is fully recovered, you will not be my match. By then you will have lose your life for nothing."

Nangong smiled. "Really?"

The priest replied with a straight face. "Of course."

Nangong Ping laughed. "If it is true, then why should you be telling me? When your internal power is fully recovered and then killed me, isn't it better?"

The priest furrowed his eyebrows and shouted. "I have the heart to treasure talents but never expect you to be so unappreciated!"

Nangong Ping said, “I appreciate it.”

The priest turned pale. “You really don’t believe that I really recover my internal power?”

Nangong Ping said, “To believe or not to believe, it is the same!”

The priest asked. “Can you explain it?”

Nangong Ping continued. “I have already placed my life and death secondary. Even though you can recover your internal power and want to kill me, I will still not leave the coffin a single step.”

Nangong Ping smiled. “My martial art skills are enough to preserve my life but unable to get rid of you!”

The priest coldly hummed and said, “You are very frank!”

Nangong Ping said in a grave voice. “You and I harbored no hatred. If you did not try to steal the coffin but continue to stand right there, even though I have the ability to win you but I am unable to kill you!”

The priest shut his eyes for a moment before opening his eyes again. With a heavy sigh he said, “I really cannot understand why you have to go through all that troubles just to protect this coffin!”

Nangong coldly said. “I really cannot understand why you have to go through all the troubles just to steal this coffin too!”

The priest clenched his fists, bit his teeth and stared at Nangong Ping.

Nangong Ping remained nonchalance and calm, and looked back at him!

After awhile, the priest sighed again. “Do you really want me to tell you the real reason before you will give up?

Nangong Ping said, “Even if you have tell me the real reason, I still will not give up!”

The priest looked into the skies and said. “There are some people in the entire life, who in their daily lives and in all matters try to do good, did not dare even to do a single wrong thing. But once they did something wrong once, they immediately become a great sinner. There are some people who are villainous but in a coincidence did a good deed and immediately people forgive all their past doings…”

Suddenly the priest laughed loudly. “Do you think that Heaven is fair?”

Nangong Ping was stunned for words. Why did this mysterious priest at this time, say something totally irrelevant to the situation here?

Then the priest pointed at Nangong Ping in an anguish manner and said. “You spend so much efforts to protect this coffin, do you know who is now lying inside the coffin?”

Earlier from the ordinary coffin, a miracle happened. Nangong Ping had already guessed that the coffin contained a secret, and slowly he had also guessed

that there might be a person hidden inside the coffin!

But what made him unable to believe was, his Mentor Master had always been aboveboard and honorable. How could he have any secrets that could not be revealed to anyone, especially one that he wanted to hide throughout his entire life!

Nangong Ping muttered. “Hidden inside the coffin…is really a person?”

The priest continued. “People in the Pugilistic Fraternity are carrying tales of the number one warrior ‘Immortal Divine Dragon’ carrying a coffin because he is expecting a defeat. And it would later become the praise of everyone to remembrance. Now that the Immortal Divine Dragon had died, this legend will be remembered for hundreds of generations. But…” He suddenly laughed aloud. “But the truth is, in the entire Pugilistic Fraternity, who really knows the truth of what actually happening!”

Nangong Ping asked, “What truth?” as he could sense the priest bitterness in his laughter.

The priest laughed for awhile, then shouted. “You really think that the Immortal Divine Dragon carries a coffin in this journey, is really because he seeks defeat and death? The reason why he did it is because the coffin contains a person!

Nangong Ping paled and asked. “What type of person?”

The priest asked. “What person…” laughed even more crazed. “A woman! A despicable, a whore by nature but also an extremely rare beauty who resembled a fairy!”

Nangong Ping was taken aback. He angrily retorted. “What did you say?”

The priest laughed. “I say, your Mentor Master the ‘Immortal Divine Dragon’ Long Bushi may be the number one warrior but the reason he is carting a coffin and expecting a defeat is all a tall tale. He only did that for a woman that is an evil whore!” His laugher getting louder and louder and the mountains echoed back. “He only did that for a woman that is an evil whore…”

Nangong Ping loudly said. “In your speech, if you continue to insult my Mentor Master one more word…”

The priest interrupted. “Insult him…heng, heng. What I say just now, every single word is the truth. If you do not believe, why don’t you open the coffin lid and have a look? Thereafter you will know, who is the person hidden in the coffin!”

Nangong Ping asked, “Who is it?”

The priest said. “Even though you may be young but you should have heard of…” His speech became muted before he could finally say it out. “…The name of Peacock Concubine Mei Yin Xue!”

A breeze blew and Nangong Ping shivered. The priest continued. “What is the world most poisonous creature, who else but the Peacock Concubine…”

Nangong Ping asked in a serious tone. “Is the Peacock Concubine and Cold Blood Concubine the same person?”

But the priest laughed again, not even looking at him and said. “A hundred birds flock towards the Phoenix, the Peacock alone display her magnitude…”

Nangong Ping was frustrated as he angrily said. “Just now what I ask you, did you not hear?”

The priest continued to recite. “The snowy ground display its magnitude; the Peacock Concubine blood has turned cold. Everyone knows that the Concubine blood is cold. The Divine Dragon in his rage descended down to the mortal world. The nine mountains of Huashan erupted into a terrible battle, only the reflection of swords and not the persons are seen; no one knows who are the victors.” When he recited up to this point, his speech became sharper and anguish.

Nangong Ping held his long sword tightly as he listened intensely.

The priest continued. “The Divine Dragon have Immortal as its namesake, ever victorious, the Peacock finds its magnitude unable to display, Divine Dragon with just a sword act as its echoes, thereafter the Pugilistic Fraternity is rid of a great poison, and exalt the victor as Immortal Divine Dragon!”

Nangong asked. “It seems that “Peacock Concubine” is the same as the “Cold Blood Concubine”?”

The priest stared at Nangong Ping and coldly said. “That is right. Mei Yinxue and Mei Leixue (Cold Blood) is the same person.” Suddenly he laughed. “Yinxue! Leixue, hehe. Excellent name, what an excellent name, excellent nickname, what an excellent nickname, I, Gong… really should have exposed the truth for the whore!”

Nangong Pong suddenly asked. “Gong what?”

The priest immediately turned paled and said, “It has nothing to do with you!”

Nangong Ping sarcastic laughed. “Since you are hiding something and unwilling to reveal your surname. I will not ask you again! But I want you to repeat what you just say again”

The priest asked. “What do you mean?”

Nangong Ping remained calm and said, “Inside the purple coffin, there is a living person and it is the Peacock Concubine Mei Yinxue, is that what you just have said from your mouth?”

The priest replied. “That is right! So?”

Suddenly Nangong Ping laughed, his wrist moved and his sword reflected the light and said. “Since you know, then why did you insist on saying those lies that insulted my benevolent teacher? Long time ago, the Peacock Concubine Mei Yinxue roamed the Fraternity fearlessly in a rampage, using her martial art skills,

intelligence and beauty to cause countless people in Pugilistic Fraternity to lose their reputations. She had also caused countless number of families to break apart but there were also countless number of people that were captivated by her beauty and kowtow under her skirt."

The Priest coldly laughed. "It seems that you do know her past!"

Nangong Ping stared at him. "Although the Pugilistic Fraternity harbored hatred towards her but at the same time were captivated by her beauty and frightened by her martial art skills. However none dare to confront her. My benevolent teacher in his rage decided to meddle in this matter. In the nine peaks of Huashan, after three days of terrifying battle, he finally emerged victorious with his superior swordplay. At that time the pugilists that were waiting under the nine peaks of Huashan when they saw him coming down from the mountain, all broke into thunderous applause. That thunderous applause was said to be heard even from ten miles away!"

Nangong Ping was filled with respect for his Mentor Master. He sighed. "It a pity at that time, I have not yet become the disciple of my Mentor Master yet. I feel so regretful that I was unable to participate in that glorious event!" His eyes shone and he said in a clear voice. "But this matter in the Pugilistic Fraternity, is known to all. Although benevolent teacher did not mention it to me but I have heard it from the mouths of others. And these people who have told me what they know are impressed with the heroism of benevolent teacher. And now you are saying, "Peacock Concubine" is still alive and is now lying inside the coffin. What evil intentions are you harboring? If you do not tell me, don't blame me for killing you with my sword. "

The priest suddenly laughed. "What a dashing hero, whom everyone respects…Long Bushi, Long Bushi although you had died you should feel a sense of guilty conscious!"

Nangong Ping angrily retorted. "What did you say?" And he pointed his long sword towards the priest's chest.

Although by now, Nangong Ping's long sword was within three feet of the priest's chest, he shown no sign of retreat. The priest said. "You are so impressed with your Mentor Master, even though I may say a million times, you still will not believe me!"

Nangong Ping said without hesitation. "Indeed!"

The priest said, "But in just a moment work, I can persuade you to be disappointed with your Mentor Master!'

Nangong Ping said aloud. "You keep talking rubbish, it really let me…"

The priest interrupted. "Although you may not believe me, but why did you not open the coffin to take a look? Just to make sure that hidden within is indeed

Mei Yinxue that all in the Pugilistic Fraternity was the whore that was nicked the 'Cold Blood Concubine'? His pitch got higher and higher as he spoke. As he finished, he was already breathless.

Deep inside Nangong Ping's heart, he thought. "Will a person that is so confidence tell a lie?" Another thought dawned upon him. "If he is not telling any lies, then were it not mean that Mentor Master really hid the Peacock Concubine inside the coffin and deceive the whole world? Mentor Master had been a hero all his life so how could he have done such a thing?"

In his thoughts, he blamed himself for not trusting his Mentor Master yet at the same time he was feeling confused and contradicting.

The priest sighed. "If you can open the coffin and let me take a look. If inside the coffin is not the 'Cold Blood Concubine', I will immediately commit suicide with a sword. Not only will I die wholeheartedly, I will also definitely not blame you!"

Nangong Ping furrowed his eyebrows in thoughts. His face was filled with bewilderment and contradiction. If he opened the coffin, would it not mean that he had already disbelieved his Mentor Master whom he had greatly respected? But if he did not open the coffin, it would not dispel the doubts in his mind!

The priest eyed him with suspicious. But upon seeing the looks of bewilderment on his face, he suddenly laughed coldly. "If you do not open the coffin, then it means that you do not fully believed in the character of your Mentor Master!"

Nangong Ping angrily said, "Shut up!"

The priest acted as though he did not hear. "If the coffin is really emptied and since your Mentor Master did not forbid you to open the coffin so even if you have opened the coffin to peek inside, what does it really matter!"

Nangong Ping sighed in his heart. "If the coffin really have no one inside, do you really mean to…"

The priest interrupted. "I will immediately commit suicide in front of you…"

Nangong Ping exclaimed in a grave voice. "A gentleman word of honor!"

The priest continued. "Is as white as a white dye!"

The priest took one step forward and looked at the coffin and said coldly. "Will you be the one that open it or me?"

Nangong Ping stared at the coffin and thought. "If the coffin really has a person inside, surely our conversations will be overheard. Therefore, there is no reason why there is no sign of any movements!" He calmed himself down with words and said aloud. "It is the possession of my late benevolent teacher. How can I allow you to defile it? Naturally it is for me to open."

Nangong Ping rolled his eyes and saw the priest looking nervously but his eyes were filled with self-confidence and looking unblinking at the purple coffin.

The priest said impatiently. “No need for words, please open the coffin fast.” Every word of his speech seemed to indicate that inside the coffin, was the legendary ‘Cold Blood Concubine’ that had passed away.

Nangong Ping felt his self-confidence shaken by the priest even though he just self-assured himself. He wanted to keep his long sword into his scabbard but he realized he lost it earlier.

The priest coldly said upon seeing Nangong Ping hesitating. “Why don’t you pass your long sword to me…”

Nangong Ping paled upon hearing this but the priest continued. “So you can have an easier time opening the coffin and it much more convenience for me to suicide.”

Nangong Ping coldly hummed and did not look at the priest anymore. His right hand still holding the long sword and his left hand grappling the lid of the coffin as he lifted the coffin opened while he thought. “The priest is full of self-confidence. Don’t tell me inside the coffin, really is that Peacock Concubine?”

The priest clenched his fists tightly and muttered. “Mei Yinxue, Mei Yinxue. Today I finally have the opportunity to chance upon you…”

Suddenly Nangong Ping became stunned, relaxed his hold and said. “This coffin has already been nailed. No one else can open it!”

The priest coldly said. “If the coffin is empty, why is it nailed?”

Nangong Ping was taken aback by the question, only to see the priest moving towards the coffin. “What are you trying to do?” Before he had finished, he saw the priest extending his left hand towards the coffin. Suddenly Nangong Ping shouted. “Stop!” as he waved his sword in a flash and stabbed towards the priest.

If he did not stop, he would be dead. Therefore the priest withdrawn and said angrily. “Stabbing behind, is it honorable?”

Nangong Ping coldly laughed and lowered his long sword. “ My benevolent teacher divine coffin is not for your hands to defile!”

The priest turned paled, tried to control his anger and stared fiercely at Nangong Ping before turning back. He then spat his saliva on the ground and cold said without turning his head. “The front of the coffin have two dragon figurines. The pearls between them are the buttons to open the coffin!”

Although Nangong Ping was filled with suspicious, he did what is told. He walked to the front of the coffin indeed saw two dragon figurines. In between the figurines indeed was a dragon pearl. Although this coffin was made of expensive purple wood under the sun and wind, it appeared to be ancient. Only this dragon

pearl is sparkly and shiny. Obviously had been handled many times! Nangong Ping sighed and realized that his observations were indeed inferior to the priest. He extended his left hand and gently pressed on the pearl twice!

There was a creaking sound. The priest said. “Try to lift it!”

Nangong Ping started to lift the coffin up. Immediately the priest turned his head.

For a moment, both of them felt their hearts pacing fast and at the same time, their hands were both shaking and broke into cold sweat!

Suddenly Nangong Ping yelled as he pushed the coffin up and half opened the coffin. And both rushed to look inside the coffin.

The priest broke into a cold sweat as he turned paled. And muttered. “This…this…she…she…” His voice became broken and unable to continue. The coffin was emptied and where was the person?

Nangong Ping glances became icy and clenched tightly his sword. Suddenly he shouted. “You are a deceiver and a heretic!” as he flicked his sword and stabbed at the priest!

The priest looked lost so when this stab occurred, he did not dodge it as if he did not see it but his mouth muttered something. “The coffin must…” Those were the three words he had just said before Nangong Ping stabbed him on his left chest as blood spurred out. In that instant, his priest garment became dyed with blood.

The priest bit his teeth, held the sword and pulled it out before collapsing on the ground. His eyes discolored as he stared at Nangong Ping and exclaimed. “You…You will one day…will…will regret it…”

Nangong Ping turned paled and his whole body became numbed. He finally relaxed his sword and looking lost.

Finally when his mind had relaxed, he felt like throwing the long sword from his hands to the bottomless ravine below. Still stunned, he kept muttering. “I finally killed a man…I finally killed a man…a man!” That was the first time he had ever killed some one and he finally experienced the feeling of killing. The feeling was so unbearable!

Then he walked away in a daze. He did not know how long he had walked before he suddenly muttered. “I should at least bury his body…” Suddenly he did a mad run back to the coffin but although the bloodstain on the ground remained, the mysterious and pitiful priest was no where to be found.

Now he was really confused. Even more confusing was that he still could not tell what secret the ordinary purple coffin was hiding? Or how many secrets it containing?

He sat down under a tree with his hands folded. Eventually the fallen leaves calmed his spirits.

He tried to understand the happenings and forgot to puzzle over why his fellow protégés did not follow him. And extended his hand into his body and took out a yellow silk handkerchief along with some feathers attracted to it.

Although he was upset but he smiled now thinking of the stupid bird as he saw the feathers. He took out the bird as well and opened the handkerchief to read at his Mentor Master last will. “I have killed countless people, among all those that I have killed they are all deserving, therefore in all my life I never feel guilty conscious…”

Nangong Ping sighed. And beginning to feel the taste of “guilty conscious”. He sighed heavily and muttered to himself. “Although this word sounds ordinary but it requires a lot of willpower, enduring much pain to achieve. But what about me!…”

He began to think about the priest. “I have harmed that person, will my heart not feel guilty?” He also recalled what the priest had said but thought. “Mentor Master in all his life, he has never feel guilty conscious, so how would he have done what the priest had said!”

Therefore his faith restored and he laughed. And continued to read. “Although no guilty conscious but there is something, I suppose can be considered guilty conscious…”

Nangong Ping paled and continued to read. “Ten years ago, there appeared a person who caused me to hate intensely. As this person had harmed one of my friends, therefore I played the role of knight-errant and swore to kill that person by my sword. But afterwards, I realized it was the wrongdoing of my friend. And that evil despicable person was in fact innocent. So I…”

The words below were dyed by blood and no longer visible!

Just when Nangong Ping had read the most important part it was missing! Suddenly he had an uneasy thought. “Don’t tell me these blood traces are left behind by Mentor Master!”

He stood up and felt very upset. Suddenly his eyes caught the sight of the blood soaked dead bird!

For a moment, he did not know whether to laugh or to cry. And sat down on the ground. Sighing he read past the blood traces. “Therefore I will hand this person to you and hope that you will take good care of her…”

Nangong Ping puzzled. “Her…? Her…Who is she?” and continued to read. “As it is too hurried, I have no time to explain to you but I hope that one day you will know the truth. As I cannot hope to repay you is the greatest regret in my life. I hope that you will sustain from rumors and evil, be strong and strive upwards so as not to disappoint the expectations that I have of you!”

“Too hurried…” Nangong Ping muttered. “Is it because…really Mentor

Master is really dead?…" As he shed two warm tears.

"One day you will know the truth…" But when would that day be? "As I cannot hope to repay you is the greatest regret in my life…" He wipe his tears and cried aloud. "Mentor Master, you have always treated me with great kindness. And I have always been grateful to you. Don't you know Mentor Master?"

Then he aimlessly dug a hole in the mud with his hands and buried the dead bird. He said to the grave. "We are fated more or less. Or else why the world is so big and you happened to fall into my hand? This grave is able to shelter you from the wind and rain…"

Nangong Ping sighed deeply before he remembered there was still the dead priest. From now on, he will be exposed in the wilderness and to the mercy of the elements, he felt upset and clenched his sword even more tightly.

Suddenly he felt so exhausted and tired. He had been fighting with the priest all morning and the fight had drained all his inner energy in his body! A biological effect acted by nature began to take over him and he slowly relaxed and he slipped into a sleep and after an unknown period of time…

Towards the evening time, when the sun was setting, suddenly there was a creaking sound that came from the purple coffin from the woods. The coffin lid began to open...

Under this peaceful mountain, although the sound was very light, it suddenly awakened Nangong Ping from his sleep. He opened his eye and saw a shadowy figurine from the empty coffin, there was a pair of white and beautiful jaded hands, pushing open the coffin lid!

What came afterwards was a long flowing black hair, followed by a pale face.

Although the setting sun cast a red glow all over the place, it failed to lit that white and pale face up. Although Nangong Ping was daring, he felt a shiver down his spine as he tried to say aloud. "Who…Who are…You?" Although he tried to muster as much courage as possible, his mouth was trembling.

The rare beauty that was in the coffin had by now began to stand slowly up. Her weak vulnerable body yet so beautiful and moving, was dressed in a pure white long robe that was identical to her face. Under the mountain wind as her white robe flurried and danced, her body seemingly could be swept away by the wind anytime, but her pair of shining bright eyes looked as steady as the mountain under Nangong Ping's foot!

She floated lightly down the ground from the coffin and moved one step by one step towards Nangong Ping. There was not a single expression on her face

much less a smile and there was no trace of any color on her face as well. Even her small lips were white too. Under this lonely and desolate place, no one would think she come from the mortal realm but from the spirit realm!

Nangong Ping tightened both his fists as he felt his palms breaking into cold sweat. Mustering his breath from his abdomen, he exclaimed aloud. “Who are you?” And he tried to stand up from the ground.

The least expecting thing happened, the beautiful woman from the coffin suddenly laughed softly and gently said. “What are you afraid of? Do you think that I am a…” as she laughed softly again.

Her voice was like the March breeze that was so gentle and intoxicating. Her gentle laughter could even melt the most steel-hearted man and moved him. The cold and chilling feeling that she carried when she walked out of the coffin, at that moment, completely disappeared with that soft and gentle laugh.

Nangong Ping felt his eyes staring at her, her laugh, was even more moving than Ye Manqing’s smiles. Ye Manqing soft laughter may be compared to the blossoming lilies and the full boom of the peonies. But that was only the eyes, eyebrows, lips and face that was laughing but that beautiful woman from the coffin, she seemed to be laughing from her whole body, her whole heart and even her soul as well was enveloped in her smiles and laughter. Even your breathing would follow her laughter breathing and let your pulses, followed her soft laughter pitch and jumped.

But once her laughing ceased, Nangong Ping felt her whole body once again radiated a chilling aura. He could not think of a reason why such an ordinary coffin, would walk out such an extraordinary person.

He finally straightened his body and stood firmly on the ground and was now facing her face to face. And he could see clearly her features now. Therefore he once again regained his self-confidence that seemed to be second nature to him. He asked again in a low voice. “Who are you?” His voice was now firm and steady.

She rolled her watery eyes and eyed him for an instant. All of a sudden, she burst into a laugh and gently said. “Although you are young but in some areas definitely set you apart from others. No wonder Long…Grandpa Long is willing to place me in your care!”

Nangong Ping was taken aback. And thought. “Place her in my care…” He immediately flashed back to the words on the yellow handkerchief. “…Therefore I will hand this person to you and hope that you will take good care of her…”

Earlier when he asked her “Who are you?” At that moment, the answer was at hand. “She” was the extremely beautiful maiden that was now standing in front of him, the face that was so paled and white, long robe that was so pure and white

and whose skin was so white as well.

There were other questions too but he had no other clues to link to it. He sighed. He had discovered that although the heaven and earth was so vast but many things were indeed so coincident. The dead bird dyed the most important portion of the letter. Was it because Heaven deliberately wished to play a prank on him?

The beautiful maiden who was dressed in white robe carried a tinge of smiles in her eyes as she sat down besides him and gently looked up the skies, muttered. “Time fly very fast, yet another day is about to pass…Alas. Actually, a human with a hundred year life span is like a flicker of a finger…Alas. Since ancient times to present, who can retain youth that was like slippery water?”

In her speech, it seemed that it was filled with self-anguish and self-worth. It seemed most unlikely that it will come from the mouth of such an well-endowed and extremely beautiful young girl. It seemed more likely to come from someone that was past her prime, mourning for her lost youth and that life was short!

Nangong Ping turned to look at her only to see between her eyebrows hid many bitterness that displayed her feeling. It seemed that it came from the bottom of her heart. Bewildered, he asked. “Maiden…Lady…”

The beautiful woman suddenly laughed for an instant and eyed him. “You don’t even know if I am a Maiden or Lady. That is indeed very strange!”

Nangong Ping stammered awhile before replying. “I and…you have never met before…”

The beautiful woman asked. “Since Grandpa Long had asked you to take care of me, did he not mention about me?”

Nangong Ping became vexed. In his thoughts were the words on the yellow silk handkerchief that was dyed by the blood of the dead bird...

“Ten years ago, there appeared in the Pugilistic Fraternity a person…” He suddenly remembered.

He thought. “Is she really the one that the priest had said, “Cold Blood Concubine”? But that Peacock Concubine had found fame ten years ago and till now will be at least thirty plus of age! But she…” And looked at the beautiful young maiden who was also looking at him. No matter how he looked, at most she was only just past twenty-year old.

He tried to avert his eyes from her only to hear her laughed gently. “Why did you not answer me?” As she reached to comb her long black hair that was touching her waist. And asked again. “In your thoughts, you must be thinking of something. Are you trying to guess my age?”

Chapter Three
The Soft hearted Hero

Nangong Ping face reddened immediately and bowed his head but said. “That is right. I am thinking about your age now!”

The beautiful woman melancholy sighed and said. “My age, is not worth to guess!”

Nangong Ping was taken aback only to hear her continuing. “When I have reached such an age, I am unwilling to let others speak of my age!”

Nangong Ping was surprised and thought. “This girl is so young, why did she sound so old?" So he unconsciously exclaimed. “You are still in the prime of your youth, why did…” Before he could finish, the beautiful maiden sprang up and touched her face and asked. “Prime of my youth?…” She sounded just as surprised.

Nangong Ping said. “Twenty years old, is indeed a person most, most beautiful period. You are already so discouraged. Do you have some difficulty in your heart that you need to resolve?”

As he had been looking down so he did not see the beautiful maiden expression changing with every muttering of his words.

Nangong Ping continued to say. “My Mentor Master has ordered me to take care of maiden, therefore I hope you will tell me the sadness that is plaguing you in your heart. So I can help to resolve it for you as well.” Although he could not understand why his Mentor Master had asked him to take care of a young girl. But since his Mentor Master had already given out the orders, even though he might have to undergo the tribulations of fire, he would not go against his orders! That why he would say such tender words to a young girl whom he had never met!

The beautiful maiden asked in a low voice. “Is it true?…” Suddenly she turned and ran away.

Nangong Ping was stunned and shouted behind her. “Where are you going?”

The beautiful maiden did not even turn her head and did not seem to have heard his shouts. He could only to see her moving fast as though she was flying, her long robes fluttering and her long hair behind her. It was such an enchanting sight and in a twinkle of an eye, she had disappeared into the nearby woods. Her swiftness movement skill was shocking, enchanting and totally incomparable!

Nangong Ping was totally taken by surprised and without thinking, immediately ran after her. He even forgot about the coffin. And he was shouting to be heard. “Benevolent teacher has already given you to my care, if there is

anything…" But the beautiful maiden was nowhere to be seen. Now he could only take in his breath and looked everywhere for her. He blamed himself in his thoughts. "If she goes missing, I will have let my Mentor Master down!"

In that empty vastness of the soon approaching darkness. To find a lonely young woman in those lonely mountain ranges was as difficult as searching for a needle in the ocean.

Nangong Ping could only looked around frantic with his eyes and running all over. He did not even know the name of the beautiful young maiden so he was unable to call out her name. He picked out the sound of a stream from the wind. Feeling thirsty, he slowed down his pace and run towards the sound of the water.

Under the starlight and moonlight, he made his way across the woods. Reaching the streams, he took two mouthful of the cold and icy mineral water. Suddenly he heard a joyous laughter coming upstream, it was the sound of a woman!

His spirit picked up and after three or five turning, he finally saw a white dress figure in front. She seemed to be looking at the running stream but also seemed to be looking at herself from the reflections of the water. Without any hesitation, he moved towards the white figure that still remained unmoving. He could hear her giggling from time to time in a joyous laugh and repeating. "Is it for real? Or is it a dream?…" Till Nangong Ping approached her, she still remained idiocy looking intensely at the stream.

Nangong Ping never expected that the mysterious maiden had suddenly ran away earlier just to come here to look at the running streams. Therefore he just stood besides her. But after a while he could not resist to take a look. From the reflections of the silvery water, he could see her extraordinary beauty and she carried smiles all over. Coupling with her beautiful laughter, Nangong Ping looked in awe.

Although the reflections in the streams sometimes broke into two, the beautiful maiden did not seem to notice. It seemed that she was so focused on the reflections in the water, that she did not seem to notice any other thing.

She kept using her beautiful hand to touch her face and she was heard muttering. "This is really true, I am really still so young…" Suddenly she laughed hilariously and said. "I wonder if it is a blessing or a misfortune that unwillingly, I have obtained what every women in the world have dreamed, the art of everlasting youth." She got up, tidied her long robes and her long hair, then she began to dance madly under the moonlight.

"From now on, no one will recognize me. And no one will ever guess that I am the Peacock Concubine…"

Nangong Ping was taken aback and shouted. "What, you are really Mei

Yinxue!”

She ceased her dancing and looked icy at Nangong Ping and said. “That is right!”

Nangong Ping was shocked for words. After awhile, he sighed and said. “Unexpectedly, what the priest says are true! I…I…really deserve to die!” At that moment, he felt so vexed and regretted hurting the priest with his long sword! Therefore, the feeling of guilt became ten times even more heavily.

The beautiful maiden from the coffin, “Peacock Concubine” Mei Yinxue cold and expressionless pale face began to smile. She walked to Nangong Ping and extended her soft white hand on his shoulder, and gently said, “You seem to have heard of my name?”

Nangong Ping looked bewildered and promptly answered. “Yes, I have heard of your name!”

Mei Yinxue asked. “Therefore, you should know what type of person I am?”

Nangong Ping replied. “Yes, I have also know what type of person you are!”

Mei Yinxue laughed gently awhile. And the silken hand that was on Nangong Ping’s shoulder began to turn steel green beneath. But her mouth was still ever so gently and filled with smiles. “Therefore, what are you planning to do with me?”

Nangong Ping took a deep breath before replying. “Since my Mentor Master has ordered me to take care of you, I will take care of you. Any persons, no matter who, that try to harm you will be the enemy of Nangong Ping!”

Mei Yinxue asked. “Really! Why?”

Nangong Ping did not even hesitated and said in a clear voice. “That is because I trust my benevolent teacher and he will never do any wrongdoing in all matters!” But he added with his thoughts. “Even if he is wrong, I will never betray his last will!”

Mei Yinxue seemed to be speechless. Suddenly she melancholy sighed. “Grandpa Long is really so nice to me!”

Her steel green palm slowly began to turn white underneath and slipped down from Nangong Ping’s back shoulder. He would never expect that in just a few moments of words, he had already come to brush with death!

He had occasionally glanced at her but end up saying nothing. He had since regained his usual calmness though.

Mei Yinxue rolled her eyes and asked softly. “You must have a lot of things that is troubling you in your heart and unable to understand but wishes to ask me, right?”

Nangong Ping nodded his head. Mei Yinxue continued. “But you have too many questions so you find it hard to start asking, right?”

Nangong Ping nodded again. Mei Yinxue asked. “But I have something to ask of you too, will you first answer me first?”

Nangong Ping said, “If it is something I know!”

Mei Yinxue softly laughed. “Naturally you will know!” Once her laugh ceased, she asked solemnly. “Your Mentor Master must have trusted you a lot, therefore he will place the purple coffin in your care and let you protect me. But, how is that you do not know the story of your Mentor Master and me?”

Nangong Ping replied. “Heh…” He reached for the yellow silken handkerchief and told her. “You take a look yourself!”

Mei Yinxue furrowed her eyebrows and reached out for the handkerchief and looked at it carefully. Suddenly she broke into a smile, softly said. “Whose blood trace is this?”

Nangong Ping answered. “Dead bird!”

Mei Yinxue was puzzled. “What dead bird?”

Nangong Ping appeared vexed and said. “You asked too many questions…” Suddenly he sighed and changed his tone. “I pick up a dead bird by accident!”

Mei Yinxue softly laughed. “Oh really, at first I thought it come from your Mentor Master!”

Nangong Ping calm face became angry and snatched back the yellow silken handkerchief. And said sternly to her. “I have something to ask you too. The way my Mentor Master had treated you, is full of righteousness. Even before he dies, he did not forget about your safety. And asked me to take care of you. What about you? Even when you know the demise of my Mentor Master, you did not even feel sad. You…You are really…” He clenched his fists and there was a cracking sound and shut up.

Mei Yinxue looked at him from up to down. Suddenly she laughed hilariously. “Sadness, what is call sadness. In my entire life, I have never for once because of anyone, anything and felt sadness. You really want me to act sad to deceive you?”

Nangong Ping stared at her, his eyes looking sharply at her and he was angry with her. He felt like killing her on the spot with his hand. He raised his hands but after a while, he slowly relaxed. Because he suddenly remembered her name - “Cold Blood Concubine”!

“Cold Blood Concubine…Mei Yinxue…” Nangong Ping sighed. “She does not even know what is sadness. No wonder everyone in Pugilistic Fraternity nicknamed her as Cold Blood!” And moved back three steps as he shivered at the thought that he was going to put up with such an extremely beautiful yet cold blood woman!

But Mei Yinxue followed him and moved forward another step and coldly

said. “But you must know, even if I am a sentimental person, I will not feel sad for your Mentor Master…”

Nangong Ping angrily said, “You are so heartless, my Mentor Master does not need you to feel sad for him!”

But Mei Yinxue ignored him and continued. “Not only will I not feel sad for your Mentor Master. When he died, I should be very happy!” Even though she said it in a heartless way, she seemed to carry a tinge of sadness!

Nangong Ping angrily retorted. “If it is not for the fact that benevolent teacher has asked me to take care of you. Just by these few statements, I will have…”

Mei Yinxue sharpened her look and coldly said. “Do you know the reason why your Mentor Master is treating me so well?”

Nangong Ping sarcastically laughed. “What a pity that benevolent teacher trusted the wrong person. If he had reared a cat or a dog…Heng! Heng! Some people are not even worthy compared to cat and dog!”

Mei Yinxue stares had become icy cold and like a pair of swords that wanted to pierce through Nangong Ping’s heart.

And Nangong Ping held his fists and he stared at her as well with burning eyes. It was as though he wanted to burn her cold blood that ran in her beautiful and alluring body.

Both of them kept staring for awhile till Mei Yinxue suddenly laughed. “Do you know that your Mentor Master is treating me this way, is because he wanted to cleanse his sins, repay me. But even then he still cannot make up for me therefore he wants his disciple to continue to cleanse his unfinished sins and to repay his unfinished debt.”

Nangong Ping was taken aback. And laughed. “Cleanse his sins! Repay debts! What sin needs to be cleansed? Will my Mentor Master really...” Suddenly he halted as he remembered the words on the yellow silken handkerchief. “…This matter is actually my wrong…” He thought. “Will my Mentor Master really do something that wronged her?”

Mei Yinxue coldly said. “Why don’t you say anything more?”

Nangong Ping sighed.

Mei Yinxue laughed coldly. “Why don’t you say something more? Is it because you already realized that your Mentor Master had committed a great wrong?”

Nangong Ping bowed his head and looked up again, said sternly. “Any person that say disrespectfully about my benevolent teacher, is my swore enemy!”

Mei Yinxue added. “What if I am the one saying it, what will happen?”

Nangong Ping coldly, “Hehe,” a few times.

Mei Yinxue said. “Not only in front of you, even if in front of the Immortal Divine Dragon, I will still say the same words. Because I have the right!”

Nangong Ping unable to endure any longer shouted. “What right do you have? Although my Mentor Master has ordered me to look after you but you have no right to mutter all these words!”

Mei Yinxue coldly said, “I have the right!”

Nangong Ping shouted. “You try to say it once more again!” And clenched his fists and moved one step towards Mei Yinxue and both are them were within one feet of one another!

Mei Yinxue eyed him with suspicious and coldly exclaimed. “I have the right, because I have been innocently been destroyed of my reputation and my body was hurt! I have the right because the martial art skills that I had painfully trained were destroyed in his hand! I have the right because of his stupidity and stubbornness, I have wasted my youth, wasted the most beautiful of my ten most precious years. Day in and night out, for every single moment, I have to lie inside the coffin that can’t even see the sun, lived a life that are thousands and tens of thousands times worse than that of a prisoner!” She said it with more and more emotions until her cold and icy voice became marred with a tearing high pitch!

Nangong Ping felt chilled the more he heard. His straighten back began to bend unconsciously.

Once she finished, she suddenly gripped Nangong Ping’s hand and turned to run.

Nangong Ping martial art skills were not weak. His specialty was on swiftness movement skills. But the grip had a very strong attraction on his hand and he found himself forcing to fly along with her. It was faster than many times than his very own speed!

He tried to muster his inner energy and shouted. “Where are you going!” As he tried to shake her off from her grip.

But he saw her slowly slowed down and they had reached the abandoned coffin. She moved to the purple coffin and forcefully opened up the coffin lid. And said loudly. “This, This coffin that is right here, I have spent ten years inside. Except for the time at night when your Mentor Master took me out to settle some necessities of daily life, I have no other chance for movement!” She stumbled in her voice but did not allow Nangong Ping to interrupt, continued. “Why don’t you close your eyes and think what sort of life that is. I only want you to stay inside the coffin for ten days, I afraid you will not be able to endure it. Imagine ten years…ten years…”

Nangong Ping stared at the coffin, stunned and muttered in a low voice. “Ten years…ten years…” And a cold shiver ran through his spine!

She took a deep breath and melancholy sighed. “Every single moment in the coffin I have something to look for, that is to wish for the freedom at night. Although during those times, your Mentor Master only allowed me to be in that room without any lights and windows. Although it is only for awhile but I am very satisfied!”

Nangong Ping was moved and he thought. “No wonder my Mentor Master always stays in the most out of reach chamber in the Manor! No wonders he disallowed any lighting and the room have no windows! No wonder he carted the coffin every night to the chamber and placed it near the bed…” He sighed, unable to think further anymore!

Mei Yinxue looked at the coffin in remembrance of the times she spent in the darkness, her pain and sadness.

She sighed and said. “Luckily I have a little hope everyday. Or else I am willing to die even if there are thousands of blades facing me than the painful condemnation of hopelessness. But…This hope and waiting, is also so painful to wait for. One day, your Mentor Master unintentionally opened the door of the room. It was the full moon that night and it was so bright. That time, I was so happy and thrilled but under the moonlight when I saw your Mentor Master aging face, I feel upset as well. Time passed and I thought I have grown old as well.” Her voice changed to bitterness yet so gentle as though she was now a clever and romantic poet.

Nangong Ping forgot her heartlessness and eccentric because he had now come to sympathize with her. He sighed and said to her. “The past is done. What past is over, you do not have to …”

Mei Yinxue interrupted. “The Past…” Suddenly she laughed. “The Immortal Divine Dragon had died and I have miraculously retained my youth. And I no longer have to be like a dead person and lay in that coffin because no one in the world knows my real identity…Except for you!”

When she said. “Except for you!” Her stares suddenly became different and icy-cold and looked upon Nangong Ping.

This beautiful maiden had a complicated emotion and ever changing. No one would have guessed from her words and actions, what she was going to do. In that instant, her change was indeed very terrifying.

Nangong Ping was taken aback but sternly said. “You have miraculously retained your youth. Moreover you have regained your freedom. Therefore at this moment, you should feel grateful and you shouldn’t feel hatred. Although I…”

Mei Yinxue laughed coldly. “What should I be grateful to?”

Nangong Ping sternly said. “At least you should be grateful to Heaven!”

Mei Yinxue said, “Heaven…Heng, heng!” Long robes flurried as she turned

away and did not even turn to eye Nangong Ping!

But Nangong Ping was left stunned viewing her back view and her flurrying long robes!

Although she seemed to walk very slowly but in an instant she had walked out of the surrounding woods. Although Nangong Ping was stunned, he was also thinking. Because when people started to think over a difficult question, their eyes would also appear to be stunned and emptied.

Just as her pure white figure was about to vanish in the darkness. Nangong Ping suddenly dashed towards her and said. “Maiden Mei, where are you going?”

Mei Yinxue stopped in her tracks and turned around. She eyed him coldly for a second before she coldly replied. “Do you know that although the world has many stupid people but there is none as stupid as you!”

Nangong Ping was taken aback and became paled. “True, true…” He bit his teeth and did not say more.

Mei Yinxue cold expressionless face became warm and gentle but her mouth was still icy-cold as she said. “If you are not stupid, just now when I say those three words “Except for you!” you should have turned and run!”

Nangong Ping tried to laugh. “Since I am that stupid, even though you have been benevolent not to kill me, I still will come after you!”

Mei Yinxue said. “That is so right. You really is stupid to the extreme!” Her gentle eyes slowly carried a tinge of smiles. But because Nangong Ping was looking down, he did not see!

When Mei Yinxue finished speaking, Nangong Ping immediately said. “Benevolent teacher has already placed you into my care. If you have walked away just like this, how am I able to answer to him?”

Mei Yinxue said, “Answer to what? Anyway the ‘Immortal Divine Dragon’ is dead already!”

Nangong Ping became solemn and said. “No matter if he really passed away…” he sighed because he was unable to endure the grief in his heart. “I wouldn’t have gone against his last Order”

Mei Yinxue asked. “Then how are you going to take care of me?”

Nangong Ping moved his lips but unable to say anything.

Mei Yinxue extended her hands to comb her strands of long hair behind that floated in front of her front and coldly said. “Since you are not going off and want to take care of me for life. Then are you following me from now on?”

Nangong Ping said, “Benevolent teacher's order is indeed written in this way!”

Mei Yinxue gently laughed and said. “Really?”

Although Nangong Ping could hear her enchanting laughter, he did not lifted

his head to look at her and with all his sincerely said. “Benevolent teacher before he went off has already ordered me not to move away from the coffin a single step. His intentions are clearly stated to order me to protect you at all times!” Although he had said so but in his heart, he was puzzled. “Her martial art skills are so much higher than me. Why did my Mentor Master wants me to protect her? Her martial art skill is so high, she could break the coffin anytime and escape. Why did she not do so?”

Although he tried to think of a few thousands and hundreds of reasons but none of it made any sense. Only to hear her laughed again and said, “Since that is the case, you will follow me then. Wherever I go, you will follow!” Before she had finished, she had already started to walk in front. After she took two steps, she turned her head and said. “Come on!”

Nangong Ping felt his heart pounding but did not know what the feeling was. He thought. “Do I really have to follow her wherever she wants to go?” He coughed out twice before saying. “For the sake of Mentor Master last wishes, even when you walk to the ends of the earth, I will surely follow you as well.”

Mei Yinxue gently smiled. “To the ends of the earth…” She continued to walk again. Although Nangong Ping found himself blushing, he had no choice but to follow.

In the hearts of those two persons, no one could guess what they were thinking now. The relationships between the two of them were very extraordinary. No one could place a word to it. Mei Yinxue in front and Nangong Ping walked behind. She kept brushing and tidying her long black hair as though she had many things in her heart.

In the darkness of the night, in the mountain woods, there appeared a man masked in black over all. He was carrying another man who appeared to be badly wounded.

In the darkness, it not possible to see his face or the man he was carrying. But he could be heard asking the wounded man gently. “Are you feeling better now?”

The wounded man whom he was carrying nodded his head and said. “Much better. If it were not for you, I…” From his speech, he was obviously trying to mask his pain.

The man in black interrupted him. “I really cannot send you down Huashan. And you are badly wounded and cannot remain in these desolate mountains. But if you can endure your pain and don’t make a single sound and take the medicine I placed inside your robe from time to time, in a few days you will recover. After

that surely you will be at the foot of the mountain and can seize the opportunity to escape!"

The wounded man bit his teeth and said. "Your benevolent acts and kindness, I…"

The man in black interrupted. "There is no need for words. They will not check the coffin again. Mei Yinxue definitely will not step into the coffin again. As long as you can endure the periodic fits and pains, you will safety reach the foot of the mountain. When he finished, he opened the coffin lid and gently placed him inside. "My medicinal pills not only heal wounds but also starve off hungry as well. You can set aside your worries."

The wounded man inside the coffin asked. "Benefactor brother, will you please tell me your name.…"

The man in black waved his hands and said. "Regarding my name, you will know in the future!" and closed the lid of the coffin. He looked around and with a sudden movement, flashed away in an instant towards Cang Long Ling! (A place name)

At that moment Mei Yinxue and Nangong Ping were strolling under the starlight…

Mei Yinxue walked for quite a while with her head downcast before she suddenly said. "You come from the righteous "Zhijiao Manor" which is famed for its strict rules. Only you alone traveled along with me, are you not afraid of the rumors from the people in the Pugilistic Fraternity?" She did not turn her head so her expressions were unknown!

Nangong Ping replied. "As long as I have nothing to hide and it is benevolent teacher order. What some petty people like to say mean nothing to me. Moreover…" But he suddenly swallowed and did not say more.

Mei Yinxue continued for him. "Moreover my age at least is ten years older than you. There is not any suspicious to hide!"

Nangong Ping halted in his steps and looked down.

Mei Yinxue suddenly turned around and said. "Is that what you trying to say?"

Nangong Ping was speechless for awhile before he said. "Indeed correct!" But he did not look at her.

Mei Yinxue continued. "Since that is indeed correct, I have one condition for you to agree!"

Nangong Ping asked. "Condition? …"

Mei Yinxue explained. "No matter in whose presence, you are not allowed

to reveal my real identity and name!"

Nangong Ping asked. "Why?"

Mei Yinxue coldly laughed. "If my name got leaked out, everyone in the Pugilistic Fraternity will know that I am not dead. Even your Mentor Master cannot protect me then, moreover you!"

Nangong Ping hummed aloud and secretly thought. "She must have a lot of enemies. If they all know she has yet to die, all will come to seek revenge on her." And his ears began to pick the piercing sound of the priest. "…Whore, despicable, everyone have called her a whore…" When he came to think of that, there arose an unspeakable feeling inside him. "Since she is such a woman, how can I keep her secret…" But he changed his mind again. "But my Mentor Master is willing to do it and ordered me to do so as well. How can I go against his orders!" In that instant, he was filled with dilemma.

Mei Yinxue asked. "You have agreed?"

He took a deep breath and said. "Agree!"

Mei Yinxue asked. "No matter who it is?"

Nangong Ping replied. "No matter who it is!"

Mei Yinxue took two looks at him from up to down before breaking into a soft laugh. "Although you have agreed in your mouth but in your heart you are not willing, am I right?"

Nangong Ping lifted his head and looked at Mei Yinxue who looked so beautiful that was out of the world in this darkness, she was simply like a fairy! He sighed in his heart. "Why has she has to be an evil despicable woman and a whore!"

Mei Yinxue asked. "Am I right?" And walked over to him.

Nangong Ping once again looked down again and said. "What I say from my mouth is actually what I feel in my heart!" When he finished, he felt a sweet fragrance scent. He did not need to lift his head to know that Mei Yinxue had walked besides him!

Only to hear her laughed softly. "Since you have agreed to my condition, I know that you will forever not change. But I have to tell you this, my moods are eccentric. There will be at times when you are unable to endure. When that time come, what will you do?"

Nangong Ping said. "As long as you do not harm anyone, the rest I can endure!" Suddenly he realized that not only could he fulfill his benevolent teacher orders to take care of her, he could also prevent her from harming others!

Was it the reason why his Mentor Master had asked him to take care of her? If he could cause a person that was so ill repute to change her ways, what did it matter if he were to endure all the insults! Therefore he lifted his head and looked

at her.

Mei Yinxue gently smiled. “Now it is very late, we shouldn’t stay overnight in this desolate mountains!”

Nangong Ping replied. “Of course we have to go down the mountain!”

Mei Yinxue laughed softly. “Go!”

She suddenly became as light as her moods and seemed to dance across the starlight. It seemed that the breeze would carry her off anytime to the land of dreams.

Nangong Ping had hesitated for awhile and when he tried to catch up with her, he found himself unable to catch up with her speed. After some time, he said. “Maiden Mei, please hold!”

Mei Yinxue turned back and asked. “What is the matter?”

Finally he caught up with her and said. “I cannot go down the mountain yet!”

Mei Yinxue expressions changed. “Just now what you have just said. Have you forgotten? Did you not say where ever I go, you will follow!”

Nangong Ping said. “I just hope that maiden will wait me awhile. Because I still have some unfinished matters…”

Suddenly Mei Yinxue laughed. “Do you want to retrieve that coffin?”

Nangong Ping said. “Indeed! Not only that, I still have some fellow clan protégé brothers and sisters that remain on the top of the mountain. I don’t know if they have gone down the mountain or not. I should at least wait for them!”

Mei Yinxue asked. “If your fellow clan protégé brothers and sisters were to if see me standing besides you, what will they be thinking?”

Nangong Ping was taken aback. And was speechless.

Mei Yinxue continued. “If they really want to find you, earlier they should have followed you. I afraid they have now gone down the mountain!”

Nangong Ping took a deep breath. He did not know why the strong bonds between his clan protégés and him had weakened so much.

Mei Yinxue said. “As for that coffin, it is useless now. Whether to bring it down the mountain is no longer of any importance. Why must we suffer in these desolate mountains? It is better that we go down as soon as possible and find a nice and quiet place. I can also tell you whatever parts of the story which you are not cleared upon and tell you from head to tail.”

Nangong Ping sighed once more, lifted his head and said. “No matter what. That coffin belongs to benevolent teacher and I must bring it down the mountains!…” He cleared his voice and continued. “As for my fellow clan protégé brothers and sisters, no matter what happens to them, I must wait for them for a while, as a token of my appreciation!”

Mei Yinxue said. “What I say, you did not even listen?” She looked lovingly at Nangong Ping as though she wanted to use her lovely eyes to melt Nangong Ping’s steel-hearted heart.

Once again, they stared at one another to determine who was the strong and who was the weak.

Under the same starry night, Long Fei and his wife, Guo Yuxia walked together hand to hand. She looked at him with loving eyes. Although her swiftness skill was higher than her husband, her martial art skills did not seem to be any weaker as well. But now her present mannerism seemed like without his strength and protection, she would be unable to continue in these desolate mountains.

She intentionally gave him a sense of pride and that she was confident in him; let him believe that between the two of them, he was the stronger. But in actuality, which was the stronger, only she knew in her heart!

Following behind them, was the enchanting Wang Susu. But she did not want the support of Shi Chen although fragrant sweat was covering her face. Therefore Shi Chen could only follow behind her!

The four of them had already combed the entire mountain range but were still unable to find any suspicious spot that gave them the clue to the whereabouts of their Mentor Master!

They had nothing to talk about therefore they had to remain silence. Finally Guo Yuxia said softly. “Unable to find anymore!”

Long Fei said in agreement. “Unable to find anymore!”

Wang Susu nodded her head while Shi Chen sighed lengthy. “Unable to find anymore!”

Guo Yuxia melancholy sighed as well. “Let go back then!”

Long Fei said. “Let go back then!”

Shi Chen exclaimed, “It time to go back then!”

Wang Susu injected what she was unable to say earlier. “Maybe he is still waiting for us!”

Shi Chen expression slowly changed but said nothing. Long Fei and Guo Yuxia stopped in their tracks and looked at Wang Susu. The four of them looked at one another.

Suddenly Shi Chen said. “There is still a path in front…” he stopped his voice in his track and looked at Guo Yuxia.

Guo Yuxia locked her eyes on him for awhile and gently nodded. “The mountain range is vast, let not make it a wasted trip. Let us investigate the path in front and see how!”

Shi Chen immediately continued. “Indeed, indeed. The mountain range is vast, let not make it a wasted trip!”

Wang Susu bowed down her head in silent while Long Fei was mystified!

As they went further, their movements became slow and the mountain ledges became more and more treacherous. Normally no one would ever think of traveling along the high mountains of Huashan let alone in the lonely darkness. The whole mountain range emitted a sense of cold chilled feeling. Guo Yuxia and Long Fei walked even more closely to one another while Wang Susu walked even further from Shi Chen!

Wang Susu was the type of vulnerable girl. She too needed a strong shoulder to support her and to protect her. But she took aside this desire in her heart. Except for “him”, she did not want anyone to feel for her. But “he”, where was he at this moment?

She tried to control her warm tears but failed. So she bowed her head and tears flowed. Therefore her head sunk even lower. She did not try to wipe away her tears with her hands as she did not want Shi Chen who was behind her to know the pain in her heart.

Suddenly, she stopped her steps and cried out in shock. And Long Fei and Guo Yuxia turned back. And Shi Chen dashed in front and asked in a low voice. “What is the matter?” And they saw Wang Susu looking in surprise, and with tears looking on the ground!

The ground looked ordinary and nothing unusual at first glance. Therefore Long Fei, Guo Yuxia and Shi Chen followed her stares and looked carefully. On the mountain footpath was a footprint that was three inches deep into the rocks. Therefore there were another three cries of surprise!

This mountain footpath was rock solid. An ordinary person with average martial art skills even if he had used a exceptional sharp weapon would have difficulty creating such a deep footprint. Moreover this person seemed to have anyhow stomped on the ground to create such a deep imprint!

And by a sheer coincidence, the footprint had pointed a path towards the left!

Wang Susu asked to clear her doubts. “This…this…footprint…does it look like our Mentor Master…”

Long Fei, Guo Yuxia, Shi Chen and Wang Susu exchanged looks with each other, trying to guess.

Guo Yuxia said in a shaky voice. “This is not our Mentor Master!” Although her voice was soft, it was also firm. She did not wait for others to speak and continued. “Although this footprint looks like his…”

Wang Susu could not help but spoke out softly. “Not only is it exactly the

same, even the design of the shoe print is the same!"

Shi Chen pointed out. "In the Pugilistic Fraternity, there are not many people that wear this type of government boot!"

One must know that the pugilists that roamed the Martial Fraternity preferred light and convenient shoe. Naturally they would not wear this type of government boot! Especially not on this type of treacherous mountain ground!

Guo Yuxia nodded lightly and said. "In the Pugilistic Fraternity, I afraid except for our Mentor Master, not many people will wear this type of heavy government boot!"

Wang Susu continued. "In the Pugilistic Fraternity, I afraid except for our Mentor Master, not many people have such internal power…"

Long Fei said. "Indeed, indeed. Our old man left behind this footprint. Surely it pointed to the direction of his whereabouts!"

Shi Chen said. "Indeed, In…"

Guo Yuxia suddenly laughed coldly. "Indeed, indeed. But all of you forget something!"

Shi Chen asked. "What thing?"

Guo Yuxia replied. "Although this footprint look like it belongs to our Mentor Master and from the depth of the imprints, looked like something only his internal power can accomplish. But this footprint definitely does not belong to our Mentor Master, that because…" She purposely dragged her words, then word by word continued. "Our Mentor Master at this moment does not have this type of internal power."

Long Fei, Shi Chen, Wang Susu were all taken aback and said together. "True!"

Long Fei said. "Our Mentor Master, after he reduced his internal powerful by seventy percent, has the same level as me, so how can he have left such a deep footprint on this rocky ground!" He looked with admiration at Guo Yuxia. "This fact, we all know but why only you remember it?"

Guo Yuxia smiled gently. "You are all so tired, hungry and your moods are full of tensions. No matter who it is, under this type of circumstances are bound to forget many things!"

Wang Susu had been looking down all along, suddenly lifted up her head and softly asked. "If this footprint does not belong to our Mentor Master, then who it belong to?" She rolled her eyes from Guo Yuxia, Long Fei and Shi Chen before continuing. " Can all of you think of anyone besides our Mentor Master, who other else will wear a government boot and walk in this desolate and treacherous place? And who other else possesses such powerful internal strength?"

Ever since the Huangshan meeting that caused all the best from the

Pugilistic Fraternity to sacrifice themselves, there indeed in the Pugilistic Fraternity no one else who had internal power the same level as “Phoenix and Divine Dragon” anymore. Therefore, Wang Susu questioning reached deep into the souls of Long Fei, Shi Chen and Guo Yuxia!

They were silent for awhile. And then Long Fei asked. “Unless in the Pugilistic Fraternity, there appeared a top ace exponent?”

Shi Chen said. “Unless our Mentor Master had been under…” He seemed to have some difficulty therefore he found himself unable to continue!

Long Fei asked sternly. “Under what?”

Shi Chen sighed and shook his head. Long Fei became vexed and asked again. “Why did you say halfway and don’t continue!”

Guo Yuxia slowly smiled.

Wang Susu said. “If he unwilling to speak. Let him bury it in his heart then.” She once again lowered her head to look idiocy at the footprint!

Shi Chen looked at her awhile and said. “How will I not be unwilling to speak!”

Guo Yuxia laughed. “Then, will you say it out fast!”

Shi Chen coughed two sounds and said. “I just afraid…that footprint…” Then coughed another two times to catch Wang Susu attention. She lifted her head and Shi Chen continued. “I only afraid that the footprint is left behind when our Mentor Master…before…before…”

Guo Yuxia said. “Are you afraid that this footprint is left behind by our Mentor Master when he fought with some one. Badly injured, before he died, there was a last exaltation of his internal power?”

Shi Chen lowered his head and said. “I am afraid of that!”

Wang Susu looked shocked, and she shook all over.

Long Fei muttered. “Last exaltation of his internal power…last exaltation of his internal power…” Suddenly he shouted. “Mentor Master, you…Are you really dead?” And tightened his fists.

One must know that some one who had strong foundations in inner strength, just before he died, the stroke he mustered with all his might, was what he normally he could not accomplish yet was the peak of all his internal power. And just before they died and their last exaltation, be it finger or palm, fist or kick, the force were not to belittle! Long ago, there were some top exponents who had retreated to live in some cave. Just before they died, they left behind their last words on the walls of the cave, all done by a type of martial arts known as the Golden Steel Finger Strength... Their last words were typically stronger than their usual cultivation by a third. Therefore, future generations also typically paid a third more respect to the words of the dead. This was exactly the same reason!

Long Fei was taught by a renowned teacher, therefore he knew the reasoning. Unable to control his sadness, his warm tears flowed!

Shi Chen said apologetic. “I am just talking rubbish. Big Brother, you…”

Guo Yuxia smiled gently “That is right. You are indeed talking rubbish.”

Shi Chen said. “But…”

Guo Yuxia said. “But what, do your words have any proof to back your reasoning?”

Long Fei wiped his tears and said. “His words, surely are not groundless?”

Guo Yuxia injected. “If this footprint is left behind by Mentor Master after he exalted all his internal power, why is that there are no signs of any fighting from the surroundings!”

Shi Chen, Long Fei and Wang Susu were stunned. Guo Yuxia added. “And, Mentor Master last will, does it look likely to be written from this place?”

Long Fei was surprised but shouted. “Indeed, indeed. If Mentor Master exalted all his internal power, how could he have written all those words!”

Wang Susu melancholy asked. “Then, who left behind this footprint? Sister in law, you can tell me?”

Guo Yuxia said. “I am just stating a matter of fact. There is no intention to oppose your ideas!”

Wang Susu said in a frightened voice. “Sister in law, I…I have no such meaning…” She blinked her eyes and asked. “Do I really have such a meaning in my words?” She was closed to tears again.

Guo Yuxia softly sighed and placed her hand on Susu’s shoulder and brushed back her hair. “Little sister, what are you hiding in your heart, you can tell Sister in law.”

Wang Susu lifted her head and said. “Sister in law, I think…” Then changed her mind. “I still young. There are many things that I do not know yet and prone to say the wrong things. Sister in law please do not blame me!”

Guo Yuxia seemed to understand and laughed and whispered in her ears. “You are thinking of little brother Ping, right?”

Wang Susu was stunned and lowered her head, speechless!

Guo Yuxia smiled and looked at her. Suddenly she said in clear voice. “Who left behind this footprint, at this moment we do not know yet. But whoever left behind this footprint, surely the person and Mentor Master have some undeniable connection…”

Long Fei asked. “How so?”

Long Fei asked. “Why did you say whoever left behind this footprint, surely the person and Mentor Master have some undeniable connection? This...I…I really cannot understand!”

Guo Yuxia shook her head gently. And copied his speech and asked. “Why did you say whoever left behind this footprint, surely the person and Mentor Master have some undeniable connection!” She sighed softly and replied. “This is because unless it have something to do with 'Phoenix and Divine Dragon', how can such a top exponent appear and in the darkness come to this desolate mountains?”

Long Fei muttered. “This…this may not really be the case!”

Guo Yuxia said. “Of course, this may not really be the case. There is for sure thing in this world. But this footprint is not left behind innocently!” She looked unhappy as she said.

Long Fei quickly said. “Of course, of course. This footprint surely have some secrets!”

Wang Susu smiled beneath her lowered head.

Guo Yuxia looked at Long Fei and laughed all of a sudden.

Long Fei thought it over. Suddenly his spirit rose and said aloud. “This footprint surely has some secrets. Why not we wait here and see what going to happen!” He looked proud of his reasoning and broadened his chest. And looked at Guo Yuxia and asked. “What do you think of this idea? Is practicable?”

Guo Yuxia tried to suppress her laughter and said. “Practicable, practicable. All of us will just wait here will do. After a while, this footprint will reveal its secrets on its own!”

Long Fei looked puzzled and asked. “This footprint will reveal its secrets on its own? This….This I really cannot figure out the reasons!”

Guo Yuxia tried to say with a straight face and told him. “This footprint may look ordinary but in a while time…” She could not suppress her laughter anymore and laughed.

Long Fei who had always been honest and straightforward did not seem to understand and asked. “This footprint, will have an extraordinary change later. This sort of matter, I can never believed!”

Wang Susu lowered her head, even lower. That was because she almost wanted to burst out laughing. Even Shi Chen who was not easily moved to laugh had broke into a broad smile by now.

Guo Yuxia smiled. “Since this footprint has nothing of extraordinary, why shall we wait here then?”

Long Fei was stunned. “Alas…Alas your words earlier, are meant to trick me!” He looked stunned and said slowly. “I know that you have always been smarter than me, this I have always acknowledge. Why…” His face became still and said. “Why did you have to trick me like this?”

There was a slight change in Guo Yuxia expressions. But she laughed again. “Why should I play a trick on you. You are just being suspicious. I…I just thought

that at this moment, everyone must be feeling nervous. Therefore I just telling a joke to make everyone relax only!"

Long Fei lifted his head and looked at Guo Yuxia. This look was half-loving, half- suspicious. For a second, love and hatred became intangible!

Guo Yuxia gently extended her soft hand and pulled him to a side and said in a low voice. "You must be blaming me in your heart, even if I will to tell a joke, I should not have make you a target, right?"

Long Fei remained silent, sighed and lowered his head!

Guo Yuxia smiled gently and said in a low voice. "But if I don't, what can I do? You are closest person to me! In all matters, I suppose only you can understand me, forgive me, but…" Her smiles slowly vanished, replaced by a troubled look.

Long Fei lifted his head, and held her soft hands tightly. His darkened look that was clouded by hatred and suspicious had all but disappeared. He said apologetically in a low voice. "I…I have wronged you. You…don't be angry with me!"

Shi Chen was watching at a distance. In his heart he felt funny and thought. "Sister in law really is very clever. But Big Brother…" He sighed. "Big Brother is really too honest!" and said aloud. "What Sister in law meant to say that remaining here is useless. But what should we do then?"

There was a sparkle in Wang Susu's eyes and she said. "We…why not we go back!" She used a great of efforts to say aloud those words.

Guo Yuxia broke into a laugh. "Fourth Sister seems hurry to go back, is it because…" She laughed again and shut up.

Wang Susu flushed and lowered her head. Long Fei laughed awhile and about to say something when Guo Yuxia said in a serious voice. "Actually I do wish to return as well. But we finally found the clue to the whereabouts of our benevolent teacher after much difficulty. How can we just leave like this?"

She looked at everyone before explaining. "What is the meaning of this footprint, whether it has any secrets, I do not know. But I can be certain of one thing. The direction it is pointing to, must be the whereabouts of Mentor Master!"

Long Fei interrupted. "But you…"

Guo Yuxia gently waved her hands and said. "You don't have to ask me for any reasons, what deductions do I have. I really do not have any reason to say so, it is all based on my intuition!"

She smiled and said. "But my intuition is usually very accurate. Do you believe or not?"

Shi Chen said. "Then we shall go and investigate!"

Long Fei said. "That shall be the case!"

Guo Yuxia smiled again while Long Fei had already broaden his strides and moved towards the left mountain path!

Huashan mountain peaks was already a very desolate place. This mountain trail which they were undertaking was even more perilous. Had it for the fact that they all possessed swiftness movement skills, they could not even took a single step in front!

Shi Chen lifted his head and looked at the starry skies and exclaimed. “If only we have a torch!”

Guo Yuxia turned her head and smiled. “Actually it is one of the necessities of pugilists to bring one along. If not for your Big Brother worries, we should have bring some along!”

Long Fei muttered some words.

Shi Chen said. “Judging from our eyesight, even if there is no torch, it does not matter.” Suddenly his eyes caught hold of Wang Susu who was about to lose her balance and reached out to hold her, only to see her once again moving ahead!

Wang Susu bit her teeth, and summoned a breath of vital energy and move ahead as though she was flying and in front of Long Fei.

Guo Yuxia gently smiled. “Fourth Sister really force herself. Look at her…”

Before she could finish, everyone heard the surprised cries of Wang Susu.

Then followed by the surprised cries of Long Fei, Shi Chen and Guo Yuxia for they had saw fire not more than twenty meters from Wang Susu.

Wang Susu being surprised by the light from the fire, halted.

In these desolate mountains, why would there suddenly appear rows of fire that obviously was made by men?

Long Fei, Shi Chen and Guo Yuxia, Wang Susu in their hearts was feeling surprised.

For this row of fire had suddenly appeared in these desolate mountain peaks making it seemed so miraculous and mysterious.

They stood unmoving on the spot as they saw a mountain wall that also appeared in front of them just as mysterious. Above the wall was darkness and no one could guess the height of that wall.

After awhile, Wang Susu sighed and began to walk towards the source of fire!

Long Fei, Shi Chen and Guo Yuxia could not help but follow her as well. Although this mountain trail looked short, but they spent considerable time making their way through. Finally they reached the source of the fire which is made of lit by four pine branches that formed the torches!

Shi Chen was really surprised. “Torches! It really are torches!” Earlier he

was wishing for a torch and now it really appeared!

Long Fei and Guo Yuxia looked at one another.

Long Fei asked. “Is it because…because our movements are being observed by others?”

Guo Yuxia thought for a moment before she said. “This is indeed very strange. Who possesses such highly martial art skills to observe us secretly and not be discovered by us. His behavior alone is weird enough. But is he our friend or foe? He spent so much effort to keep us guessing his intentions. Can he be a friend? If he is, that is good. But if he is a foe…” She did not say more.

Her eyes were looking at this sheer mountain wall. That was because suddenly she had caught some words on the mountain wall. Everyone followed her glances and saw the words as well. It was written like this. “Long Bushi! Have you come! On top of the mountain wall, ten meters ahead are some words that you wish to see! Do you dare to take a look?”

It was filled with words of challenge! Who would dare to challenge the “The Immortal Divine Dragon” who was renowned throughout the Pugilist realm? Who had that inner strength to write such words firmly on the mountain walls?

Long Fei took a deep breath. “Who is he?…Who is he?” As he dashed to take a closer look at the words. It was obviously inscribed by a weapon. Who could inscribe such firm words with a weapon must have possessed exceptional inner strength that was equally shocking!

Guo Yuxia was looking at the other side of the mountain wall. She looked idiocy at a mountain rock that looked clean for awhile before she sighed gently. “Fifth Brother, your words are proven correct. Our Mentor Master…he is really not dead!”

In her tone, she looked disappointed as well as happy. But in what she was disappointed? Was it because of jealousy over Nangong Ping’s talents or was it because of some other matters? But no matter what she disappointed over, at this moment, this circumstance, no one would notice the looks on her tone!

Long Fei asked. “What Fifth Brother had said are true? Mentor Master really did not die?” Although he kept asking, his tone was excited and happy.

Guo Yuxia nodded her head and said. “That is right!” She pointed to a position of a mountain rock that looked clean and said. “Mentor Master did not die. When he arrived here and saw those words, he immediately exhibited the Floating Cloud swiftness skill and went up the mountain wall from that rock.”

Long Fei looking puzzled asked. “But…”

Guo Yuxia said. “These words are left behind for Mentor Master. The person that left these words must have predicted that our Mentor Master will surely come this way. And from the mountain wall, the one that scaled the mountain did

not use Tiger upon the Wall and similar swiftness skill because such martial art skills are back facing up. But from the imprints of the palms, the one scaling the wall had his face facing the wall. All of you should know that in the entire world, only “Divine Dragon Clan” Floating Cloud swiftness skill face the wall. Therefore, the one who went up the wall, who else can it be, except for Mentor Master!”

Long Fei exclaimed. “Mentor Master he did not die, why then have you sigh?”

Guo Yuxia continued to sigh. “What did you know?” She looked at the words inscribed on the wall again and sighed. “When Mentor Master arrived here, although he did not die yet but once he scaled the mountain wall, he will be in immediate danger. Can you see that it is all a ruse!”

Long Fei asked. “A ruse?”

Guo Yuxia said. “Indeed a ruse!” She explained. “First using words to taunt, then reduced Mentor Master internal power. Lastly they had tried to lure him here! This three things, comes one after one another. It is arranged to the point of perfection…” She sighed heavily. “I can't blame Mentor Master for falling into the ruse!”

In that instant, Long Fei, Shi Chen and Wang Susu became saddened.

Shi Chen solemnly said. “Therefore it seems that the Ye maiden says that Danfeng is dead, it is all a pretense!”

Guo Yuxia answered. “Possible! Very possible! She reduces Mentor Master internal power and further aliening Mentor Master from us, and caused him to venture alone. And then lure him to this place, alas...Mentor Master when he reached here, judging from his temper, even if it is a mountain of blades and burning oil, he would even try. Therefore…therefore…alas, he will fall into the trap of others!”

Even before she had finished, Wang Susu had dashed to the mountain wall and tried to climb up the sheer mountain walls!

Shi Chen gently shouted behind her. “Fourth Sister, let me go up!” As he came to the foot of the mountain wall. But Wang Susu was already several meters high already.

Guo Yuxia caught hold of Shi Chen’s shoulder and softly said. “It is only ten meters. Judging from Fourth Sister swiftness movement skill, it shall not be a problem. You relax a little and let Fourth Sister takes a look at the words up there!”

Shi Chen nodded his head but he appeared vexed and looked in concern at Susu.

Wang Susu movements slowed down and Guo Yuxia asked. “Did you see anything?”

Wang Susu turned her body and said. “It is here!”

Guo Yuxia asked. Can you see?"

Wang Susu replied. "I can see very clearly!"

Shi Chen shouted. "Fourth Sister, you must be careful!"

But Wang Susu did not reply.

Guo Yuxia said. "After you finish reading, come down fast!" But even before she had finished speaking, she saw Wang Susu moving up again.

Long Fei became puzzled and shouted. "Four Sister, why are you going up?" Suddenly he shouted. "Oh no! Not good!" As he saw Wang Susu had been on top for sometime and her inner strength began to give way, and floated down!

Shi Chen became paled and reached out his arms. Long Fei and Guo Yuxia was astonished and said aloud. "Fourth Sister, be careful!"

In a twinkle of an eye, she dropped down although she had tried to muster a breath of inner energy to keep her afloat but dropping from such a high place placed her into a precarious position!

Shi Chen blended both his knees as he mustered all the inner energy that he had in his body to catch Wang Susu body. He was forced to move back three steps before he could balance himself after catching her. But Wang Susu immediately pushed him away another three steps. He was left looking stunned on the spot and the fire from the torch showed that he felt very horrible within!

Wang Susu rolled her eyes and eyed him awhile. Before sighing and lowering her head and softly said. "Sorry, and thank you!" She was naturally kind at heart and unwilling to hurt others feeling. Moreover Shi Chen was doing all for her. She felt just as horrible within!

Guo Yuxia looked at both of them, where else Long Fei did not seem to notice the love relationship that is going on, shouted. "Fourth Sister, what did it written up there? Did you tell a close look?"

Wang Susu nodded her head and said in a low voice. "I have looked clearly!" But her voice appeared vexed.

Long Fei asked anxiously. "What was written on top?"

Wang Susu sighed lightly and said. "Long…" She could not read out her Mentor Master name out of respect, so she replied. "You come up for what? That means that your internal power is not reduced. When you come down, walk left sixty steps, there is an opening at the foot of the mountain. You will see a crack. Continue to walk right in and towards the end, you will see me!"

As she paused. Long Fei immediately walked left and started counting. "One!"

Wang Susu sighed softly and said. "Big Brother, hold on, there are still some more!"

Long Fei halted and turned back. "What some more? You have not finished

reading all out yet?”

Wang Susu nodded. “There is another line. And it is written like this. “If you still have strength, continue to move up another five meters there is more words. Do you want to take a look?"

Wang Susu bowed her head and said. “But I am unable to move up!” She became melancholy.

Long Fei was stunned. “Fourth Sister's swiftness movement skill has always been better than mine. If she can't go up, so am I!”

Shi Chen said. “Let me try!”

Long Fei said. “Sister in law's swiftness movement skill is better than you. Let her go up to take a look!”

Wang Susu said. “There is no need to try. Sister in law can't reach the top too. When I was ten meters on top, and tried to move up another one foot, it proved more difficult than the one meter earlier. To move up another five meters, even if I have trained another ten years, I still will not be unable to accomplish the feat!”

Guo Yuxia said, “This sort of thing, even if you do not say it, I already know.”

One must know that Tiger upon the Wall and Floating Cloud all depended on that one mouthful of inner energy. At first, the first few meters might be easy. But the further the distance, it would prove to be taunting and difficult. If one had reached their limit and still unable to reach the destination, even if there was still one feet more, they would still fail to climb up. This was the same reasoning as the piercing of the sword into the rock by Guo Yuxia earlier. If the sword had no more strength, even if you push the sword, it would still refuse to budge.

Long Fei, Shi Chen looked at one another and did not know what to do. After awhile, Long Fei sighed. “What shall we do then?”

Shi Chen said, “If there is no other ideas, let me at least try to scale the mountain wall!”

Long Fei said, “Indeed, indeed.”

Guo Yuxia said, “If there is no other ideas, even if you try to scale, it will be futile. Let us first travel through the tunnel to the left and take a look.”

Long Fei said, “Indeed, indeed. We shall at least take a look, who is the person that is guarding that place.”

Guo Yuxia smiled. “I already know who is there without taking a look!”

Long Fei asked. “Who?”

Guo Yuxia replied. “Who else but Danfeng Ye Qiubai. Will it be anyone else?!”

Wang Susu softly said. “Maybe is…”

Guo Yuxia asked. “Who else but Ye Qiubai will talk in such a manner to

Mentor Master?"

Long Fei looked stunned for awhile before asking. "But…Danfeng Ye Qiubai is already dead!"

Guo Yuxia said, "I have told you earlier that this is yet another ruse. Except where the loose ends of this ruse lie in, I do not know yet. Unless…Alas! Unless we can see the words on top."

As her voice echoed around, a long rope dropped from the top of the mountain peak!

Shi Chen, Wang Susu, Long Fei and Guo Yuxia cried at the same time in surprise and looked all around with their eyes. They were left standing looking stunned at the long robe and were silent for a long time!

Four pair of eyes gave rise to surprise, chill and saw on the tall peaks, there was a figure!

Long Fei asked. "The one that throw this long rope down, I wonder if he is the same person that lit the torches?" Without waiting for the rest to add anything, he continued. "Surely it has to be!"

Guo Yuxia nodded her head.

Long Fei said. "Surely it has to be, surely it to be!"

Shi Chen felt more troubled and solemnly said. "But this person whether he is a foe or friend. At the moment, I am still unable to figure out. If he have no ill intention toward us, we can use the rope and go up. Otherwise…judging from our situation, it is really dangerous!"

Guo Yuxia sighed. "We come so far, no matter if he is a friend or foe, we have no choice but to take a look above!"

Shi Chen said, "But if this person is planning to ambush us. Once we gone up the rope, will not we be trapped in his ruse!"

Guo Yuxia smiled and shook her head. "Judging from this person martial art skill, if he want to harm us, why go through all this trouble…"

Wang Susu continued. "Then let me go up and take a look will do!"

Shi Chen immediately said. "You and I go up together, if there is something amiss, we can look out for one another." At this moment, he forgot about the dangers.

Wang Susu looked down and said. "I alone go up will do!"

Shi Chen said, "I will accompany you!"

Wang Susu said. "Aren't you afraid of danger?" Her voice muttered as if she had regretted she had been too harsh. And said. "If there is danger, it will be better for only one person to be up there!"

Shi Chen was speechless and he lowered his head. He bore a guilty expression on his face.

Guo Yuxia smiled. “Fourth Sister has been up once already. This time shall be my turn to go up.”

Long Fei said, “Indeed, Indeed. This time should be our turn to go up!”

Shi Chen suddenly lifted his head and said aloud. “I will accompany Sister in law up!” Because he wanted displayed his bravery in front of the person he liked, therefore he did not hesitate even if it a mountain of blades that was braving him now.

Guo Yuxia said, “ Let Third Brother accompany me will do.” Turning around, she leapt three meters and gently extended her soft hands to gripe the rope. Suddenly she turned back and laughed. “Big Brother, if I should fall, you must catch hold of me!”

Long Fei extended his arms and laughed aloud. “You can fall in peace, I…” But felt his words may not be right under this situation so he did not continue.

Shi Chen dashed up soon after. Wang Susu moved her lips, finally she muttered. “Be careful!” Although her voice was very soft but Shi Chen had heard it clearly! His spirit rose immediately and said. “I will be careful, you be assured!”

In the darkness, his figure elevated higher and higher. Finally he was past the place where Wang Susu had saw the words earlier. His figure halted awhile before he elevated past the words and finally it was more and more difficult to spot him.

Wang Susu looked for a long time before she finally lowered her head and softly said. “I think that they will not be in any dangers on the way up!”

Long Fei asked. “Why will it not be dangerous?”

Wang Susu replied. “Didn’t Sister in law say already! That person's martial art skills may be many times higher than us. If he wanted to harm us, why expend so much efforts?”

Long Fei thought it over and finally he nodded his head and yelled at the top of his voice. “Is there anything amiss up there?” His voice was loud and high and the wind carried his voice up. But the pitch-dark mountain peaks emitted no sound. Long Fei became vexed and asked himself with his eyes above. Was it because they could not hear?”

Wang Susu was stunned. Long Fei shouted again. “Oei! Can you hear me?”

This time, his voice was even louder and Wang Susu who was standing besides him felt a burning sensation on her ears and moved back unwittingly. But the dark-pitch peaks still emitted no reply. Only the sound of the mountain breeze that carried Long Fei shouts to the surroundings was heard.

Wang Susu felt confused. Although the walls of the mountain peaks were high but there were also no obstructs, how would they not heard such a loud voice?

Unwitting, she started to worry for them but still, she did not say her fears

out. She took a glance at Long Fei under the soft light of the fire and saw his appearance started to change. His dark face had now turned bronze green as he blamed. “Look, look, you say Sister in law and Shi Chen will not be in any dangers. But…But now, why did they not reply to my shouts?”

Wang Susu sighed. She really did not know how to reply him. After awhile, she finally sighed softly. “If there is danger, they should at least let us know but until now, it is still disquiet above. This is indeed very strange!”

Long Fei said solemnly. “This is indeed very strange…” And gripped the long rope and looked back at her. “No matter, I will also take a look…” Before he finished, his hands was already shaking. But Wang Susu did not know the reason why?

Long Fei big hands were holding the rope tightly but because his hands were shaking uncontrollably so did the rope now! Wang Susu exclaimed in surprised. “Eldest Brother, you…what is going on?” She pointed at Long Fei’s shaky hands.

She was surprised because she knew that Long Fei was known in Pugilistic Fraternity as a fearless man. His bravery and righteous, and his steady internal power, fierce swordplay and his mighty strength that could split mountains, was renowned throughout the Pugilistic Fraternity, why did his hands began to shake so violently?

Long Fei was filled with surprised and fear as he said. “Look!”

His hand gave a pull and that long rope began to shudder!

Wang Susu was in deep thoughts as she too reached for the long rope and shook it a few times. The long rope began to shudder and shudder. There was nothing up there! She lowered her hand and moved back a step in surprise. She looked up and said. “This piece of long rope has no pull whatever so. Where did they…they go!”

Long Fei stared at her and shouted. “Did you not say they will be in no danger?”

Wang Susu expressions changed and she move back another step again. And looked at the long hanging rope and bit her teeth. And then she leapt forward...

Shi Chen was as agile as a monkey as he made his way up the mountain. Although the higher he climbed, the mountain breeze became harsher and the light from the torch became smaller but in his heart, he felt warm as he thought. “She do cares about me after all.” And he recalled Wang Susu parting words. “Be careful”. Therefore his spirit and body became as light as the cloud as he relished in those thoughts!

Before he knew it, he was already at ten meters elevation. And he heard Guo

Yuxia saying, “These are the words that Fourth Sister saw. Alas, her memory is really very good. Just now when she read it out, there is not a word missing and not a word wrong.”

Shi Chen replied. “Her memory has always been good!”

As he glanced through all those words, he began to think again. “She is after all concern about me. Sometimes the way she treats me is because she is after all a young girl that is shy and a need to observe the proper propriety. But no matter, I have known her for five years. How will she not feel anything about me?” His mouth cupped a smile as he immersed himself in the bliss of his thoughts.

Suddenly his head knocked into something. Surprised, he looked above and saw Guo Yuxia’s beautiful shoes. A pair of green shoe that had some beautiful purple flowers sewed onto it with a pearl ornament at the point of each shoe. At this moment, this two pearls by sheer coincident was at the front of his eyes and a sweet perfume aroma reached his nose.

Shi Chen body froze and so did his eyes. Now then he understood, why this beautiful Sister in law who was renowned throughout Pugilistic Fraternity, why did she always refuse to wear the typically shoe of the atypical pugilist women or shoes that could hide a blade. That was exactly the same habit as Mentor Master who under no matter what circumstances would not switch his government boots. Maybe it was because the thick government represented his authority and righteousness and separated him from the rest of the ordinary pugilists. As for this light and flowery shoe, it drew out the beauty of the girl’s foot!

Suddenly Guo Yuxia laughed softly, disrupting his thoughts. “What are you looking at?”

Shi Chen blushed as she asked again. “Come up quickly and check if these those words are true instead of looking at my leg for?” Her voice was soft but it seem like she was speaking close to his ears, making him flushed with redness, all the way to his heart.

He tried to say something. “I…I, I…” Suddenly he felt a soft hand gently touching his hair.

Guo Yuxia on one hand holding the rope, the another hand sliding down and gently supported against his head, said gently. “There is no need to be shy, hurry up. In the presence of Sister in law, there is nothing to be shy at!”

This gentle laughter caused Shi Chen to lift his head unwittingly and saw her beautiful face looking at him. Under this dim light, he could almost hear his heart pounding, as he asked. “What is written up there?”

Guo Yuxia supported her body against the mountain walls as she said softly. “Come up and take a look yourself!”

Chapter Four
Dangerous Cliff, Dangerous Love

Shi Chen moved up once he had sufficient space after Guo Yuxia moved aside. He did not dare to look at her again.

When he reached the top where the words were, he began to read. “Long Bushi, you actually can reach here. Very good, very good. Your martial art skills indeed did not gone to waste. Now you go up, move toward the right and walk fifteen steps there is another opening. This route is much nearer but harder to walk. If you still have enough strength, you can move up another seven meters, you will find another better route. But you must not force yourself and walk the route that you can walk. Do not force yourself. Even if your martial art skill are weaker a little bit, you can still see me!”

Although the light was dim but with Shi Chen superior eyesight, he was still able to read the words craved on the cliff clearly. Although he had finished reading but his eyes did not move as he remembered something from the perfume that was in the air.

When he was ten and Guo Yuxia was twelve, thirteen-year-old, they were under the tutorage of the Divine Dragon Clan. At that time, they were still enjoying the golden period of their childhood. Although Mentor Master was strict in his training, they still enjoy games of what other kids enjoyed in their childhood.

Naturally he would come to secretly like his Second Protégé Sister, who was two years older and cleverer than him. But that was only a pure love between children, a brotherly and sisterly love, as pure as a white paper. Even when he had grown up, he still never spoke out his true feelings!

When he was fifteen year old and Wang Susu had become a disciple of the “Divine Dragon” Clan, till five years from now, Shi Chen could still remember how bright was the starlight on that night!

On that bright and starry night, the “Immortal Divine Dragon” Long Bushi announced two joyous things in that grand hall filled with tables of wine and dishes. Firstly, he had accepted another intelligence girl as his disciple. Secondly, he announced the wedding of his first disciple Long Fei with his second disciple Guo Yuxia.

On that very night, in his cold but spatially room, he had secretly cry. But from that day onward, he tried to very best to forget that pure love he harbored. That was because she had already married to his most respected big brother. From then, she had become his “Sister in law” and no longer his childhood companion,

that “Little Protégé Sister”. Therefore he could only try to forget this hurt, forever forgot and forgot it cleanly!

From then, he began to distant himself from her. Even their chats became formal. One day at the training ground he happened to see her and they were alone. He tried to avoid her but she stopped him and asked. “These days you are always trying to avoid me. Is it because I am no longer your Little Protégé Sister anymore?”

In his heart he thought. “Yes! You are indeed no longer my Little Protégé Sister.” But he did not voice it out.

Till now until this moment, they never had the chance to be alone with one another. The past became to flash in a blink of the eye in his heart.

Just like many years ago when Guo Yuxia was with him, under the influence of the perfume, he actually forgot that she was his “Sister in law” and turned back his head and unwittingly muttered. “Little Protégé Sister…”

Although those three words appeared soft but was like a thousand tons gigantic rock that was cast into the ocean. It caused Guo Yuxia deep blue ocean to react with ripples. Her eyes took a glance at Shi Chen face. The ripples ended and was replaced by a ray of moving light - What was she thinking in her mind?

But who would know what she really thinks in her heart? She just gently reached out her hand and touched Shi Chen face and softly said. “You have become thinner!”

Shi Chen did not move but was as quiet as a stone statue that was engraved on the walls. But his heart was definitely not as calm as his appearances - What was he thinking now? But no matter what he was thinking now, he could be heard saying. “Surely Mentor Master has gone up!” He did not dare to look her in the eyes but mustered his strength and continued to ascend!

When Shi Chen reached the top, above the mist was a flatten terrain. And he cast his eyes and looked around. “This mountain peak is indeed very strange. From the bottom, no wonder we cannot see the peaks. That is because the peak head is chopped off!” Then his thoughts were interrupted by Guo Yuxia voice!

It was a soft voice and she needed not have to say aloud for she was already besides his ears.

Shi Chen did not dare to turn back. Although he harbored that wish but he remained looking in front but in actuality, there was not a thing to be seen in his eyes!

The wind, that was even wilder than the wind below, blew her loose hair to his ears, chin and mouth…

She lightly sighed and said. “I know that when I am with your Big Brother ever since, you are always trying to avoid me. That day at the training ground

when I have the chance to be alone with you, why did you not even say a word to me, why did you not treat me the same as before…"

Suddenly there was a big yell below. "Is there anything amiss up there?"

Surprised by the shout, he turned his head and immediately touched against Guo Yuxia sweet and beautiful lips. Both of them did not make a sound, no one moved, not even replying to Long Fei shouts and even to the surrounding echoes. For they could only hear the sound of their beating hearts…

Guo Yuxia gently said. "Do you remember that there was once upon a time, behind the manor, there was an elm tree…" her breath was like a sweet aroma of an orchid.

Shi Chen took in a deep breath and said. "I…hugged you and want you to play the bride and groom game…"

Guo Yuxia gently rolled her eyes and said. "You want me to be your new bride and accompany you to the bed chamber. I refused…"

Shi Chen said dreamily. "You said your age is older than me and only can be my older sister. And unable to be my bride…"

Guo Yuxia said. "Therefore you hugged me and forced me. That time…I...I…"

Suddenly from the mountains below was another big shout. "Oei, can you all hear my voice?"

Shi Chen felt himself awakened by the shouts but suddenly a pair of gentle red lips touched his mouth…

Guo Yuxia gently said. "That time, I was exactly the same as now, being kiss by you…"

Shi Chen said. "But…later you are already married to Big Brother and you are now my Sister in law…" He did not did not turn his body away nor did he step backwards. It was because the fire of his youth was burning hotly inside his heart.

Guo Yuxia said. "Although I have married to your Big Brother but…You still do not understand my heart?"

Shi Chen asked. "Your heart…Your heart…"

Guo Yuxia said. "I have helped you in all my matters. Sometimes when you meet with difficulties by Fourth Sister, I am the one that helps you to put in the good words. Do you why that is for?"

"Meet with difficulties by Fourth Sister!" He painfully thought. But he was soon captivated by the beautiful sight in front and dreamily asked. "Why?"

Guo Yuxia said. "Because in my heart, I am still thinking of you. And always treat you as nice as before but you did not know it!"

Shi Chen thought awhile before asking. "Then why did you have to marry Eldest Brother?"

Guo Yuxia rolled her eyes. “I am older than you and is your Protégé Sister. Even if I want to marry you, Mentor Master will not agree!”

Shi Chen sighed. “At first I thought you only want to be the wife of the first disciple of Divine Dragon Clan and to take over Zhijiao Manor, therefore you married Big Brother. Because…because you and Big Brother in terms of persona and moods, there isn’t any there seemingly fitted.”

Guo Yuxia smiled and said. “Even though I was not able to marry you but…from now on, if we can meet from time to time, won't not it still be the same?”

Shi Chen looked dreamily at her for a long time, even forgetting to breath…

At this moment, in this empty plain and the starry skies, he suddenly found himself to be so close with the stars - He was closer to the stars than many in the world. Suddenly he had another thought. If all the stars were the eyes of people and they saw him with his Big Brother’s wife so intimate, intimate till there was not even a single spacing, what then should he do?…

Suddenly from below, Long Fei said solemnly. “Fourth Sister, there would be dangers above. You should have let me go up first!”

Suddenly Shi Chen jumped with shock and he moved back immediately two meters and at that single moment, Wang Susu leapt in front, followed by Long Fei at the back.

Under the starlight, four pair of eyes looked at one another and everyone looked surprised and stunned. Naturally Shi Chen eyes were filled with shame and fright as well!

Long Fei said. “Oh you are all on top!”

Guo Yuxia smiled and brushed her long hair. “Of course, we are on top. Would we be below?”

Long Fei swept his eyes around, and saw Shi Chen looking frightened and he stood stiffly, back facing a mountain rock, as if he was afraid to topple over. His mouth looked like he wanted to say something but unable to say a single word and although Guo Yuxia was smiling, her mannerism did not look as her usual self and unnatural. Although he was a frank person but upon seeing Shi Chen and Guo Yuxia not in their usual self, he began to show signs of suspicious in his heart. He asked solemnly. “What are you all doing?”

Guo Yuxia sunk her face and said. “Why ask such a strange question? What do you think we are doing?”

Long Fei was taken aback and said. “Just now when I was shouting below at the foot of the mountain, did you all not heard me?”

Guo Yuxia answered. “We have heard!”

Long Fei sighed. “Since you have heard, why did you all not answer me?

And make me so anxious below!"

The calmer Guo Yuxia became, the more impatience Long Fei was. In his heavy sighing, his speech was filled with reproach.

Guo Yuxia exclaimed. "Hehe." And laughed. "You are muddle-headed. But I am not as muddle-headed as you!"

Long Fei asked. "I am muddle-headed? In what sense?"

Guo Yuxia coldly smirked and said. "Do you know that we are under a dangerous situation? The enemy is hidden and we are in the open. The enemy is strong and we are weak. And you keep shouting so loud, do you really want others to know where we are! How can I be the same as you. You rushed into things blindly and yet blames on me!"

Long Fei was taken aback and lowered his head.

Wang Susu sighed softly and said. "Sister in law is indeed thoughtful!"

Shi Chen heart began to calm. But his face was still awful. To Guo Yuxia, he was impressed and at the same time, afraid. For he could not imagine a person who after doing a guilty act, would go on becoming righteous and blaming others.

As for Long Fei, he began to reproach himself after taken aback for awhile. He took a broad stride towards Shi Chen and extended his hand said. "I am sorry to you!"

Shi Chen heart skipped a beat. "Big Brother…you…you in what way need to be sorry to me…"

Long Fei sighed. "I wronged you just now."

Shi Chen lowered his head and said. "I…" Compared to Guo Yuxia, he found himself unable to say something with a straight face.

Long Fei sighed. "Although I did not say it in my mouth but in my heart, I was suspicious of you. Alas! I deserved to die for doubting you."

Shi Chen was stunned. And he felt his warm blood gushing to his head. Facing such an honest, frank, apologetic real man, compared to him, he felt very tiny and shameful. "Big Brother…I am…"

Before he could say. "I'm sorry to you," Guo Yuxia had stepped in between them and said aloud. "Even if there is misunderstanding among brothers, you just need to say it out and then let it rest. There is no need for anyone of you to say anything more!"

Long Fei said. "Indeed, indeed. I won't say anymore, I won't say anymore."

Suddenly he saw something behind Shi Chen and suddenly cried out in surprise. "What is that?" Long Fei was staring at something behind him.

Once again a surprise was sprang upon Shi Chen as he turned his body and saw that engraved on the rock above was a picture of a woman garbed in priest robes with her hair pinned on top of her head. Her body rigid with her left shoulder

lowered, extending out with her two fingers lifting upward. As for her right hand, it carried a long sword and it was in a lowered position. Her face seemed real and if one were to take just a glance, it would look like a woman that was alive!

Besides the engraved image, was some words - “Long Bushi, your internal power has once again improved. But can you break this stance of mine? If you can, proceed. If not, go back!”

Long Fei took a careful look before he burst out in a cold laughter. “Even me can break this stance, Mentor Master definitely can break!”

Shi Chen said. “The words sound arrogant. At first glance, this stance looks ordinary but could it hide an extraordinary stroke?”

Wang Susu did not even move her eyes away and said. “This stance may look ordinary but I am sure that it conceal many powerful strokes behind. It just that at first glance, we did not notice!”

Guo Yuxia nodded and said. “Indeed. The more ordinary a stroke is, in fact it is all the more deadly! All of you have been looking for sometime but have you saw anything that is worth noting?”

Long Fei looked again before saying. “The way she lifts her sword, her feet must definitely position in a attack position. But this priestess, both her legs was together and her feet formed a “Eight” characteristic, as if she is preparing to use some movement skills.”

Guo Yuxia said. “That right. That is the weird part!”

Long Fei said. “And her left shoulder was lowered but her two fingers pointing upward, this is not a way to counter and display swordplay.”

Guo Yuxia said. “That right!”

Long Fei looked proud of his deductions and continued. “Although she is wearing a priestess robe but the shoes she is wearing is a man footwear. It is so ridiculous.”

Guo Yuxia gently smiled. “Clothing and swordplay are not related. This does not count as …”

Long Fei was serious and said. “How can it not be considered a weird part. If the attire is improper, it is also unrighteousness, the swordplay will also not be righteous, an improper unrighteous swordplay will never defeat enemies and gain victories!”

Guo Yuxia laughed and said. “Alright, alright. Let consider you’re…”

Long Fei interrupted. “Naturally must consider.”

Wang Susu found herself saying. “An improper unrighteous swordplay even though it may dominate for a period but it will not be everlasting. Big Brother’s words, are indeed logical!”

Shi Chen said. “Indeed that is the case. Throughout ancient times, there have

been many such examples. For example, 'Southern Sea Swordplay' that is renowned for its viciousness and nicked 'Life Stealer Sword', till today only the name is remembered but not its legacy. Therefore we can surmise that those that wield this type of swordplay in the past was able to dominate for a time because they were more intelligence, had strong internal power but definitely not because their swordplay is extraordinary. Fourth Sister words, really…"

Guo Yuxia interrupted. "Have you finished?"

Shi Chen was taken aback. But Guo Yuxia explained. "At this moment, I really don't understand why you all have the mood for idol chats."

Shi Chen lowered his head.

Guo Yuxia suddenly smiled and said. "If you want to chat, there will be a time for it in the future. Why pick this time?"

Wang Susu flushed with red and lowered her head.

Guo Yuxia looked at her and laughed. "With the exception of these two points that Big Brother pointed out…"

Long Fei said. "Three points!"

Guo Yuxia laughed awhile and continued. "With the exception of these three points, did any of you observe anything else?"

Shi Chen lifted his head and although he was looking at the picture but his eyes were a blank, he did not found anything amiss.

Wang Susu softly said. "I think the most important part is that the woman's eyes are closed. If there is a fight, it doesn't seem logical for one to close their eye?"

She did not lift her head. It seemed that she had already observed it but did not have the chance to speak!

Long Fei sighed. "Indeed Fourth Sister is much more attentive!"

Guo Yuxia said. "That is right. Earlier I found it the weirdest part. And it so weird till it makes no sense. But on further analysis, it make great sense to have her eyes closed and it is also the most deadliest part in her swordplay!"

Shi Chen and Long Fei asked together. "Why is that so?"

Guo Yuxia explained. "This stance from her swordplay is as motionless as the mountain. It is using the principle of being motionless to counter motion. Everyone in the Pugilistic Fraternity know that our Mentor Master's 'Heavenly Dragon Seventeen Strokes', is the most fearsome in attacking and difficult to block swordplay, especially the last four stances, which has even more changes and dazzling. Some people can't even block a single stroke!"

Shi Chen said. "Therefore now she closed her eyes, she can't see the dazzling swordplay and her heart become even calmer..."

Guo Yuxia nodded. "That is right. But that is because her inner strength has

also reached the peak of perfection and is confidence of countering just by listening to the vibration of the wind!”

Long Fei clapped his hands and said. “Indeed, indeed. I was thinking of using a stroke from 'Wind Tiger, Cloud Dragon' as bait to induce her into attacking me. If she shifted her sword positioning, then I will attack with a stroke from 'Ascending Cloud Breaker' to break her defense stance. But since she closes her eyes and if she have the patience, then how my "Wind Tiger, Cloud Dragon" stroke going to be useful?”

Shi Chen said, “Even if we don’t use a dazzling stance, from the “Heavenly Dragon Seventeen Strokes”, there is a stroke that can break her stance!”

Guo Yuxia said. “Do you mean that 'Cloud Breaker Four Strokes', the first stroke of 'Ascending Cloud Breaker', that 'Ninth Heaven'?”

Shi Chen said, “Indeed! Although her sword can protect her on her left and can seal the advance of her opponent on her right. But there will be an opening towards her left. If I use the sixth stroke and interchange it with the seventh stroke of “Ascending Cloud Breaker”, it not difficult to break her stance.”

Guo Yuxia smiled. “Third Brother roams the Pugilistic Fraternity for not even two years and to think that his martial art skills have improved by leaps and bounds.”

Long Fei said, “In another two years, surely you will be even better than your Big Brother!”

Shi Chen nodded his head in appreciation.

Guo Yuxia said. “If you use these two strokes “Ninth Heaven” and 'Moon Disturbance, Shooting Star', although it is impressive and sure but the feint is overdoing it. Moreover if the opponent has the same internal power as you, and just change the sword stance a little, it will block your sword stance and it will become a contest between who has the stronger internal power. It will not be a contest to see whose swordplay is better and will lose its original intention!”

Shi Chen lowered his head and thought deeply. And borne the mark of respect!

Long Fei asked. “Then what do you think what stances we should use to break it?”

Guo Yuxia smiled. “If one is to defeat the opponent and hope to win, one must first know how many deadly stances that one single stance has hidden. And the more ordinary a stance looks, the more changes it is able to display. This is the undeniable acme in swordplay but too many people forget about it!” She said it slowly, as she wanted to let the others to absorb it and to be able to understand the logic behind it.

She saw Wang Susu lifted her head and listened intensely.

Guo Yuxia laughed awhile and said. “This reasoning is very obvious. In the multitude of all matters, nothing can be compared to simplicity. For example, if a scholar is to write just a word, if he just write a “Heng” (It can mean unruly or horizontal) character, the next character he is going to write, no one will be able to guess. That is because from one word “Heng” it can be added to form many other characters, really is uncountable. But if he writes a 'Bao Gai', or 'Cao Tou', then the next words he can write will become narrow, and others may find it easier to guess. When he has written half a sentence, then he can no longer change and write other words. Then others will naturally try to make a guess and guess it!”

Long Fei, Shi Chen and Wang Susu were filled with admiration as she continued. “It is the same as fighting with another. It is taboo to keep using the same strokes again and again nor can you use your fullest strength. It follows the same reasoning!”

Long Fei sighed and said. “This logic although I have known it but I can never understand it that clearly. But once you explain, I began to understand clearly. Your example of using writing words is indeed quoted in a very excellent manner!”

Guo Yuxia smiled. “The stance that was engraved on this mountain rock, is indeed like the scholar that writes a “Heng” word only and makes us wonder how many words remain to be written. If we do not know how many stances it hid, so how can we ever break her stance!”

Wang Susu suddenly said, “This is not 'Heng' but a 'Cao Tou'!

Guo Yuxia nodded and laughed. “That is right, I say the wrong word. Is a 'Cao Tou'. If it is a 'Heng', it cannot be considered a stance!”

Long Fei and Shi Chen exchanged glances for awhile before Long Fei said. “I think the girls are smarter than us, men!”

Shi Chen said, “Indeed!” And both of them laughed.

Guo Yuxia said, “Fourth Sister indeed is smarter than the both of you.”

Wang Susu lowered her head and said, “Sister in law is much…”

Guo Yuxia laughed and said, “You do not need to praise me. I ask you, did you manage to find out how many hidden stances that one stance hide?”

Wang Susu lowered her head and muttered. “Although I do not know much but from what I know, there is already seven different stances!”

She swept her glances at Long Fei and Shi Chen who was looking half-believing as they listened.

Guo Yuxia asked. “Which seven stances?”

Wang Susu replied, “Although she doesn’t look like she is using any swordplay stance from any clans but it can be evolved into Wudang Clan, from the stance 'Ninth Palace Continuous Swordplay', a stroke call 'Total Oblivion'…”

Guo Yuxia said, “That is right. If the sword point moved toward the left and turn, it becomes 'Total Oblivion'.”

Long Fei narrowed his eyebrows and nodded.

Wang Susu continued. “If her sword stance is to lift up to the left, it will be 'Returning Dance of the Gentle Wind' from Diancang Clan. If her wrist were to move back, it will the Emei Clan most powerful sword stance 'Returning Wind Swordplay', a stroke that can attack and defend call 'Peacock Spreading its Tail'!” When she appeared flustered as she tried to say it all in one breath!

Guo Yuxia smiled. “It is alright for you can say it slowly.”

Wang Susu took in a deep breath and said, “Other than that, that one stroke can…can…be change…change into…”

Long Fei asked. “Can be changed into what?”

Under the starlight, Wang Susu beautiful face looked painful and confused.

Shi Chen asked in fright. “Fourth Sister, are you…you…alright?”

Wang Susu took in a deep more breath and she slowly became restored her calmness. “I am alright, just…just that my chest suddenly feel painful. Now I feel fine!”

Shi Chen reached out to wipe his sweat from his forehead. It was because just now he felt so anxious that he broke into cold sweat.

Guo Yuxia rolled her eyes and laughed questioning. “And the other four strokes?”

Wang Susu continued. “That one stroke can be changed into Tianshan Clan from 'Triple Divine Swordplay', a stroke call 'Spreading Confusion' and Kunlun Clan from 'Jade Carrier Swordplay', a stroke call 'Jade Tidal'. Shaolin Clan, 'Demonic Divine Swordplay' a stroke 'Reversal of Nature' and in the past there was 'Triple Flower Swordman', he left behind his 'Triple Flower Swordplay', a stroke call 'Seizing the Peach'. “ Although her face looked calm but her eyes looked terrible as though she was unwilling to say out what she had just said but was being forced to.

Long Fei sighed. “Fourth Sister, I really can’t tell that your martial art knowledge is so profound. I guess that before you have been accepted by Mentor Master, you have already learned quite a lot of martial art skills!”

Wang Susu turned ashen and muttered. “No…I didn’t…”

Long Fei asked. “You didn’t? I don’t believe. If you did not, how is that I cannot see from this stance, how many changes can it evolve?” He looked at Guo Yuxia and asked. “Can you tell?”

Guo Yuxia laughed and shook her head. “I did not too. I can only tell that it can be evolved into Wudang Clan’s Total Oblivion from the Ninth Palace Continuous Swordplay, Shaolin Clan’s Reversal of Nature from Demonic Divine

Swordplay. As for the other five changes, I was not able to tell."

She continued. "Although I can tell that single stroke may hide more than two strokes. But 'Triple Flower Swordplay', 'Jade Carrier Swordplay' all these swordplay I have never seen before. As for 'Triple Swordplay', 'Returning Dance of the Gentle Wind' all these swordplay, although I have seen before but I am not familiar with its strokes. Therefore how it evolve, naturally I am unable to tell."

Long Fei sunk his face and looked at Wang Susu. And he slowly phrased word by word to her. "All these swordplay, where did you learn from?"

Guo Yuxia laughed and said. "I am wondering as well!"

Shi Chen looked in concern for Wang Susu but he could tell from her face, she was hiding some secrets!

Guo Yuxia rolled her eyes and tried to contain her smile. "When Fourth Sister was accepted as disciple, I was already feeling strange. Big Brother, do you remember who recommend Fourth Sister in?"

Long Fei replied. "It is the head of the Red Flag Escort Agency from the northern sixth province, Sima Zhongtian!"

Guo Yuxia said. "That is right. But Old Senior Sima did not reveal her background and only say she is the daughter of a bosom friend. Our Mentor Master, he is a trusting person, therefore he did not ask for her background." Although she carried a smiling face but it was a malicious smile. And she looked from time to time at Shi Chen and then at Wang Susu.

Wang Susu became even more paled. Even her fingers were shaking.

Guo Yuxia contained her smile and said. "All these years we have been living like a family and like real brothers and sisters. But Fourth Sister, under this situation today, however I cannot but…"

Wang Susu suddenly interrupted. "Even though I was not able to marry you but from now on, if we can meet from time to time, won't not it still be the same?"

Guo Yuxia and Shi Chen suddenly turned ashen. And was shocked.

Shi Chen unwittingly took a step backwards.

Long Fei puzzled. "Fourth Sister, what did you just say?

Wang Susu smiled and said. "Nothing. It just that I unwittingly…"

Guo Yuxia laughed and said. "She did not say anything!" And walked towards Wang Susu but Wang Susu took two steps backward.

Long Fei was bewildered. "What are the two of you doing!"

Guo Yuxia suddenly laughed softly. "Look, I am really muddle-headed. There is far more important things left to do and we are chatting here. As for Fourth Sister background, even Mentor Master did not ask and feel assured. So why should we worry? Divine Dragon Clan has no rule that stops anyone who already knows other forms of martial arts from entering. Even if she have learn

other forms of martial arts, so what does it matter?"

Long Fei said. "I never say it matter but …"

Guo Yuxia furrowed and said. "What do you still want to say. If Fourth Sister has a dubious background, base on the esteem of the Escort head of the Red Flag, how will he introduce Fourth Sister to Mentor Master?"

Long Fei said. "But…"

Guo Yuxia said. "But what? Let hurry and find Mentor Master!" And hold Wang Susu by her hand and walked in strides away!

Shi Chen sighed secretly. He looked troubled for he knew that Wang Susu had overheard his conversation with Guo Yuxia. At this moment when he looked at the back view of Wang Susu, he felt his heart weighed by a thousand ton of heavy rock.

Only Long Fei who was righteous failed to see the malicious in their behavior. He looked bewildered and asked. "Third Brother, what is going on?"

Shi Chen lowered his head and said. "I do not know as well." He had no courage to face his frank Protégé Brother.

Long Fei wondered awhile then laughed suddenly. "I really do not understand what going on between the girls. Never mind, I shall not be bother anymore." He laughed a few times and said. "Third Brother, let me tell you. It is best to be single! If you get involved in girl matter, it will always mean trouble."

Shi Chen after listening to his forthright laughter, he felt respectful but at the same ashamed. He let down his guard only with his Protégé Brother's laughter but he felt even more ashamed!

Guo Yuxia held Wang Susu's hand till they made a turning after a mountain rock. She suddenly halted her movements and pulled Wang Susu to the back of the mountain rock.

Wang Susu asked. "Sister in law, what is the meaning of this?"

Guo Yuxia coldly laughed awhile before saying. "Do you really think I do not know what you are planning?"

Wang Susu said. "Sister in law, what are you saying? I don't understand!" Although she tried to force a smile but in the presence of this "Sister in law", somehow she could not shake away her fear. It was as though she was facing her real elder brother...

Guo Yuxia rolled her eyes and said. "Once we are down the mountain, I have things to talk to you!"

Wang Susu said. "Alright!" Suddenly she saw Long Fei and Shi Chen hurried steps.

Long Fei asked. "What are the two of you doing here?"

Guo Yuxia laughed and said. "Can't sisters be left alone to whisper some

mush words?"

Suddenly Long Fei said aloud in surprise. "There are words on top as well!" and continued. "Third Brother, come and have a look! The words written on top read. "Long Bushi, if you can only tell that the stance has only seven changes. It best that you turned back!"

Long Fei was surprised. "Alas, that stance has more than seven changes!"

Shi Chen walked besides Long Fei and started reading. "Total Oblivion, Reversal of Nature, Jade Tidal…These are the four types of changes that Fourth Sister had mentioned."

Long Fei took in a deep breath and said. "I don't believe that such a simple stance can hide more than seven changes and that there are others too!" His eyes caught some words below. As those words were messy and not easy to be noticed, only now had he noticed it.

Guo Yuxia softly exclaimed. "Isn't it Mentor Master's handwriting?"

Wang Susu softly said. "That right!"

The four of them began to look at each other and then started to read the words.

"The sword is the primary, the leg as auxiliary, the orthodox swordplay, the unusual kick technique. To break this stance, the only way is to go against the flow!" There was another messy line below. "Although that stance of yours may be extraordinary. But that was all based on the intricacy upon the left shoulder and that strange shoe on your leg. You really think I cannot tell, haha, haha…"

Long Fei laughed as well. "Haha, haha…What do you think. The intricacy part of that stance lies on that pair of strange shoe. And you say that it is unrelated to swordmanship!" He looked extremely proud.

Shi Chen looked in bewilderment and muttered. "To break this stance, the only way is to be go against the flow!…How do we explain 'Against the Flow'!"

Guo Yuxia took a glance at Long Fei before her eyes rolled and glanced at Shi Chen who continued. "All these theories on the intricacies of martial arts, even if we are to think for three days and nights, we may not be able to think of a breakthrough!"

Long Fei said. "But I…"

Guo Yuxia said. "Even if you have said correctly by guessing but do you know what the intricacy behind that pair of shoe?"

Long Fei was stunned.

Guo Yuxia continued. "There is one more suspicious point but all of you did not even noticed!"

Long Fei asked. "What is it?

Guo Yuxia pointed at the words and asked. "Can you all tell how these

words are written?"

Shi Chen looked doubtful and said. "It is by finger!"

Guo Yuxia said. "That is right!"

Long Fei asked. "What is so strange about it. Our Mentor Master finger strength is enough to grind rock to powder!"

Guo Yuxia coldly laughed awhile and asked. "What about you?"

Long Fei said. "I am not able to."

Guo Yuxia said. "After Mentor Master reduced his internal power by seventy percent, won't his internal power be the same as yours?"

Long Fei clapped his hands. "True, true. When Mentor Master writes those words, his internal power must have fully recovered. This is indeed a strange thing and indeed worthy for us to ponder…But at this time and place, who will help him to release his accupoints?"

Guo Yuxia sighed and added. "The duel at Huashan is normally an ordinary affair. Before I reached the mountain, I was thinking that although there may be some risks involved but definitely not this mysterious and crowded with secrecy. But once I reached the mountain, I discovered that every single matter is out of expectations. I afraid there isn't any past records of any duels that can be stranger than this!"

She rolled her eyes before adding. "That Ye maiden tries to use numerous methods so that our Mentor Master will reduce his internal power. And Mentor Master even agreed even though it is something that never happened in the Pugilistic Fraternity before. And that strange priest that risks his life to steal an empty coffin makes the entire thing even more mysterious. In my heart I already feel so uneasy but it turned out to be even stranger the more we try to unravel.

Therefore it set me thinking that this Huashan duel, surely it is hiding many secrets and many plots. Maybe it is even planned by many people for a long time and they set a ambush to trap Mentor Master using Danfeng Ye Qiubai as a bait. All of you think carefully…"

Before she had finished, Long Fei looked like he was about to spring. She halted him and said. "What are you doing?"

Long Fei slowed down and turned back his head and said. "Since that is the case, even if we stand here and discuss for three days and nights, it will be pointless. Let hurry to aid Mentor Master. No wonder he says you are intelligent and brilliant, but a pity you say too much and not much of an action!"

Guo Yuxia turned ashen and looked stunned while Wang Susu said. "Big Brother, wait for me!" as she sprang three meters…

Shi Chen was slower and took a glance at Guo Yuxia before he too sprang forward as well.

Guo Yuxia looked at them from the back view and laughed coldly awhile. Once her laugh ceased, she too run after them!

Unexpectedly, Long Fei halted his movements for he saw that seven, eight meter ahead, there was something. It was another portrait of a priestess engraved on the mountain rock. But her stance was now changed! What used to be a defensive stance had now changed to a offensive stance. What used to be a rigid body had now changed to a posture that looked like she was about to spring anytime. Her left hand wielded a sword while her right hand carried the scabbard. And the words besides her read. “Long Bushi, even if you can break the defensive stance just now but can you break the offensive stance now?”

But he just took a few glances and sprang past the mountain rocks. Besides the words there was some more words.

Shi Chen coldly laughed awhile and said. “Again the same old trick!”

Long Fei said aloud. “What the point of looking?” And he again hastened his pace.

Guo Yuxia mustered her vital energies and sprang besides him and asked in a low voice. “Why did you treat me like that just now?” Long Fei looked stunned. She added. “In front of Third Brother and Fourth Sister, you should at least give me some face!”

Long Fei said. “In front of them, you too treat me the…” He sighed deeply and changed his tact and said. “I feel anxious inside. Don’t blame me.”

Guo Yuxia melancholy sighed awhile as though she wanted to say something but she saw another rock in front. It was another portrait of a priestess and it was destroyed and its pieces had fallen to the ground.

Long Fei and Guo Yuxia looked at one another and the words on its sides were smashed to bits.

Long Fei questioning asked. “Mentor Master…”

Guo Yuxia said. “That is right. Except for Mentor Master, who else have this level of internal power.”

Long Fei asked solemnly. “Why did Mentor Master…can it be that Mentor Master is unable to break this stroke?”

Guo Yuxia sighed and shook her head. However they sprang ahead and a few ten of meters away there was another rock that was blocking them. On top on the words were the words “I, Long Bushi has been here!” written with his fingers. But at the bottom, there was another line of words. “Never turn back!”

The words at the top and bottom were different. One written by fingers, the another engraved by a blade.

Long Fei shouted and raised both his hands to strike against the rocks and in a shattering sound, send the some rocks shattering but he was knocked back three

steps. Although in Pugilistic Fraternity, he was renowned as “Iron Hero” but he was after all made of flesh and blood.

Guo Yuxia sighed softly. “Your temper is exactly the same as Mentor Master!” And she extended her hand to help him up. “But you must know, your internal force is not the same as him!”

Long Fei appeared more vexed and he broke loose from Guo Yuxia’s grip and raised his legs to kick the rock. This kick shattered more of the rock.

Shi Chen and Wang Susu said together in concern. “Big Brother, what are you doing?”

Guo Yuxia said coldly. “It best that you save some of your strength to kick the stomach of your opponent. It better than kicking this rock!”

Long Fei turned back his head and said. “You…You…” He was so angry that he was not able to say anything!

Shi Chen added. “Sister in law, Big Brother’s temper is always like this…”

Guo Yuxia laughed coldly awhile and walked ahead of them.

Long Fei said. “You…” He was interrupted by a cry from Guo Yuxia behind the mountain rock. Without finishing his words, he immediately dashed ahead.

Wang Susu eyed Shi Chen for awhile and added. “Big Brother is good to everyone, especially Sister in law…”

Shi Chen reddened and almost could not lift his head!

Behind the mountain rock, there was a fork and at the side of the fork was a bamboo hut!

Long Fei hurried past Guo Yuxia who muttered. “I afraid Mentor Master is no longer…”

Before she could finished, Long Fei had hurried past her and pushed the door opened and shouting at the time, “Mentor Master!” And he entered the bamboo hut.

Shi Chen was taken by surprised and he cried out behind him. “Big Brother…” And he too was about to rush inside when Guo Yuxia caught him by his sleeves and said. “Wait awhile!”

Wang Susu said. “What are we waiting for, if Big Brother is in danger, you won’t even go inside?” This usually gentle and demure girl now sounds anger judging by the tone of her voice. She did not even took a glance at Guo Yuxia and rushed into the bamboo hunt…

Long Fei stood unmoving inside. The bamboo hut was emptied of anyone. But the strange thing was, there was actually five shining pearls, four closed doors, three trace of fresh blood, two footprints and a set of furniture in this empty hut!

The five shining pearls lit the ceiling while the four doors all looked differently. The door that Long Fei entered was the smallest and towards the end was the biggest closed door. And now he was facing it and a old furniture!

But the furniture was in a bad condition with only a small part still intact and the three traces of blood and two footprints were seen besides it.

Long Fei broke into a cold sweat as he began to think about this bamboo hut and everything that could possible happen inside. It was so mysterious and the three trace of blood further shrouded it with even more secrets and even looked horrific.

Long Fei was momentarily stunned before he opened the door to the left, and it revealed a passage down the mountain.

Wang Susu opened the door to the right and revealed another passage down the mountain.

Although these two passage ways looked the same but its wide was different.

Long Fei began to think. “These left and right passage way must be the route indicated by the rock when we passes through. Although there is one destination but there are actually three routes. I think the person in the bamboo hut wanted to use this opportunity to test Mentor Master’s martial art skills. Once Mentor Master entered this bamboo hut, he will immediately be attacked upon…”

Long Fei was a straightforward person in thoughts and deed but he was not stupid. Although he was careless with things but he was not rough. Certain things he just could not bother to ponder over it only.

Now he was set thinking and his mood grew somber and heavy. “If the person in the bamboo hut is Danfeng Ye Qiubai, judging from the relationship between the both of them and her status and martial arts in Pugilistic Fraternity, it seemed unlikely that she will ambush Mentor Master. But why then she wants to set up things in such a way? If this bamboo hut is not Danfeng Ye Qiubai, who will it be? And from the looks of this old furniture, she must have rested in this bamboo hut for quite some time…”

He tried to ponder over the heads or tails of this mystery but was unable to think of any lead. And saw Wang Susu pushing opened the biggest door…

Guo Yuxia pointed at Wang Susu back view and laughed awhile and softly said. “This wrench indeed knows too much, too much…”

Shi Chen said. “If Big Brother knows about it…” His voice was shaken and unable to continue.

Guo Yuxia added. “People that know too much, will usually invite disaster.”

Shi Chen eyed her and sensed her malevolent air and felt a chill down his spine. “Sister in law, you…”

Guo Yuxia turned her head around and said word by word slowly. “Am I still your “Sister in law” now?”

Shi Chen lowered his head and said. “I…I am terribly afraid…” He was shaking all over.

Guo Yuxia suddenly laughed and gently said. “What are you afraid of. Tell you the truth, you do not need to be afraid of anything. Although she knows a lot but she will not dare to say anything out!”

Shi Chen said, “But…”

Guo Yuxia smiled broadly and added. “To tell you the truth, she is hiding some secrets as well. If I will do spend some more time…Heng, heng!” Although her face was smiling, her speech was surrounded by an aura of malevolent air.

Shi Chen looked idiocy at her smiling face and his heart did not know if he was afraid or felt confused.

Suddenly there was a cry from Wang Susu inside the bamboo hut!

Guo Yuxia ceased her smiles and said. “Let's go!” And dashed inside the bamboo hut.

When they reached the inside and they saw a bony green hand clawing firmly onto the bamboo door! Beyond the door was a bottomless ravine. And the man was desperate enough to hold onto the door or he would have dropped down the ravine. His eyes were staring horribly and filled with hatred!

Guo Yuxia asked. “Who…who is he?”

Long Fei, Shi Chen, Guo Yuxia, Wang Susu looked at the terrible face, his hands that were clawing onto the door. After awhile, Long Fei sighed. “He is already dead!”

Shi Chen bent down to examines his hand, which was cold and rigid. And immediately withdrawn his hands and said. “He is already dead!”

Long Fei lowered himself to grip the corpse shoulder and dragged him up. But the corpse hand was firmly on the door and after some efforts, Long Fei managed to loosen the fingers and placed his corpse horizontally on the ground.

The corpse was a thin man and he did not look old. At most around thirty years old and he was clad in black attire.

Long Fei sighed and said. “I wonder who this man is.”

Guo Yuxia coldly added. “Search his body, and see if we can find any possessions!”

Long Fei’s eyes were wide opened as he asked. “Why?”

Guo Yuxia said. “From his possessions, maybe we can find out his identity!” She said it in such a calm manner that it looked like it was the right thing to do.

Long Fei turned ashen and rose up and looked steadily at Guo Yuxia and said. “This person is unknown to me and moreover no hatred exists between us. Even though he may be my enemy, we should not intrude his body after he had died. Our Mentor Master is a righteous man for his entire life because he wants to lend some benevolent to the Martial Fraternity and upheld some righteousness. How can we go against the principles of Mentor Master and did such an dishonorable and unrighteousness thing!” When he had finished, his eyes were as firm as the mountain rocks!

Guo Yuxia smiled, turned back her head and said. “Alright, up to you!” And no longer looked at Long Fei.

Wang Susu was standing besides the door and when she looked at Long Fei’s face, she felt very respectful!

Shi Chen coughed twice and said, “From the clues of this traces, Mentor Master must have passed through here. Take this pair of footprints for example, it even look like Mentor Master. If Mentor Master internal force has been regained, then the footprint that we have discovered below the mountain must be most probably left behind by Mentor Master as well. But…Where did Mentor Master go now?” He seemed to be muttering to himself and yet asking everyone. But no one had the answers to his queries.

Shi Chen added. “This place altogether have three traces of blood. I think there is more than one person that are wounded. But from this dead corpse, there aren’t any traces of blood to be seen. Therefore who is the wounded person? And the one that inflict the wound, who is the one?…”

Shi Chen heart was in a wave of confusion. All those feelings that seemed to overwhelm him as he wanted to say the word that everyone was asking too in their hearts.

Long Fei lifted his head and looked at Shi Chen. “Third Brother. You don’t have to say it out. Big Brother, I…am feeling very confused…”

Wang Susu melancholy sighed. “Big Brother, actually this person…”

Long Fei said solemnly. “Don’t!”

Wang Susu softly sighed. “But for the sake of Mentor Master’s whereabouts…”

Long Fei thundered. “Just because it is for our Mentor Master, all the more we cannot do anything that cause him to feel ashamed and uneasy.” He sighed. “Fourth Sister, you must know that although many things you can do without anyone knowing but it will weighted upon your self-conscious and even will cause deep regrets for life. At present, there are many evil doers that are because when they do evil, they hope that no one will know about it and not ask their conscious if it is shameful. Fourth Sister, you and I come from a righteous clan, so how can we

do anything that is against our conscious!" His voice was slow and deep, it was as though he was also lecturing everyone while talking to Susu.

Shi Chen eyes looked clouded and his hands were shaking. And he felt his adrenaline rushing to his head. "Big Brother, I…I have something to say to you! I…actually…"

Guo Yuxia suddenly turned around and although her eyes seemed affected but her expression was as calm as ever.

Shi Chen stepped back and his head was lowered even more. His eyes looked blur and the guilty feeling in his heart caused him unable to lift his head and unable to face Wang Susu!

Wang Susu expressions looked even more painful than him and aroused. For deep inside her heart, she hid something that was even guiltier than he did. Following Long Fei speech, there were two steady tears flowing from her eyes!

Finally she cried out and Long Fei was stunned. "Fourth Sister, why did you cry?"

Wang Susu wiped her tears with her hands and painfully cried aloud. "Big Brother, I am sorry to you. Sorry to Mentor Master…" She suddenly pointed at the corpse on the ground. "This person, I do know him and there are many more people I also know as well. And there are many other things that I know too…"

Long Fei furrowed and asked. "Fourth Sister, what do you want to say. Feel free to talk to Big Brother."

Wang Susu suddenly stopped crying and walked step by step towards Long Fei!

Long Fei on seeing that she looked paled and her eyes were in a blur and looked possessed. He felt disheartened and asked. "Fourth Sister, you…sit down first and calm yourself!"

Shi Chen was taken aback to see her losing her normal self while Guo Yuxia seemed she was panicking from her eyes…

Wang Susu said slowly. "Big Brother, do you know that my entire family is Mentor Master's sworn enemies and we can't wait to kill him until we are satisfied. The reason why I joined the Divine Dragon Clan, is to avenge my entire clan on the Immortal Divine Dragon! And my surname is not Wang, and not even name Susu. I am Gu Yi Hong and the descendant of the Heartless Sword Gu Xiaotian who was wounded by the sword of the Divine Dragon!"

Even before she had finished, she had already crumbled onto the blood stained ground and in that instant she finally removed the burden that she had carried, that thousand ton rock that weighed upon her conscious was finally removed. Her heart could not bear the burden nor endured it, finally she broke down and cried uncontrollably!

But this big rock that weighed a thousand ton began to weigh upon Shi Chen and Guo Yuxia's heart!

Shi Chen could not believe that this weak and most demure "Fourth Sister" would bear such a heavy burden. She bore the heavy burden of hiding her identity as a "Spy". He could not believe that the one that treated Mentor Master the best, and closest to him and the "Fourth Sister" that Mentor Master most doted on, was actually the daughter of his swore enemy!

Although Guo Yuxia had guessed she was hiding her background but never would she expected, that this vulnerable girl would have the courage to reveal her secret out!

Guo Yuxia had wanted to use this secret to blackmail her. But now the only hold she had on her had become useless. She thought. "If she could say out her own very secret, she could well possible say out my secret?"

Only Long Fei looked very calm. It was an unexpected reaction coming from him as he walked slowly towards Wang Susu...Gu Yihong's side. He sighed and gently pats her on her head, not once aroused to anger or incitement. He only did a deep sigh and said. "Fourth Sister…"

But this deep sigh only made Gu Yihong felt even more painful in her heart.

For she had painfully felt Long Fei gentleness and it was a great shame upon her. And his big rough hand that gave her a feeling of love.

She painfully cried. "Ever since forty years ago when my grandfather returned wounded, after no medicine could treat his injuries and he passed away. My pitiful father could not endure this shock and slowly become crazed. He would sit down under the chrysanthemum flowers behind our courtyard, did nothing, say nothing except repeating what my grandfather had say before he died. "If only my, that stroke 'Heaven Startling Hues', if it had been deeper by a little…" I been hearing the same words until my father passed away. Every time I heard it, my heart will have an unspeakable pain!" Her voice and body was shaking as she said.

Long Fei only lowered his head and listened.

Guo Yuxia wanted to say something but was stopped by Long Fei. It was as though he wanted her to pour out all her pain and worries.

"These unforgettable vendetta have been with us for forty years and cause everyone in my family to engrave with "Vengeance". We can only bear with it the whole time as we know deeply that "Immortal Divine Dragon" martial art skills, are already unparalleled in the world!"

She added. "Time passed but till we cannot think of a fail-safe revenge plot. Therefore, our hatred grew deeper as time passed. It was so painful to endure that one year seem like three years. My father and mother lived like that painfully and wasted their lives and they had never in their entire lives, laughed heartily for even

once!”

Tears flowed from her eyes as she added. “A person that never laugh in his entire life, a person that never experience benevolent love, and only hatred. What a frightening and painful thing to have!”

The Long Fei sighed deeply in concern.

She cried. “When father and mother died, that time I was still very young. The only one dependent I have is my big brother. But half a year later, my brother suddenly went away. Everyday I will sit by the chrysanthemum flowers which my father once did and wait for my brother to return. That time I had already felt the sadness and pain of my deceased father. Therefore, although I never learn how to love but I learn how to hate…”

Long Fei was shaking in his head. A child that was living in a family that only knew hatred, her life itself was a sad thing. Long Fei sighed again!

Gu Yihong exclaimed, “One year later, brother returned. He brought back a lot of friends. Although his friends were all young, but their looks and attire were all so differ. From their speech and tone, they are all not from one place. But they all know martial art skills, although there were differences in their strengths but all were more or less the same. Brother did not introduce them to me but instead brought them to a secret chamber. And for three continuous days, they did not appear. During that three days, they talked over many things and also drunk many wine…”

Her cries seemingly weakened and her voice slowly becoming normal but her eyes were still blur as she recalled back the painful memories of the past! “Three days later, I really could not endure anymore and run to the door to eavesdrop. But when I just run to the door to listen, someone in the room had heard me and the door was opened all of a sudden. A tall and thin man stood by the door. His face was green and pale. I was taken aback and was about to turn and run. Just when my body started to move, he caught me much like lightning.”

Long Fei muttered. “Can he be the only descendant of Kunlun Clan, 'Cloud Breaker Hand', one of the new batch of young swordsmen?”

Gu Yihong replied, “That time I only feel that his hands were like iron. If my brother did not stop him, my shoulder would have been broken. Later I come to know that he is the renowned 'Cloud Breaker Hand'. His father too was defeated by the sword of 'Divine Dragon', was left broken for life. Not only him but in that room, was other people, they were all the descendants of the enemies of 'Immortal Divine Dragon'! Although they were scattered all over, and did not know one another but my brother had managed to contact them all!”

Long Fei thought. “From the looks of it, her brother is a resourceful person. But why there isn’t any news of him in Pugilistic Fraternity?”

Gu Yihong said, “They discussed for three days and decided a few most important matters. First matter is to do their best to send me to the… Divine Dragon Clan to monitor 'Immortal Divine Dragon' movements, secretly trained in his martial art skills and once an opportunity arose…”

Guo Yuxia suddenly said as she stared. “Once an opportunity arose and assassinate Mentor Master, right?”

Shi Chen felt heaviness crowded his head as he looked at Gu Yihong and saw that she nodded her head and added. “That is right!”

Guo Yuxia said sternly. “The sin of betrayal to one's Mentor Master, cannot be forgiven. Why should we allow these type of people to live in the world for?” She leapt forward, and raised her hand! She had long labored the thought of silencing her, therefore this strike was not only as swift as the wind but also long been prepared!

But unexpectedly before she could hit her, Long Fei suddenly shouted. “Stop!”

Guo Yuxia was surprised and moved half a step back and angrily asked. “Big Brother, what is the meaning of this…”

Gu Yihong did not even lift her head and added. “Sister in law, today I have revealed all my secrets out and I am preparing to die. Sister in law you shouldn’t have been so impatient!” Although she was still feeling sad but her voice was steadily becoming calmer.

“Since I am unable to be filial to my parents, nor can I uphold loyalty to my benevolent teacher’s clan. Under this circumstance, except for death, I have no other choices. All these years, Mentor Master, really treat me very well but the more he treated me well, the more painful I feel in my heart. For more than once, I feel like telling him everything from head to tail but…”

She sighed and added. “But I can never forget the look of my father before he died!”

Guo Yuxia said sternly. “All these years, I don’t believe you did not do anything that betray our Clan?” Every word of her speech seemed to push one to a corner. If words could kill, then Gu Yihong would have died this very instant.

But Gu Yihong did not lift her head as she continued. “All these years, I have indeed did many things that are against the interest of the Clan. More than once, I revealed what I learnt from Mentor Master, the essences of his martial art skills, to my brother or to another person that he sent!”

Guo Yuxia coldly hummed and said. “Anything more?”

Gu Yihong said. “This Huashan meet is actually a ploy from my brother and I have already known as well.”

Guo Yuxia said. “But you did not even reveal a single word!”

Gu Yihong answered. “I did not reveal a single word, because “Indebtedness” and “Hatred” are both weighed equally in my heart. Indebtedness is engraved deeply but so is Hatred!” She lifted her head and asked. “Big Brother, if you are me, what will you do?”

Long Fei was silent and he was expressionless.

She pointed at the corpse and said. “This man, was the descendant of Peng Tianlie from the 'Five Tigers Crushing Through Blade'. He, my brother and that Kunlun 'Cloud Breaker Hand' and Diancang Clan, eldest disciple, 'Returning Dance of the Gentle Wind Swordsman' Liu Po Yang’s descendant, for the sake of today Huashan meet, have expended years of thoughts to bring this to fruition!”

Guo Yuxia coldly laughed awhile before saying. “So, now you have fulfilled your wishes now. Our Mentor Master, he really…” She said more and more aloud and at this point, she covered her face with her hand and cried aloud.

Gu Yihong lowered her head and two crystal tears flowed once again. She cried in sadness. “Alas Heaven, why did you ask me to be borne as a descendant of Heartless Sword and yet at the same time asked to experience the kindness of the Immortal Divine Dragon …Alas Heaven, do you or do you not know, every time I betrayed my Mentor Master, how heart wrenching I felt. But…If I don’t do it, how could I face my father who had passed away…”

Shi Chen faced the wall and tears flowed as well.

Guo Yuxia wiped her tears from her face and said. “Since you know that you cannot be filial to your parents and unable to be loyal to your teacher’s clan, therefore why do you want to remain in this world for? If I were you, I will never remain for even a second in this world!”

Gu Yihong said.“Will… never…remain….for… even….a… second… in… this… world…” She once again lifted her head and looked at the night sky from the door seemingly as if it was her last!

Suddenly she reached lightning fast into her dress and drawn out the “Golden Dragon Dagger”, as she prepared to thrust it into her chest. “My Mentor Master, Big Brother, I am so sorry to you…” Even before she muttered, “All”, she had thrust the dagger into herself.

Long Fei suddenly yelled and his left hand gripped her right wrist and there was a “Dang” sound as the dagger dropped to the ground!

Guo Yuxia asked fiercely. “What motivations have you got? Are you trying to cover this traitor?”

One must know that in the Pugilistic Fraternity, one of the taboos was the act of betrayal to one own benevolent teacher. It was a terrible sin and everyone in the Pugilistic Fraternity would not hesitate to kill anyone that committed such an act, even if it was their own relatives or best friends, no one would dare to speak for

such a person.

At this moment, Long Fei was treating Gu Yihong as such. Naturally Guo Yuxia was filled with anger.

By a masterstroke, she had placed her hidden intentions to that of justice. She angrily said. “Just now when I tried to cleanse this evil on behalf of benevolent teacher but was stopped by you. Is it because between you and she, there is a…” She wanted to say “affair” but just when she about to say it, she felt a sense of emptiness and was unable to say it out!

Long Fei still ever so calm and holding Gu Yihong’s wrists, and did not even look at Guo Yuxia, said. “Fourth Sister, don’t rush into matters first. Listen to me…”

Guo Yuxia interrupted. “Listen to what? There is nothing to say…” She labored an evil intention and could not wait for this only person who knew her secret, to die as fast as possible.

But before she could finish, Long Fei turned around and shouted. “Shut up!”

This shout was so loud that the surroundings, this bamboo hut began to shook and the sound echo back from the surroundings non-stop.

Guo Yuxia was stunned for awhile and she turned ashen. Ever since Long Fei and her were married, he was always giving way to her, and never once lost control or shouted at her. She began to question herself in her thoughts. “Why did he treat me like this, don’t tell me he had already know my secret?”

Gu Yihong white teeth began to bite her colorless lips and her tears continued non-stop. “Big Brother!” She took in a deep breath and said. “Sister in law is right. I should have die. Every time I accompany Mentor Master to practice calligraphy, he would impart me some of the theories of martial arts and how to be a good person. It is all the more I feel I deserve to die, because…he treated me so well and I have always lie to him…”

Long Fei sighed deeply and added. “You did not lie to him!”

Guo Yuxia, Shi Chen and Gu Yihong was all taken aback as Long Fei sighed and explained. “On the third day when you joined the clan, Mentor Master had already known your background!”

Gu Yihong cried out in surprise while Guo Yuxia and Shi Chen turned ashen!

Long Fei looked calm as he looked longingly back to the past as if he was chasing the noble side of his Mentor Master’s spirit. “You must know that Mentor Master has always been strict in selecting disciples. Your Sister in law and I are orphans. I am adopted to be Mentor Master’s godson. Three Brother is the grandson of Mentor Master's friend and he and Fifth Brother family have deep ties.”

He asked. “Why did he accept you, who seemingly comes from nowhere, it was because Mentor Master knew your background from the day Sima of the Red Flag Escort brought you to him…”

Gu Yihong interrupted. “Old escort chief Sima did not know of this matter. This is a ploy set by my brother and his friend. To let Old escort chief Sima thought that I am a fatherless, motherless orphan. Under a hopeless situation I was unconscious in front of the door of old escort chief Sima. Therefore he would send me to Zhijiao Manor!”

Long Fei stern expression began to smile. “There is no secret that can be buried for long in the world. And there is no person that can fool another person and that person is little stupid to think like that.”

Guo Yuxia was shook from the confines of her mind. She had already reached her hand into her dress and secretly prepared three steel needles and aimed at Gu Yihong back. But when she heard those words, her hand shook as well and the needles dropped back inside her dress.

Long Fei added. “Don’t think that you have fooled old escort chief Sima. Actually he brought you to Zhijiao Manor was because he had already see the loops in your story. You just think about it, a fatherless and motherless orphan girl that suddenly shown interest in martial arts and know about Zhijiao Manor? Since you know about Zhijiao Manor but why choose Zhijiao Manor as a place to learn martial art skills? Under those circumstances, no one really have a choice. But speaking of a place to learn martial art skills, is not learning under the renowned Master Sima the same!”

Gu Yihong was stunned and unwittingly melancholy sighed.

Long Fei added. “Since ancient past, there were many intelligent people, who were prone to do stupid things. Your brother may think that he is superb brilliant but he would never think of such a big loophole!”

Gu Yihong lowered her head even more!

Guo Yuxia felt a chill in her heart as she thought. “He said all these, could it be it he trying to convey another message and purposely tell it for me to listen?”

Therefore she felt even more frustrated inside her!

Long Fei sighed. “Old escort chief Sima after he brought you to us, went on to discuss with Mentor Master for quite awhile. Mentor Master concluded that you are the daughter of his enemy. Old escort chief was someone who comes to the point and his heart was like iron stone, immediately said in a low voices. “Investigate the background, complete the extermination!”

Gu Yihong shuddered at the words!

Long Fei said. “But at that time Mentor Master only smiled and said. I am from the Martial Fraternity and could not avoid bloodshed. In my entire life, I have

killed and wounded many and the enemies I have made are uncountable. But at that time although I am forced by circumstances to kill but every time I think back, I will feel very regretful!" He unwittingly copied his Mentor Master's mannerism and set Gu Yihong to think of her noble Mentor Master, and her tears started flowing again.

Long Fei said. "At that time old escort chief Sima interrupted him and said. If you don't kill others, others will kill you. If you kill without guilt, you will not feel regretful afterwards! At that time I was still young and when I listened to his explanations. I feel it make sense.

But Mentor Master shook his head and sighed. This may be the case but Heaven decides human lives and if we can avoid killing, it is the best. I know that I have wounded many and if next time I will to be wounded by the descendant of my enemies, I will have neither regrets nor complaints. This cycle of avenge and revenge is normal!

Mentor Master smiled after saying this and added. Although I do not wish that in the future I will die prematurely, but I am not willing to go into the stage of complete extermination and pulled out all roots. I hope that the vendetta can be mediated. This young girl no matter whose descendant is she, is after all a determined child. Moreover her physique is good. She made so much efforts just to try to be under my clan, how can I disappoint her? Even if she have one day learnt all my martial art skills and turned around to kill me, I will not regret it. If I can use benevolent to dissolve her hatred, and moved her, dissolved this vendetta, will not be the best thing?"

Gu Yihong after listening up to this point wailed and cried.

Long Fei sighed and said. "At that time, I was besides Mentor Master, and these words I have heard it clearly and I remembered it deeply in my heart, never will I forget. Although I don't know if I can ever learnt one tenth of Mentor Master's martial art skills but if I can learn his big hearted characteristics, I will be satisfied!"

The crying Gu Yihong moved her lips as she wanted to say, "You have already learnt it!"

Shi Chen looked respectfully at his Protégé Brother.

Long Fei sighed and said. "Therefore that very night, when Mentor Master accepted you in the Clan, and that very night, Mentor Master, he also…" He did not look at Guo Yuxia! And continued. "Announced the wedding of your Sister in law and I."

"Do you still remember that the following morning, on the second day, he rode a horse out and only come back on the third day of the night. When he returned, he told me that you are the descendant of Old Master "Heartless Sword"

Gu Xiaotian. And sternly guarded this secret. And told me to treat you nicely from now on. Your Sister in law, Third Brother and I when we first become disciples, we have to undergo much hardship. Even your Fifth Brother with his family connections, is not spared the hardship. Only you, are spared from all this."

Gu Yihong cries became even sadder. In her heart, she really had so much to say but she just could not know how to say it out.

At the same time, Guo Yuxia was feeling a sense of panic. The more she thought, the more panic she felt. It was because in her heart, she had a secret, a guilt - one that was disloyal to her husband. Although she might not feel painful but more or less she would feel panic!

Shi Chen was feeling the same as well. At least he still had some conscious. He knew the despicable and shame of being with a married whore, moreover it was with his friend and brother's wife. Although his remaining conscious had been blinded by lust...

This was such a sad thing considering that such a good young man was really seduced by lust. At least he can still be forgiven, for he had never taken the initiative!

Long Fei said. "One day, when the night is late, I saw you looking suspiciously around for awhile and secretly went to the back yard outside the manor. I know that my swiftness movement skill is not good therefore I did not follow but watched from a distance. I saw a man in the darkness conversing with you for quite some time. That man even reached his hands from time to time to wipe away your tears. Come to think of that, that man must be your brother?"

Gu Yihong gently nodded her head.

Long Fei sighed. "All these things, not only have I know but I have also known it for a long time but…only one thing, I found it hard to understand! I wonder if you can…"

Suddenly he stopped talking of a sudden.

Gu Yihong tried to stop crying. "No matter what thing, as long as I know."

Long Fei sighed. "Fourth Sister, now you are trapped between filial and loyalty. You can't cast away your vendetta and neither can you forget Mentor Master's benevolent. I'm not forcing you to say anything." He closed his eyes and added. "All this are within the predictions of Mentor Master. That time Mentor Master had already told me, no matter what happens, I mustn't force you. That is because he already know you are innocent and kind within."

"No matter what thing, I will be willing to say it out!" She said resolutely as she rose up; even her vulnerable, petite face became resolute. "How can it be considered that Big Brother is forcing me!"

Long Fei sighed. "You should not really, unless you…"

Gu Yihong said. “I have never forgot my kin vendetta. But…Mentor Master…he…is already …” Her voice became weak.

Long Fei said. “Mentor Master will definitely not die!” At this moment, he was full of confidence.

Gu Yihong said. “But no matter, it is time for me to repay my benevolent teacher!”

Long Fei asked. “But if it is to harm your brother…”

Gu Yihong said. “I will do my best to dissolve it. Didn’t Mentor Master say it too, isn’t it best to dissolve the vendetta?

Long Fei sighed. “If it cannot be dissolved. Then what should be done?”

Gu Yihong said. “If it cannot be dissolved, I will die in front of brother and use my blood to cleanse the vendetta between our two families.” She said with much conviction that her eyes shone.

Long Fei sighed deeply. “If it still cannot be dissolved. What will you do?”

Gu Yihong said. “No matter what happen, I strive to do my best and doesn’t matter if it is within my means to accomplish…”

She suddenly sighed awhile. “I can only pray for the best providence of Heaven. Big Brother…if you were me, what will you do?”

She looked at Long Fei and after awhile…

Long Fei suddenly laughed hilariously. “Fine, fine. The Immortal Divine Dragon no longer accepted you as disciple. I, Long Fei will also won’t recognize you as Protégé Sister. Loyalty and Filial are both so hard to be fulfilled, Benevolence and Hatred are so hard to be separated. If I cannot give up loyalty for filial and neither can I give up filial to be loyal. If I were you, I will simple end my life!”

He ceased his laughter, looked at Gu Yihong and said word by word. “If it is me, that will what I do!”

The two of them locked eyes with one another, in their hearts were the feelings of appreciation!

In Guo Yuxia eyes, she was feeling scared. “The two of them seems to be getting along well. If one day she reveals my secret, what shall I do!”

In her heart, she really felt uneasy. She thought of silencing her but at the same time thought of leaving. But after awhile, she thought it was better to observe and changed according to the circumstances. She glanced at Shi Chen who looked greatly troubled.

Suddenly from the roof, there was a clear laughter. “What a hero, what a heroine!”

Everyone was taken by surprised!

Long Fei said aloud. “Who is that?”

All turned and saw a man in dark gray sliding from roof, as he somersaulted in mid-air and gently floated inside the door. He seemed like he had been on top of the roof for a long time. But all the top exponents of Pugilist that were inside, none had detected his presence! From his dexterous display of his agility that was so light and slow, inside the hearts of everyone, they felt all the more surprised.

Who is this man? Long Fei, Shi Chen, Gu Yihong and Guo Yuxia glanced in that direction with eight beaming eyes!

Chapter Five
The Distant Past

Long Fei and the rest viewed the intruder as he came forth. He wore a broad smile and he looked like a warm sort of person. Although he was rude by coming in just like that but for some strange reason, none in the hut developed feeling of animosity towards him especially Long Fei. At first look, he viewed the intruder in a positive light. Because he knew that a person that carried an air of happiness around him, his heart would never be tainted by malice.

The smiling young man rolled his eyes and actually walked to the front of Long Fei and greeted him. “Big Brother, how are you?” His tone of mannerism sounded like he had already known Long Fei!

Guo Yuxia, Shi Chen was surprised and looked at Long Fei. Gu Yihong lifted her eyes and looked up and she turned ashen immediately!

Although Long Fei was surprised as well, but he answered. “Still good! Still good…” As he was a genuine person himself, if others were respectfully, how could be bring himself to brought forth a sour face!

The cheerful young man smiled again. “Big Brother, I know that you do not recognize me…”

Long Fei looked and looked, said. “Really…do not recognize!”

The young man laughed and laughed, said. “But I do know Big Brother. And I also know...” As he took a sharp glance at Gu Yihong. “This little girl!”

Gu Yihong turned ashen and her body began to move backwards unwittingly. “You…You…”

Shi Chen shouted. “Who are you?”

Because of the change in Gu Yihong expressions, everyone reaction started to change but this young man countenance did not changed.

“Who am I?” He laughed cheerfully. “This question is so hard to answer! Just like what this sister Yihong had said earlier, her brother have gathered a group of Old Master Long’s enemies and descendants. I am one of them, I too have been involved in their plans for revenge.”

Shi Chen mustered a breath of vital energy, as he stepped forward. “Are you from Diancang Clan?” As he raised both his hands and preparing to attack!

The cheerful young man laughed and said. “You ask who I am, naturally I will reply you. But if you keep interrupting, I will not say!”

Shi Chen looked coldly and suspiciously at him.

But the strange young man maintained his cheerful look at Shi Chen!

Long Fei sighed. “Friend, if you are enemy instead of ally. Can you please enlightenment the reason why you are here.”

“Enemy instead of ally!” The cheerful young man laughed. “If I am an enemy, how will I address you as Big Brother. If I am an enemy, how will I prepared for Big Brother torches, lowered a long rope.” Suddenly he grew solemn and said. “Although I have been involved in their evil plans but I have never muttered anything and neither did I forward any ideas.” Then he became his normal self after saying till this point and laughed. “Therefore all of them look upon me as useless, muddle headed and a stupid fool!”

Long Fei questioned. “Torches, long rope, all are from you…” He took a glance at Gu Yihong who nodded her head.

The cheerful young man laughed again. “But in my view, they are actually the fools. They didn’t use their brains to consider that the renowned swordsman Ninth Wing Flying Eagle, Di Mengping that is so famous throughout the world, how will he give birth to a muddle-headed and foolish son!”

Long Fei was taken aback and clenched his hands together. “Alas, it is Young Master Di. Benevolent teacher has often mentioned to me that among all his opponents, the one who has the highest martial art skills, the most righteousness and the most heroics, from the frontier is the most foremost swordsman of this generation, Ninth Wing Flying Eagle Old Master Di Mengping!”

The young man ceased his cheerful countenance as he said. “My deceased father…”

Long Fei was surprised. “Old Master Di has passed away! Why is there no news in the Pugilistic Fraternity?”

The young man regained his cheerful mannerism but it looked forcefully. “The road to Tianshan is far, and he had retired for ten years…alas, even if the people in the Pugilistic Fraternity with the most updated affairs will not take notice of some one who had sealed his sword for ten years.”

Long Fei unwittingly sighed. Although he did not speak it loud but his heart knew that after Ninth Wing Flying Eagle, Di Mengping was defeated by Mentor Master’s sword, his fame was not as before and in fact faded!

But the young man regained his heroism mannerism and said. “Father when he was alive, often referred to the heroism of the Immortal Divine Dragon. Although, he was defeated by the sword the Divine Dragon, he had never felt anguish.”

Long Fei sighed. “Benevolent teacher has often said the winner of that fight should be Old Master Di because he was first wounded by Old Master Di’s sword!”

The young man said. “Wrong, Father had already told me the situation at that time. Old Master Long braved the heavy snowstorm alone just to go up Tianshan. And he waited at the peak of Tianshan for one day and a night. He is originally from Jiangnan, how could he be used to the freezing temperature of Mt. Tianshan? His hands were already covered with frostbites. Under that situation, Father managed to win by half an opportunity. When Father’s sword point reached Old Master Long body, Old master Long's long sword had also reached his chest…Alas! If not for the fact that Old Master Long was merciful…Alas!” He let go of a deep sigh, and was silence.

Gu Yihong suddenly melancholy sighed and was filled with respect.

Long Fei extended his hands his headdress and said aloud. “A win is a win, a defeat is a defeat. Even if we do not discussed about Old Master Di’s swordsmanship and martial art skills, just based on the heroic spirit displayed, is already considered a Hero of our age. I, Long Fei is greatly impressed!”

Gu Yihong lowered her head, as she knew that her own grandfather heart was a little too petty. But little did she know that in Pugilistic Fraternity, winning and defeat are viewed very important. The better the exponent, the more they would want to determine to the utmost who is the victor and loser. Therefore a man like Ninth Wing Flying Eagle would be uniquely special and deemed worthy of respect!

The young man said. “Before Father passed away, he repeatedly told me, “There should be only gratuitous and not anguish towards Old Master Long. In future, you can only repaid his kindness.” These words, at all times, I have never forgot. After Father died, I journey down Tianshan, traveled into the Passes and reached the Central Plains. At that time, I was still young and enjoyed drinking wine...” He smiled as he said that. “Until now, I still love wine more than my life!”

Long Fei smiled too.

“One day I was drinking wine in a very small town, inside a wine tavern. That time I was so drunk that I was muttering nonsense...” The young man smiled again. “There after did I know that at that time I was drunk and boasting of the superiority of my swordplay, even…even the Immortal Divine Dragon was not my match. I even said how superior is Tianshan swordplay and belittle Central Plains swordplay!”

Long Fei smiled knowingly. He had begun to like this frank young man.

“The next morning when I woke up,” He added. “I discovered that a handsome young man was looking after me. That was the Heartless Sword Old Master Gu’s descendant and also the brother of this Sister Gu, Gu Hong. He and I toured together for three days, and after many more Fragrant Bamboo Leaf (Wine that is brewed from Yellow Wine and bamboo leaves), he began to discuss his ploy

with me. That is, if we can gathered all the descendants of the enemies of Immortal Divine Dragon, to extract from the invincible number one warrior the blood debt of our forefathers!"

"At that time, I was indeed slightly shocked in my heart. Because I heard that he had already gathered all the renowned descendants of the famous heroes that was scattered in four directions. No matter how highly skilled was the Immortal Divine Dragon, the gathered strength of all the descendants of the famous heroes cannot be belittle! At that time, the words that my Father told me before he passed on, rung in my ears. "…There should be only gratuitous…" Therefore, I immediately agreed. The things that happened afterwards, Sister Gu had already told you. What Big Brother does not know is how these people managed their roles for the "Phoenix and Divine Dragon" meet in Huashan. And how they set their stratagems?"

Long Fei sighed. "Indeed, this matter confounds me. But before you tell me all these, do you mind first telling me your name!"

"Di Yang!" The young man gestured his hands to form a soaring gesture. "Fei Yang, the Yang (Soaring). This name is not well known in Pugilistic Fraternity but it was because I was acting dumb for these couple of years." And he heartily laughed for several times.

Long Fei could not help but joined him in the laugher; even Gu Yihong eyes appeared to smile as well. But Shi Chen expression remained as still water!

Guo Yuxia rolled her eyes and looked at him for awhile before smiling. "Di Yang, is a good name!"

"Sister in law, thank you!" Di Yang said. He seemed to be able to bring out the sunshine and warm no matter how sad, solemn a situation was and even in those dark, chilling places! He could make the best out of everything.

Somehow when Shi Chen looked at him, he felt angry. And turned his face away, no longer looking at him.

One must know Shi Chen character was originally a righteous person. Only "lust" figured prominently on his head and he lost his tolerance. Just now when he saw Gu Yihong reaction, he had already started to feel vexed. And now when Guo Yuxia mannerism was like that, he was overcome with jealousy in his heart yet he was unable to vent it out!

Di Yang said. "Although I may have the heart to help Old Master Long but because I have an agreement with Gu Hong and the rest, it not convenient for me to aid directly. Therefore I can only aid behind the scenes."

Long Fei nodded his head. "Just now the torches and the long rope, I have already given my silent thanks. I was wondering who was the noble man that secretly aided us. So it was from worthy brother. Now that I have witnessed the

talent of worthy brother, even if you did not forsake the agreement and not aid us anymore, I will still be very happy!"

Di Yang sighed deeply. "Ever since I have entered the Central Plains and traveled across the Pugilistic Fraternity, I have already heard of the many rumors of the Martial Fraternity on how upright and righteousness the eldest disciple of the Divine Dragon Clan, 'Iron Hero' Long Fei is. Now that I have met Big Brother, I know your fame is indeed true!"

Long Fei smiled. "Worthy Brother, heap too much praises."

Di Yang turned ashen but said calmly. "If I did not witness the actions of Big Brother secretly, I will never appear in front of Big Brother." He turned his glance at the corpse and sighed. "Although there is no long standing friendship between the two of us, but at least we know one another. Now that he had died and Big Brother still treated him with much respect and none insulting whatever so. So I thought in my heart, since Big Brother can treat the dead with so much respect, what about those alive? If I can have such righteous hero as my friend, I will not waste my trip to the Central Plains therefore I could not help but jumped down…"

Long Fei smiled and said, "I see that Brother Di you are already at the roof top. The funny thing is although we have many people here, none of us knew about it."

Guo Yuxia said, "I have long heard of Tianshan Triple Divine Sword and Seven Forms Swiftness Skill are two of Pugilist foremost skills. After witnessing your swiftness skill, I know that the sayings of the Pugilistic Fraternity are not false!" She was smiling now. It was although she had forgotten her worries!

Di Yang heartily laughed. "Triple Swordplay, Seven Forms Swiftness skill, I have only learnt some portions. But running in the winter snowstorm is good training for agility, my legs become stronger than others, how can I deserve the praise of Sister in law!"

Long Fei sighed. "Everyone knows Tianshan swiftness movement skills are the acme of the Pugilistic Fraternity. Imagine running in the treacherous paths of the high mountains in winter, that level of difficulty in training your movement skills, how will the swiftness movement skill that is developed under that condition not be stronger than others by a few notches. All the famous skills from the various Clans in Pugilistic Fraternity must have good reasons for its own uniqueness and it is not attained through luck!"

Di Yang exclaimed. "How true! Take for example Old Master Long's Divine Dragon Swordplay, didn't he undergo great tribulations and thousands of dangers before he can create it…"

Long Fei closed his eyes and sighed deeply. "Unfortunately, among all the disciples here, none of us can master his techniques…Alas. Although Fifth Brother

is born highly talented and is willing to brave hardships, but he follows Mentor Master for a short while only and seems unlikely he has managed to learn all the intrinsic formulas from Mentor Master. And although I been the longest with Mentor Master, but unfortunately I am so stupid!"

Di Yang thought it over and said. "Big Brother, the Fifth Brother you mention, is he the descendant of the Nangong Aristocracy Family whose wealth equaled a kingdom?"

Long Fei nodded. "Indeed!"

Di Yang said, "I too had heard others say that the Lord of the wealthy Nangong family had a only son who had a love for martial art skills and been under the tutelage of a great many Martial Teachers. He wasted plenty of riches just to seek a worthy Martial Teacher. A pity that none of them were the truly skilled exponents that he had sought. It was only just recently that he had joined the Divine Dragon Clan. At first I thought that it was just the son of a wealthy family that was pursuing martial art skills as a pastime therefore he joined the Divine Dragon Clan, how could he undergo the hardship to train? But from the accounts of Big Brother, it is indeed very strange!"

Long Fei said. "The Nangong Aristocracy Family and benevolent teacher have deep ties that is hard to explain in a few words."

Long Fei raised his thumb and said aloud. "But my this Fifth Brother, no ordinary disciple can compare to him. Not that I am boasting for him but he was not only highly talented, he has a natural disposition towards others as well. He was piety to his family, loyal to our Mentor Master, righteous to all his friends, cool towards lust and calm in the face of dangers. Although he is born in a wealthy family and knows how to blow and sing with a flute, plays the zither and chess, read and paint, knowledgeable in a hundred crafts but he had shown none of the obnoxious air.

Not only that, until today, there is not a day that he has neglected his training with martial arts. Ever since he has joined the Clan, he has been obedience, work hard with self-encouragement.

When he first joined the Clan, he would chop the woods, and cart the bucket of water, swept the courtyards. Those tasks that he did not have to do, he is eager to do as well. As for training in martial arts, he is a notch above the rest. When everyone is still sleeping, he will wake up early and practice swordplay. When everyone is asleep, he will still be practicing internal breathing exercises. Even when I first joined the Clan to train in martial arts, I am not as hardworking as him. Moreover his talent is twice as high as I. I dare to wager, the one that will spread the fame of Divine Dragon Clan far and wide, will surely be Fifth Brother. It will not be long before he will make a impact upon the Pugilistic Fraternity."

Although Long Fei was not good with words but he was saying it proudly from the bottom of his heart, therefore although it was such a long speech, he said it out with one breath.

Shi Chen remained unmoving while Guo Yuxia listened with a smile.

Gu Yihong was looking at the ceiling, was she listening or she in her own thoughts?

Di Yang was listening intensely till his warm blood began to stir within him. When Long Fei had finished, he was stunned and muttering. He finally sighed deeply and said. “It will not be wrong since it came from Big Brother!”

Long Fei said. “Naturally it won’t be wrong. Or else Mentor Master will not think so highly of him.”

Di Yang furrowed and asked. “Where is this Nangong big brother now?” Although he was a courtesy to everyone he come near but in actuality, he was a haughty man. Therefore after hearing how Long Fei had praised Nangong Ping, he remained unconvinced within his heart.

Long Fei sighed. “That Nangong Fifth Brother of mine suppose to be here too but…”

Long Fei explained all the reasons from the beginning to the end.

Di Yang was stunned momentarily after hearing. Suddenly he turned his body and began to walk in strides towards the entrance of the door. “Good bye everyone, I make a move first!”

Long Fei asked in puzzlement. “Brother Di, where are you going?”

Di Yang turned his head and said. “I have heard Big Brother speaking of the heroic mannerism of brother Nangong that if I do not rush down the mountain to meet him, how can I pacify my heart. I afraid I am unable to sleep at all even if I do so.”

Long Fei laughed. “Since ancient times, there always been a mutually attraction, moreover both of you are young heroes that will surely meet. But even if you to meet Fifth Brother, the days are long, there is no need for you to rush! Moreover…”

Di Yang said. “Although the days are long but I can't wait!”

Long Fei said. “Although you cannot wait but the question I asked, if you do not explain, how will I get to the bottom of this. Benevolent teacher is missing, if you do not say, Big Brother I, cannot help but worry.”

Di Yang was stunned momentarily. And lost his smiling countenance and said. “I am only thinking of meeting that Nangong big brother and forget about this whole matter.”

Long Fei thought to himself. “It seems that this person is a warm hearted man that value friends dearly. If Fifth Brother befriends him, in future, he will have

a someone to look after him."

Di Yang turned around and muttered something, seemingly considering how he will begin relating Long Fei's concern.

Long Fei said. "This matter should be long, Brother Di, you don't have to rush, just slowly…"

Before he could finished, Di Yang lifted his head and looked at the five shining peals on top of the ceiling and said. "Big Brother, from your travels in the Pugilistic Fraternity, do you know the origins of that five shining pearls?"

Long Fei was stunned and said, "I do not know…"

Di Yang said. "Years ago after the Huangshan gathering, Danfeng Ye Qiubai became renowned throughout the realm. At that time she had not come to Huashan but was staying at the foot of Huangshan in her Shi Zhu Manor."

Long Fei said. "This I am aware too!"

Di Yang said. "Then, is Big Brother aware that ten years ago in the Pugilistic Fraternity, there was a distinguished gathering hosted by Shi Zhu Manor?"

Long Fei asked. "Do you mean the gathering of the Hundred Birds Flocking to the Phoenix* that was often mentioned in Pugilist?"

* Known as the Phoenix Banquet. The Phoenix is widely regarded as head of all birds.

"Indeed!" He smiled and said. "At that time, I was still young and was beyond the frontiers. Although I have never saw this distinguished banquet with my own eyes but when I heard others mentioning about the banquet, perfumed dresses flowing long hair, unrivalled grandness. As a gesture of respect for "Danfeng", none whatever so dared to bring a weapon into the manor but left it behind outside the door of the Manor, in a room filled with five hundred over precious swords, excluding other types of weapons that was too many to count.

It was said that the beautiful wine that was drunk, if it was to pour over to Lake Taihu (Lake Taihu, located at the junction of Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces, the Yangtze River Delta in the south, is the largest lake in China's eastern coastal region, is the third largest freshwater lake in China), the waters of Lake Taihu will rise by one feet!…"

Long Fei smiled, "I was there at that time but that Hundred Birds Flocking to the Phoenix distinguished gathering, although it may not occurred ever again but it was not without precedence."

Di Yang smiled. "This naturally, I knows. Thirty years ago, people in the Pugilistic Fraternity hosts a grand congratulation ceremony at the top of Xian Xia Ling (Ancient hill in Zhejiang) in honor of Old Master Long, which glorious splendid equaled the gathering."

On Long Fei's face floated the expression of admiration as he unwittingly smiled. "That gathering had no courtyards nor halls. Everyone in the Pugilistic Fraternity brought their own wine and meat and carried their swords up the hill…"

Di Yang looked up and laughed. "Everyone brought their own wine and meat, what cavalier spirit, what an extraordinary gathering. Since ancient times after thousands and hundreds of years, I afraid there will not be a second such time anymore. The person that can think of this idea, must be a chivalrous and impressive hero character. What a pity, that I was born later and unable to participate in such a gathering."

Long Fei said. "It was hosted by thirteen of the most famous old heroes from the Seven Southern and Six Northern Regions throughout the thirteen provinces. But the main host was actually one that was so famously renowned throughout the realm. With a pair of iron fists, with a iron lance and his uncanny predictions that was always accurate with his iron mouth, whose was so famously well known throughout the two grand rivers, to the North and South of Changjiang, the Heavenly Crow Priest!"

Di Yang cried out in surprise. "The Heavenly Crow Priest! Indeed he was a chivalrous and impressive hero character!"

Long Fei continued. "That grand congratulation ceremony started on Mid-Autumn Festival and lasted all the way to the wee morning. Thousands and hundreds of pugilists drawn their swords high above and shouted loudly. "Immortal Divine Dragon, Divine Dragon that is Immortal." The rising sun reflected the light of those thousands and hundreds of swords and its light shine forth like a five colored sea of light. The ear shattering shouts had already dispersed the fog of Xian Xia Ling. Such a gathering when compared to the Phoenix Banquet, how that compare to it!"

Everyone listened intensely at this tale with stirring joy in his or her hearts especially Di Yang who seemed to be totally immersed in the exaltation of the Divine Dragon.

Long Fei broad smile disappeared and he said solemnly. "Although both gatherings were equally grand but the quality cannot be compared."

Di Yang asked. "Why?"

Long Fei said. "This grand congratulation ceremony was held for benevolent teacher heroics by the people in Pugilist. Benevolent teacher was invited to it but did not know the purpose. But that Phoenix Banquet gathering was sent alone by Danfeng Ye Qiubai to invite all the famous heroes of Pugilist and all the women pugilists. Those that turned up for the Shi Zhu Manor gathering, there were some that were unwilling to come but were not prepared to offend Danfeng Ye Qiubai. Therefore they had to come, so how could that gathering compared to the grand

congratulation ceremony at Xian Xia Ling!"

Di Yang smiled and knew that the two equally famous Clans of Phoenix and Dragon, that a line had been drawn between them, therefore Long Fei would tell him that.

Suddenly Guo Yuxia coughed a laugh and said. "What are the both of you saying earlier on?"

Long Fei was startled, and he lost his smiles. "We are originally talking about that shining pearl!"

Guo Yuxia smiled. "You both only care to keep on talking and the conversation seems to be carried away. I am waiting to hear the origin of the shining pearl and I was anxious from waiting!"

Di Yang laughed. "Sister in law please don't fault us. We will keep idle talks to the minimum and get back on track!"

Long Fei and Guo Yuxia laughed together as Di Yang copied a line from the storyteller.

Di Yang purposely coughed two times and cleared his throat, said. "Just as what Big Brother had said. The invitations that Danfeng Ye Qiubai sent out, every swordswomen, heroine, no matter whether they were willing or unwilling, all brought gifts and hurried to Shi Zhi Manor. Among the crowd, from Hengshan, under the protégé of Master Jing, were the Murong five sisters who brought those five shining pearls!"

Long Fei said. "Therefore this five luminous pearls were from the Hengshan five sisters, given to Danfeng Ye Qiubai. In another words, this bamboo hut is the dwelling place of Ye Qiubai."

Di Yang said, "Indeed."

Guo Yuxia asked questioning. "Ye Qiubai was the daughter of a wealthy family and she was very particular on her choice of food and living. How could she stay in a place like this?"

Di Yang said, "Very few people knows about this matter in Pugilistic Fraternity." He sighed. "That Danfeng Ye Qiubai and Old Master Long, used to be a couple in Pugilist…"

Suddenly Long Fei coughed two times and Di Yang changed tact and said. "Please don't be offended by little brother! I unwittingly mentioned about Old Master's past."

Guo Yuxia said, "Although benevolent teacher and Ye Qiubai had long know one another but they did not become a couple. Furthermore, ten years ago over a matter, they quarreled and refused to meet anymore. And in a surge of anger, they even made an agreement to duel ten years later using their swordmanship. Everyone in Pugilist knew about this matter. What does it matter

even if you mention it?"

Di Yang said. "That Danfeng Ye Qiubai and Old Master Long sealed a pact for the duel on swordmanship ten years later. In her haste to claim victory over Old Master Long, she began to practice a secret skill on inner strength that originated from the west in a region known as India. It was called the 'Three Treatise Divine Skill'. Rumors had it that it was a type of inner strength skill created by the Buddhist high monk Jiu Mo Luo. It was a secret technique that was considered not hereditary."

Long Fei said in a startled manner. "I have heard benevolent teacher remarking about this skill before. Rumors had it that the leader of the evil flocks, Taiyang Monk Yuan Ji had used this skill but it was lost after he had passed away. That Danfeng Ye Qiubai was not from the Monastic Order so how could she have tried to practice this Monastic secret skill?"

Di Yang said. "According to my knowledge, Danfeng Ye Qiubai accidentally obtained this secret manual. Naturally she was very happy and in her eagerness to borrow this skill to emerge victorious for the duel on swordmanship ten years later. But in her haste to master this skill and because her own inner strength and the inner strength that was needed had differences, after painstaking training for one year, she lost control and was afflicted by deviation phenomenon (In wuxia terms, it means nerve damage or seeing illusions. In modern terms, it can also mean too deeply into something)."

Long Fei turned ashen and unwittingly made a startled sound. "Ever since Danfeng Ye Qiubai distributed away the riches of Shi Zhu Manor, and give the hall of Shi Zhu Manor to Divine Nun Ru Mo. Benevolent teacher thought she had gone to a quiet place to train a secret technique. But who would expect that she would be afflicted by deviation phenomenon." He could not help but sighed for her.

Di Yang said. "After she was afflicted by deviation phenomenon, judging from her haughty persona, she would constantly think about the swordsmanship meet with Old Master Long, therefore she would feel unspeakable heart wrenching and torturous.

Just then her best friend Divine Nun Ru Mo paid her a visit at Shi Zhu Manor. Upon seeing her in pain and the decorations of her bed was scratched to shreds. Her disciple who was attending her was constantly being blamed and scolded. Therefore she urged her to find a secluded and cold high mountain and built a dwelling place that can shelter her from the wind and rain to train. Using the icy cold depths of the high mountains and the coming of the windless wind and the cold rain to insolent her body's inner demons and inner fire. Maybe after less than ten years, she would be able to regain her bodily movements and used this opportunity to train another earth shattering inner strength."

Long Fei sighed. “Therefore she stayed ten years on the peak of Huashan in this rough bamboo hut, painfully braving the wind and rain everyday, just because she wanted to prove something with Mentor Master, is it?”

The night settled in and the chilliness crepe into the bamboo hut. Although their internal strength protected them from the cold but still it was insufferable. When he thought how Danfeng Ye Qiubai had soldiered on and stayed in this bamboo hut for nearly ten years, although he was not on the best of terms with her, he unwittingly sighed for her.

Di Yang continued. “After hearing from Divine Nun Ru Mo, Ye Qiubai took a newly accepted disciple and her four maids who were always with her and reached Huashan. She would sit on this set of furniture and stay alone in this bamboo hut. Only her disciple will come everyday to accompany her for a few hours, bring some food and train some martial arts.”

Long Fei said, “Therefore, this ambush is thought by Ye Qiubai!”

Di Yang shook his head and said. “Gu Hong is bent on seeking vendetta After sending sister Gu to Zhijiao Manor, he brought us to the newly renamed “Ru Mo tranquil residence” that used to be Shi Zhu Manor to seek aid...”

Long Fei was astonished and he could not help thinking about it, interrupted. “That Divine Nun Ru Mo and benevolent teacher, do they have any animosity?”

Di Yang shook his head. “Although that Divine Nun Ru Mo has no animosity with Old Master Long but she has a deep connection with Kunlun disciple 'Cloud Breaker Hand', Zhuo Bufan.”

Long Fei muttered. “This is also strange as well...”

Di Yang interrupted. “Does Big Brother know the origin of Divine Nun Ru Mo?”

Long Fei replied. “I do not know!”

Di Yang explained. “Big Brother, have you ever heard from others, that tens of decades ago, there was a ‘Agile Hand’ Li Ping a swordswoman from the Kunlun Clan?”

Guo Yuxia smiled and said. “I have heard of this name before. Big Brother, do you still remembered when Mentor Master mentioned ‘Peacock Concubine’ Mei Yinxue, he had also mentioned that thirty years ago, there was a ‘Agile Hand’ Li Ping who was even more vicious in her persona and actions than even the famous ‘Cold blood Concubine’. But after she created a storm in Pugilist, she suddenly disappeared!”

Di Yang smiled and said. “The people in Pugilist will never expect ‘Agile Hand’ Li Ping who was as beautiful as a flower, whose heart was as cold as steel, would suddenly become a nun and become the famous Divine Nun Ru Mo in Pugilist. It was because her enemies were pursuing her. Therefore she disappeared

from the Martial Fraternity. But after reaching middle age, she felt regretful and shaved her hair and entered the Monastic Order. After she became a nun, she grew even more regretful and felt that the past was like a dream, a smoke. So she took the name of 'Ru Mo'."

Long Fei sighed. "To be able to put aside all thoughts of vengeance and turned over a new leaf. This Divine Nun Ru Mo is indeed a wise person. But a pity, in this world, some people even when they did the wrong things, persistence in their evil ways. Man is no saint, as long as one have the heart to turn over a new leaf, how could anyone not forgive her!"

Shi Chen was startled and turned his body around..

Guo Yuxia rolls her eyes and thought. "Is he talking about me?" But she smiled sweetly and said. "That is to say, that Divine Nun Ru Mo and 'Cloud Breaker Hand' are from the same Clan…"

Di Yang nodded and said. "Therefore Divine Nun Ru Mo suggested that 'Cloud Breaker Hand' and us to go Huashan and seek Danfeng Ye Qiubai. At that time, Ye Qiubai were filled with anguish. When she heard our intentions, without saying a word, she waved her hand to strike at Gong Hong and Zhuo Bufan! Alas! Although this renowned old senior was afflicted by deviation phenomenon and her body could not move, but her extended palm was shocking. I was standing far away behind and only saw her extended palm gently lifting up, there were two ripples of palm force that rippled out towards Gu Hong and Zhuo Bufan."

He sighed again and again before saying. "Before the palm force had landed, Gu Hong had evaded it. As for Zhuo Bufan he did not try to move but directly accepted her direct attack. I heard a 'Peng' sound like thunder. I saw Zhuo Bufan standing rigid and was startled that his internal strength could handle Ye Qiubai's direct attack. But before I was able to finish my thoughts, Zhuo Bufan collapsed with a 'Pong' sound on the ground."

Long Fei said. "That Zhuo Bufan is indeed a real man."

Guo Yuxia smiled. "It seemed that young master Gu was smarter than him."

Gu Yihong blushed upon hearing.

Di Yang said. "Although Zhuo Bufan had managed to fend off Ye Qiubai's one palm attack, but had already expended all his strength in his whole body, therefore he was unable to stand. Siting on the ground, he began to scold Ye Qiubai. "Even though you don't agree but you do not have to attack us juniors. We have after all a common enemy, and on the recommendation of the Divine Nun Ru Mo."

He began to scold for some time, although his meaning is about the same as this but it was very vulgar. When he had scolded halfway, we began to be on our guard in case Ye Qiubai suddenly attack. But who will to expect that after he had

finished scolding, Ye Qiubai would suddenly sigh deeply and said. “Just on base on the standard of everyone’s martial skills, how could you be the match for Long Bushi.”

She just waved her hand, closed her eyes and no longer looked at us. Therefore Gu Hong who was standing besides her began to say. “We are not looking for Long Bushi to compare martial skills but seeking revenge on him. We only seek to accomplish our goals, by hook or my crook. Although our martial skill standards by comparison are poor but our chances of success rate are high indeed.” He did not wait to see whether Ye Qiubai was listening, and began to pour forth our plans to her. He even told her that in Zhijiao Manor, there was already a spy planted, not only would they know the every moves of the Immortal Divine Dragon but also his newly created martial skills.”

Di Yang smiled and added. “Our this Gu brother, although I never know the extend of his martial skills but he is really very good with his mouth and Ye Qiubai slowly opened her eyes and her eyes had a strange glow. Looking from the sides, I knew the matter was a success!”

Long Fei was surprised. “Ye Qiubai had always been lonely and likes to do things alone. She always wanted to be strong. This is so out of her characteristics, alas...I will never think she will try to use unscrupulous methods to obtain her objection.”

Di Yang said. “Although it is the case but Ye Qiubai was forced to sit and mediate, suffered the torture of the cold and the wind. Moreover the ten years of swordsmanship was approaching and her body shown no signs of recovery…alas! That time within her, naturally she would behave out of norm and actually accepted Gu Hong suggestion.”

Long Fei asked solemnly. “What suggestion?”

Di Yang replied. “We stayed on Huashan for five years. During those five years, we take turn going down the mountain and to update ourselves with news and the martial skills development of Old Master Long. At the same time we trained our martial skills on the mountain…alas! I did not expect that the enmities between Gu Hong and Old Master Long would be so deep. It seemed that his entire existence in life was just for vengeance. Would he not feel torturous to be in Huashan all year round, braving the loneliness and cold for his age and characteristics?”

“Fame, repute, wealth, joy, glory…” Di Yang sighed. “These are the dreams of every young man but he did not even think about these. I am startled because with his charisma, whatever else if he pursued would definitely be obtainable.”

Gu Yihong unwittingly melancholy sighed and softly said. “If you but will to imagine growing up in my brother’s environment…” But she did not finish the

words she was thinking in her heart.

How could anyone not understand her meaning?

Di Yang was silence for awhile before continuing. “Five years of extreme loneliness, torture yet filled with hope finally passed. They finally thought of a plan that was fail-safe and the chance of it being exposed was the smallest yet the chance of it failing will be the minimum.”

Finally he had reached the most important aspect!

“This plan if I will do say it in detail, will be divided into six parts. Firstly, use the news of the death of Danfeng Ye Qiubai to disrupt Old Master Long’s concentration and to weaken his defenses. Everyone knows of the past between Old Master Long and Ye Qiubai. If Ye Qiubai were to die, Old Master Long upon receiving the news will more or less be affected and be upset. And also when he knew that his one and only opponent had already died, his defenses and mental state will be loosen and will belittle his enemies.”

Long Fei sighed. “And the second?”

Di Yang said. “Secondly, instruct the disciple of Ye Qiubai to use a haughty and cold language to revoke Old Master Long’s rage. Judging by his temper, naturally he will be affected by this taunting tactic. Therefore that Ye Manqing will propose that Old Master Long reduces his internal force. Once Old Master Long has agreed, the plan will thereby succeeded by half.”

Gu Yuxia melancholy sighed. “At that time, I already knew that something is amiss. Therefore urge Mentor Master not to fall into the ruse but unexpected…alas! Fifth Brother…”

Long Fei said. “Even if Fifth Brother did not do it, I will still do it. How can a real man behaved like a woman. Even if I know someone wants to lie to me, I will still try and definitely refuse to swallow that bitter pill. Even if I am silly for once but I am not the one that is wrong. So therefore you can see, who can bluff me twice thereafter.”

Di Yang raised his mother thumb up and said. “What a real man! The heroism of Divine Dragon Clan is well known throughout Pugilist. It is indeed incomparable.”

Guo Yuxia lowered her eyes and softly said. “And thirdly?”

“Thirdly...” Di Yang said. “After reducing Old Master Long internal force, will be to weaken his surrounding strength and separate him from all of you…”

Long Fei glanced at Guo Yuxia and sighed. “Just as she expected.”

Di Yang said. “If the first three parts of the plan succeed, it doesn’t really matter if the next three parts are to success or fail, for he will be in a very precarious position.

I supposed to be in the middle to aid the plan but when I saw that Ye

Manqing was taking Old Master Long alone up here, I thought to myself if this is not the time to repay Old Master Long gratitude, then when will it be!" Therefore I made up my mind to finish Ye Manqing and to tell Old Master Long the truth."

Long Fei bowed his head. "Just basing on this good intention from brother, is enough for me to give this respect!"

Guo Yuxia rolled her eyes and said. "And Sister in law, this respect as well!"

Di Yang moved back many times and bowed in return. "Big Brother, your this respect should be shown to Maiden Ye Manqing rightfully!"

Long asked in puzzlement. "How do you explain this line?"

Di Yang said. "At that time I had that intention in mind. But when Maiden Ye saw me, without saying a word, she began to attack me with her sword. Her sword was fast, vicious, accurate and steady. It was as though she could not wait to pierce me with her sword. It took me all my efforts just to dodge. My heart was panicky at that time and thought that girl had the ability to foreseen the future. Did she saw my intentions therefore she wanted to kill me first?"

He smiled. "My heart was agitated while she remained as calm as still water. Seemed that she treated me as though I am her greatest enemy, left side one sword, right side another sword and dancing her piercing thrusts non stop. All her sword strokes were extremely vicious. My martial skills could not win her in short notice and I was afraid that some others would come to aid. Therefore as I fought her, at the same time I shouted to Old Master Long and reveal their plans. But who would to expect that after I had shouted, Ye Manqing actually stopped."

Long Fei took a deep breath. "Could it be that Maiden Ye is also intending to help Mentor Master?"

Di Yang nodded. "Indeed. Because that Maiden Ye's forebears was once indebted to Old Master Long. Moreover regarding this cunning ploy, she is extremely against it. Although she did not have any plans but along the way, after listening to Old Master Long and saw his persona, she decided to aid Old Master Long away from the ploy even if it mean she has to betray her Teacher."

Long Fei made a sound of lament before saying. "It really true for the saying that help is all around us. At first I really could not tell that Maiden Ye is such a righteousness woman."

Di Yang smiled. "Old Master Long was the most startled. He was a frank man, how would he suspect that there would be ploys? Therefore we invited him to a dwelling place where we normally residence on the mountain and told him the entire matter."

But his smile soon ceased and gave way to a deep sigh. "But who will to expect that soon after he heard us, he asked for paper and brush to write some

letters. He looked very peaceful within for we were looking at the side and his writings did not appear to be hasty. We were even more afraid than he was.

After he had finished, he folded the letters up and passed to Ye Manqing and instructed her to pass to all of you. And said to me. “Lead me!” Ye Manqing and I were too startled and asked him where he wanted to go?

He laughed aloud upon seeing our expressions and laughing said. “Even if it a dragon territory or a tiger den, I will still want to go. Having lived till today, I have already see beyond life and death. Only gratuitous and vengeance are more important to me. That is because I do not want to bring those unfinished gratuitous and vengeance to the grave. And in front of me ‘Immortal Divine Dragon’, was a fitting place for me to finish all the gratuitous and vengeance, why shall I not go!”

Di Yang at this moment when reciting ‘Immortal Divine Dragon’ Long Bushi words, happened to mimic some of his heroic spirit.

Therefore Long Fei felt his warm blood arousing and said aloud. “And then?”

Di Yang replied. “Suddenly there was a cracking sound that echoed loud by Old Master Long’s bones as he continuing laughing. It seemed like the tall imposing figure of his, became even more imposing. I did not dare to look into his eyes but was looking down. But I could tell that in his laughter, he had freed himself of all the sealed accupoints and regained his original internal power…Alas! I am really deeply impressed by his martial skills and heroics!

Since everyone in the bamboo hut were mostly the disciples of ‘Immortal Divine Dragon’ and after hearing those words from Di Yang, a sense of heroic spirit began to stir within the hearts of everyone. It caused this chilling cold bamboo hut to generate some warmth.

Di Yang looked down and said. “Ye Manqing and I after witnessing Old Master Long this magnificent display of heroics, none of us dare to persuade him anymore. When we walked out of the dwelling place and reached the crossroads of the mountains, I could not controlled my tears anymore. Maiden Ye had been in tears long before I even shed. Only Old Master Long was expressionless as though he had never put life and death into his thoughts.”

“At the mouth of the crossroad,” Di Yang could not help but sighed. “Old Master Long placed his precious sword into the hands of Maiden Ye and asked her to bring it down the mountain. But Maiden Ye was too startled and stood there unmoving. Although usually I am full of words to say but under that situation, there was none.”

Long Fei sighed. “At first I thought of that Maiden Ye as a heartless and cold maiden.”

Di Yang said. “Although we did not say anything but in our hearts, we are

most unwilling to let Old Master Long braved the dangers alone. Although his martial skills are invincible but there are still a few more cunning stratagems ahead that are set to snare Old Master Long frank and heroics persona. After a long time, Maiden Ye finally slowly turned her body and Old Master long seemed to flow forth a unspeakable sadness, looking idiocy at her back view…"

"Under the celestial lights, I could clearly see his scars and wrinkles. I knew in my heart that each scar and wrinkle carried his past and his fulfilling life. And I saw too a tinge of sadness in his eyes and unconsciously, I suddenly thought of the plains over Tianshan, and the setting sun over the plains. But my vision came to the part when the darkness overtook the plains, it became to dark and quiet…I really could not resist but to knee before Old Master Long!"

Di Yang said aloud. "At that time, I only saw the glance of Old Master Long that looked like the bright stars of the night that shone deep into my heart. He looked at me questioning for a while before he said aloud. 'Once a man is born, as long as his heart is without guilt, able to end all gratuitous and vengeance, how it doesn't matter if one is to die? Your father has warrior spirit that is passed throughout the generations, you are born in a Martial Aristocracy Family, why learn all the hesitation mannerism of little girls.' Upon finishing, he gently stomped his foot and his tall imposing figure was like a cloud that fluttered away and disappeared into the darkness."

Di Yang was silence for a while before he added. "When I lifted my head, I saw on the ground was a deep footprint. I looked in idiocy at the footprint and my heart was really confused as I recalled all his teachings echoing in my ears…"

Long Fei sighed deeply. "That footprint was what we saw earlier..."

Guo Yuxia melancholy sighed. "But we nevertheless failed to guess for what reason caused that footprint to be left behind…"

Di Yang bright eyes too became empty and deep. He said. "There are many things in the world, even if the most brilliant of all, is unable to guess…"

He looked up and added. "For example, even now, I cannot know what happens to Old Master Long up the mountains and where is he now at this very moment!"

Long Fei was startled. "You do not know?"

"I do not know!" Di Yang shook his head. "After he had left, I thought it over for some time before I decided to go down the mountain to look for all of you. But all of you had already moved up the mountain so I started to follow and listen to your theories and guesses…"

He smiled. "Later, when I heard that you all need a torch, so I went to my dwelling place to retrieve some torches and rope. Later I lit the torches in the route in front of you and from the small road, I lowered the long rope. As for what

happened in this bamboo hut, I am the same as all of you, clueless."

Long Fei and Gu Yihong was thinking in their heart. "What actually happens here? And where did Mentor Master go? What sort of outcome will it be?"

But Shi Chen and Guo Yuxia were thinking inside their heart. "Since this Di Yang was already up here, would he not already have saw our actions."

Shi Chen became even more guilty and thought. "No wonder he was rude to me, that is because he had already saw what happened earlier!" He did not consider that it was he who was rude first.

He looked at Di Yang coldly and asked seriously. "What you have just said, is it real?"

Di Yang was startled and Long Fei interrupted. "Third Brother, don't be rude!"

Shi Chen kept quiet as his heart sunk.

Guo Yuxia softly said. "Brother Di, what happened in this bamboo hut, you have witnessed it. Why did you say you did not witness?"

Di Yang suddenly laughed hilariously. "Good, good. I have good intentions but it turned into deceiving all of you." He was shaking with anger in his words and about to storm off when Long Fei blocked him.

Guo Yuxia looking composed gently laughed. "Brother Di, if I have said anything wrong, do not fault me but…"

She smiled awhile before adding. "Since you already been here and along the way we wasted quite some time with the pictures that were engraved on the three rocks…Moreover, when you first entered this bamboo hut, you were not the least startled. Why is that so?"

Shi Chen asked as well. "Why is that so?"

Long Fei looked perplexed as well and saw that Di Yang had closed his eyes. He could help but wondered. "What is the reason?"

Guo Yuxia added. "The first three traps that you all set, you have already told me. As for the next three traps, even if you don't say, I know it as well. Firstly, your friends engraved some words on the side of the mountain to incite Mentor Master to climb up even if it dangerous so that even before he could fight, his strength would be spent. In fact, they would even make a wistful hope that he would not be able to maintain his inner strength and fell. They would not need even to move their fingers."

Until now, Di Yang did not open his eyes. Therefore Guo Yuxia continued. "Secondly, for many years now, your friends had already learnt from the mouth of Fourth Sister, the extend of Mentor Master's martial skills. Therefore through the efforts of several people, created three stances and engraved it onto the rock. Theoretically, it may be workable but in actual fight, it may not be really

practicable to use it. Therefore they could use it as an opportunity to deal a blow to Mentor Master and cause him to feel frustrated even before he had the chance to confront Ye Qiubai."

"The third stroke of the stance could even be unattainable. Or should I say unattainable by anyone. Mentor Master is a prominent figure, how can he not see through it. Therefore in a fit of rage, he smashed that rock with his hand."

"Thirdly," She paused to catch her breath before saying. "Three choices of route, four heavy doors. That was the way for your friends to test Mentor Master's martial skills…There is more one thing which profound me. Since that Danfeng Ye Qiubai had already been afflicted by deviation phenomenon, then where is she now at this moment?" As she initially had the intention to malice Di Yang, therefore she immediately cast him in a suspicious light.

Long Fei took a few glances at Di Yang, he could not help but wondered in doubt.

Di Yang opened his eyes and added. "Sister in law, you are really intelligence. These three things, you have all guessed correctly! But his speech was still as calm as ever.

Guo Yuxia smiled as Di Yang said. "That right. The stances and strokes that were engraved on the three rocks, theoretically can be achieved but in practically, it is impossible!"

The side of his mouth seemed to be smiling as he said. "I have heard every single words that you discussed by the three rocks. But a pity, at that time Sister in law, in your heart, you were thinking of too many things therefore you did not notice that above the rock, there is a person hiding!"

Guo Yuxia was startled.

Long Fei sighed deeply. "Brother Di, there are too many things that happened therefore our hearts and thoughts are all in confusion. If Sister in law has offended you…Haiz, haiz, you…"

Di Yang laughed it off and said. "This can't blamed upon Sister in law. If it were I instead, I would feel doubtful too. Although I reached this bamboo hut a little earlier than you but what concurred in this place, had already passed. What Sister in law is wondering, I am wondering in my heart as well…Ye Qiubai, Gu Hong, Zhuo Bufan and Old Master Long, their whereabouts have now become a mystery…"

His eyes looked on the ground. "The floor have three traces of blood," He blended down and turned the body over a few times. "But only this corpse shown no blood traces. So how did he died?"

Although this question was very obvious but before he pointed out, no one else had noticed. Everyone looked at the corpse now and observed that his face

was twisted and he died because he was greatly startled by something. Or was he attacked by a form of soft stance inner martial skill, that destroyed his veins and died?"

Long Fei sighed deeply. "All these had become a mystery. But I hope that Brother Di will join hands with us to investigate the mystery…"

Di Yang smiled coldly, his hands carried the corpse and said with his head lowered. "All these mysteries will be revealed one day. By then everyone will know that what I say earlier is the true!"

He lifted his head to glance at Long once and said in a clear voice. "Big Brother take good care of yourself." And he flashed outside the door.

Long Fei was stunned and shouted after him. "Brother Di…Di Yang…wait!" But this Tianshan Sword Clan only descendant, had an astonishing swiftness movement skill. Even though he was carrying a body in his hands but in an instant, he had all but disappeared!

Long Fei was left looking idiocy at the door for awhile as he eyed the darkness. He sighed deeply in his heart, turned back and muttered. "He is really a worthy man…!"

Guo Yuxia rolled her eyes and softly said. "From what I can tell, this man has something up his sleeves! He…"

Long Fei suddenly shouted. "Shut up!"

Guo Yuxia was startled as Long Fei continued to add. "If it is not for your finger guessing, I will not offend such a good man. Have you already forgot what Mentor Master usually have been teaching us? Use honesty to treat people, suppress all anger. Now look what we done. Will anyone in Pugilist still befriend Zhijiao Manor. Does it mean the end of Zhijiao Manor because of what you have done!"

He was usually a lenient man to others. Therefore when Shi Chen and Gu Yihong saw him now in real rage, they did not dare to say anything now!

Guo Yuxia was startled momentarily before she covered her hands with her face and stormed out of the bamboo hut.

Shi Chen and Gu Yihong were startled as well and together they shouted after her. "Sister in law!"

Long Fei countenance changed and he looked with open eyes. How could he not feel startled within after he saw his doted companion of many years stormed out in a fit of anger?

When Shi Chen reached the door, he felt like going after Guo Yuxia. All of a sudden he halted his steps as though he seemed to remember that he was not the person that supposed to go after her.

Gu Yihong softly said. "Big Brother, you should be the one soothing her…"

Long Fei lowered his head. “I was too bash in my words!” He looked at Shi Chen and sighed deeply. “It is better if Third Brother will to sooth her instead!”

Even before he had finished, Shi Chen had rushed out.

After being silence for quite some time, Long Fei sighed deeply. “Indeed, I was too harsh on her. Actually, what she did is for the concerns of everyone…”

He did not try to fault others and fault himself first. When Gu Yihong looked into his eyes, she felt a sense of pity for him. After what happened, she could no longer remained in the Divine Dragon Clan but somehow, she could not bear to say out the word “leaving”!

Therefore she could change tact and say. “Big Brother” She softly said. “Do we remain here or do we go down the mountain?”

Long Fei muttered as he looked down. “Down the mountain!” He sighed deeply. “Anyway your Sister in law has no reason not to go back Zhijiao Manor and…Fifth Brother is very likely to be waiting for us down the mountain. Haiz…What concurred today is indeed very weird and mysterious. What for did that priest steal the coffin? This matter and the other matters are the same, it really stumbles the mind. Maybe…” He smiled. “Maybe I am too a little too stupid.”

Gu Yihong sighed in her heart. “Is he really too stupid?” She could not answer therefore she did not reply.

“All these mysteries, there will be a day when it will be revealed…” Long Fei muttered as he eyed the door outside to see a column of misty fog rolling over. Therefore he sighed deeply at the sight. “But no matter what…” he muttered. “This very day is finally done!”

No one can catch the passing of time and no one can retain time either. But I could tell you this, even before this fog had rose, the night was already very late. Under the starry nights at the Huashan mountain range, under the flurrying of the leaves…

Nangong Ping and Mei Yinxue continued to stare at one another. After what seems to be a long time, none of them even flinched.

Between the two of them, no one really knows who was the victor. Finally, Mei Yinxue motionless body began to move. She gently brushed her fluttering long hair to a side and said. “Do you really want to wait for them?”

Nangong Ping without any hesitation replied loud and clear. “Naturally!”

He did not know that when a woman was arranging her hair, her heart was feeling confused too. He only knew that it was what he should do, therefore he replied without hesitation.

Mei Yinxue melancholy sighed. “As you wish!” And danced away with the

fluttering of her dresses. But suddenly she turned back her head and stoically added a few words. “But only this once!”

Under the starry nights, Mei Yinxue sat onto a tree branch while Nangong stood motionless besides the coffin…His heart was in a state of confusion!

Then he walked to and stopped in front of Mei Yinxue. “Let me ask you…”This four words when he first said it out, was loud and clear but the next few lines, he could not continued.

Mei Yinxue rolled her eyes and asked. “What do you want to ask?”

Nangong Ping was startled but he added. “When I first opened that coffin, why was it empty?"

Mei Yinxue gently laughed. “This coffin have another compartment beneath, cant you tell?”

Nangong Ping made a sound of acknowledgement and about to leave when Mei Yinxue tried to contain her laughter and said. “I afraid that what you want to ask me, is not this right!”

Nangong Ping was started and turned back. Both their eyes locking before Nangong Ping lowered his head and said. “That is right!”

Mei Yinxue asked. “Then what is your original question?”

Nangong Ping replied. “But now, I don’t feel like asking anymore!” And walked away.

Mei Yinxue was startled as well. Suddenly she melancholy sighed and said. “Earlier, if I did not borrow the reflection of the Moon to graze at the running stream, I would really think I am old now!”

Nangong Ping turned his head and asked. “What are you saying?”

Mei Yinxue brushed her long hair to the sides of both her shoulders. Under the moonlight, her pale and pure glamorous face indeed displayed her peerless beauty.

Under the background of the tree and the starlight, her eyelids and her beautiful eyes that seemingly reached out to the hearts of others looked at Nangong Ping but although he had turned his head but he was not looking at her. Therefore she unwittingly softly sighed a few times and said. “Ever since I started to roam the Pugilist realm when I was fourteen, anyone that have seen me, no one have treated me the same way as you have treated me…”

Nangong Ping coldly hummed, and reached to feel the patterns of the purple coffin. If he had but opened the coffin lid now, there would be fewer stories to tell in Pugilist. But he was only gently feeling the designs of the coffin and had no intention to open it.

“I have seen many extraordinary youths,” Mei Yinxue was still brushing her long hair that was like the cloud, “I have also seen a lot of extraordinary

established heroes. Till now, I still remember very clearly the pitiful and laughable eyes that they have when they looked upon me…"

There was a tinge of reflection in Nangong Ping's eyes and he shot it towards her as he coldly said. "It is best that you keep all these proud histories of yours in your heart."

Mei Yinxue said. "Erm...Umm umm?..." She smiled. "If you don't want to listen to me, you can walk far away!"

Nangong Ping in a show of frustration slammed his hand onto the coffin and sent the coffin vibrating for awhile. There seemed to be a sound coming from within the coffin but because he was feeling vexed, he did not heard.

"Everywhere I go, I was flattered. Everywhere was those pitiful and laughable faces…" At last she said. "After ten years had seemingly passed. During those ten years, indeed there were many egoistic and stupid men that would bleed for me, involved in duels just for me. It was all because I had looked at him once or I had once smiled at him. Therefore in Pugilist, there were people that started to scold me, scolding me that my blood was cold. But...They did it out of their own free will, how could they blame onto me? Hello...Do you agree?"

Nangong Ping just hummed. Mei Yinxue gave a captivating laugh. The more frustrated Nangong Ping became, the happier she felt.

"Ten years ago, I finally met a very special man." She softly sighed and added. "When others looked at me lustfully, he did not. When others stick to me like flies, he did not. When others are either scolding me, or boringly flattering me, he only talked to me when it is appropriate. You could even say he was beginning to understand me. Moreover he is dash and charming, had an extraordinary manners, excellent in martial arts, came from a prominent Clan and added to that he was also capable in chess, music, calligraphy, painting as well as in dance and song. Sometimes he could even recite a few poems. His repute in the Pugilistic Fraternity was prominent too, often mediating and resolving the disputes of others, as well as doing righteousness things. Therefore slowly, I befriended him!"

What she had said, were all praises for that man. It sent Nangong Ping's heart pacing as he thought. "Such an extraordinary man, if I have the chance to know him, I will surely befriend him as well."

Therefore he unwittingly interrupted. "Who is this man, is his heroic presence still in the Pugilistic Fraternity?"

Mei Yinxue said, "You do know this man." As she gave a most loving and captivating laugh at him. "But a pity he would never appear in the mortal realm ever again…"

Nangong Ping sighed with regret in his heart only to hear Mei Yinxue ceased her smiles and coldly added. "Because this man had already died under

your sword!"

Nangong Ping was stunned as though some one had struck him hard onto his chest. He asked. "What did you…you say?"

Mei Yinxue appeared not to hear him and went on saying. "Although he may look like a good man from the outside. But in fact, hum hum! One day during a big snowstorm, I alongside with him and also another friend of his, also a prominent figure in the Pugilistic Fraternity was using his place for drinking wine and the enjoyment of the snow. But when I drank halfway, I began to feel that something was not quite right with the taste of the wine. So were their expressions. Therefore I pretended to be drunk, only to heard his friend patting him and said. 'Fallen, fallen.' And added. 'After you have ridden this base mare, do not forget my contributions!' I had heard it very carefully therefore I temporary remained immobilized and checked out what they were trying to up to!"

This story obviously had caught the attention of Nangong Ping for he was no longer interrupting her.

Mei Yinxue continued. "This man with a beastly heart could even laughed and carried me onto the bed. Just when he was about to undress me, I simply could not tolerate any longer and jumped out of the bed and struck him directly at the front with a palm. This hypocrite although he was bad but his martial arts were not weak. But he ran out of the room through a window. Truth to tell, at that time I had already drank quite a few of the drugged wine so I felt very tired. Therefore that one attack did not seem to injure him but I was unable to chase after him! After awhile," She looked at her hands, her glances filled with anguish and malicious, and said. "I forced the drug out with my inner strength but I could not contain the vehement in my heart so I ran out and stabbed that despicable friend of his with seven strokes, every sword landed on his vulnerable points!"

Nangong Ping felt a chill in his head as he commented. "How vicious!"

Mei Yinxue coldly laughed awhile before saying. "If I have been less experience in Pugilist, I would have let them violate my body. Then who in Pugilist would believe my words, I afraid they would only think I am the one seducing them. Once it happened who would be the one that was 'how vicious'?"

Nangong Ping was startled and lowered his head, speechless. But in his heart, he was secretly sighing.

"The next morning, I announced to the whole world, if I ever seen that man face again, I would gouge out his eyes, cut off his ears, and sliced him piece by piece until he slowly died. The people in Pugilist did not know the reason and spread all kinds of rumors…" She laughed but it seemed like intense mourning. "Naturally, these rumors were created to hurt me!"

For no reason, Nangong Ping felt vexed and he angrily said. "Who is this

man?"

Mei Yinxue coldly laughed. "He was naturally a very prominent and famous in Pugilist. Every one nicked him as Gentleman Swordsman…" She muttered it off with two sounds of laughter.

Nangong had a sudden inspiration in his head and he queried. "He…he…ain't…"

Mei Yinxue coldly said. "Indeed he is that Danfeng Ye Qiubai cousin!"

Nangong Ping stumbled and sat onto the coffin in shock!

Mei Yinxue said. "I did not participate in Ye Qiubai's Phoenix Banquet gathering and I shamefully sent out a similar invitation, everyone in Pugilist already saw it as being unprincipled and unrighteous. Now I want to kill Danfeng Ye Qiubai cousin, it became a pandemonium. Not to mention others, the Immortal Divine Dragon would be the first one that would not allowed it to happen. People in Pugilist tended to ingratiate themselves on others, to fawn or to follow a trend easily, who would care to separate the black from the white? Of course, they would all believe in the upright hero of that Gentleman Swordsman and who would believe the words of a woman heretic, a demoness? Moreover I had already killed the only witness. Therefore the Immortal Divine Dragon issued the Divine Dragon Challenge to me and asked me to go to the nine peaks of Huashan to pay for my life!"

Her speech was turning more aroused and high pitch while Nangong Ping head bowed even lower. Only to hear her added. "Therefore I go. At that time, I was only twenty plus, and feeling high spirited, lofty and sure of the invincibility of my martial skills. Even if it were Pugilist number one warrior Immortal Divine Dragon, in my eyes he meant nothing. When I reached Huashan, I suggested four types of challenge to Long Bushi. He did not even think twice and immediately agreed. You must know that at that time, my martial skills had not met any match yet. Even a top exponent like Gentleman Swordsman who saw me, had to turn his back against the wind and ran. When the Immortal Divine Dragon agreed so fast to my method of challenge, I felt so delightful within my heart."

"But who would expect," She softly sighed and continued. "The first contest on swiftness skill, I lost and I lost very badly. Therefore for the second contest, I thought very carefully and challenged him on the softer aspects of martial skills. As he was tall and powerful, I thought that it could not be his strength but…I lost again! Therefore when the third round of challenge on secret projectiles, I had grew impatience and while he was unprepared, I secretly launched the attacks on him but who would know that his whole body seemed to have eyes and back stabbing proved to be futile too!"

From the praises of the enemy, really was the most precious gift ever.

Nangong Ping secretly sighed and thought. “Mentor Master's reputation in life is not in vain!”

“When the forth round on swordplay began, the Immortal Divine Dragon was by now in a rage and told me he would definitely not let me off for I had secretly attacked him! Therefore he trusted the words of that Gentleman Swordsman even more and thought that I was but a woman who was not only a whore and evil as well!

Nangong Ping flashed back to the words of the priest that scolded her exactly the same, and also remembered…

Mei Yinxue sighed and said. “Even though that was the case, he still accede three strokes to me and let me had the first opportunity to attack. After I had attacked, he retaliated and in just seven strokes…” She looked up to the sky and continued. “In just seven strokes, he had loosened the sword in my hand and forced me under a ancient pine tree. He pierced me squarely in my front…I could only seen a flash of light darting in my eyes. Therefore I closed my eyes so that I would peacefully await death!” She closed her eyes and sighed softly. “But I waited for quite some time and could only sense the reeking sound of the wind passing through but there was no other activities. I opened my eyes and saw that the sword of the Immortal Divine Dragon had pierced through the Pine tree behind me much like going through tofu and not a single sound was made.”

She opened her eyes and rolled her eyes, added. “That time I was so startled and heard Immortal Divine Dragon exclaiming to me solemnly, ‘I use a sword to defeat you, the people in Pugilist will definitely say I bully you and you may be a sore loser!’ He clapped his hands and took five steps back and added. ‘If you with a sword can win my bare hands by half a stroke, I will let you go down the peak alive!’

That time concerned my life and death so I cast aside everything. Even before he had finished speaking, I had thrown myself forward. As I was fighting for my life, so all my stances were close melee. Because I knew the depth of his martial skills therefore I would only hope to die along with him, there was not a hope of even winning him. You must know, I was not trying to purposely trying to deny anything but because I was in an inferior position against the strong. I could only use this method.”

Nangong Ping could not nod nor could he shook his head and could only listened in silence as she continued. “But after twenty strokes had passed, my breathing was no longer in a continuous flow. At the same time, he used a common stance in the Pugilist that was often seen, ‘Cloud Dragon extending its Claw’ and attacked me in the front. I saw that the left side of his lower body had a big gap, therefore I was delighted in my heart and immediately dodged my body using a

feint movement, attacked with a stroke nicked 'Peacock Picking Feather' and thrust a sword to his left body."

And she demonstrated the Peacock Picking Feather stance with her hand gestures. Nangong Ping secretly praised it in his heart, for this stroke of hers looked nimble, and the placement mystified, although it looked ordinary but in fact was an extraordinary superior stroke.

She added. "This one stroke from the Peacock Picking Feather is the most vicious among the one thousand seven hundred and forty two stances of my Peacock Swordplay. This sword does not seek self-preservation but only to wound the enemy. From that one stroke, several strokes can be evolved from it as well, one of them is a stroke that seeks to die together along with him. But when I had thrust out my sword, my vision became blur and he clapped his hands together and caught hold of my sword and attacked above my waist. I could only feel a burning sensation arising above my waist and it enveloped my entire body. A most uncomfortable feeling started to overwhelm me and my whole body seemed like floating and flying, then...I crumbled onto the ground without any strength!"

Nangong Ping felt a chill in his head and thought. "Mentor Master must have hated her intensely at that time therefore he would use 'The Seven Diaspora of the Divine Dragon' to disperse all her internal force in her body."

Mei Yinxue sighed sorrowfully and said. "What so mystified about that one stroke, I thought for over ten years in the coffin and is still unable to penetrate through how it works. At that time, I could only feel that stroke, he could steal my sword, wound me and was so natural, that irresistible but at the same time I could not find anything extraordinary about it. It is precisely that I cannot find anything special about it that I did not know where should I resist it…haiz! I can only say this stroke is simply too unexplainable, totally cannot be described."

Nangong Ping secretly smiled and pondered. "This one stroke contained the epitome of Mentor Master martial art essences. Using the intricate part of 'Void', 'Flexibility', of course you are unable to discover it!"

'Stick', 'Fit', 'Compel', 'Slice', 'Incite', 'Pierce', 'Contain'…etc, were although inseparatable from martial arts but they were after all the lower level of the arts only. 'Void', 'Flexibility' was the superior level of the epitome of martial arts. To be able to use them together and on a single stroke and caused others to feel so unfathomable and unable to describe it was akin to the Buddhist saying. 'Everything is formless.'

Mei Yinxue once again sighed to herself and said. "The cultivation that I had, the sweat and blood that I had expended, the painstaking training that I had to build up my martial art, at that instant, was destroyed lightly by him. At that time, my heart was really feeling startled, angry, frightened, scared and at the same time

sorrowful and upset. It really felt ten times more painful than just killing me with just a sword.

Therefore I cried and scolded aloud the Immortal Divine Dragon as vicious and hurtfully told him what had happened. I scolded aloud. “Is it really my wrong? What right do you have, that you can treat me like this, you hold yourself as self-righteous so why did you not investigate the matter, why did you have to cover such a shameful despicable fellow and bully a woman like me!” Her countenance slowly shown signs of her anguish and resentment as she remembered the sorrowful past and the hurtful incident.

The more Nangong Ping listened to her, the more he sighed in his heart and the more deeply he sympathized with her.

Mei Yinxue added. “After immortal Divine Dragon listened to me, he turned pale and after awhile he asked. “Why did you not say earlier!?” His voice was shaking and he clenched his fists and he was feeling very angry with himself, and regretted for what he had done. But...What the point of regretting…” She tried to suppress her shaking and incite voice and lowered her head for a long time.

Nangong Ping looked at her beautiful fingernails, her long flowing black hair and thought. “The good and evil of the pugilists, who could really discern?”

“At that time, Immortal Divine Dragon took out a miraculous medicinal pill for treating internal injuries and ask me to take it.” Mei Yinxue finally broke her silence and added. “But I rejected him. What was the use if I could temporary starve off death? I had made countless enemies for the past ten years and if they knew that my internal force had been dispersed, my martial art skill lost, they would surely seek me for vengeance!

But Immortal Divine Dragon was indeed an upright and heroic man. He went even that far to beg me, if I had died, he would feel regretful forever. He wanted to seek forgiveness for his sins and to compensate and finish off this wrong, wanted to protect me for life and to seek that despicable Gentleman Swordsman out, to avenge me!”

She slowly recovered her composure and added. “He did not wait me to say anything but helped me to swallow that medicine pill and used his internal power and treated my injuries on the mountain. Although he and me only duel for just one day but he only came down from the mountain only on the third day. The other pugilists upon seeing him looking paled and tired, thought it was because he had dueled me for three days and applauded for him!…Alas! Who really knew the real contents.”

Nangong Ping secretly sighed and thought. “When Mentor Master heard those cries of applaud, he must be feeling extremely upset!”

“Just before he went down the mountain, he sealed off my accupoints and

carried me to a quiet and secret place inside a cave." Mei Yinxue added. "On the following night, he was once again on the mountain with two very tall and strong men carrying a coffin. He placed me inside the coffin. The reasons given were to hide me from everyone's knowledge but of course the most important..." She suddenly laughed a sound and added. "Maybe it was to hide it from Danfeng Ye Qiubai!"

Nangong Ping was startled and asked. "What do you mean?"

Mei Yinxue extended her hand to comb her long hair and suddenly giggled. "Do you not know yet!" She giggled and said. "Danfeng Ye Qiubai is a demeanor beauty, her martial arts are extremely high as well, moreover she knew how to maintain her countenance, that time although she was fifty but looked only like thirty. Therefore everyone in Pugilist nicked her as the Ageless Phoenix and a fitting match for the Immortal Divine Dragon. She is good in everything but..." Her laugh was filled with teasing and mocking.

Nangong Ping paled and asked. "But what?"

"But she was too fond of acting with jealousy!" She could not resist anymore and made several squeamish laughs. "As a junior, naturally you will not know all these!"

Nangong Ping tried to stand upright but suddenly Mei Yinxue ceased her light laughter and in a blink of an eye became very serious.

Her expressions could swing from one end to the other, always so sudden, no one could know what she really felt.

"But..." She respectfully and solemnly added. "During those stuffy nights, in that dark room, I heard from the mouth of Immortal Divine Dragon, many things that concerned Ye Qiubai…" Her voice gradually became slow, finally she sighed deeply and said. "Just think over it, if it is not for the fact that Ye Qiubai has a strange temper, she should have married the Immortal Divine Dragon. One is the number one warrior in Pugilist, the another is an all talent heroine. They could just link their swords like their hearts and traverse merrily throughout the entire Pugilistic Real. What a most enviable life; but that did not happened and instead they spend their entire lives in loneliness... loneliness…loneliness…" She lowered her head and her long flowing black hair followed suit to land and covered her face, hiding her feeling as well!

Nangong Ping was stunned for a while and a feeling of unspeakable regret too floated in his heart.

"Loneliness…loneliness…" During this instant, he finally understood the loneliness of many people...The loneliness of the Cold Blood Maiden that people in the Pugilistic Fraternity had nicked her; And the loneliness of the Phoenix Ye Qiubai who was above all. Most of all, the one he had respected the most; the

number top swordsman of the Pugilistic Fraternity; the Immortal Divine Dragon too had his loneliness.

Nangong Ping finally began to understand why his Mentor Master benevolent face would always carry such a solemn expression and why so it was always lacking in joy and laughter…This was the secret of the top prominent swordsman, the number one warrior. Naturally he would not mention all these things in the presence of his disciples. But during that cold chilling night in the darkness and facing a woman that was even more loneliness than him; even though he may have the heart of steel, he would still unwittingly let go of some of the secrets in his heart…

Although he had regarded winning and defeat lightly, did not take life and death into heart. He scorned even fame and wealth but he was still unable to escape from the darkest recess of his heart. He could not shake off the shadow that Danfeng Ye Qiubai had cast upon him; those feelings and affections that he had secretly concealed within him. He might have unlimited courage to face everything with his sharp long sword and roam carefree in the world but…he was unable to cut the binding cords that he had felt within.

This was the secret of the righteous hero, it was also the brilliant talented man weakness. It was also the humanity of the legend of the hero in the Pugilistic Fraternity but because of his shining and sparking position and repute had blinded everyone, no one took notice.

In this world, no one could ever be able to sympathize with the loneliness in his life, nor felt pity for his unluckiness in his romance. That was because what others felt towards his feeling would only be respect, envy, jealousy and hatred.

This was the sorrow part of being a hero. From the ancient past to the present, the sorrow of a hero would be the least noticeable!

Finally Nangong Ping could not resist anymore and let go of a deep sigh. He looked around and his heart almost jumped. For all around him, it was filled with a silver light, and caused the galaxy to turn into a transparent crystal. And the Mei Yinxue in this crystal, had been turned into a figure of a goddess.

After quite some time, Mei Yinxue finally lifted her head and to finish what she left hanging.

“Ever since that day, I had no chance whatever so to view the day and the sun. It just a pity that night I did not know that I would be separated from the stars, moon and the loftiness for so long a time. If not I would surely mused over them a little longer…”

Her cold and calm words were suddenly filled with warm feelings. “Ten

years…" She said. "Long Bushi did not fulfilled his promise. He did not right my wrong, did not avenge me but…I do know the reason why..." She suddenly stopped and looked at the fluttering light and shadows of the woods and did not say a word more.

This sudden silence seemed like a thousand tons hammer that suddenly crashed onto Nangong Ping's heart. That was because he knew that, her silence represented her anguish, disappointment and pain. It also covered her sympathize, understanding and forgiveness.

For the sake of Ye Qiubai, because that Gentleman Swordsman was the cousin of Ye Qiubai, his Mentor Master could not bear to capture that Gentleman Swordsman. Therefore naturally he could not right Mei Yinxue's wrong. And that the 'Cold Blood' Mei Yinxue did not force his Mentor Master to do so; This naturally spoke volumes of her sympathy and understanding for him…

He knew deeply in his heart; In that dark little room, his Mentor Master had felt just as terrible and painful as hers. Because at this moment, he too was feeling awfully painful for he was unable to say neither a single word of console nor a single word of asking her to forgive him.

She looked forlornly at the starlight while he looked forlornly on the soft grass on the ground. After another long period of silence, Mei Yinxue sparkly eyes was suddenly drawn towards him. He slowly lifted his head and discovered that from the side her soft and beautiful lip, there was a tingle of smile which he was unable to comprehend just like the far reaches of the starlight that mystified him.

She looked at him intensely and suddenly carried smiles and said. "But do you know…do you know?" She repeated.

Nangong Ping could not resist and asked. "What do I know?"

Mei Yinxue was still looking at him intensely and said. "What your Mentor Master failed to do for me, you have done for me. I personally heard him and you talking and I had heard his dying cry after you wounded him with your sword!"

Nangong Ping felt his ears drumming loudly as his body staggered backward. "That…That priest…is Gentleman Swordsman?"

There was a deep resentment in Mei Yinxue as she coldly laughed. "He has already become a priest? Good, good!" Her voice became as sharp as the whip that was lashing in mid air. "Although I do not know why he became a priest but his voice…his voice even if I die, I will never forget!"

Although Nangong Ping face was calmed, he was unable to suppress his startled feelings. He did not know whether to feel proud or apologetic. The renowned swordsman of Pugilist had actually died under his sword! But nevertheless, the feeling of guilt and apologetic that he had felt for the priest had more or less faded.

Only to hear Mei Yinxue continued to say. “That is the conflict your Mentor Master and me have and should be what you wanted to ask earlier but did not. You have avenged for me therefore I want to tell you this. That man did not died unjustly at all. All these years…while I was lying inside the coffin, I have no other wishes other than to hope that I can speedily regain my internal power, using all means to regain my internal power and to seek him for vengeance. Therefore earlier when I heard his horrible cry, although I feel happy but I can’t help feeling disappointed. And feels anguish too. I even think of after I walked out of the coffin, I will kill the person that help me killed that man!”

Nangong Ping felt a fear in his heart and saw the edge of Mei Yinxue’s mouth seemingly carried a tinge of laugh.

“But, somehow…” She calmly smiled and said. “Maybe it because my state of divinity has changed over the years. Now not only will I not kill you, I seem to feel like thanking you. That because you cause my hands to avoid the chance to be tainted with bloodshed. And a person whose hands avoid needless bloodshed, no matter what, is a most excellent good thing that can happen.”

This woman whose everyone had called ‘Cold blood’ would say such a word at this time, surprised Nangong Ping. He thought of saying an appropriate word at this time but after some pondering, he could only say. “After Mentor Master dispersed your internal power, now that your internal strength has been recovered, this is indeed a weird thing.”

Mei Yinxue mysteriously smiled awhile and softly said. “Is this such a weird thing?” She did not continued and Nangong Ping could not guess the hidden meaning in her words.

What he said earlier was just a random utterance. But now he really felt strange about it. He suddenly remembered her words. ‘…speedily regain my internal power, using all means to regain my internal power…’ Unconsciously, he shook in his heart and thought. “When she regained her internal power, did she uses some unorthodox methods?” He could not resist the temptation to ask her but Mei Yinxue interrupted his thoughts.

“It is really so strange. Now that I have regained my internal strength but I feel that it is useless. Now I am neither debts to repay nor vendetta to be done. Alas! This is really much better than a stomach full of hatred.”

Earlier, she was suddenly aroused with emotions, suddenly resentment, suddenly excited, suddenly malicious, now she quieted down to sigh softly onto the top of a tree. She was arranging her hair and at the same time, softly singing. *‘Roll and roll, roll till Grandma bridge, Grandma calls me a good baby…little baby, go to sleep, mommy sit by the rolling cradle, roll and roll…’*

Her voice was so sweet and gentle, and her countenance so peaceful and

serene. It seemed that she had returned to a very far dream like state where at that time she was still little. Surely she had a very gentle mother and she would sing this ordinary, sweet and this familiar yet warming child ballad that everyone knew in their hearts.

When Nangong Ping heard this gentle singing and looked at her serene face, his heart could not help but felt pity and regrets. Ever since she started to roam the Pugilist at fifteen, she must have for a long time did not refresh this song. That was why she sung it in remnants, even mixed two different child ballads into a single ballad. But in the ears of Nangong Ping, this fragmented singing was exceptional sweet and intimate. He wished she could always maintain this state of divinity and wished that it would happen for him as well. That was because he too had returned to a distant dream. If mortals would always maintain this baby state of divinity, then bloodshed and ugly things would occur much lesser.

Nangong Ping had been weary, now felt a warm fatigue slowly overcoming him as he listened to her singing. Unconsciously, he slowly enclosure his eye lids…the singing seemed to be more and more distant away…

Suddenly there was a sarcastic laughter that sounded in his ears! He opened his eyes and in the midst of the fog, from the woods, appeared a shadowy figure of a person. Mei Yinxue ceased her singing while Nangong Ping shouted. “Who?”

There was a flash and a young man in gray appeared in front of him! In that instant, the two of them stood still facing one another and at the same time look over one another. In Nangong Ping’s eyes, this young man who suddenly appeared supposed to look joyous and handsome but his face nevertheless carried a taint of stubbornness and disdaining cold laugh that seemed to direct at Nangong Ping!

Nangong Ping lifted the tip of his sword and asked in surprise. “Who may you be? Why did you come?”

Chapter Six
Guest of the Heavenly Emperor

The young man in gray kept staring at Nangong Ping. “Marvelous, marvelous!” He suddenly laughed coldly and said. “Your Mentor Master most exalted disciple in the apple of his eye, your older protégé brother spoke of a most exalted fellow disciple brother, while his Mentor Master whereabouts is still unknown, actually have the mood to sit here and listen to a girl singing. Marvelous indeed, marvelous indeed!”

Nangong Ping solemnly said. “This have nothing to do with you!”

Young man in gray laughed. “You still behave so arrogant, why don’t you admit your wrong?”

Nangong Ping said. “This depends on who you are? And what is your intention?” His countenance was calmed and his speech was neither weak nor forceful. He simply stated matter of fact. He did no wish to reveal too much to someone who he not sure whether if he was a friend or foe. It was actually the same like he would not hide anything from his friends!

The young man in gray browsed his view and saw Mei Yinxue who remained motionless on top of a tree and suddenly laughed aloud. “You want to know who I am? And what is my intention…” He laughed aloud again. “But first you have to admit your wrong!”

Nangong Ping coldly hummed and said. “If you have come to provoke, free please to drawn the soft blade hidden in-between your waist. There is no need to go around in circles.”

Mei Yinxue softly laughed awhile, seemingly approving and praising of his action.

That young man in gray halted his laughing and he seemed to be startled. He seemed to feel strange that Nangong Ping under his taunting could still be in such a calm composure. He also seemed to feel strange that an inexperience young man like him would have such a sharp observation and eyes and could see that he had hidden a rarely seen soft weapon inside his clothes!

Now he felt disadvantage and this was something out of his expectations. Now he wished he could immediately dealt him a fierce retaliation!

He recovered his thoughts and coldly laughed. “If I am not here to provoke, you...” Before he could finish, he had another thought. Would he not give him another chance to laugh at himself? So he kept quiet suddenly. But out of his expectation, Nangong Ping did not laughed and continued to look calmly at him,

seemingly guessed what he had been thinking in his heart.

Nangong Ping interrupted his thoughts, “If you do not have the intention...”

The young man in gray interrupted him and said, “Just treat that I have the intention to provoke will do!” As his body turned and when he once again faced Nangong Ping, he had with him a soft silver spear in his hand!

Nangong Ping’s long sword was still by his waist. Although his heart was not calm, he was paying a great attention to this long sword. That was because he did not wish that after losing the scabbard, he would lose the precious sword that his Mentor Master had given him!

He just smiled and said. “If you have the intention to provoke, then I have no choice but to retrospect a few strokes!” He turned his wrist and gently drawn out his sword. He did not show off his swordmanship nor did he likewise followed the usual swordsmen style of displaying how fast they could draw their sword in a feat to measure the brilliant of their swordplay!

He was calm and steady, did not have Shi Chen rashness and jealousy, nor did he have Shi Chen proneness to fall into temptations. He was also benevolent and frank but when compared to Long Fei, he knew how to hide his strength and be tactical.

He lifted his shoulder and held his sword in front of his chest while the young man in gray shook his spear and in that instant, five to seven beams of reflective light lingered.

Nangong Ping slowly extended his sword point and solemnly said. “After you!” By now he had already noticed that the young man in gray harbored neither evil intention nor his enemy and was only suppressing his frustrations. Therefore in his speech and actions, there was still some traces of courtesy!

The young man in gray thrust his spear and in the fog was a ray of light as he bypassed even the shower of reflective light. Nangong Ping admired secretly. That young man spear technique was indeed amazing fast till the point of unbelievable!

He shifted his leg movements as his sword point followed the spearhead of his opponent. There was a green light, then a silver light and a couple of clashing sounds. Suddenly the young man in gray coughed out a sound as he soared upward!

There was a ray of silver light as it followed the ascended up. Nangong Ping took a step backward as he lifted his sword.

But the young man in gray as he ascended up, his shining silver spear broke through the fog and at lightning speed thrust downward, just like a crane that was dancing in mid-air that was descending upon its prey on the ground!

Nangong Ping was startled as he said. “Tianshan Seven Forms Swiftness

skill”! And he adjusted his steps to home his sword upward.

There was a flash of green light as it sealed off the silver spear path. The young man in gray jerked his spearhead and gently contacted the sword point. There was a dang sound as he once again used the opportunity to jump forth again.

Nangong Ping suddenly shouted a sound as well as he hastily hurried seven steps that placed him out of reach of the young man in gray spear attack.

His eyes focused but he did not retaliated yet as he waited patiently for the young man to descent first!

But the young man kicked backward to reverse and he extended both his shoulders much like a eagle and a ray of silver light once again came piercing in his direction.

Nangong Ping once again moved another seven steps. He was as steady as the mountain, when he moved, it were as fast as lightning. This seven steps looked like just one step as the green light of the sword in his hand beamed, being as fast as the silver spear!

The young man failed in his first attempt as his body much like an eagle landed on the ground. Now if Nangong Ping were to shift his sword up, although he may not lose but he could seize the first strike opportunity! But he only maintained his present posture when the young man landed with his silver spearhead vibrating.

The young man secretly muttered to himself. “Alas Di Yang, Di Yang, do you still want to continue to test one more stroke?”

This young man in gray was naturally Di Yang. After he had buried the corpse, he immediately rushed down the mountain. Imbued with the solo purpose of finding out what sort of a person was this ‘Fifth Brother’ that Long Fei had lavished so much praise upon.

He was naturally a forgiving person; therefore he did not put much thought whether others had doubted him. But he had the same haughtiness of most young men that when he saw Nangong Ping, he felt like pitting against him. On the other hand, he was feeling strange why this young man had the mood to listen to the singing of a girl?

But now as he was facing Nangong Ping, his heart was slowly begun to appreciate him. His spearhead was constantly shaking but in fact foreshadowed an extremely powerful stroke that he had yet to use!

Nangong Ping still maintained his posture all the while his attention was focused on the moving spearhead.

Suddenly Mei Yinxue suddenly softly laughed awhile and asked. “You are not fighting anymore?”

The two young men with their four eyes turned their attention on her. Mei

Yinxue slowly stood up, her looks was so charming and lovable that just that simple posture of just standing up, caused them unable to resist to have a second look.

She walked gracefully towards Di Yang and said. “Are you not the descendant of Tianshan Divine Sword, Ninth Wing Flying Eagle Old Master Di?”

All along, Di Yang did not pay attention to her. Now it seemed that he was like a man enveloped in darkness that suddenly discovered her glamorous beauty. This glamorous beautiful woman instantly dazzled him with her beauty like lightning. He felt so startled that he just nodded and did not say anything.

Mei Yinxue softly laughed and said. “Did you see his protégé brother just now?”

Di Yang was once again startled and nodded his head again.

Nangong Ping was surprised inside him. “How did she know? How did he have known his protégé brother?” Just as he was about to ask him where he had saw him, Mei Yinxue giggled and said, “His protégé brother must have been praising him in front of you, therefore you do not feel good within and wish to test him?”

Di Yang widened his eyes and was astonished. He could only nodded again.

She asked him three questions and all hit the mark of Di Yang’s heart. It caused Di Yang who had been dazzled by her beauty to unconsciously intimidate by her superb intellect.

Inside Nangong Ping’s heart, he felt more and more curious. Only to hear her laughed softly and turned back, “That is it, what are you all fighting for!” She walked to a tree and began to sit down. Her eyes rolled and looked at the two young men and suddenly laughed. “I observed it from his martial art skills to know his origins, from his attitude and speech and guessed his intention. There is nothing so strange about it. Why are you puzzling over it?”

Her speech was modest, seemingly suggesting that it was something everyone would have guessed.

Di Yang secretly sighed in his heart and thought. “What an intelligence girl!” He laughed suddenly and said. “What an intelligence girl!” What he had thought in his heart was exactly the same as what he had said. But the language and meaning was entirely different.

Nangong Ping asked. “May I know if...“

Di Yang said. “That is right. Just as what this maiden has said, I indeed saw your protégé brother earlier. At this moment, he is still on top of the mountain peak. Now that it is soon to be morning, you should go up and conduct a search.” He did not wait for others to say anything and laughed again to say. "I am Di Yang. Now that I seen you, I am really very happy. Hope that we can meet again some

other time..."

Nangong Ping asked. "Why not stay behind for awhile to talk…"

Di Yang laughed. "Earlier I have intentionally offended and now I really feel slightly embarrassing. There be much to catch up some other time but today we must part!"

When he had said 'embarrassing' he had already started to move away. When he had spoken the last word, he had already moved beyond the woods.

Nangong Ping looked at his direction intensely and secretly sighed. "What an extremely fast swiftness movement skill."

Suddenly Mei Yinxue laughed lovably and said. "Do you know why he suddenly go in such a haste?"

Nangong Ping paused to consider but before he could reply, Mei Yinxue laughed again and said. "That is because he really did not dare to look at me!"

Nangong Ping was stunned for awhile but he did not turn his head and coldly said. "I afraid that may not be the case!" But his heart secretly sighed unconsciously.

Suddenly there was a sweet fragrant in his nostril as Mei Yinxue walked undetected besides him and softly laughed. "In your heart, you think that what I say is correct but your mouth refuse to admit it. Why is that so?" She carried all smiles on her face and she happily observed Nangong Ping face and thought. "Whether you admit or not, I am going to see how you are going to reply me this time."

But even before she had finished her thoughts, Nangong Ping solemnly said. "You are always treating human characteristics as too base therefore even if I am unwilling to agree with you but I have to agree. But what I say whether it is worth a grain of salt by agreeing with you, why don't you think about it, right?"

The revealing truth was always better than flowery words. Mei Yinxue ceased her smiles and she was startled. Only to hear Nangong Ping looked at her in her eyes as he started to carry the coffin and solemnly said. "It best if you follow me and I introduced you to my big protégé brother, then you will know that in this world, there is still a few real man!"

Mei Yinxue was still remaining stunned for awhile until Nangong Ping had carried the coffin for quite a distance. Unconsciously she began to follow him. After awhile, she suddenly halted her steps and looked at his back view and sarcastically laughed a few times and said. "What a disciple that respected his benevolent teacher and his teachings, I see now that he is such a person!"

Nangong Ping was startled and turned his head to ask. "What did you say?"

Mei Yinxue coldly laughed and said. "I am speaking Mandarin, don't tell me you do not understand?"

Nangong Ping looked perplexed and said. “If you do not explain, it doesn’t matter to me if I listen or not!” he turned his head and continued to walk.

Mei Yinxue looked at him hatefully. Ever since she started to roam the Pugilistic Fraternity, every time she knitted her eyebrows or laughed, there were be countless number of men who got smitten by her. She had never seen a young man such as Nangong Ping before. When Nangong Ping still did not turned back and continued to walk, she could not resist the urge to follow and said. “Hello…”

Nangong Ping did not ceased his walking nor did he turned his head but he asked. “What is the matter?”

Mei Yinxue said, “Your mentor master ordered you to follow me, to protect me. Why did you choose to run up the mountain alone?” Although she sounded so frustrated but she did not ceased her steps either.

Nangong Ping stopped in his tracks. He turned around and looked at her. “Did you not follow me up as well, why did you say I go up alone?”

Mei Yinxue said, “I…I…” Suddenly she stomped her leg and said. “Who says I want to go up the mountain with you!”

Nangong Ping said, “Marvelous, marvelous…”

Mei Yinxue widened her beautiful eyes and cautiously asked, “What did you say?”

Nangong Ping smiled and said. “If you are not willing to follow me up the mountain, please wait for me here awhile and I can also put the coffin here too.”

Mei Yinxue bit her teeth, asked. “Who say I am going to wait here for you?”

Nangong Ping said, “Then…” Whether he really did not understand a girl heart or intentionally did not understand, he did not say a single word of pleading. “Then…” He purposely pondered. “What should be done?”

Mei Yinxue said, “You will follow me down the mountain…”

Nangong Ping said, “It is naturally. Naturally I will follow you down the mountain…”

Mei Yinxue smiled and said, “Then…Let go!”

But Nangong Ping smiled too as well. “But you should follow me up the mountain for awhile.”

The smiles that was on Mei Yinxue instantly evaporated as she said angrily. “Why you…”

Nangong Ping smiled and added. “You have lay in the small coffin for thousands of days, you should really have taken a stroll. Have a look, today wind is so wonderful, the weather is so fine and the grass and trees are so beautiful. And touring under the grandeur of the peerless view of Huashan, isn’t it such a joyous thing?”

Mei Yinxue was half filled with frustration for awhile. Suddenly she bit her

teeth and moved to the front of Nangong Ping and said. “Follow me!” At last she finally move up the mountain.

Nangong Ping glanced at her long fluttering hair and secretly laughed. “People in Pugilist all say that she is so cold hearted and how vicious. But I think she is just a girl who have not shed off her innocent yet.” He tried his best not to laugh it out.

But Mei Yinxue suddenly giggled in front and said. “First time listening to some one sounds fun. But…” Suddenly her laughter was no more as she turned her head. “Only this once.”

Nangong Ping said. “Indeed, indeed. Only this once.” He turned his head back as not to let Mei Yinxue saw his smiling look.

The morning sun rose above the peaks of Huashan when they found the broken down bamboo hut. Although Nangong Ping was feeling anxious, he had stopped earlier at the place where there was a deep footprint on the ground as well as the various stone figurines. Finally they had reached the bamboo hut but it was now emptied of anyone. He sighed disappointing. “They have left…”

Mei Yinxue casually said. “And you have wasted a trip!”

Suddenly Nangong Ping eyes shone and he said aloud. “That may not be the case!”

He suddenly placed the coffin that was in his hands to Mei Yinxue. Mei Yinxue had not the time to ponder and received it. She saw him moving to the old furniture and lifted it. Mei Yinxue did not saw that beneath the old furniture was a piece of yellow paper so she sarcastically said. “Will there be a treasure underneath?”

Nangong Ping said. “Indeed!” As he turned his body and on his hand was a piece of yellow paper. He looked at it carefully for awhile and slowly there was a comforting smile to his countenance. But his smile contained some elements of astonishment. Afterwards, he placed it in his clothing.

Mei Yinxue who was carrying a coffin had wanted to look at it too. But because she was being encumbrance, she could not do so therefore she could not resist asking. “Hello!”

Nangong Ping purposely remained nonchalance and said. “What is the matter?”

Mei Yinxue coldly hummed and raised both her hands to fling the coffin to Nangong Ping. After he had received it, she stormed out of the door.

She felt so frustrated in her heart and did not wish to look at Nangong Ping anymore. But after walking awhile, she could not resist looking back only to see

Nangong Ping looking at the stone figurine that was engraved on the side of the mountain. When he had walked casually towards her, he looked very calm. It seemed that his worries earlier had largely faded.

But Mei Yinxue felt even more perplexed and after walking another two steps, she turned her head and asked. “Do you want to say it or not?”

Nangong Ping asked. “Say what?”

Mei Yinxue hummed and swung her waist a little as she stormed off several meters away.

Nangong Ping felt it was funny but she suddenly stormed back again and said aloud. “That piece of yellow paper, what on earth is written on it?”

Nangong Ping smiled and said. “You want to look at the paper, why don’t you say it sooner? If you don’t say, how should I know!”

His right hand was carrying the coffin but his left hand when it extended out, was clenching the paper. It seemed that he had already placed the paper on his hand.

Mei Yinxue was stunned for awhile and she could not help but sighed melancholy in her heart. “Although I am beautiful, but not all the men in the world are smitten by me. Although I am smart but he is not necessary stupider than me…” She looked at Nangong Ping awhile, was she feeling sorrow, angry or happy in her heart? She reached out for the yellow paper and opened it and it read. “Guest of the Heavenly Emperor, the Divine Dragon is well!”

“Divine Dragon is well…” She softly muttered and raised her voice to ask. “The Immortal Divine Dragon, he is not dead yet?”

Nangong Ping smiled. “He will not die!”

Mei Yinxue lifted her head to look at him and asked in a serious tone. “This ‘Heavenly Emperor’, how you do decipher it?”

Nangong Ping said. “Naturally is a name of a Old Master in Pugilist. Other than that, what…”

Mei Yinxue coldly added. “Who is it? Have you ever heard that there was some one in Pugilist that is nicked Heavenly Emperor?” Nangong Ping appeared to be startled while Mei Yinxue added. “Maybe…” She wanted to say ‘Heavenly Emperor’ also meant Western Paradise or maybe it was the joke of his enemies to deceive them. Or the good intention of friends that wanted to comfort their hearts.

But when she saw the expression on Nangong Ping, she found herself unable to say aloud her thoughts. “Heavenly Emperor! Heavenly Emperor!” She just said matter of fact. “Just that this name I have never heard anyone mentioning it about.”

Just when they were about to descend down the mountain, she suddenly laughed. “It better that we go down by the small road!”

Nangong Ping asked. “Why?”

Mei Yinxue extended her hands to comb her long hair and gently laughed. “Look at my appearance, how can I face anyone?”

Nangong Ping looked at her for awhile, looked at her beautiful long hair that was as thick as the cloud, looked at her beautiful eyes, her pale white face under the glow of the sun and her snow white long dress, she was really unearthly beautiful. What was it and anywhere that she could not face anyone? So he muttered. “If with your appearance you cannot face anyone, then all the rest of the girls should dig a hole in the ground and hide inside it!

As he had news of the safety of Divine Dragon and as for his clan brothers and sisters, it would be a matter of time before they would finally gather again. As he was feeling quite happy, he did not say anything but followed Mei Yinxue using the small road down the mountain. Finally they reached the town of Lin Xuan.

Nangong Ping who was carrying the coffin mumbled in repetition. “This coffin is really very heavy. No wonder, Mentor Master expended so much trouble to find the coffin carriers. But they usually do not work for long before they quit!”

Mei Yinxue followed docilely besides him, her knowing eyes rolled and smiled.

Her smile seemingly contained some secrets but Nangong Ping did not noticed or paid much attention. He only added. “Do you that some of the coffin carriers are actually some who have turned over a new leaf…” He suddenly stopped and he suddenly noticed that everyone in the streets were looking at him.

A handsome presentable young man who was carrying a coffin and a maiden who was strangely attired but whose beauty was beautiful beyond comparison, were both walking down the street. If they did not attract any attention, then the people on the streets surely must all be blinded. Nangong Ping blushed and lowered his head and softly said. “If we have gone down by the main road, we can hire a carriage.”

However Mei Yinxue remained as composed as ever and smiled. “If you are afraid of being seen, there are many shops on both sides of the streets…” Her meaning explicitly speaking mean that she was already used to being look upon.

Nangong Ping said. “Indeed, indeed…” As he lowered his head and walked to the side of the street.

He suddenly spotted a wine tavern with a signboard ‘Ping Ji Fast Wine Tavern’ written in fresh red color. Even the sides of the door were in red black colors and it was differ from the other wine taverns. His countenance undergoes a slight change but he continued to walk towards it.

But even before he could enter the door, a tavern assistant came out. He was

not trying to welcome him but to block him from entering. Nangong Ping was startled and asked. “What are you doing?”

The tavern assistant looked proud and hypocrite as he coldly said. “What are you trying to do?”

Nangong Ping said. “Naturally I come to eat.” He wondered in puzzlement in his heart why this shop treated its customers with such disrespect. So he asked. “Isn’t this shop opening for business?”

The thin shop assistant coldly laughed. “Sure we have to do business but for customer that bring a coffin, we do not welcome.”

Nangong Ping flurried laughed and said. “But…this coffin is emptied. If you do not believe me, I can open it for you to look!” He was about to put the coffin down when the shop assistant pushed him away and shouted. “Even if it is emptied, it is still not welcome.” Although he was skinny but he had great strength. Therefore it quite obvious that he had practiced martial arts before.

At this moment there appeared many people who had gathered to see the commotion. Nangong Ping looked perplexed and he was slowly giving way to anger but when he saw the crowd, he suppressed his anger and said peacefully. “Your boss and I are acquaintances. Do you think you can do me a favor by letting me place the coffin…”

Even before he could finish, the shop assistant was in rage. “Even if you know my boss, I will not allow it, now leave fast…”

Mei Yinxue had already noticed that Nangong Ping did not want to create any troubles so she gently tagged his sleeves and said. “This shop can’t, we can still change to another shop!”

Nangong Ping looked at the shop assistant for awhile before he made his way out of the crowd, only to hear him scolding. “You should have asked around what place is it! Who open it? And who is our Master? If you come to make trouble again, I will break your leg…”

Mei Yinxue secretly looked at Nangong Ping and saw that he was calm and did not show any hint of anger. So she felt very strange.

But when they changed to another shop, the another shop assistance told them. “Customers that Fast Wine Tavern rejected, our small shop did not stay to invite…” After changing another three shops, it was exactly the same as before. By now Nangong Ping became perplexed. The small whispering that was filled with jeering behind his back caused him a great deal of intolerant.

But still, he did not give way to anger. And make his way to another big street and finally found a small shop that was willing to accept them. The old tavern keeper served them cups and chopsticks but whispered in a low voice. “Actually, customers that Fast Wine Tavern refuse to entertain, we do not dare to

receive but…Alas! You are so young and bring along your wife…Alas! I heard that their Young Master is someone, who upheld righteousness and thought little of wealth, has a rich reputation, is a wanderer and has many friends. Just now the person you meet should be Second Master You. This Second Master You is someone who is trained by the boss of the Ju Ying Hero Establishment. I heard that he even learnt some martial arts from their boss personally. Although he is a shop assistant, even their tavern keeper did not dare to offend him…Alas!"

Although he said a lot, he also at the time placed three dishes on the table. Nangong Ping still remained as calm as ever and not a trace of any expression.

After Mei Yinxue heard the old man words, she was original quite puzzled and flabbergasted. But now she found it to be quite funny.

After eating two mouthfuls from the dishes, Nangong Ping suddenly requested for paper and brush, wrote some words and carefully folded it and walked to the door and handed it over to an idle man by the street and said something in a very low voice before walking back.

Mei Yinxue looked at him and smiled captivating but she did not ask him what he was doing, seemingly she had something up her sleeves as well.

The both of them continued to eat their meal peacefully. After awhile, there was a middle age man in cotton attire who clumsily and hastily appeared. He respectfully raised both his hands to greet Nangong Ping. But before he could say anything, another man came like the wind and bowed down on the ground. He was that thin shop assistant Second Master You.

Nangong Ping rolled his eyes and slowly got up and asked. "Second Master You, what are you doing?"

The proud and hypocrite Second Master You now looked so pitiful and laudable that he could not say anything. The another man in cotton attire had an anxious look on his face, tried to lighten the mood by saying. "I didn't expect…I didn't expect…that Young Master will come, arrive at the Northwest."

The old man from the little shop was startled as well ad glanced at Nangong Ping and glanced at the crowd that was gathering outside the shop. He rubbed his white hair on his head and really could not believe his eyes.

One must know that the Nangong Aristocracy Family had the wealth that could equal a kingdom. In the entire fraternity, it seemed that everywhere were their business. And the famous red black marking of the Nangong Aristocracy Family supported thousands if not tens of thousands of people but very few actually knew their Young Master Nangong Ping!

Now the paper that Nangong Ping wrote could cause that Second Master You and the man in cotton attire to feel startled and anxious as they faced their Young Master. Those two men really did not know what to say and what sort of

pleading should they do.

Mei Yinxue softly laughed and said. “Now we can change another place to eat right!”

Nangong Ping lowered his head and said in jest. “Second Master You, can we carry a coffin inside?”

Of course, his henchmen would never allow their Young master to carry the coffin. So the man in cotton attire replied. “Welcome Master to first come to the shop. Your humble servant will order some men to carry the coffin after you.” He felt strange why his Master would want to carry a coffin by his side but he kept those questions to himself, as he did not dare to ask.

Nangong Ping smiled and from inside his clothing, he took out a fragrant sack and placed it casually on the table and smiled at the startled old man. “This is the payment…” He paused awhile before adding. “In two days, I will arrange for you to be the Steward of Fast Wine Tavern. I believe that you will motivate the shop assistants over there to be more kind and courtesy.”

He did not wait for the old man to thanks him and walked hurried out of the little shop with Mei Yinxue.

Only when they had disappeared from view with the crowd, this happy old man stood motionless by the entrance and it seemed that he had just had a very beautiful dream.

He sat by the side of the table and opened the fragrant sack and there was a brilliant light shining forth from it. It seemed like the ray of light from the sunrise that blinded his eyes and also lit his heart. This happiness came too suddenly yet came too late. He rubbed his wrinkles and thought of his dead wife. He did not know whether to feel happy or to sigh.

Suddenly he heard of a cracking sound, therefore he turned his head. But as soon as his eyes moved, his entire body seemed to freeze. And he dropped the fragrant sack as four shining pearls rolled toward the coffin that was at the side of the wall…

The coffin lid was now opened and a priest who was drenched with blood climbed out. The old man felt his body shook and suddenly remembered he still got his voice…but he was already too stunned by the happenstance just like he was too stunned by the happiness earlier. But even before he could shout, the priest had purged forward and extended all ten of his fingers like hooks and strangled his neck.

There was some sound before silence settled down. The priest looked around anxiously; the streets were emptied as everyone had gone to take a peek at the dashing Nangong Young Master.

He let go of a sound of relief as he hurried upstairs to change his clothing

with the old man and then sneak off, leaving the old man who had work hard for his entire life helplessly on the ground with the shining pearls…

The Young Master of the Nangong Aristocracy Family had arrived at Lin Xuan!

This piece of news took Lin Xian Town by storm. There were some that envied his background, some that were envied of his fame, some jealous, women that want to see his dashing appearance and women that like his wealth.

Inside Fast Wine Tavern, there were countless numbers of people who want to take a peek at Nangong Ping in person.

Now Nangong Ping had started to regret why he had openly revealed his identity.

Similarly like Nangong Ping, Mei Yinxue too took Lin Xuan by storm.

Hardly anyone could scarcely believe their eyes that in this life, they would actually witness this extraordinary beauty that simply looked like a fairy.

Nangong Ping quietly walked down the stairs of Fast Wine Tavern to ask a shop assistant softly. “Did you see a strong man and three other young men and women that come to Lin Xuan?” The shop assistant respectfully shook his head and he solemnly said. “Go check it out.” And the shop assistant respectfully nodded. He then asked. “Have that coffin been settled? Did you invite the old man from the small shop here?”

The shop assistant countenance changed. For no one remembered the old man in that small shop.

Nangong Ping countenance changed. And at the same time, the crowd who saw a handsome young man in a clean cloth but not flashy walking down the stairs to talk to a shop assistant. Then someone shouted. “Look! That is Nangong Young Master!” As shouts and praises came from the crowd. But Nangong Ping had already sneaked out from the back of the shop!

Because it was dark now, he managed to avoid the crowd and arrived back to the small shop down the street. But strange, why was there such a crowd outside the small shop?

Feeling puzzled within, he hesitated for awhile before he could not resist the temptation to walk in and saw the gruesome sight!

There was a funeral procession that was walking out of Lin Xuan City, on its way to the ancient tomb that was outside this Xian ancient city. On the funeral parlor was the word “The benevolent of Old Du will be remembered forever”. But

who had died? And for whom? Some people began to wonder about it and search for the name of Old Du but it was a most ordinary name. So everyone felt even more puzzled.

A man in black appeared at the front of the funeral procession. And some people knew him as Young Master Nangong from the Nangong Aristocracy Family!

But the strange thing was for whom was he mourning?

For a dead bird, Nangong Ping was willing to bury it. Needless to say when he saw the corpse of the kind old man, he felt very heavy and sorrowful. He could not guess how the old man got killed but he had a feeling that the old man died because of him.

He knew that this old man lead an ordinary life, a quiet livelihood. He could never expect a slight happenstance would cause this old man to lose his life. This feeling of guilt caused the benevolent Nangong Ping to blame himself and to lose sleep. He could only host a grand funeral for the old man and to make up for the sorrow when he was alive.

Suddenly there was a commotion on the road in front as a man in white made his way through. Nangong Ping lifted his head only to see him pay respectfully to him and said. “Your humble servant is Wei Cheng En, who have been taking care of Xian City business for Master…”

Nangong Ping said solemnly. “Now is not the time to talk…”

Wei Cheng En anxiously said. “Your humble servant heard the news yesterday and specifically come to welcome Old Master Du spiritual funeral and to clear a path but who would expect…”

Nangong Ping said in a tranquil manner. “It been hard on you, stand up and talk.” But he continued to walk but after walking a few steps, he noticed that there were several big tables with incense and funeral papers (altar). But now it was in a mess and some of the tables were even destroyed.

He became perplexed and looked at Wei Cheng En who looked awful but was still besides him. He turned and asked him solemnly. “What is going on here?”

Wei Cheng En lowered his head and said. “Your humble servants yesterday when we knew that Master is holding a funeral, so we busied throughout the night to prepare the sacrifices. But who would expect that there is another group of people from outside Xian City that is holding another funeral too. And they are planning for it to be very grand too and brought almost all the sacrifice materials from all the funeral shops in Xian. Your humble servant put forth a pricier offer and managed to buy back some of it.”

Nangong Ping said. “It must be very hard for you all. With such a good intentions, it is enough.”

His mannerism and attitude was peaceful and spoken like a gentleman. Wei Cheng En did not expect that this Nangong Master who was so famous in the world, whose wealth equaled a kingdom would be so courtesy, so he was startled. But he soon recovered and said. “Master you are indeed benevolent and did not blame upon your humble us. But we are afraid that if the funeral procession is early so we already camped outside here throughout the night. But last two or four hours, there were another funeral procession and we thought it was yours. But…”

Nangong Ping asked solemnly. “Some one creating trouble for even a funeral?”

Wei Cheng En sighed and said. “Coming from the sandstorm, there was seven to eight men riding strong horses and in black. And they carried a small red flag…”

Nangong Ping was slightly startled and thought. “There riders, could they be the Red Flag Escort Agency, Sima Zhongtian’s men?”

Wei Cheng En was still relating. “From what I could see, these men do not look upright therefore I avoided them.”

Nangong Ping hummed a sound. Although he did not say it aloud but he felt unhappy in his heart. “These men braved the hardship of long journey and served as armed escorts, earning their keep. How could they not be upright!”

“But who would expect that when these people saw us, they got off from their horses and knee before us and shouted. ‘Old Master, us juniors have arrived late!’ Some even lay on the ground to cry aloud. Therefore we feel strange about it and asked them for who funeral they are for? But when they lifted their heads and saw the words on the spiritual tablet, they flew into a rage when they got up and scolded us nonstop. I told them that the one who mistaken the spiritual tablet is you, why did you have to scold others? These men when they heard me, without any reasons at all started to fight with us. We are not their matches and some of us are even beaten up badly and are sent for treatment. And they got on their horses and rode off. Those of us who are still able to stand started arranging the tables and to wait for Master…therefore…It is the mess that you witness now and may Master forgive us.” When he finished, he and all the men in white kneeled on the ground.

Nangong Ping swept his eyes around and saw that although they were not badly injured, they looked awful. He said in a tranquil manner. “Everyone please get up.” In his heart he questioned angrily. “These Red Flag Knights, why are they so barbaric? They had seen the wrong spiritual tablet yet blamed it on others. I should really ask Old Chief Sima.”

But then Nangong Ping had another thought. “The Red Flag Escort Agency has long been established and build up quite a reputation for itself in Pugilist.

Moreover, Red Flag Iron Lance Sima Zhongtian is well known for his chivalrous ways. So his followings under his Escort Agency will surely not be that rude. It is well possible that these shop assistants have long been haughty and offended the others with their words. How can I have such a thought to blame others without checking out matters. How can I make friends in Pugilist in future? How can I find a footing in Pugilist?" After thinking, he had a cold sweat.

He had always been righteous. When he encountered problems even before he blamed on others, he would blame himself first. He had never brought into account that he was born in an aristocracy or his connection with a famous Clan. He would try to deal with it personally and in a fair manner. Therefore when he thought that he would almost become an unrighteous person, he grew afraid in his heart.

As he was approaching ever closer to Xian City, he had another thought. "The Red Flag Knights seemed to be in great haste. I wonder which prominent figure had passed away…Alas! It seemed that there will be frequent troubles arising in Pugilist…" Therefore he became heavy in his heart as he felt sorry for the lives that could possible be lost.

Suddenly a few shouts interrupted his thoughts and Nangong Ping saw a few figures standing in front blocking his way.

The one who was leading them was a pale man in a black gown and dark shoes. His pair of eye was like fire and shot toward Nangong Ping, coldly said. "Please halt your advance!"

Nangong Ping swept his eyes as he bowed with his hands and asked. "What may it be?"

The stranger with a sharp expression shot past Nangong Ping's shoulder and glanced at the banner behind him and said solemnly. "I suppose you are the steward of this funeral?"

Nangong Ping said. "I beg to differ!"

The stranger said. "I have a matter to ask for…"

Nangong Ping replied. "Please free to say!"

The stranger asked. "Will you lead the funeral procession to the West Gate?"

Nangong Ping suppressed his moaning and said. "Isn't the East Gate just in front?"

The stranger said. "That right, the East Gate is in front. But the East Gate currently has many pugilist friends that have gathered to send an old prominent pugilist master off. If you do not take another track, it will create inconvenient."

"Inconvenient…?" Nangong Ping asked. "If I change my track, then will it not inconvenient myself. The road is meant for all, I afraid I cannot comply with your request."

The stranger looked at him carefully for awhile before solemnly said. “If you do not change your track, it has nothing to do with me. But that group of pugilist friends are very rough…”

He did not wait for Nangong Ping to reply, looked up the sky and said. “If you pause to consider awhile, if it is not some one prominent that had died, how can these pugilist friends gathered here to perform such a grand rite? Since it is for an earthshaking hero, these pugilist friends, how will they let other funeral procession go through and spoilt their rites? If you are but a normal traveler, it can still be understandable but with a funeral procession…hehe, it best that you change your track.”

Nangong Ping looked at him carefully and noticed that other than he is pale, he was not that old either. But his attitude carried an air of intimidation. One look and he knew that he was not an ordinary man. If it were a rite for a prominent hero in front, if he changed his track, it would also be a mark of respect for the old pugilist master.

But before he could voice out his thoughts, the stranger coldly added. “I am afraid that my friends will offend you therefore I have come to warn you…”

The big hulk in black that had been standing besides him added. “Big Brother Ren has such a good intention towards you. Friend, you should know where to stand!”

Nangong Ping appeared to be perplexed and did not glance at the hulk, solemnly said. “In Pugilist, righteousness and benevolent come first. If it is an upright and earthshaking hero, could he so much as to force the weak to give way to the strong? I afraid that even if he had died, he would not have wanted others to do such things right.”

The stranger countenance started to change and once again, he looked carefully at Nangong Ping. Suddenly he said in jest. “That is right. You are young, handsome and frank.”

Nangong Ping asked. “Then please give way…”

The stranger waved his hand and said. “Although you are frank but the funeral procession still have to change its course…” He smiled and said. “When two person crossed the bridge, the young should let the old cross first, when two enter a one feet door, the junior should let the senior. The person that we are holding rite for, whether it is fame or standing, I afraid are several notches higher than the person in your funeral procession. Therefore, if you change your track, what does it matter?”

Till now, his attitude had been cold and haughty. But his voice was tranquil.

Nangong Ping solemnly said, as he stood upright. “That is right. You are right on the spot!”

The stranger laughed but suddenly he thought that he might use the same words on him, so his laugh immediately ceased!

Nangong Ping pretended not to see and solemnly said. “The old man that lies in this funeral procession, whether in terms of fame and standing, may not be compared to others. But in terms of righteous and benevolent, it is earthshaking and even Gods and Demons know. I afraid it is not less than the one you are paying respect to…”

The stranger coldly said. “Really?”

Nangong Ping added. “Moreover, if you compare it with the fame and standing of the Pugilist, not only our funeral procession, no one will even side track.”

The stranger looked icily at Nangong Ping for awhile before he smiled and added. “Since you are not willing to listen to my good advice, I wash my hands off this matter!” As he turned and walked off.

Nangong Ping did not expect him to just walk away so suddenly. So he was stunned and that big hulk shouted. “Since Big Brother Ren do not want to meddle into this matter anymore, let me ‘Pillar of Heaven’ Xue Bao Yi take care of it instead. Friend, are you willing or not to change your track!”

Even before he had finished, he started to extend his hands to push Nangong Ping on his shoulder.

Nangong Ping expressions undergo a change as he avoided this attack effortlessly. He said. “I have no conflicts with you and I do not want to hurt you. Please make way.” He really did not want to hurt anyone and it came from the bottom of his heart.

This big hulk Xue Bao Yi laughed hilariously at him and said aloud. “Little friend, Uncle Xue can’t bear to hurt you too so it best if you change your track!

Nangong Ping paled and asked. “What did you say?”

Xue Bao Yi laughed strangely and said. “This!” As he sent another palm attack at Nangong Ping. “I see that you also know some martial arts therefore your Uncle Yi is willing to accompany you to play around.” But even before he had finished, his speech lost its jeering for the way Nangong Ping avoided his attack was simply unbelievable.

‘Pillar of Heaven’ gathered back his force and said aloud. “Excellent display!”

The other men that were blocking the road, now attacked at the same time as Xue Bao Yi.

Nangong Ping remained as steady as the mountain as he knocked Xue Bao Yi and two other men on the ground.

Xue Bao Yi was stunned for he did not know how he fell as he witnessed

more men fell by Nangong Ping.

Nangong Ping by now realized that the Big Brother Ren when he said. “Wash his hands mean asking them to attack him. Now he was curious about the background and identity of this Big Brother Ren.

Nangong Ping swept his eyes and saw that ‘Big Brother Ren’ had brought two elderly men in black to the scene and although he looked very calm but his eyes betrayed his surprise. He leapt to him and said in a low voice. “The strong bully the weak, employing wolf pack tactics. Is there no more justice in the Pugilistic Fraternity?”

The ‘Big Brother Ren’ remained composed. Although he was younger than the two elder men but he carried much more air. If he did not speak, the other two elder men would not speak or ask. Just then more than ten men plunge toward Nangong Ping’s back but that Ren surname man waved and they ceased their attacks and none of them moved.

Under the sandstorm, Nangong Ping could see that both the elder men were thin and pale but possessed sharp eyes. It seemed that they were prominent heroes in Pugilist who had not yet retired.

The man with the surname Ren smiled. “Your martial skills are not weak and you are actually one of us.”

He said in jest. “Since you are also from Pugilistic Fraternity, things will be easier to settle.” As he pointed to the slightly taller elder man and added. “This is one of the Man Shan Two Brothers, 'Iron Palm Golden Sword Solitary Swordsman' Chang Sun Chan, Master Chang Sun Da.”

He pointed to the right hand man and continued. “This is naturally 'Startled Soul Twin Sword Wind Chaser Swordsman', Chang Sun Kong, Master Chang Sun Er.”

Nangong Ping clenched both hands in respect and said. “I long heard of your name…” But he thought that it was really very strange that those two recluse swordsmen would be here. And why did he mention their name?

The Ren man smiled and said. “Although I am but a nobody but the one that can cause these two to come from a thousand mile away to attend the funeral rite, how many people in Pugilist are capable of it? Can’t you guess?”

Nangong Ping appeared to be in deep thoughts as he pondered. “Who is he? That can cause the Man Shan Two brothers to come?” Therefore he could only laugh half-heartedly and said. “I am poor in knowledge and cannot guess the identity. But please enlightenment me!”

The Ren fellow suddenly became very solemn and sighed deeply. “This man who died, is a great loss in Pugilist, a loss that equaled a city. This man is famous throughout the nine provinces, whose skills are unrivalled in the world, with the

sword Fallen Autumn Leaf dominate Pugilist for tens of years, the Immortal Divine Dragon Old Master Long…Alas! Since you are also part of the Pugilistic Fraternity, for the sake of this Old Master Long heroic spirit and change your course, is appropriate!" He suddenly noticed that Nangong Ping looked very stunned and did not say anything. Therefore he felt very strange and asked. "Do you know this Old Master Long…"

Nangong Ping suddenly dashed past them lightning fast.

'Man Shan Two Brothers' turned pale as they turned toward Nangong Ping. But that Ren man waved his hand and laughed. "Don't bother to go after him. This young man must be somehow related to the Immortal Divine Dragon. He has no ill-intention and is only attending a funeral rite."

He looked at the shadowy figure of Nangong Ping from a distant and softly sighed. "This young man is a dragon among men. You must take care to observe him. Hopefully he can be our friend or else…" He did not say more as his eyes turned sharp and cold.

There was a tall and imposing old man who stood in the middle of a crowd. He looked very solemn and his eyes were sorrow. And he did not notice Nangong Ping as he approached. He seemed to be in silence for quite a while before he said aloud. "The Immortal Divine Dragon had been a hero and we should not behave like sassy girls and caused his heroic spirit to be unhappy. Brothers, let hurray aloud for the Immortal Divine Dragon!" And an earthshaking shout echoed all around.

Nangong Ping felt confused within. He did not know whether to feel sorrow or happy. He sighed deeply as he stepped forward to the large table in front.

The tall and imposing man was startled and yelled. "Where did this animal come from and dare to come to disturb the spiritual tablet. Take him down!" His voice was solemn and imposing much alike to the Immortal Divine Dragon. After he had shouted, more than ten men from all sides rushed to Nangong Ping.

Nangong Ping shouted aloud. "Wait!" His voice was startling and caused the men from all sides to halt.

The imposing old man shouted angrily. "Waiting for what, hurry…"

Nangong Ping swept his eyes across and saw that thousands of angry eyes were now eyeing him. He felt startled within and did not how to untangle from this situation.

But men were rushing upon him from all sides now and interrupting his thoughts. All these men were no doubt all highly skilled and Nangong Ping was forced to dodge from all their fierce attacks.

The imposing man angrily said aloud. “I want him alive so that I can question him…” Before he could finish, two other big hulk were by his side and said something in a low voice and his rage seemed to disperse. Looking at Nangong Ping, he saw that although he could not retaliated but no one managed to touch him yet. But more and more pugilists by now had rushed forth to capture this rude young man.

Nangong Ping was perplexed as he tried to dodge and shout at the same time. “Everyone wait…” But how could he explain in such a circumstance?

But unexpectedly, the imposing old man shouted. “Everyone hold it!”

This shout was very loud and startling. And everyone immediately ceased but the thousands of angry looks remained.

Nangong Ping sighed, as he felt touched for the achievements of his Mentor Master in Pugilist. He turned around and respectfully bowed to the imposing old man.

The imposing old man asked suddenly. “Are you the fifth disciple from the Divine Dragon Clan, Nangong Ping?” His words were very clear as it echoed to everyone who was startled by this revelation.

“This young man is really from the Divine Dragon Clan?” And the pugilists whispered among themselves. One must know that Nangong Ping after he became the protégé of the Divine Dragon Clan, had not roamed the Pugilist realm yet.

Therefore the people of the Pugilist fraternity did not know him. Although everyone knew that he was the heir of the Nangong Aristocracy Family but none knew that he was also the disciple of Immortal Divine Dragon.

Nangong Ping thought it was strange that this old man would suddenly recognized him and he said still bowing. “Junior is indeed Nangong Ping!”

The imposing old man appeared to be perplexed and said sternly. “Since you are from Divine Dragon Clan, don’t you know that I am conducting a rite for your Teacher? Why are you behaving outrageously here? Change to a filial funeral dress and apologize to the heroic spirit of your benevolent teacher in Heaven.”

Nangong Ping expression was stone heavy and bowed again but said in a clear voice. “The kind treatment that is shown by all the seniors, is greatly appreciated by junior but…” His eyes swept around and he said firmly. “Benevolent teacher actually did not pass away…”

Suddenly there were a commotion all around and the imposing old man clapped on the table and he said. “Divine…Dragon…didn’t…die…?” He suddenly turned over and shouted. “Li Sheng, Wang Ben Guang, come over here!”

Nangong Ping lifted his sight and saw that behind the imposing old man walked out two other men in black robe. They were the coffin carriers of Zhijiao Manor!

It seemed that after Nangong Ping was chasing the priest, Long Fei, Shi Chen, Guo Yuxia and Gu Yihong went up the peak in an attempt to find their benevolent teacher. Those two hulks had waited quite a while before they decided to descent the mountain.

The two of them took the main road down but before they could reach the foot of the mountain, they saw many people from the Pugilist Fraternity. They knew that the Immortal Divine Dragon had a ten-year sword duel, therefore they came from thousands of miles to await news of the duel between Divine Dragon and Phoenix. Because they knew the temper of the Immortal Divine Dragon, therefore none of them dare to ascend the mountain.

Therefore the news that the two coffin carrier hulks brought to them came as a tremendous surprise to them! “Phoenix had died.” “Immortal Divine Dragon had been tricked by the ruse of the followers from Phoenix Clan.” And he even left behind a Will. And now, members of the Divine Dragon Clan had been scattered!

This unconfirmed yet exaggerated news spread like wildfire and became the hot topic among the pugilists. In less than two hours, this news spread throughout the entire fraternity by fast horses!

The hero of Xian, who was well known in pugilist as the Northwest Divine Dragon, 'Flying Rings' Wei Qi, Master Wei Qi although he was nicked by fellow Pugilists as a Fake Dragon but he did not place it to heart. And felt even proud to be associated with the Immortal Divine Dragon. When he heard this most unfortunate news, he immediately summoned the heroes of Pugilist and to organize this grand rite in the ancient city.

Those who had heard of the news and from the Pugilist fraternity all rushed here to attend the rite.

And adding honor to this grand rite, was from outside the Yumen Pass, a mystical person known as 'Fragrance of a Thousand Miles' Ren Feng Ping, who came hurriedly together with two Kongtong swordsmen, the Manshan Two Brothers!

At this moment ‘Fake Dragon’ Wei Qi flew into a rage as he summoned the two coffin carrier hulks – Li Sheng and Wang Ben Guang.

Nangong Ping thought to himself. “No wonder he knew of the news of the passing of my Mentor Master. No wonder he suddenly knew of my name…”

‘Flying Rings’ Wei Qi said aloud. “Is the news of the death of Immortal Divine Dragon muttered by the two of you?”

Li Sheng and Wang Ben Guang nodded at the same time!

“But why did your Fifth Master say that the Divine Dragon had not died?”

Li Sheng and Wang Ben Guang looked at one another. None of them dared to speak.

Wei Qi questioned. “Did you really see the Divine Dragon dies?”

Li Sheng, Wang Ben Guang lowered their head even lower. Only to hear Li Sheng muttered. “Your humble servant…your humble servant did…not…”

Wei Qi angrily said. “What audacious servants, you did not witness it yourself and talked rubbish making a fool out of me!”

In his rage, he left palm slammed the table and sent the offerings to fly in all directions!

Li Sheng and Wang Ben Guang became as white as sheet. .

Nangong Ping said in a clear voice. “Old Senior please restraint. This is not really their fault…”

Wei Qi angrily said. “Don’t blame them, then it is my fault? If the Immortal Divine Dragon really come, won’t he think that I, Fake Dragon is cursing him to die the sooner the better!”

Nangong Ping secretly sighed. “So this man is the ‘Flying Rings’ Wei Qi…” And look carefully at him and noticed that he had some characteristics that resembled his Mentor Master. But he lacked the splendid aura of his Mentor Master.

He recovered from his thoughts. He was still very respectful towards this old man. Although he could be compared to his Mentor Master but at least he was an old hero in Pugilist. So he said. “It is really hard to explain in short notice. In Junior’s heart, I did not think that Old Senior did not handle it wrongly. In fact, I think that Old Senior is worthy of much praise.” He looked around at all the people presented and said. “I believe that the heroes and friends, Seniors of the Pugilist in their hearts feel the same as Junior!”

‘Flying Rings’ Wei Qi looked at Nangong Ping and then looked at the two coffin carrier hulks and waved his hands. “Go, go, go…”

The two men bowed and walked away in shame.

Suddenly there was laughter coming from the back and the same person said. “So I see that you are from the Divine Dragon Clan. It seem that my first trip into Yumen, I will have the chance to meet such a young hero. It really such a joyous thing. Although the news of the death of Immortal Divine Dragon is falsely circulated but his heroism is an eye opener for me, therefore it is an even more joyous thing…”

Nangong Ping turned to look and he was suddenly startled. For he once again saw the Ren man but the people besides him were not the Manshan Two brothers but were a man and a woman. The man was tall, regal and his expression quiet. The woman was captivating and beautiful with beautiful eyes. She was actually his Sister in law Guo Yuxia and his third protégé brother – Shi Chen!

He opened a fan and laughed merrily. “What makes me, Ren Fengping most happy, is that I accidentally meet two other disciples from Divine Dragon Clan. Who is these two? Haha, I am sure everyone knows them too!”

There was another wave of commotion as Guo Yuxia and Shi Chen made their debut.

One person was heard saying. “People say that the wife of Iron Hero is very beautiful. Now that we know it is true…” As all eyes turned to look at Guo Yuxia.

‘Flying Rings’ Wei Qi laughed and said. “Good, good. It amazing that Hero Ren brought along two disciples of the Divine Dragon.” And he extended his hands to pay his respect. “The two must be the Zhijiao Twin Swords that is so famous in recent Pugilist history!”

Shi Chen countenance had a slight change as he lowered his head.

Guo Yuxia softly laughed and said. “Junior…I...”

Nangong Ping stepped forward and introduced. “This is Junior’s Sister in law. And this is Junior’s third protégé brother and is also one of the Zhijiao Twin Sword, who is also nicked the ‘Quiet Swordsman’ Shi Chen!”

‘Fake Dragon’ Wei Qi looked at the two of them a few times and said. “Sister in law…” He laughed aloud and said. “This is the wife of the ‘Iron Hero’? Excellent, oh how excellent! Although I stay far away in the Northwest but I do have heard people in Pugilist praising ‘Iron Hero’ as Lu Bu* and the girl as Dian Chan*…” Even before he had finished, people around started to break into laughter.

**Characters from the Three Kingdom Period.*

Nangong Ping unwittingly secretly laughed and thought. “This old man although he is wise with age but his language is so crude.”

Ren Fengping smiled and said in a clear voice. “In Pugilist, although there is many nicks that are unlike the person but the nicks of the Divine Dragon’s disciples are all so true. Take this Hero Shi who is nicked the Quiet Swordsman. He is really as quiet as stone…” Although he was praising Shi Chen, he was in fact looking at Nangong Ping.

“This young and handsome man is also from Divine Dragon clan and his name must be prominent as well. May I be introduced to him?”

When Nangong Ping saw Shi Chen and Guo Yuxia but did not saw Long Fei, in his heart, he had many questions to ask. But because this Ren Fengping looked refined and had an extraordinary air, he thought that he must be someone very important and unwittingly a touch of appreciation overtook him. So he smiled and said. “I am Nangong Ping, just become protégé of the Clan not too long ago. How can I possible be compared to my Sister in law and Third brother…”

Guo Yuxia softly laughed and said. “Although my this Fifth Brother just

joined the Clan, he is better than all of us!"

Wei Qi laughed and said. "The disciples of the Divine Dragon are all outstanding. You are all too humbled. Let me ask you. Since the 'Divine Dragon' is not dead, where is he now?"

Guo Yuxia melancholy sighed. "Although Mentor Master is well possible be alive but as for where he is now, we as juniors, do not know!"

Wei Qi widened his eyes, surprised at the reply.

Guo Yuxia added. "Yesterday night, we been combing the mountain for Mentor Master and at the same time anxious for Fifth Brother's whereabouts!"

Wei Qi looked puzzled and asked. "He is not with you?"

Guo Yuxia melancholy sighed. "No."

Wei Qi looked at Nangong Ping and questioned him looking startled. "Your Mentor Master whereabouts is unknown, his fate undetermined, you do not make an effort to search and yet busied yourself with the funeral of others…Haiz, haiz! What sort of disciple are you?"

Nangong Ping was stunned and wanted to explain but how could he explain what happened in that single day which was not only complex and involved the reputation of his Mentor Master.

Guo Yuxia softly sighed. "Fifth Brother is still young and…" She sadly sighed but did not elaborate.

Wei Qi hummed in disapproval and did not look at Nangong Ping, asked. "That 'Iron Hero' Long Fei, I have long heard of his fame. Why is he not here?"

This was also the same question that was haunting Nangong Ping. Although the attitude of Wei Qi changed towards him but he did not mind and thought. "I am about to ask for Big Brother whereabouts. It good that he has asked."

At this time, the unusual guest that came from beyond Yumen Pass, 'Fragrance from a Thousand Miles' Ren Fengping who was watching coldly by the side, thought that it was strange. "Is there some conflicts between the disciples of the Divine Dragon Clan?" And a smile floated across his face.

But Guo Yuxia only rolled her eyes to express her reply. Wei Qi pondered in frustrated and said. "Then where is Long Fei? Is his whereabouts a secret? Where did he go?"

Guo Yuxia sighed and said. "My Big Brother…Alas! My Big Brother he accompanied my Fourth Sister to stay at the back but I wonder why they are not here yet!" She sighed again and lowered her head. Her voice although was normal but her speech was marred by many tell tale signs that all were not well and hiding many other reasons.

Nangong Ping grew perplexed and he became suspicious. But 'Fake Dragon' Wei Qi asked. "Why did he not accompany you but instead accompanying another

girl?"

Guo Yuxia melancholy sighed. "Jun…Junior do not know!"

Suddenly among the wind and the sand, a white carriage appeared. Although the carriage was small, it was pulled by a young horse and seemingly pulled by no one. On closer look, extended inside it, a beautiful hand was holding a rope.

Although the carriage curtains were pure white but this hand was as white as the luster of a jade.

Nangong Ping who was looking at a distant countenance slightly changed and Guo Yuxia noticed it and laughing asked. "Whose daughter may this carriage seated? Fifth Brother do you know?"

Before she finished, the curtains of the carriage were slightly drawn and an extremely beautiful woman with watery eyes and long hair that seemingly flowing like the cloud was seen carelessly slanting by the side. Her watery eyes rolled and looked around and then fixed upon Nangong Ping and said. "Hello, have you finished talking yet?"

The people from the Pugilistic Fraternity, who had been secretly admiring Guo Yuxia, were all stunned into silence as thousands of eyes turned their attention upon this extremely beautiful woman. Earlier when they saw Guo Yuxia, they all thought that she was a peerless beauty but this woman were even more beautiful than her by several notches. Guo Yuxia beauty can be described with words but this woman beauty was out of this world and more like a heavenly fairy that had descended upon the mortal realm.

Now that Mei Yinxue had arrived, although Nangong Ping appeared calm but he did not know what to say

Guo Yuxia said, "I was thinking where Fifth Brother go to, now I see…" She softly laughed and added. "This girl is so beautiful. Fifth Brother, you are so capable. In the pace of a day, you manage to be acquaintance with such a beautiful beauty and she seems to be very friendly with you!"

'Fake Dragon ' Wei Qi hummed and solemnly said, "Noble Hero Ren, Brother Shi, I staying in Xian City. Please come and attend a feast later!" As he turned to leave without looking at Nangong Ping and extended his hands together to everyone presented. "Thanks for making this difficult journey and follow me to the city to enjoy a feast for some ordinary wine." He walked away in strides.

There was some initial confusion among the pugilists as they scattered.

Nangong Ping had a stumbling block in his mind. He was haughty in his heart, how could he stand this humiliation, this cold treatment? And he could not even explain it to anyone.

Guo Yuxia as she returned the courtesy to Wei Qi, her face could not help but felt proud. Only when Wei Qi had walked far did she turned over and walked

to the carriage and said in jest. “This maiden, what is your surname. What brings you here to look for our Fifth Brother?”

Mei Yinxue did not even move and remained slanting by the side of the carriage. Her watery eyes looked at her casually while her beautiful hand holding a rope as though she did not heard.

Nangong Ping secretly sighed and walked over. “This is my Sister in law. This is Maiden Mei, is…is…” How could he reveal the background of Mei Yinxue?

“Maiden Mei,” Guo Yuxia smiled. “Our Fifth Brother who is able to know you. I as his Sister in law feel very happy as well.”

Mei Yinxue coldly laughed awhile and looked at her. “Now that the old man has left, you should be very happy right?”

Guo Yuxia was stunned and her countenance changed.

Nangong Ping who was benevolent naturally was still filled with great respect for his Sister in law. But he knew Mei Yinxue eccentric temper therefore he stood on the tight spot, not knowing what to do. So he anyhow said anything, laughed and said. “Sister in law, where exactly did Big Brother go?”

Guo Yuxia stared at Mei Yinxue and then suddenly turned around. “You should go and ask your Fourth Sister!”

Nangong Ping was startled and thought. “What sort of a reply is it?” He saw that Shi Chen was standing at a side, indifferent to anything while Ren Fengping was smiling. Although most of the pugilists had departed but there was still many that remained. And they were now looking at them.

He lowered his eyes but suddenly there were two flashes of lightning as two shadows dashed past and stop in front of the carriage. They were the two Kongtong Swordsmen ‘Manshan Two Brothers’! But now their eyes were like blades and swords looking intensely at Mei Yinxue. After awhile, Chang Sun Kong slowly said. “Ten years of parting and now this familiar face is seen again.” His stares were filled with malicious.

Chang Sun Kong solemnly asked, “Maiden, is your surname Mei?”

Nangong Ping was startled and thought, “Did they recognize her?”

Mei Yinxue remained as compose as before and nodded her head.

Chang Kong Sun paled immediately and his hands were shaking as he said, “Mei Yinxue, you…you…” As he drawn out a soft sword from his waist as he shouted. “You come down!”

Chang Sun Dan too undergo a terrifying change.

Guo Yuxia was startled and turned to look at Nangong Ping. “She is really the Cold Blood Concubine?”

Nangong Ping was frightened in his heart and looked at Mei Yinxue who

was still as composed as ever as she laughed. “Who is Mei Yinxue, Mei Yinxue is who?”

Chang Sun brothers looked at one another in bewilderment. Chang Sun Kong’s sword slowly lowered. Ten years ago, the Cold Blood Concubine Mei Yinxue played a fool out of the two brothers and they hated her even now. But their memories of her features had been clouded with the passing of a decade. Now that she had asked, the two of them were unable to come out with an answer.

‘Fragrance from a Thousand Miles’ Ren Fengping smiled and said, “The Peacock Concubine has found fame long ago. This maiden is not more than twenty. Chang Sun brothers, it is most likely that you have made a mistake!”

Chang Sun Kong looked perplexed and added. “Although I knew that Mei Yinxue had been killed by Divine Dragon but…this person she is surnamed Mei as well and they looked so alike…”

Chang Sun Dan looked at Mei Yinxue and asked, “Are you the kin of Mei Yinxue and what is your relationship with Mei Yinxue?”

Mei Yinxue smiled and asked, “Those with the surname Mei, are they all related with her?”

‘Fragrance of a Thousand Miles’ Ren Fengping laughed and walked over in strides as he separated the two brothers. “In this world, there is many people with the same surname and those that look alike are not few either. Chang Sun brothers, you have been mistaken. It is best that you apologized to this Maiden Mei.”

Although he had said like this but he secretly pulled the Chang Sun brothers aside because he knew that the Chang Sun brothers who had found fame long ago would never apologize to a nameless girl.

Mei Yinxue laughed forth awhile before coldly added. “These two great heroes, great swordsmen, how would they apologize to a nameless person like me. You really should secretly pull them away.”

Ren Fengping was stunned. Although he was very composed in all matters now his countenance had a slight change as he tried to forcefully laugh it off.

Mei Yinxue waved her hands at the pure white curtain as it fell.

Guo Yuxia eyed the heavy curtain strangely as she thought. “What an attentive and alert girl, what a sharp tongue!”

She was proud of her beauty and proud of her intelligence and words. But when she saw this extremely beautiful girl who was so cold in demeanor, she felt she lost something. Her thoughts recovered and she lifted her head and said. “Fifth Brother, after this matter is over. Are you going to go back to Zhijiao Manor?”

Nangong Ping replied, “After I have finished the funeral, naturally I…” But then he suddenly remembered that at the end of March, he had to meet that Maiden Ye Manqing at the foot of Huashan to fulfill three unfinished wishes of his Mentor

Master. And he also remembered that he had to protect Mei Yinxue who was in the carriage and never to leave her a single step, he became speechless.

Guo Yuxia added. “Since Big Brother is not here, you should travel with me. If not if I am seen with Third Brother alone by the pugilists, there are bound to be gossips.” She melancholy sighed and said. “Third Brother, what do you think?”

Shi Chen lifted his head and said plainly, “Yes.” And he lowered his head again.

When Nangong Ping saw his expression, he thought that it was because everyone was still in a state of confusion over what happened to his Mentor Master.

He said, “But after March I have to…”

Suddenly there was an icy cold voice coming from the carriage. “Hello. Will you hurry and finish the old man funeral. I want to go Jiangnan.”

Guo Yuxia coldly replied, “If you want to go Jiangnan, please go yourself…”

Nangong Ping slowly said, “I afraid…I afraid that I have to go Jiangnan too.”

Guo Yuxia expression changed and asked solemnly. “What did you say? Don’t tell me that when Big Brother is not here, I am no longer your Sister in law?”

She was already jealous and afraid of Mei Yinxue looks and talents. Therefore she did not want such a girl to be by the side of Nangong Ping. Because that will disrupt her plans in the future and even discovered her secret. Therefore she tried to make Nangong Ping stay by her side.

Nangong Ping by now was very confused in his thoughts and was in a very tight spot. “Naturally I have to listen to Sister in law but…”

Suddenly a man in black approached and asked, “Master, do we continue the funeral procession to the cemetery?”

Nangong Ping said, “Naturally to the cemetery.” As he took the opportunity to slip away. “After I take care of the funeral, I will come back to discuss with Sister in law.” He extended his hands and said to Ren Fengping. “Hero Ren, I make a move first.” As he hurriedly walked off with the man in black.

Ren Fengping fanned his fan and smiled and said in a clear voice. “Finish your task, I will pay you a visit some other time. “ As he and the two Manshan Two Brothers moved to the direction of Xian City.

The rope leading inside the curtain of the carriage was lifted gently as the horse carriage make a turn before it moved off.

Guo Yuxia looked perplexed and purposely said melancholy. “When I was a maiden, I have never heard of any unmarried girls that followed a man. It seem that

in such a short period of time, the world have become so decadent."

But a merry laugh was heard inside the carriage. "After one have become another's wife, a good conduct has to be observed. When one is a maiden, nothing matters."

Guo Yuxia angrily said. "What did you say?" But the carriage had gone far and only left behind a pack of dust that lingered on her face.

Shi Chen sighed and said, "Sister in law, I…we should search for Big Brother!"

Guo Yuxia appeared to be startled for awhile before she turned and coldly said. "Are you still thinking of your Fourth Sister?"

Shi Chen said, "I…" But he got nothing to say therefore he sighed.

Guo Yuxia said, "Listen to me and be a good child. Only then will Little Protégé Sister like you." Her eyes rolled and she paused to considered. "First we will go to the house of that Master Wei Qi. I don't believe that Fifth Brother will not go to Xian City." She looked at the scattering crowd she secretly held Shi Chen by his wrist and softly said. "Good child, follow me there."

Shi Chen replied, "I…I…" Nevertheless he still follow her there.

Chapter Seven
The Concubine causing uproar in the City

Manshan Two Brothers countenance looked as dark as the darkness. They had secretly followed Nangong Ping till he had completed the funeral process and entered Xian City. Now they had followed their carriage to a villa.

Chang Sun Kong stood far away under an opposite house and said in a low voice. “Since this girl is not Mei Yinxue, why did he ask us brothers to follow them?”

Chang Sun Dan considered for awhile and said. “He is a dragon among men. Surely he have his purposes when he wanted us to do so. Now I may not know but in future, we will know. Second Brother, you and me possesses an extraordinary martial skills but whatever fame we have is but a fleeting moment. So what is the use? If you and me want to gain fame in the Central Plains, we have to depend on him!”

Chang Sun Kong sighed and suddenly from the door opposite, a man walking in strides approached them and extended out a invitation and handed it to Chang Sun Dan. He simply extended his hands but did not say anything.

Manshan Two brothers were startled and opened up the invitation and on it was written. “Zhijiao Manor disciple Nangong Ping lacking proper knowledge of the Pugilist respectfully invite Manshan Two Brothers.”

Chang Sun two brothers looked at one another and were startled. And at this time, Nangong Ping who had changed his robe was now standing at the door opposite and extended his hands.

Although the two brothers had much experience in Pugilist but at this moment, they did not know what to do, as they remained startled.

Chang Sun Dan extended both his hands and said in a clear voice. “We appreciate your kind intentions. We pay a visit some other time!

And they turned and left at the same time without turning their heads.

After Nangong Ping had watched them leaving, the smile on his face vanished and he sighed and walked heavily into the door. As the skies had darkened, light from the bronze lamps soon lighted the courtyard. Although he possessed martial skills and millions of taels of wealth, he was now carrying a problem that neither martial skills nor wealth could solve.

He muttered. “If only I could split into three then all my problems would be solved but…Alas!” As he did not know how to split into three therefore his frustrations and misfortune did not go away.

Mei Yinxue was sitting in a comfortable manner and relaxing under the exquisite purple lamp. The soft light of the bronze lamp shone on her like a dream. On top of the stone table, was a basket of erotic fruits like banana, litchi, grape, lemon…all these erotic fruits from the Southern Seas that even a very wealthy family had rarely seen, did not even hold her attention. She just looked lazily at the bronze lamp that was hanging on the wall and lost in thoughts.

Nangong Ping heavy treading did not disturb her trance like thoughts. She did not even turned and looked at him. Her pale white face under the light of the lamp was like a beautiful piece of jade.

After awhile, Mei Yinxue finally softly sighed. “Did they go?”

Nangong Ping said. “Yes…The two of them had been secretly following us. I wonder what they are up to. Did they manage to recognize you after all?”

Mei Yinxue causally laughed. “Why are you worrying for?”

Nangong Ping asked. “Why should I worry?”

Mei Yinxue melancholy said. “You are thinking that if others will to recognize me, then it will place you in a disadvantage position. When that time comes…You will not bother with me anymore because I am a person abandoned by the Pugilistic Fraternity. If you were to aid me, then won’t you too become a traitor to the Pugilistic Fraternity? The most, most upright disciple of the Divine Dragon will never dare to become a traitor. Even the Immortal Dragon did not dare to, don’t you agree?”

Nangong Ping remained as composed as before. There was not a tingle of expression on his face.

Mei Yinxue added. “The Justice of the Pugilist is but a prestige right enjoy by a few people. If there are ten heroes of Pugilist that say you are an evil person, then you are destined to be one. That is because no matter what you will try to do, you will always be in the wrong. Even the most, most upright of the Divine Dragon will never dare to say a word of fairness under the banner of the Justice of the Pugilistic Fraternity. Because even if it is said out, others may not believe…Hello, do you agree?”

There was a tingle in the eyes of Nangong Ping but till, he kept quiet.

Mei Yinxue suddenly softly laughed. “But you can place your heart to rest. Now in the Pugilist, except for you and me, there is no one else that knows that I am…” She did not say it out.

Suddenly there was laughter coming from outside the window as it said. “Peacock Concubine, this time you are wrong!”

Nangong Ping underwent a great change in his countenance as he said in a low voice. “Who?” As he saw a man entering by the window who smiled and said. “Due to unforeseeable circumstances, I am forced to enter through the city to avoid

the ears of men. Please forgive me!"

The man was actually 'Fragrance of a Thousand Miles' Ren Fengping!

Nangong Ping was startled as he fell backward three steps.

A strange expression floated on Mei Yinxue pale face as she got up and said. "What are you saying? Please say it again alright?" Her voice was so gentle and tranquil like a teacher taking to her students to repeat their answers.

Ren Fengping was slightly startled and did not know whether this woman was actually composed or unconcerned. But his thoughts betrayed him as it was shown on his face. So he tried to shift this frustrating query by saying. "The Nangong Aristocracy Family is really wealthy throughout the world! Who will expect that in faraway Xian, you have such a beautiful villa."

Nangong Ping smiled and extended his hands as an appreciation of thanks. By now he had recovered his composure.

When Ren Fengping had sat down, Mei Yinxue softly laughed. "What I asked earlier, did you not heard?"

Ren Fengping smiled and said. "The Peacock Concubine is renowned throughout the realm. Maiden Mei words, how can I afford to miss out…"

Mei Yinxue looked solemn and coldly said. "Maybe you have heard too much of a gossip…" As she moved forth and one of her jade hands waved in the front of Ren Fengping.

Although Ren Fengping remained motionless and smiling, he was looking at Mei Yinxue's hand. It was as though he did not know that once Mei Yinxue lowered her hand, he would immediately hover around death's door.

Nangong Ping looked on knowingly and he stepped to the front of Mei Yinxue. Only when Mei Yinxue gently put down her hand did he take a deep breath in his heart and thought. "This man either he possesses supreme martial skill or that he has a superb intellect…"

His thoughts were interrupted by Ren Fengping big laughter. "Impressive! Impressive! The Peacock Concubine is indeed a phoenix among women…"

He ceased his laughter and said solemnly, "Maiden Mei, if your hand was to pat down, then you don't deserve to be a phoenix."

Mei Yinxue coldly said, "You have not make yourself clear, naturally I will not harm you…"

Ren Fengping suddenly laughed and said, "After I make myself clear, I don't think Maiden will think of harming me."

Mei Yinxue coldly said, "Those that know too much, will usually hover around death's door."

Ren Fengping exclaimed, "Do I really know too much?"

Mei Yinxue said, "Indeed!" As she did not take her glance from Ren

Fengping. Although she could not guess his intention but she could not take him lightly. For a person that could treat lightly her hand that could end his life anytime, his action and words were not to be taken lightly.

Ren Fengping ceased his laughter and added, “If I had known too much, then in the Xian City, those people that know too much numbered at least a thousand!”

Mei Yinxue countenance changed as she interrupted, “How do you explain it?”

Ren Fengping explained, “Maiden Mei knows the arts of youth and can remain ageless. Therefore no one else in the world will ever know Maiden Mei that look like twenty years of old will be the Peacock Concubine. But…who will expect that Nangong brother will leave a survivor and he has ran to 'Flying Rings' Wei Qi…”

He pointed at the dark skies outside the window and said aloud. “Nangong brother, Maiden Mei, did you not notice that the skies of Xian City is now filled with the malevolent air of sword energy!”

Nangong Ping muttered, “Survivor…”

Mei Yinxue solemnly said, “That...That Ye Liuge (Gentleman Swordsman) did not die?”

Ren Fengping sighed and nodded, “Although he is heavily injured, he has yet to die…”

Nangong Ping was left stunned for awhile before muttering. “He has yet to die?” Although he sounded startled, he was actually also relieved.

Therefore when Ren Fengping looked at him, he found that Nangong Ping did not behave within his expectations when he heard the news.

“Although Ye Liuge is wounded, he did not die. Li Tian Ming has come down from Mt. Zhongnan. Li Tianming is the Chief of the Zhongnan Sect and Wei Qi is the Seventh of the Zhongnan disciples. And at this moment of time, Wei Qi has mustered all the pugilists in the city to search for the two of you. Although I am hapless to aid you but I could not watch on helplessly therefore I rush here…Nangong Master, the enemy is strong and you weak and you are greatly outnumbered. Moreover your protégé brother and protégé Sister in law seem to some biased views currently, therefore I suggest…”

Nangong Ping added, “Do you mean to say that we should seek cover for awhile?”

Before Ren Fengping could say anything, Mei Yinxue interrupted, “Wrong!”

She was smiling but no one knew why.

Ren Fengping replied, “I do have such an intention. Why did maiden say it is wrong?”

Mei Yinxue explained, “If I were you, I would advise him to stop meddling on this matter. Because anyone that is involved with the Cold Blood Concubine Mei Yinxue, will not have a good ending.” She said in jeer, “Is that what you want to say to him in your heart?” She did not wait for Ren Fengping to open his mouth and turned to Nangong Ping and said, “If I were you, I would immediately go far, far away. Even run to that ‘Flying Rings’ Wei Qi and to tell him straight in the face that Mei Yinxue and you have nothing to do with one another…”

She suddenly stumped in her voice and then laughed hilariously, “Mei Yinxue haiz, Mei Yinxue…You are really a most misfortune and dumb person. You obviously know that the people in the Pugilistic Fraternity will never let spare you because you do not stand for heroism and righteousness. Because of your pitiful yet spiteful temper…but at least you should feel very proud. Because of a lonely girl like you, those righteous and heroic pugilists actually mobilize the entire city to deal with you!”

Nangong Ping kept quiet and he retained his composure while Ren Fengping looked on strangely at the out of norm rare beauty who had by now ceased her hilarious laughs and was now sitting on the chair. Her eyes now looked sharp, firm and cold. It seemed that she had thrown away all her feelings with that laugh. And now her blood really became icy cold.

Ren Fengping secretly thought. “This man and woman is not a couple, they are not even friends. I wonder what are their relationship with one another.”

He turned his attention to Nangong Ping and asked, “This matter must not be delayed anymore. I wonder what you planning to do?”

Nangong Ping smiled and said, “Your kind intention, I appreciate it…”

Feng Fengping said, “The odds are many, it is better if you flee.”

“The odds are many…” Nangong Ping solemnly said, “Zhongnan Sect is an orthodox clan. Surely they will listen to explanations and not use the odds right?”

Ren Fengping thought, “The Cold Blood Concubine has such a bad reputation that there is no need for any explanations…” But he said instead, “This…”

Mei Yinxue suddenly laughed coldly and added, “You may look smart but actually you are very stupid. Those self-righteous people have long hated me to the core. Will they even give me a chance to explain?”

Ren Fengping thought, “Indeed she has excellent foreknowledge…” And he looked at Nangong Ping and thought it weird that although he looked calm from outside, but he was stubborn within. How could he tolerate her at all?

Suddenly there was a knock as Wei Cheng En entered. He felt strange to see that there was another person in the room. But because he was experienced in dealing with surprises, in that instant, his surprise faded away. He lowered his head

and said, “Your humble servant did not dare to disturb Master but…” A sorry smile was seen as he added, “The servants underneath Master and some merchants from Xian City when they heard that Master have come, all wanted to come and pay a visit. And they are holding a feast at Eternal Restaurant for Master and Maiden Mei. I wonder if Master will honor a visit.”

Nangong Ping looked solemn and glanced at Mei Yinxue who raised her eyebrow slightly as he looked at her. Although she did not say it out, her disapproval was spelt out quite obvious.

But Nangong Ping asked solemnly, “Is it now?”

Wei Cheng En replied, “If it is convenient for Master…”

Nangong Ping said, “Let's go!”

Wei Cheng En looked very happy as he said, “Your humble servant will lead the way!” He left the room joyfully for his Master had actually shown him such a great honor.

Ren Fengping was stunned. At this moment of time, the entire city of pugilists were now combing for Nangong Ping and the ‘Cold Blood Concubine.’ He really could not believe that Nangong Ping would agree to such a request. He thought, “If he is not exceptional brave, then he must be a hopeless fool…”

Nangong Ping smiled and seemingly saw through his heart, “Hero Ren, will you like to join us too for a couple of drinks?”

Ren Fengping shook his hands and said, “It’s alright with me.” He could not resist sighing and added, “I really cannot understand your intentions…”

Nangong Ping added. “My Benevolent Teacher often taught me, when things happen, why avoid it? Face it boldly!” He smiled. “The disciples of the Divine Dragon will never back down from anything!”

Ren Fengping quietly said, “Maybe you are right.”

Nangong Ping said, “As for the kind intention shown by you, I am very grateful. If we have a chance to meet some other time, I will make merry with you.”

Ren Fengping said, “Ever since I entered the Pass, my only achievement is to know a heroic young man like you. Please take care after we part.” As he extended his hands and left through the window!

Nangong Ping watched him as he disappeared and commented. “This person is really a good man!”

Mei Yinxue coldly laughed and said in jest, “Really?” And walked to the door but she suddenly turned her head and laughed. “I am feeling strange. Why did you want to go deliver yourself to…”

Nangong Ping said, “If you don’t wish to go…”

Mei Yinxue said. “Since you already decided. Neither did I attach any

importance to life and death in my heart. Alas!…Frankly speaking, with regards to life, I am really very tired." She lifted her hand to comb her hair back and slowly walked out.

Nangong Ping was startled and heard a soft sigh coming from outside of the door. "If I were them, I would never give you the chance to explain either."

But the steps that followed Nangong Ping out of the door was strangely steady amidst the sorrowful sighing.

Suddenly there was a great commotion as the pugilists saw a nonchalance young man in cotton robe and an extremely beautiful and demeanor woman.

"Nangong Ping!"

"The Cold Blood Concubine!"

The pugilists that littered the streets echoed the names of these two people in their eyes.

Nangong Ping was smiling as he followed Wei Cheng En. He was exceptional calm and that alone captivated the hearts of all the pugilists!

Hundreds of eyes looked on as they followed his steady footsteps.

Suddenly a thin young swordsman drawn his sword and it emitted a chilling cold sword energy. But Nangong Ping did not even look at him. The pugilists that were around therefore did not make their move. The thin young swordsman looked around and froze in his tracks.

Mei Yinxue beautiful eyes rolled as her long hair flurried. She was carrying a captivating and sweet smile on her face and docile walked besides Nangong Ping. An unknown number of people were looking at her. As she looked at the pugilists with her beautiful eyes, many of them immediately lowered their heads and started to tidy their clothing.

Those who were pessimists secretly thought. "Is it because my clothing is untidy? Is it because I look funny? Why did she smile at me?"

Those who were egoistic secretly thought. "Alas, she is smiling at me. Is it because she takes a liking for me?"

The pugilists that crowded in the streets were all thinking that Mei Yinxue's smiles were all directing on them.

When Mei Yinxue saw their expressions, the captivating smile that was on her face grew even more charming!

The lighting and decorations in the Eternal Restaurant had been specifically prepared for the young master of the Nangong Aristocracy Family. Now Nangong

Ping and Mei Yinxue had reached the wine restaurant and were walking up the stairs. Although the boss of wine restaurant was trying his best to restrain himself but his glance was unable to remove from Mei Yinxue.

The tables had been laid on the second floor of the restaurant and seated besides it, were the richest men in Xian City. In normal days, the attitudes of those men were usually haughty but today, they were all humbly waiting. Because the one soon to come, was the wealthiest of the wealthy, the Prince of the Golden Kingdom!

All the wealthy merchants immediately stood up but lowered their heads at the same time as though the dazzling golden light of this Prince would blind their eyes!

Nangong Ping smiled and extended his hands to everyone. They lifted up their heads and could not help feeling startled and stunned. But what caused them to be caused were the straightforward mannerism of Nangong Ping and the unparalleled charm of Mei Yinxue.

At the same time, the crowd that was down the streets was in a state of pandemonium. “Nangong Ping and Mei Yinxue have gone up to the Eternal Restaurant”. This message started to spread till it reached the ears of Priest Tian Ming and Wei Qi.

Thereafter shoves of pugilists headed toward the Eternal Restaurant in excitement and nervousness!

Coming from the top of the Eternal Restaurant were music, laughers, toasts…as it made its way down by the wind.

The Chief of Zhongnan, Priest Tian Ming walked hastily to the Eternal Restaurant with ‘Flying Rings’ Wei Qi.

Priest Tian Ming asked, “This Nangong Ping is said to be the son of a very wealthy family…”

Wei Qi replied, “Indeed.”

Li Tian Ming said in jest. “If he think he wants to move our hearts through wealth, then he is not far from death. How can we let such a rogue mingle in Pugilist?”

Wei Qi said, “Although he is young but his wealth equaled a kingdom and is the protégé of the Immortal Divine Dragon. He has everything and should have behaved. Who will expect that although he is handsome, he is so lecherous. It really cause others to sigh for him.”

Li Tian Ming exclaimed, “This Nangong Ping shall pay for his evil deeds with his life. Even his clan disciples look down upon him and refuse to be involved

with him!"

Wei Qi sighed, "But no matter what. Today our target is Mei Yinxue. As for Nangong Ping, we should at least reserve some respect to the Immortal Divine Dragon.

Li Tianming scoffed, "This has to depend what is the relationship between Mei Yinxue and him!"

By now they had reached the Eternal Restaurant. Li Tianming waved with his hands as a signal for the pugilists to surround this wine restaurant. This was to cut off the retreat route of Nangong Ping and Mei Yinxue. This act had alarmed the people of Xian City and countless number of speculators had also crowded round the big street. It caused the curious constables to stall in the attempt to investigate the riot.

This riot had never happened before…

Everyone from young maidens, married women with babies to the bedridden old men were asking, "What is the matter?"

Those that were working stopped their work, those that were scholars put down their books, those that were eating stop their meals, and the gamblers stopped gambling and hurried to the street to ask, "What is the matter?"

Some thought that there was a mass robbery for many of the wealthier men were at the Eternal Restaurant. Therefore there was even more panic among the rich.

Some thought that there was an upcoming bloodshed by the pugilists for they recognized Master Wei Qi and immediately barred their doors and windows.

The anxious constables were shouting in the crowd and holding iron chains in their hands!

The frightened married women were in the crowd shouting for their sons and daughters who was lost.

The ancient city of Xian was now in a state of a commotion and confusion. And the people that were affected by the riots would never expect that it all happened because of one woman, a very beautiful maiden – the 'Cold Blood Concubine'!

But above the wine restaurant, under the majesty light of the lamps, Mei Yinxue was nonchalant and at ease.

She was even sitting quietly besides Nangong Ping, with a coy look and was smiling.

But the riots on the streets had started to cause these wealthy merchants to feel startled as they secretly thought, "What is going on?"

But because none of them dared to be disrespectful to Nangong Ping, therefore none of them walked to the window and took a peek.

Suddenly there was a great shout from below and like a wind, from the surrounding windows, scores of men appeared like a ghost in the darkness and their icy cold stares were upon Mei Yinxue and Nangong Ping.

"Who are they?"

"What is the matter?"

Nangong Ping sighed as he got up and he slowly walked to the stairs. He was like a host that was waiting for late guest.

Ascending from the stairs were Li Tianming and Wei Qi. Their expressions were like bronze as they made their way up the stairs.

Nangong Ping smiled and said. "Please forgive me for the lack of welcome for the two Seniors."

'Jaded Hand of the Positive Nirvana' Li Tianming stared fiercely for awhile before he walked slowly towards Mei Yinxue, who was trying to contain her laughter. He sat down and took a cup of wine from the table and drink from it. The people all around were looking in tension at his very move. And the air around suddenly became insufferable.

He did not even look at Mei Yinxue who seated just opposite him and looked at his snow-white hand and solemnly said, "The night is very late now. I sure the guests have their fill of the food and wine. It is time to go back!"

There was a commotion as the guests ran down like prisoners forgetting their usual etiquette.

But there was a very brave bank boss who said, "What is going on with you people. For no reason you come here to create trouble. Is there no regard for law and order? Although his words were brave but he was stumbling with fright.

Li Tianming coldly laughed and did not even turned his head, "If you don't wish to leave, you can choose to stay here!"

The bank boss looked around. By now, the rest of the guests had mostly dispersed and he looked at the cold stares around him. He felt a cold shiver down his spine. He hurried extended his hands to Nangong Ping and left in a hurry.

Wei Qi coldly laughed as he walked toward Li Tianming side and sat down.

Nangong Ping walked towards Mei Yinxue and said to the visitors. "The dishes are still hot and the wine still warm. Respected Seniors, let's drink together?" He said it in a calm manner.

But Wei Qi smashed the tables with his hands.

There was a change in Nangong Ping's countenance and he said solemnly, "If Seniors wish to drink, I will glad to comply. But if Seniors do not wish to have the intention to drink, then I afraid I have to leave."

Li Tianming coldly said, "If you want to go down, please free to."

Mei Yinxue softly laughed as she slowly stood up, "Then let us go."

Wei Qi shouted, “You cannot go!”

Mei Yinxue raised one of her eyebrows as she asked flabbergasted, “Why is that I cannot go? Does Master Wei Qi wishes for me to stay behind to accompany you, to drink?”

Li Tianming coldly said, “Maiden you have been overbearing in the Pugilistic Fraternity for nearly thirty years and there are countless number of people harmed by you. Now you should have lived long enough.”

Mei Yinxue charmingly said, “Priest your hair is white and you have not live enough. If you continue to live…Ha, I afraid others will soon call you an old imp.”

Wei Qi was enraged while Li Tianming did not appear to be moved. He waved a hand to calm Wei Qi rage and coldly said, “If today, Maiden you die, I will conduct a rite for you to pacify your soul. So that those malicious ghosts that you have innocently harmed will not extract revenge upon your soul.”

Mei Yinxue softly said, “Haiz! You have to kill me today?”

Li Tianming coldly said, “I dare not. I only hope Maiden will decide use a sword to end your life yourself.”

Mei Yinxue asked, “End myself with a sword?” She looked very surprised. “Why?”

Li Tianming said, “I don’t wish to talk with you but because a priest is merciful that why I am doing so now. If you still want to talk in circles, I'll be forced to kill!”

Mei Yinxue said, “Then you have better start doing so or else I will reveal your secret!” She was still smiling while Priest Tianming underwent a great change in his countenance.

Wei Qi said, “I have already said we shouldn’t talk too much with her.” As he brandished out a Phoenix and Dragon Ring.

Nangong Ping suddenly said, “Wait!”

Wei Qi said, “Do you wish to accompany her to die?” As he sent tables flying all over.

Nangong Ping parried the tables away to the walls behind his back as he said, “The two of you come in such a haste only to kill. It is so ridiculous!”

The surrounding pugilists were surprised to find them so composed and unwittingly sighed. The pugilists below were also in a state of surprise to find it quite quiet above.

Nangong Ping took a glance around and said in a clear voice. “Today you come with many, using bullying tactic and attempting to kill us in the confusion. Then in the future, would not others in the Pugilist demand a justice as well? If you really want to take our lives today, at least you should make accountable to all the people in the Pugilistic Fraternity for whatever reasons, must we die!” His voice

was clear and loud and echoed to all sides.

Priest Tianming said in jest, “From your speech, it seem that you want to say it to the pugilists around?”

Nangong Ping said, “Indeed. Unless the Pugilist today have no justice and righteousness to speak of. Even if you are the Alliance Chief of the Pugilistic Fraternity, you still cannot treat human life so lightly!”

The fellowship of the pugilists had all come in a state of incitement but after listening to Nangong Ping who was filled with righteousness in his words, everyone from some degree or another was secretly moved. Some even quietly jumped down from the window!

Li Tianming looked around and his countenance changed.

Mei Yinxue smiled captivatingly, “You must be feeling regretful in your heart that you shouldn’t have talked to me that much. And should have just killed me!”

Although her voice was soft but every single word of hers spread far and wide.

Wei Qi laughed aloud hilariously, “If you were someone else, I afraid you will raise suspicious upon the words of my brother and I. But you are Cold Blood Concubine so even if you say a thousand words, it is useless. No matter how beautiful you can say, I, Wei Qi must rid the Pugilist of this jinx.”

He turned towards Nangong Ping and said, “Since you know that she is the “Cold Blood Concubine’, why then did you want to intercede for her? Just this point alone, you deserve to die. But for the sake of your Mentor Master…go, go, leave now.”

Li Tianming said, “The way you are covering for her. Does it mean that you and her have something that is under wraps?”

Nangong Ping was now furious. At first he had thought that this Chief of Zhongnan and ‘Flying Rings’ Wei Qi were righteous people. But after witnessing the scene, he was now enlightened.

The pugilists, who were still around after listening to their explanations, now thought. “That is right. If it is others, there is still some room for negotiations. But the ill name of this ‘Cold Blood Concubine’ has long been known. Therefore she deserve to die long ago. The way this young man tries to protect her, very possibly he is not a good man either.”

Actually none of them had really seen Mei Yinxue before but people were like that. The little sympathies that they had for Nangong Ping had largely vanished. One must know the feeling of the crowd since ancient times operated in an illogical manner. Even if a person could be very understanding but when throw in the midst of the crowd, they would feel unable to flex their own free will but to

follow the crowd.

Nangong Ping sighed and knew that he could not control the situation today unlike his earlier expectations. He turned and glanced at Mei Yinxue only to hear her still maintaining her smile. She seemed truly had placed life and death aside.

The pugilists were all shouting. “What is the use of saying so much. Kill them both.”

Li Tianming coldly laughed, “You want the justice of the Pugilistic Fraternity, now you can have it!”

Wei Qi shouted as he swung his weapons right up and left up. His appearance was imposing and this stance ‘Upright Display’ cheered for his extraordinary display of martial skills.

Mei Yinxue kept her composure and slowly said, “You want to challenge me alone?”

Wei Qi was stunned in his mind as he suddenly remembered that the ‘Cold Blood Concubine’ possessed very frightening martial skills. And he stood on the same spot seemingly stunned and did not even take a step forward!

Nangong Ping laughed. “Haha. The people from Pugilist are mostly blind fellows…”

Even before he had finished, angry shouts came from all sides as this sentence of his really aroused the anger of all.

Mei Yinxue softly said, “Follow me as I charge out.” Her face was still composed as she had made some tactical thoughts earlier and knew that although their opponents were many but was inevitable to have some confusion. She knew that with her martial skills, surely she should be able to make a blood path out.

But who would expect that Nangong Ping would stand firmly on the same spot and shouted loudly. “Shut up!” This shout was indeed earth shattering. Everyone was startled and ceased their movements.

Nangong Ping looked at Li Tianming and shouted aloud. “No matter what the head or tail, first I, Nangong Ping will like to ask this esteemed Senior of the Pugilist, in what year what day Mei Yinxue committed the crime that sentenced her to death?”

Li Tianming did not expect that at this moment of time, he would ask such a question, therefore he was stunned.

Nangong Ping stood upright and shouted. “If you are unable to answer, then what right do you have to represent the entire Pugilist Fraternity? What right do you have to talk about the Justice of the Pugilist Fraternity? If you and her have some deep vendetta, as the Chief of a Clan, you can only settle it on your own with her. Even if you want to slice her to hundred of thousands of pieces, I, Nangong Ping will not care. But if you want to abuse your power to settle a personal grudge,

use the name of the justice of the Pugilistic Fraternity, borrow the use of unproven rumors, use flowery words to confuse and incite hundreds of drunken pugilist friends and call it 'Justice'! And act so righteously to remove a menace from the Pugilistic Fraternity. I, Nangong Ping am unable to tolerate such hypocrites. Even if you have thousands of words as excuses, thousands and hundreds of men behind you as shields, I, Nangong Ping will not back off!"

Every word coming out from Nangong Ping was filled with righteousness and was earth shattering.

Wei Qi expression changed and the pugilists that was around felt impulsive. Only 'Jaded Hand of the Positive Nirvana' was calm. After Nangong Ping had finished, he coldly said. "So it seem that you are challenging me?"

Nangong Ping replied loud and clear. "Indeed!"

A young man freshly initiated from his Clan would dare to challenge the head of a big sword sect; it was really an earthshaking matter in the Pugilistic Fraternity. The pugilists all around broke into a commotion.

Many pugilists that remained below tried to squeeze up while the common people were feeling startled. The government constables did not know why suddenly there were so many pugilists. Even though they had some connection with Master Wei Qi but it was something that they could not afford to be held accountable so they reported it to higher up authority.

Li Tianming swept his eyes around and noticed that many of his helpers had become speculators. He started to regret in his heart. He did not know that many people could hinder things. Moreover these pugilists came from all over the place, were hard to control and like scattered sand. He raised his robe and said. "Since you are so arrogant, don't blame me for teaching you a lesson."

Nangong Ping laughed coldly awhile.

Wei Qi was startled and immediately took a few steps behind.

Mei Yinxue exclaimed. "Interesting, interesting. If this place is not big enough, let me push those tables to the side." From her speech, it seemed that it was a challenge by others and none of her business.

Nangong Ping knew that she was like that and did not feel strange in his heart. But all others were secretly startled and thought. "She is indeed without doubt the 'Cold Blood Concubine'!"

But there were some love simply love to see troubles, and actually started to pull the tables and stairs to one side.

Nangong Ping and Li Tianming both stood upright and looked at one another. Naturally Li Tianming was composed and calm, as he was sure that this young man was not his match.

As for Nangong Ping, although he had an iron gut but he could not help but

feel nervous. After all it was the first time he had to fight a strong opponent and could not afford to be careless. So he first tried to calm himself down by planning for the first few strokes, he had to be extra caution, and use defense as an opportunity to attack.

Li Tianming who was a veteran of countless fights knew instantly what his intentions were from his eyes so he was even more assured. He solemnly said. “Brother Qi, do not let that witch go.”

Wei Qi made a sound as reply while Mei Yinxue laughed. “Such an interesting show, how will I bear to leave?”

Nangong Ping pretended not to hear.

Li Tianming hummed and said. “Ready!”

As he treasured his status, so he was not willing to attack first.

But Nangong Ping had already decided to use ‘Still to counter Action’, using ‘Defense as Attack’. Therefore he did not move at all.

Wei Qi said in a low voice. “Fourth Brother, there is no need to be courtesy to this pugilist rogue.”

Li Tianming replied. “Indeed!” He extended a hand and pat toward Nangong Ping’s shoulder!

This stroke when it was launched, the left hand was by the side of the body. It left the entire body unguarded and there was plenty of opportunity for an attacker to exploit. And the direction of the right hand was not the vulnerable point of Nangong Ping. Although he attacked first, he was actually giving way to him.

The speculators around were all good fighters in the Pugilist. So how could they not tell therefore there were shouts of approval.

Nangong Ping was slightly startled and he did not expect the Chief of Zhongnan would deploy such a stroke.

As he was inexperienced and he did not seek to win in his heart. Therefore when he saw Li Tianming attacked him with his hand, he did not seize the opportunity to counter attack. Instead he moved back lightning fast three steps backward.

Li Tianming smiled and he attacked using the same stroke again, also with his left hand by the side. Nangong Ping once again retreated as the pugilists shouted.

Before the shouts of applause were over, Li Tianming attacked again with the same stroke. Nangong Ping was feeling angry at heart. But just when he was about to retaliate, he found out that it was actually directly at his head so he took another two steps back.

Nangong Ping secretly sighed. The second shouts of applause from the pugilists had not yet ended when a third wave was heard. Nangong Ping did not

have the opportunity to attack and Li Tianming had garnered three rounds of loud applause.

Some even muttered in low voices. “Such lowly standard, to think he dare to challenge ‘Jaded Hand of the Positive Nirvana’. This is indeed laudable!”

After the three strokes, Li Tianming was feeling high in spirit. So he get real. Now his right hand attacked Nangong Ping’s left neck while his left hand extended five fingers to grip Nangong Ping’s three major accupoints on his waist.

Nangong Ping managed to retain his calm. He moved his legs and avoided the attacks and his right hand extended lightning fast to attack Li Tianming on his diaphragm major accupoint.

Li Tianming was secretly startled as he dodged and withdrawn his attacks. But his palm force startled Nangong Ping as well.

Li Tianming used the ‘The Golden Scissors’ stance but Nangong Ping had suddenly kicked and he immediately leapt back three steps. By now his haughtiness had largely faded. He had the first opportunity to attack and within his stances, was hidden some other stances as well so he was not worried.

And the pugilists all thought that Nangong Ping would be fell very soon.

But Although Nangong Ping was very young, he was not cowed or confused. That kick of his, whether in term of placement and timing were perfect.

Therefore some pugilist started to whisper in low voices. “The disciple of the Divine Dragon is really an extraordinary fighter.”

Now tens of strokes had passed. As Nangong Ping had a barrier in his heart, he could not utilize his full potential. Therefore once again, Li Tianming gained the upper hand. And the crowds were chanting the name of ‘Jaded Hand of the Positive Nirvana’.

Li Tianming fully displayed the ‘Proud Wind of the Spring Swordplay’ as he converted it to the style of his palm attacks and his hands became like that of a sharp sword!

Wei Qi slowly relaxed and his solemn face replaced by a smile. He took a glance at Mei Yinxue who was still smiling and in her eyes she seemed to be sure that Nangong Ping would win.

Although Li Tianming attacks got fiercer and more and more powerful but Nangong Ping remained undefeated. Although everyone was cheering for Li Tianming but in their hearts, they were extremely startled that this fresh protégé from his Clan would stay undefeated for so long under the hands of the ‘Jaded Hand of the Positive Nirvana’.

After another tens of strokes had passed, Nangong Ping gained his confidence and calmed himself down and knew that he could win.

One must know that the martial skills of the Divine Dragon derived from

interchanging between Void and Flexibility. And attacking with a fierce but surprise element was the attack forte of the Divine Dragon Skills. Although Nangong Ping was using defend as a forte and he seemed to be using all his strength but in fact he only used five folds of his strength.

Li Tianming with a stroke 'Flower Drifting Style' attacked Nangong Ping. Suddenly Li Tianming was stunned when Nangong Ping shouted suddenly as he was being attacked from up to down, left and right at the same time. No matter how he tried to dodge it, he would be hit from one hit!

The pugilists were startled as Wei Qi was heard exclaiming. “The ‘Heavenly Dragon Sixteen Stances’!”

In his entire life, he most admired the Immortal Divine Dragon but in his most innermost heart, he had a personal wish to fight with the Immortal Divine Dragon. Now that he had saw this beautiful, graceful and incomparable stance, his heart was downcast. He did not know that lately the Immortal Divine Dragon had developed a Seventeenth Stance to the stances of the Heavenly Dragon Skill.

In this whole wide world, in terms of flexibility of movement skills, there may be many types but only ‘Genesis Thirteen Strokes’, ‘Tianshan Seven Formless Hand’, ‘Eight Palm of Kunlun Divine Dragon’ were extraordinary in the sense that those skills allowed them to attack after they soared.

But only this ‘Zhijiao Manor’ unique skill derived from the ‘Heavenly Dragon Sixteen Stances’ called the ‘Cloud Breaker Four Strokes’ which was derived from the last stroke, could attack while the body was soaring.

Therefore this stroke that Nangong Ping used was the ‘Cloud Breaker Four Strokes’. The first stroke that was named ‘Ninth Heaven’, that attacked with both hands and legs after he had sealed off the retreat path of Li Tianming and interchanged it with a stroke from ‘Heavenly Dragon Claw’. Next he attacked with ten fingers as he descended like through the cloud!

But the ‘Jaded Hand of the Positive Nirvana’ being the Chief of a Sect, his martial skills naturally could not be underestimated as he used a stance ‘Hand Reversal’ as he caught hold of Nangong Ping’s fingers. His internal power, his timing and the placement startled everyone as the sound of twenty fingers locked and crackled.

The shout of the pugilists was it cheering or was it because they were startled?

Nangong Ping paled as he and Li Tianming rolled on the ground, both refusing to let go of their fingers, as they fought with their concentration, internal strength and even staked their lives upon it.

This heart stopping challenge silenced everyone. Those below were puzzled by the sudden silence.

And beads of perspiration were seen on them. Although Nangong Ping had many excellent martial skills but in terms of internal strength, he was not on par with the tens of training that Li Tianming had. Therefore Nangong Ping strength was failing fast.

Wei Qi slowly broke into a happy look while Mei Yinxue face slowly became solemn.

The dead silence was no more as cries were heard below. Everyone was startled as they felt hot and even the speculators perspired.

Nangong Ping and Li Tianming sweat even more.

And then there was shouts coming from below. “A fire broke out, a fire broke out…”

A pandemonium broke out and the pugilists were no longer interested to stay on and look. Many jumped down. And the number of speculators was like ants on a hot stove, scattering in all directions.

Although there were some that were trying to put out the fire but the fire was very strange. It was a burning fierce type and looked like it would swallow the whole wine tavern in a great instant.

But Nangong Ping, Li Tianming was still locking their hands in a life and death fight. None of them dare to move even half a step.

‘Flying Rings’ Wei Qi who was sweating with beads of perspiration, his eyes stressing and his Twin Rings made a noise and when he was about to leap, his vision blurred and suddenly Mei Yinxue was standing coldly in front of him.

In his rage, he shouted and his right hand attack with the Golden Dragon Ring and aimed on Mei Yinxue’s face. While on his left hand, the Golden Phoenix Ring and threw towards Nangong Ping.

Nangong Ping by now had exerted all his strength. Not to mention this powerful sneak attack, even a ten-year-old child who threw a stone, he would not be able to take it. Now he could only await death with his eyes opened.

But Mei Yinxue only coldly laughed awhile as she blended backward suddenly (Her waist seemed soft and without bone) and gently extended her hand as her beautiful fingers hit the golden ring. With a flicker of her fingernails, she sent the Golden Ring flying towards Li Tianming.

As Nangong Ping was startled, in a lapse of concentration he allowed his opponent to gain momentum strength. Now he was about to lose all his strength and was about to fall when Li Tianming appeared to be very startled all of a sudden. Seizing his lapse in joy, Nangong Ping immediately regained some momentum strength and retaliated.

Mei Yinxue softly laughed and said. “This is called reaping your own…” But before she could finish, the Ring flew back to the back of Mei Yinxue’s waist.

Mei Yinxue smiled and said. “Excellent, you actually attached a chain to the Ring!” In the pace of her words and smile, her beautiful hand caught hold of that flying Ring as easy as catching things with a big sack. One must know that she had been in the coffin for ten years to train her martial skills. In her later years, she managed to redevelop her martial skill to a higher height. Her eyes and ears by now were unparalleled in the world. Even it was a flying needle that was behind her back; she could still catch it.

‘Flying Rings’ Wei Qi was startled as he moved backward and used all his might to pull back this Golden Ring. His chain was made of white gold, although it was very thin and soft but it was very firm and blades and swords would even find it hard to be severed.

But Mei Yinxue was still smiling as she waved her right hand and simply cut the chain!

Wei Qi found himself losing courage. Although he had regained his composure but unwittingly he took two steps backward.

By now the raging fire had reached the second floor and the window frames were all destroyed by the fire. The fury fire caused Nangong Ping, Li Tianming and Wei Qi to be drenched with sweat from their entire body. By now Mei Yinxue too started to profuse with her sweet sweat as well.

Some of the burning ceiling had dropped off and a plank dropped by Mei Yinxue’s side. She swung her leg and just avoided a kick from Wei Qi, and she picked out the burning plank with her leg and sent it flying toward him.

With a shout, Wei Qi left hand hit the burning plank very hard and sent it flying out of the burning restaurant. He seemed to have forgot that he still had a Golden Ring on his wrist. As his hand was extended, the chain moved and hit himself at the back of his head.

Although the chain was thin, it was made of white gold and when he added his internal force on it, it was not to be taken slightly. Therefore he was now bleeding on the top of his back head. Wei Qi cried out as he tried to untangle from the gold chain.

Mei Yinxue laughed. “What an excellent stroke. Is it call the ‘The Dog whipping itself with its Tail’?”

Although she was laughing and talking but she had moved to the side of Li Tianming.

When Nangong Ping saw that she had not left during this torturous standoff, somehow he felt consoled. Then he saw her about to place her beautiful hand on Li Tianming, he suddenly shouted (But his shout was soft as he had almost exerted all

his strength), and pushed with all his might and pushed Li Tianming five feet away. And the two of them landed with a loud stump on the ground.

Mei Yinxue was startled and was besides him in an instant while Wei Qi rushed to the side of Li Tianming and looked at the two of them. Although the both of them were breathless and looked spent but there was no sign of any internal injuries.

But they remained staring at one another and both were startled.

It because that under this painstaking fight, it became a mental contest as both of them were startled constantly by outside factors. Although their hands were clenched tightly together but it was without vital energies. Nangong Ping being a hero with an iron gut did not wish for a third party to hurt his opponent and when he saw Mei Yinxue was about to pat her hand down, he pushed Li Tianming away at the risk of hurting himself.

After he pushed, he discovered that the both of them had long expended their vital energies and was unable to hurt one another, therefore he was startled.

There was a big shout below. “Master Wei Qi, Priest Tianming…” As four priests with swords emerged from the burning flames to the second floor.

Mei Yinxue was startled and softly said. “Let's go!”

Li Tianming took a deep breath and after seeing that his helpers had come, his spirit was stirred. He shouted. “Nangong Ping, before a winner is determined, the one that leave is not a man!”

Nangong Ping was aroused as he broke away from Mei Yinxue’s wrist as he tried to stand.

Li Tianming had by now charged toward him, raised his fists and attacked him on his chest. Although this old man hair was white with experience but at the moment of time, his eyes were blur, his hair was messy, his mental was weakened and really could not compared to a young pugilist.

Nangong Ping felt a stirring of warm blood rushing forth his head as he was incited by his nature. His body turned, avoided this fist and retaliated with both his hands.

Those four priests had by now surrounded them. They were actually the four protectors of the Zhongnan Sect. Not only were they nimble, they were also very experienced with their swords.

Wei Qi shouted aloud. “Leave the man, capture the girl first.”

And four reflections from their swords flashed like lightning and aimed upon Mei Yinxue.

Although Mei Yinxue was in a very dangerous predication, she had not lost her captivating smile yet. Her eyes rolled and glanced lightly at each of the four gray robe priest.

These four men were priests and their willpower as steady as the mountain. But they had never saw such an extremely beautiful woman before, never saw such a sweet and beautiful smile. Therefore they were stumbled in their mind and their four swords were slowly lowered.

Mei Yinxue swung her thin waist, as her hands shot up and in that instant, there were three loud sounds and three pairs of sword was broken by the Golden Ring in her right hand!

The fourth priest could only see a golden whirl in his eyes as he felt his wrist twisted and moved and the sword that was in his hand was on Mei Yinxue's left hand!

Mei Yinxue with her long hair flurrying and sent the Golden Ring flying toward Wei Qi, who had been sneaking upon Nangong Ping's back.

With both hands together, the long sword that was in her left hand was now on her right as she slashed most ordinary at a priest. The priest unable to back off in time was seen screaming and his face was covered with blood. The second priest able to back off in time was startled as his headgear was sliced. The third priest was badly frightened.

There was more as Mei Yinxue left hand seemingly moved without a hint of a sound and action as the broken sword from the third priest dropped to the ground. He clasped his right hand with his left in pain as he backed off three steps and was stunned for awhile as he did not know how Mei Yinxue executed that stroke.

The forth priest saw her smiling charmingly and in an instant totally defeated his three disciple brothers. He lost his courage to fight, turned around and run.

Mei Yinxue laughed. "Don't go, alright?" Her voice was so gentle and poetic similar to a young woman asking her husband to stay. But before the fourth priest could raise his leg to run, the side of his body was slashed two times!

Wei Qi was just about to plunge upon Nangong Ping when he heard the sound of the flying Golden Ring that was resounding aloud and was even fiercer than his by a third.

He did not dare to risk so he turned around and decided to use the Golden Ring on his right hand to parry and used his left hand to receive it. But when both Rings impacted on one another, the Ring that Mei Yinxue threw, seemed to have a life of its own and possessed wings and flew to his back.

At this time, a burning log suddenly dropped from the ceiling and Wei Qi faced an attack to his back and front. He extended his hands and charged to the front.

There was a 'Dang' sound as Mei Yinxue's Golden Ring dropped to the ground. He steadied his footing, body but was startled suddenly to see Mei Yinxue

giggling in front of him!

Nangong Ping bit his teeth and used the ‘Horizon Five Strokes’ from the ‘Heavenly Dragon Seventeen Stances’. From the entire stance of Heavenly Dragon, from the first to the seventeen, only the Horizon Five Strokes do not depend on the art of ‘Flexibility’.

From the Five Strokes, there could be twenty-one changes, with attack and defensive moves. It could be said to be most extraordinary but at this moment of time, he had suffered tremendous loss of his strength so even if he could hit Li Tianming, he might not be able to hurt him!

Li Tianming was even more solemn than he was earlier on and he was no longer holding the superior ground as he became tired and many of his attacks slowed down. When Nangong Ping attacked him with a ‘Heavenly Dragon Slashing’ with his hand, he stepped back to avoid being hit but there was a loud sound as his foot broke through the floor.

He cried out, startled as he crashed through the ground, his hands managed to grasp the floor before he completed fell. But now he was completely exhausted. Where could he find the strength to pull his way back?

But without a thought, Nangong Ping gripped Li Tianming by his wrist but he was spent of all his strength and even though he tried to use all his strength, he was unable to pull Li Tianming up. There was a ‘dang’ sound as Nangong Ping too lost his foot into the wooden floor. If he would to move back now, Li Tianming would surely fall into the burning fire below. If he did not, he too would be fallen into the burning fire.

Li Tianming was shaking all over and his clothing had caught fire.

Nangong Ping looked at this opponent who was trying to kill him just a moment ago. But the righteousness in his heart refused to let go and he gripped even more tightly, refusing to let go. A burning plank fell and as he could not avoid it. But luckily it landed three inches away from him. If it landed on his head, he would die instantly.

Li Tianming looked on with his eyes widened and sighed. He could help but was touched by the righteousness of this young man. Therefore he croaked. “Hurry and run…hurry and run…Don’t bother about me…”

Nangong Ping bit his teeth as his right hand gripped Li Tianming’s wrist while his left hand gripped the plank of the wood floor. Now blood and sweat dripped from his head as it dripped onto Li Tianming’s body.

Mei Yinxue coldly laughed. “Ten years ago, is it really my wrong?”

She dashingly avoided Wei Qi attacks and slashed across at Wei Qi ‘Jiang Qi’ accupoint position.

Wei Qi shouted. “No matter who is in the wrong, you are the root of all disasters. If it is not for you, where will all these things happen!”

Mei Yinxue appeared to be stunned. She thought. “If it is not for me, where will all these things happen…Is it really my wrong? But when did I ever been in the wrong!”

Wei Qi continued to shout. “Jinx! Jinx! Today I will let you die in my hands!”

The four gray robe priest by now had recovered their composure and was now attacking at the same time.

Mei Yinxue extended her long sword, and the sword light beamed forth like snow and sent the priests forcefully to the side. Her eyes rolled and suddenly she moaned and moved lightning speed toward Li Tianming and Nangong Ping.

Wei Qi was stunned and immediately turned his glance. He saw Nangong Ping and Li Tianming in a dangerous predicament. So he sent the Golden Ring in his right hand flying towards Nangong Ping but when it was near Nangong Ping, the Ring lost its strength. One must know that he had trained for years with the pair of Golden Rings and he could control it freely.

Nangong Ping rolled his eyes and his left hand gripped the Golden Ring and Wei Qi started to pull as he shouted. Slowly, Li Tianming was pulled up. By now Mei Yinxue too had reached and she used her soft internal strength to pulled them both out of the predicament.

The four gray robe priest once attack plunged forward but Li Tianming rolled his eyes and said in a low voice. “Hold it.” He looked idiocy at Nangong Ping for awhile before he sighed and lowered his head.

Nangong Ping, who was still breathless, said. “The victor is still undetermined, you can still continue on!”

Lu Tianming lowered his head and trembled. “I…I have lost!”

When he had said those three words, it seemed that it took away all his strength. Nangong Ping was stunned and did not expect this haughty priest would admit he had lost. At that instant, Li Tianming being the proud Chief of a Sect became a lonely, ordinary old man!

‘Flying Rings’ Wei Qi looked at his Protégé brother and said in a low voice. “Protégé Brother…”

Li Tianming did not turn his head but said in a trembling voice. “Let us go now!” Before he could finish, he collapsed. The wounds on his body cannot be compared to the wounds in his heart!

Wei Qi carried him up and altogether with the four gray robe priests as they made their way out. There was a thunderous sound as the wine tavern collapsed in half.

Nangong Ping was stunned for awhile before sighing and said. “Jaded Hand of the Positive Nirvana’, is indeed a hero!”

Mei Yinxue softly laughed. “What about you?” The two of them locked eyes with one another, there were silence and forgot even the burning fire on their clothing.

The soldiers from the government had now arrived…

Outside the ancient city of Xian, although there were a few moments of shouting that was carried over by the wind but it could not break the boundless tranquil. This tranquil, was cute especially in the eyes of Nangong Ping and Mei Yinxue who had escaped in the confusion. This tranquil was not only cute but much appreciated.

Now, Nangong Ping was lying comfortably under the bright starry hosts, peacefully enjoying this much appreciated tranquil. The images of blades and swords, life and death, the fire and the falling floor earlier…seemed so far away under the tranquil starry hosts.

After awhile, Mei Yinxue melancholy sighed deeply and asked. “Do you know what place is this?”

Nangong Ping slowly shook his head. “I do not know!”

Mei Yinxue said. “This is the palace ruin of the First Emperor of China.” Once again she sighed. “Extending eight hundred miles, its majestic was unrivalled. But now what are left of it, was these broken rubbles. Qin Shihuang conquered all the lands and become king of all kings but now where is he?”

She seemed to refresh many of her past memories. Therefore in this tranquil darkness, she unwittingly began to sigh!

Nangong Ping smiled. But suddenly he heard her singing. “*The river of the Da Jiang (River Changjiang), the waves rocked, the thousands of ancient people…*” This is the poem of the great Scholar Su. Naturally Nangong Ping who was taught literature, knew of it. So when he heard this song of hers, his heart suddenly became even sadder!

“Hero!” He muttered. “What is a hero? Where should a hero be?”

Mei Yinxue ceased her singing and said. “Jinx. Beauty…” She remembered how Wei Qi had scolded her. “Is a woman who is born beautiful, an unforgivable sin?…Alas!”

Therefore very naturally, ‘Hero’ and ‘Beauty’ since ancient times had been

linked so she thought of it. She turned her head and looked at the Nangong Ping who was not aware that she was looking. She remembered his iron guts and righteous heart and her eyes suddenly shone. But she softly said instead. “Do you know that just now you should not have done what you have done. You are still young, don’t you treasure your own life at all?”

Nangong Ping secretly sighed and slowly sat up. “My life!” He said in a low voice. “Naturally I treasure it but I always feel that in this world, there are many things that are more valuable than life…All the ancient heroes, they had now turned to dry bones but until now, they are still living in the hearts of the people! Maybe they are very lonely in life but when they are dead, they will never be lonely again…” His voice stumbled and very naturally he thought of ‘Beauty’. Therefore he said. “This is just like beauties who lead a tragic life but when they are dead, they will always be remembered in people’s hearts! Xi Si, Zhao Jun…Heroes! Jing Ke...Alas. Why were they all so lonely and so tragic?”

He was looking very far away at the trees in the distant and his heart was thinking of all the past heroes. He did not know that a pair of beautiful captivating eyes was now looking at him in silence.

Mei Yinxue looked carefully at him, looked at his eyebrows, his mouth and lips, and the lines on his face. At first glance, everyone would think that this young man appeared soft and weak – almost like a young woman. But after further observations, this type of soft and weak feeling vanished, replaced by a limitless mental strength, extraordinary courage and a strength that was flowed from within that knew no fathom.

Especially his pair of eyes, so deep and intelligence and handsome. Although his eyes looked gentle but when it became enraged, it would become sparks that touched the hearts of everyone.

She looked quietly at this young man who was younger than her and suddenly she felt an uneasy feeling overwhelming her. She melancholy sighed, turned her head over and a frosty expression surfaced on her face as she coldly said. “You probably did not expect that the responsibility given to you by your Mentor Master will be so painstaking and heavy right.”

Nangong Ping was startled from his enthrallment and immediately returned to his old self.

Mei Yinxue coldly added. “You must be feeling right now in your heart, that because of me, you almost lost your life. It is indeed not worthwhile, right?”

Although Nangong Ping was very intelligent, but in this world, no matter how smart a person was, he was still unable to second-guess the changes in a girl’s heart. He felt it was strange that earlier the gentle and demure girl would become suddenly so frosty.

Mei Yinxue did not turned her head. She seemed most unwilling and did not dare to look into his bright eyes.

"But," She coldly added. "Even if you really died, you should not blame me. It is the pitiful acts of always trying to be a hero that caused you to die. You have a hundred chances to leave but you did not. Who will think that you are a hero? Even if you are a hero but how much does it worth?"

Not only were her words frosty but sharp as well. It seemed that she purposely did that to hurt Nangong Ping just like the way she hurt herself. Nangong Ping was stunned and looked at her. Anger from his heart slowly boiled within him and he thought. "Why are you not understandable at all? All these, I did it all for you…"

Suddenly another thought shook him as he suddenly remembered that just now during the fire and the dangerous floors, she had protected him and the anxiety shown by her, the warm feeling of her besides him protecting him. He also remembered just when he had almost fell, she had dashed to him, her startled and concern look as she pulled him up when he had no more strength. And how she took him out of the Xian City during the confusion.

In that instant, everything flashed in his heart. He unwitting sighed and slowly said. "Then what about you? Just now why did you not leave? You have more than ten times better chances than I to escape. Why did you choose to accompany me?

Mei Yinxue trembled. It was like someone whipping her as it touched deeply into her innermost feelings.

She wanted to say something but a strange and weird feeling caused her to become speechless.

Nangong Ping looked at her and saw her back trembling…

A drop of clear and cold tear dropped on her hand. She was startled in her mind. "I have cried!" She thought and immediately used her hands to wipe away her tears but her tears were uncontrollable. This 'Cold Blood' maiden although she tried her best to control her feeling but the sorrow in her most innermost place caused her unable to control her tears.

She did not dare to turn her head even more. "You don't have to care for me." She said aloud. "From now on, I will not dare to impose upon you to protect me…" Now even her voice trembled. "Even though your Mentor Master had order you to do so but…You have already did your best and is already more than enough…is…enough…"

Suddenly even before she could finish, she had sobbed aloud and uncontrollable on the grasslands.

Nangong Ping sighed and even his eyes were beginning to be swollen.

Everyone would have his or her moments of sadness. But only those that were cold hearted, their tears were the most precious. That was because unless it was extremely sorrowful, their tears would not flowed.

"Maiden…Mei!" He sighed and solemnly said. "Do you know that my actions, are not wholly because of Mentor Master…Alas! Even if Mentor Master did not give me his orders, if I see a girl who is being humiliated and unable to explain the black. I will also do the same thing. I did not think of being a hero. I only want to do what I feel right. You…you…you should have know my intention…Don't you know?"

Words that were sincere caused Mei Yinxue to descend into a deeper pit of grief. And she cried out even more sorrowful.

Chapter Eight
Is a Hero worth anything at all?

"**B**ut…" She sobs and said. "Don't you know that what you going to do have a heavy price…From now on, you have become the traitor to the Pugilistic Fraternity. No one will forgive you…just like…no one will forgive me. You are still young…And you still have a very bright future…You should be respected by others…admired by people…In this vast Pugilist, there is no other person that have a future as bright as you…handsome, young, wealthy…born from a aristocracy family, comes from a respectable Orthodox Clan…Why did you want to throw everything away, just…so…because…of…me…"

Even in her sorrowful speech, her voice could not have been much clearer.

Nangong Ping lifted his head to the skies and he solemnly said. "You don't have to say it anymore. As long as I can face my conscious, I will not care for the insults of others. For the sake of the justice of the Pugilistic Fraternity, I can even sacrifice my future. What does everything matter."

When he thought of this, in his innermost heart there was a chill. Because the extreme loneliness was something that not even a hero could endure. But his voice remained as steady and his weak body became a body of will that could stand firmly even if it was a hundred blows coming. Even if he would die, he would not regret it.

Now he was beginning to understand this 'Cold Blood' maiden. He strongly believed that beneath her icy cold surface hid a warm heart that was like a fire – But this was not easy to be found out for because of the ignorant of others, she had long ago hidden this warm heart.

He unwittingly reached out his hands to softly comb her long flowing hair.

"Loneliness can be easily put aside, but wrongs are very hard to endure…" Mei Yinxue softly said. "All these, I have long endured. These heart breaking pain, you…still young. You will not understand how much willpower you will need to hold yourself together."

Her voice had by now started to be composed but her words leaked out more of her heartbreaks.

Nangong Ping sighed and said. "The span of a human life will be over in a fickle of a finger. I only want to live a life of knowing what is good and evil, no sense of guilt just like Mentor Master and that is enough."

Mei Yinxue lifted her head and at the same time, four eyes strangely gentle merged together. At that instant of time, they forgot all the happy and unhappy

feelings, beyond the pains of life, death and sickness. They even forgot their status, place and age!

Therefore, they enjoyed a moment of golden silence.

At the same time, far away, slowly stood up a man in black. He looked idiocy at this man and woman almost to the point of complete stoniness. His eyes were admiring yet at the same time felt pity, yet there was a small trace of envy.

Therefore he could not resist sighing.

Nangong Ping and Mei Yinxue was suddenly startled and got up and said at the same time. “Who?”

And they saw a shadowy figure from far away running over to them. In an instant, he was here.

Nangong Ping exclaimed. “It is you.”

Mei Yinxue tears had dried and her face regained her composure. She coldly said. “How would Tianshan disciple be this sneaky?” In her all life, she liked to act strong and most afraid of her tears being seen by others. Therefore she at this moment was most afraid that this Tianshan disciple who had suddenly appeared had secretly heard her and saw her composure.

Di Yang, who had been sighing earlier, was now covered with a laughing and smiling face. “The words of the Cold Blood Concubine are indeed very chilling to the bones…” He ceased his laughter and said in a serious tone. “But when I arrived here, I have no intention to sneak.”

Mei Yinxue coldly hummed and turned her head back.

Di Yang felt a heart wrenching pain in his heart but still he laughed merrily. “Mei Yinxue, do you know why I am here for?”

Nangong Ping paled and asked. “Are you here too for…”

Di Yang laughed. “Wrong, wrong. Even if you don’t say it out, I know you are wrong.” He ceased his laugh and said solemnly. “Although you and I only meet once but I strongly believe that what you been doing, will definitely not be a disgrace to the righteousness of the Pugilistic Fraternity. So how will I come to with ill intention!”

Nangong Ping was silence for awhile and could not help sighing. He slowly said. “I did not expect that in this whole wide world, there is another person that understands my difficulties…” His words were filled with gratefulness. And this telling sign of a friendship caused the breeze to be filled with a warm feeling.

Mei Yinxue turned her head, softly laughed awhile and said. “Then…I must have really wronged you!”

Her frosty face had suddenly changed to a smiling face. It was really like a barren desert that suddenly bosomed forth a flower. From now on, if anyone were the bosom friend of Nangong Ping, so would he be her bosom friend. Even though

she might loathe a person but if that person could praise Nangong Ping, she would also turned her loathing to a smile.

Di Yang really did not dare to look at this smile that was like a flower. He lowered his head and suddenly laughed merrily. “Do you know that I have come to report my contribution?”

Nangong Ping was slightly startled. Only to hear Di Yang laughed and said. “Do you know what cause that big fire to start?”

Nangong Ping was filled with appreciation in his heart. If it were not for that big fire, now he would not know where would he be.

This appreciation that was so delightful that it caused Nangong Ping to bow to Di Yang. Although he was filled with gratefulness but he did not know what to say.

Di Yang smiled. He knew that this soundless appreciation was even more esteemed than speech. It was so heavy that he did not know how to do with it so he could only try to laugh it off to calm his heart that was very touched by his gesture.

“When I descended from Huashan,” he laughed. “I too, have reached Xian. But I arrived late and Xian City was already in a state of pandemonium. I tried to squeeze in and asked what happened. When I secretly took a peek above, I saw the Chief of Zhongnan Sect and you in a painstaking duel. I analyzed the situation and knew that it cannot be resolved. And it was also impossible to lend you a helping hand. Therefore…haha, therefore I could only sneak around and set the fire.”

Nangong Ping looked at Mei Yinxue from the sides of his eyes. Mei Yinxue said. “Just now I have already said, I have wronged him.”

Di Yang laughed. “Don’t worry, don’t worry. This ‘sneak’ word, I unintentionally used it.” He merrily laughed and said. “That ‘Eternal Restaurant ’ although it was built grandly but who would expect that, it would not hold the fury of the fire. I only set three, four torches and the fire spread like wildfire. When I saw the two of you escaping out from Xian City, I would not resist the temptation to follow. After searching for quite a few, I finally found the both of you. Actually I just want to meet you and there is no other reason.”

Mei Yinxue softly sighed. “You are not here to simply talk to him. You are afraid he would be badly injured and I am unable to take care of him…Haiz. I didn’t expect you to be such a good friend. But a pity…a friend such as you, is very rare in this world.”

Although Di Yang felt very touched in his heart but his mouth laughed merrily. “Maiden Mei, although you can be uncanny accurate but you think of me as too kind.”

Although Nangong Ping too was feeling touched but his mouth said. “I was slightly hurt but now I am alright now.”

These two young men although they had a warm heart but they were also haughty. Although they felt very touched but was unwilling to display it on your face. Although they were filled with a warm feeling, they acted like they were nonchalance.

Mei Yinxue smiled and smiled. “Is my guess wrong?”

Before she could finish, there were a eerie laughter coming from afar. And a man coldly said. “Naturally you have guessed wrongly. Those that secretly set fire, would he be a hero and a real man? How could he be a good man!”

Nangong Ping, Mei Yinxue and Di Yang were startled at the same time and turned their body!

In the darkness was a man with a snowy white fan. He was like a phantom that slowly made his way to them.

Di Yang straightened his body and immediately plunged forward like an eagle and attacked with his powerful hands.

The man in black laughed and commented. “What an extraordinary fast swiftness movement skill!” And he avoided Di Yang’s attack and reached the front of Nangong Ping.

Nangong Ping greeted him. “It is Hero Ren!”

Di Yang lowered his hands. He knew now that it was a friend and not a enemy.

‘Fragrance of a Thousand Miles’ Ren Fengping laughed. “Who will expect that the person that set the fire is from the Tianshan Clan!”

Nangong Ping did not expect that this person would be here so he introduced him to Di Yang.

Ren Fengping laughed aloud. “Young hero Di, the one that constructed the Eternal Restaurant did not use inferior materials. It just that I have added some combustible materials that the fire spread like wild fire!”

Di Yang laughed and said. “People said that ‘Fragrance of a Thousand Miles’ is an extraordinary hero from beyond the Pass. Now that I have seen it, it is indeed true.”

Ren Fengping said. “I am concerned about the whereabouts of Nangong Ping and this man who set the fire. Therefore I have followed!”

He took a glance at Nangong Ping, Mei Yinxue and Di Yang for awhile before he said solemnly. “After today, Mei Yinxue and Brother Nangong will find it difficult to move around in the Pugilist. I wonder what are your plans for the future?” His speech seemed honest but in his eyes he seemed to disguise something.

Nangong Ping sighed. “After today’s matter, I know that I will not be forgiven by the people in the Pugilist. But as long as I am without guilt, it doesn’t

matter anything to me. Most probably I will visit Zhijiao Manor once. If I got the time, I will go to my hometown to pay my parents…"

Ren Fengping said. "Other places you can go but these two places you cannot go."

There was a slight change in the expression of Nangong Ping as Ren Fengping explained. "Do not blame me for being straightforward. When Maiden Mei roamed the Pugilist doing whatever she cared to do in the past, she really made a lot of enemies. I believe that after what happened in Xian today, in a matter of days, the whole of the Pugilistic Fraternity will come to know that Maiden Mei is alive and her enemies will come knocking. If they cannot find the two of you, they will most likely to come knocking into those two places. Although the both of you are highly skilled, but you cannot win the masses…Haiz! Moreover Brother Nangong fellow clan brothers and sisters…" He solemnly sighed and then stopped.

Nangong Ping seemed to ponder while Mei Yinxue coldly laughed and asked. "Therefore, in Hero Ren opinion, what should we do?"

Ren Fengping paused for awhile to consider as he knew that in front of this clever maiden, he must not say the wrong words.

"I am stupid therefore I can only provide some ideas." He smiled and solemnly said. "Maiden Mei made many enemies during her time in Pugilist. Although they are the same enemies but times have changed now."

Mei Yinxue looked puzzled and asked. "How do you explain it?"

Ren Fengping explained. "At that time, these people are scattered all over. Among themselves, they do not know who is the also the enemy of Maiden Mei. Moreover owing to the circumstances at that time, no one will be willing to say it loud. But after ten years, the times are different. If those people know that Maiden Mei is still alive, they will be sure to group together to seek vengeance."

There was suddenly a very mysterious smile on her smiling face as she slowly added. "Are they all coming just so for vengeance? I afraid…" Suddenly she looked at Nangong Ping and immediately stopped.

Ren Fengping said. "No matter what. In my humble opinion, just the two of you will surely face many dangers…"

Nangong Ping interrupted. "You mean to say that we should seek shelter in…another Clan?" His voice was solemn and unhappy.

Ren Fengping smiled awhile. "With the status of two of you. I won't say the word 'Shelter' even if I have the guts to say so."

Mei Yinxue coldly said. "Hero Ren. If there is anything please say it out directly. Isn't better than going around the bushes?"

Ren Fengping laughed. "In the presence of the smart people, there is no need for secrecy. If there are no friends that stand by you, I afraid it will be very hard for

you to walk around in the Pugilist in the future. The two of you have a bright future. If you carry on like this, it will be such a waste."

Nangong Ping sighed. "In this world, other than the two of you as my righteous friends, where can I find more."

Di Yang laughed and said. "I am minor but Brother Ren…Hehe. He is indeed a undeniable hero of the pugilists and a Hero from the beyond the Pass."

Ren Fengping smiled in appreciation. "What I have is only a title. How can I ever possibly be compared to you? Both of you are young, handsome heroes–" Suddenly he stopped and solemnly added. "But I have the fortune to know a friend. He is really a talent among talents. And he has a most heroic heart. He even knows the formation stratagems, music, chess and painting. As for his martial skills, it is even more extraordinary; he could use a leaf or a flower to wound others. He loves to make friends and his hospitality greatly exceed that of mine."

Mei Yinxue secretly laughed coldly in her heart while Nangong Ping and Di Yang was impressed.

If it were others who said a similar thing like this, it would seem unbelievable. But from the mouths of 'Fragrance of a Thousand Miles' Ren Fengping, the temptation to know was different.

Therefore the two of them asked at the same time. "Who is this man?"

Ren Fengping smiled. "He stays beyond the Pass. Very few people know of his name but the name of Shuai Tian Fan would be known far and wide in future.

Di Yang commented. "What a dashing name."

Nangong Ping said. "If such an extraordinary person will to come to the Central Plains, I will surely want to know him. Unfortunately I do not know him."

Mei Yinxue asked. "Then Hero Ren, your meaning is, if we can make such a man as our friend, then all our troubles will be over?" Her tone was still cold and icy.

Ren Fengping said. "Brother Nangong, the Pugilist Fraternity is like a scattered sand. Kunlun has long been dominating the western region, Shaolin dominating the Central Plains, Wudang dominating in the areas of Jiangnan. Further south is Diancang and to the east is Huangshan. To the north is Tianshan and to the west is Zhongnan. All of them possess their own techniques. All of them have long wanted to dominate the entire Pugilistic Fraternity and potentially caused the entire realm to enter into chaos.

It was only of what happened in Huangshan in the past that caused grievously the loss of so many pugilists and because the 'Divine Dragon and the Phoenix' had been leading the Pugilistic Fraternity that the realm is currently at peace."

Although his words had left the topic but Nangong Ping and Di Yang

listened on with interest.

Ren Fengping added. “But now the various Sects and Clans are slowly regaining their lost strength and secretly on the move. Now that the Divine Dragon had disappeared, the balance that is holding the Pugilistic Fraternity is gone. If within a year, there is no one to hold the balance, the entire realm will be in a state of chaos.”

His words were like gold that impressed deeply in the hearts of men. Nangong Ping and Di Yang felt their hearts stirring.

Ren Fengping glanced at them and was secretly feeling happy at their expression. He added. “What have been divided will be whole again. Peace will come again after chaos. This will occur naturally. If during this time of chaos, there is no one in the Pugilist that could uphold righteousness, then the chaos caused by the hundred clans would not only cause chaos, plunder and rape would also be inevitable. If it still descended into chaos and no one can stop it, then how sorrowful will it be?”

Nangong Ping sighed. “Indeed. This is an excellent foresight.”

Ren Fengping smiled and said. “I don’t have the hidden talent of a crouching dragon. That Shuai Tianfan is the real Zhuge (Zhuge Liang (AD 181 - 234) was one of the greatest Chinese strategists of the Three Kingdoms period, as well as a statesman, engineer, scholar, and inventor. Zhuge is an uncommon two-character compound family name. His name (or even just his surname) has become synonymous with intelligence and wit in Chinese culture) from beyond the Pass. Although he has not even stepped into the Pugilistic Fraternity but his ability to analyze the situation of the realm is the same as actually witnessing it. To be honest with the two of you, I have stepped into Yumen, acting under orders to search from among the numerous pugilist heroes, to find those with the guts and enlightenment to resolve this situation. So that in future, we can uphold justice and righteousness for the entire Pugilistic Fraternity.”

Di Yang narrowed his brows and added. “Excellent thoughts for righteousness. But a pity there is no wine here or I will want to merrily toast you three times.”

Nangong Ping was perplexed in his heart and he became silence with many thoughts in his mind.

Mei Yinxue could not help but coldly laughed awhile and secretly thought. “I see that this Ren Fengping is a persuader for that Shuai Tianfan to buy over the hearts of others. Alas, alas, this Shuai Tianfan wants to dominate the Pugilistic Fraternity. He has such a wild ambition.” She paused to consider. “The appearance of Ren Fengping is most extraordinary, his martial skills outstanding. Even his words are inspiring and are anything but ordinary. What is more, he is also a heroic

figure with a warm heart. No matter which angle I analyze, he can be considered a talented hero. Even that 'Manshan Two Brothers' listen to him. And he is only a persuader for that Shuai Tianfan. From these, that Shuai Tianfan martial prowess, talents and intellect are indeed unfathomable!"

When she had thought to this point, she could not help but felt astonished in her heart. She noticed that Ren Fengping did not say anything now but was like a speculator that was looking at their reaction before he said. "Brother Nangong, with your martial skills, talent and intellect, with your family wealth, the future of the Pugilistic Fraternity will definitely be yours. But you are unfortunately to be involved in a messy situation that could not find the understanding of your fellow pugilists."

"Even your fellow clan brothers will not be able to understand. You cannot move front or back, surround by enemies from left and right. Even if you have a thousand grievous but you still cannot earn the trust of the world. But if you will to co-operate with Shuai Tianfan and with the aid of this heroic Brother Di, there is no difficulty that cannot be resolved! Once the matter is over, not only can you uphold justice and righteousness for the Pugilistic Fraternity but also summon all the fellow pugilists and explain the head and tail from the beginning to the end. At that time your status will be different and your words will be golden instead. Will there be anyone in the Pugilistic Fraternity that dared to say a word of disrespect to you? Not only will you not be in any danger; you will also be famous throughout the world. Even 'Zhijiao Manor' will hold a important place in the Pugilistic Fraternity realm forever because of your fame!"

His words although said in a grave tone but every single word seemed to move the hearts of the listeners. It really caught the attention of the listeners and once they had listened, they could help but feel moved.

Ren Fengping looked at Nangong Ping and Di Yang, observed their expression and laughed aloud. "As the saying goes, if the hearts of two joined, it can severe gold. If the two of you will to join forces with me, in the future, the whole world will belong to us brothers!"

Mei Yinxue rolled her eyes and softly laughed. "According to Hero Ren, in less than ten years, this exceptional talented Shuai Tianfan will be the Alliance Chief of the entire Pugilistic Fraternity?"

Ren Fengping laughed. "If we could have the aid of the young hero Nangong Ping, in less than ten years, we can indeed control the situation of the Pugilist in our hands."

He was very satisfied and proud, very sure that these two men would be moved by him.

Mei Yinxue softly laughed. "This Hero Shuai lead a recluse life outside the

frontier, have not yet stepped into the Central Plains but already have the lofty aspirations to dominate the Central Plains and the Pugilistic Fraternity. It is really very impressive and worthy of respect."

Although her smiles were very demure, beautiful and sweet but her words were actually that of disdain. But Ren Fengping, who was feeling sure, did not noticed it all.

He smiled and said. "The three of you are very intelligent people. I am sure you will understand my efforts…"

Mei Yinxue rolled her eyes again and softly laughed. "Hero Ren kind intentions, we are indeed very moved but…" She looked at Nangong Ping who did not show any expression and was in thoughts.

Therefore she softly laughed and added. "We are in a very critical situation now and we are on the run. But Hero Ren grand plans are so far from being fulfilled. And that Hero Shuai is not even in the Central Plains yet…"

'Fragrance of a Thousand Miles' Ren Fengping laughed and added. "Since everyone have the intention to participate in this grand scheme, I as brother will not dare to hide anything from everyone."

He ceased his laughter and said solemnly. "Although it appeared that I have only been in the Pugilist for a few months but in fact, I have been within the Pass for five years. These five years, I have established in the Pugilist some foundations. But because the time is not ripe, therefore there are no one in the Pugilistic Fraternity that know about it."

Mei Yinxue giggled. "Putting other things aside, just Hero Ren unfathomable martial skills alone is an amazement!"

Ren Fengping looked pleased and said. "For my selections of talents, those ranked in the middle I have found quite a few friends but those ranked on the upper echelon, are so few. Therefore it is the reason why I need the great support of the three of you because very soon, that Shuai Tianfan will enter the Pass."

Although he thought of himself as brilliant but he did not know that the demure Mei Yinxue was drawing him to relax his guard with her beautiful smiles and her alluring eyes had already captivated him.

Nangong Ping and Di Yang had a slight change in their expression but Ren Fengping eyes shone brightly in a dazzling light. He added. "Not far from here, I have a villa. Although it is simple but it is quiet. I am sure no one will disturb the three of you. Unfortunately I have to remain in Xian City for awhile therefore I am unable to accompany you."

Mei Yinxue purposely sighed in disappointment and slowly added. "Then what shall we do?"

Di Yang looked on seemingly frustrated while Nangong Ping knew her she

had always been like that therefore he kept quiet and waited what would happen next

'Fragrance of a Thousand Miles' Ren Fengping smiled. "No to worry. Although I am unable to accompany the three of you but there will be someone to lead…"

Suddenly he stopped and he looked at the three of them.

The smiles on Mei Yinxue face grew even sweeter while Nangong Ping kept his composure. Although Di Yang was getting impatience, for the sake of Nangong Ping and Mei Yinxue, he endured.

Ren Fengping was pleased with their expression therefore once again he recovered his smiling face and reached into his clothing and slowly said. "Although I want to be eager friend with the three of you but you may not believe yet…" His hand took something from within his clothing. Mei Yinxue, Nangong Ping and Di Yang took a glance and saw that he had a taken out three colorful sacks that shone like gold.

Mei Yinxue laughed lovable for awhile and then asked, "It so beautiful. What is it?"

Ren Fengping solemnly said. "Until now, those in the Pugilist that have seen this is rarer than rare…" He respectfully opened one of the sack and everyone caught a strange sweet aroma coming from the sack. From it, he took out a square ordinary purple wooden tablet and respectfully put it into Mei Yinxue's hand.

Mei Yinxue lowered her head and noticed that this ordinary looking tablet had an exquisitely workmanship. On the surface was a craving of a picture. On top it was a Buddha that sat on the high clouds above the peak of a tall mountain. And behind the image, was the setting sun. And in the cloud was a man whose looks were impossible to tell although it was very bright around him.

On the other side of the tablet were the lines of a Tang poet Gao Shi taken from the Song of a Sparrow. *"A man should have roamed carefree in the turmoil of the Pugilist realm."*

Mei Yinxue had been looking at it for sometime now with her head down. She looked up and laughed. "The man that was on the tablet, is it that of Shuai Tianfan?"

Ren Fengping nodded his head and replied, "This 'Fragrant of the Wind and Rain Tablet' belongs to Shuai Tianfan."

He smiled and gave the two other sacks to Nangong Ping and Di Yang. "Because I want to gain the trust of the three of you, I make an exception to ignore any paper works and entrust these tablets to you."

Mei Yinxue played with the tablet gently with her hand and then laughed. "What paper works?"

Ren Fengping replied. “Once the three of you reached the villa, you will know naturally!”

He suddenly clapped his hands with both his hands and there was a loud noise as the figure of a man that moved very fast appeared. He was one of the ‘Manshan Two Brothers’ Chang Sun Dan!

He moved lightning fast and was besides Ren Fengping in an instant. He looked maliciously at Mei Yinxue but when he saw the tablet on her hand, he was startled.

Ren Fengping smiled. “Brother Chang Sun, I know you have a misunderstanding with Maiden Mei but from now on, we are a family. Brother Chang Sun, you should forget about the past.”

Chang Sun Dan paused to consider for awhile before he coldly said. “I have already forgot about it.”

Mei Yinxue laughed lovingly and said. “Wow, what amazing speed!”

Ren Fengping laughed. “Can I bother Brother Chang Sun to accompany them to the ‘Fragrance Scent Manor’. I have some business at hand in Xian but I will hurry to meet up with everyone after I am done!”

Chang Sun Dan said. “Then…the sword…”

Ren Fengping laughed. “Brother Nangong, the precious sword that you have left behind in Xian City, I have sent my people to find it for you already.”

Nangong Ping who was in deep thoughts was startled to hear that.

Chang Sun Dan took a long sword from behind his back and coldly said. “The scabbard may not fit.”

Ren Fengping took the sword and handed it over to Nangong Ping and smiled. “Just now when I entered your room at the villa, I had already saw this famous precious sword. Later, I did not see Brother Nangong carrying it besides you. I hope I did not offend you by bringing it to you.”

He did not wait for Nangong Ping to appreciate his thanks and turned to Di Yang to ask. “Brother Di, do you know what so special about the wooden tablet?”

Di Yang who had been looking perplexed coldly laughed. “No matter how special this wooden tablet is, I will never become the claw of some one that want to dominate the Pugilistic Fraternity. Heng, heng...” He turned over his hand and threw the sack down on the ground and looked in the sky and refused to take a second look at Ren Fengping.

Ren Fengping was startled and his expression changed. He croaked. “Brother Di, you…you…”

Nangong Ping took a deep sigh and said. “I am really appreciative of Brother Ren kindness. If that Hero Shuai is to come through from the Pass, I hope that I can be friend with such a great heroic figure but…” He sighed again and

handed over the sack to Ren Fengping and added. “I am stupid, have no talent and moreover I am too willful. Therefore I am afraid I am unable to participate in Brother Ren grand plans. But, alas…I will never forget your kind gestures.”

He was born to be appreciative and kind. Although he appreciated the kind intention of Ren Fengping but he was not willing to be brought over by someone.

But he felt he owe something to this man therefore he was sighing.

Ren Fengping turned bronze green, clenched his hands tightly and seemingly almost crashed the sack that he was now holding. He turned slowly and looked at Mei Yinxue.

Mei Yinxue laughed and said. “I am for anything…” She gently laughed and returned the wooden tablet to the sack.

Nangong Ping expression had a sudden change while Ren Fengping eyes shone.

Mei Yinxue laughed and added. “But I don’t have any ambitions and guts therefore I can only give a thank of appreciation to Hero Ren. But…” She suddenly placed the sack into her dress and lovingly laughed. “I like this sack and wooden tablet very much so I am loath to return it to you. Since you have been so generous in giving it to me, I am sure you will not be so petty as to take it back. Hero Ren, do you agree?”

Di Yang could not resist making a laugh and noticed that Ren Fengping turned very pale and was stunned.

Ren Fengping slowly stretched down, picked the sack that was on the ground and looked very downcast.

Nangong Ping felt sorry for him and solemnly asked. “Brother Ren, if you need anything in future…”

Before he could finish, Ren Fengping burst out in hilarious laughter. It was icy and shrieking.

“Very good!” He laughed. “It seem that I am blind today. I see that the three of you have been making a fool out of me…”

Suddenly his laughter ceased and he slowly said word by word. “But since the three of you have known of my secrets, do you think you can leave here alive? Hehe! Do you really think Ren Fengping is an idiot!” He clapped his hands and he moved back seven feet!

From all around, in the shadows, more than ten men appeared with maces.

Nangong Ping, Di Yang, Mei Yinxue was startled while Chang Sun Dan remained solemn and flashed a sword!

Ren Fengping said in jest. “If I have no confidence to seal your mouths, would I dare to reveal those secrets in front of you?” He made a signal and his men surrounded Nangong Ping, Di Yang and Mei Yinxue.

Nangong Ping swept his eyes around and suddenly coldly laughed. “The feeling of appreciation and gratefulness have now been washed away by your this gesture!”

Ren Fengping coldly laughed. “It doesn’t matter if you are grateful to me, heng, heng! There is no difference now.”

Nangong Ping laughed. “Hundreds of pugilists surrounded me at Xian City. Will these tens of men cause me to lose my life here?”

Di Yang said aloud. “For those with the guts, they can also have the taste of the Tianshan Divine Sword!”

Ren Fengping coldly laughed. “Let me show you the result of five years of my painstaking effort whether it is any different from those rubbish in Xian City.”

Mei Yinxue solemnly said. “Don’t try to attack first, use inaction to counter action.
If there is anything wrong, clear a path out of the formation first…”

Ren Fengping said aloud in a clear voice. “Heaven!” then “Earth!” Tens of men attacked at Nangong Ping, Di Yang and Mei Yinxue at the same time in a tremendous show of force that startled them.

Nangong Ping shouted as he drew his long sword on his right hand. Mei Yinxue dress fluttering in a dance while Di Yang readied his fists as the three of them stood back to back with one another.

“Wind!” Hissed Ren Fengping.

The attacks grew even fiercer with the chains swinging and making ding dang sound.

Suddenly Di Yang cried out as a silver chain appeared like lightning struck him.

This formation was very deadly. It made use of the silvery reflective light of the maces, the sound of the strong wind caused by it and the ding dang sounds of the chain made this formation truly terrifying.

Mei Yinxue said in a startled voice. “Not good!”

Before she could finish, Di Yang tried to stand but another chain struck him. Without pausing to think it over, he caught hold of the mace with both his hands and his hands felt terrible. He was suddenly in pain from his left waist as well. But he charged to the black clad man with the mace he caught and both of them fell startled to the ground!

Nangong Ping used the sword to protect his body. Although the Fallen Autumn Leaf was a precious sword, it was not because it was renowned for its sharpness but because it was the sword of a famous man. But at this moment when Nangong Ping slashed it with all his might, its power was extraordinary!

There were a few sounds and three of the strange looking weapons which

were really Morning Stars were fell by him. He turned around and saw Di Yang had fallen to the ground in a startled cry.

When Mei Yinxue saw that those men were using Morning Star Maces, she thought. “No wonder Ren Fengping does not seem worry!”

One must know that the Morning Star Mace was a type of weapon that was rarely seen in the Pugilist. Not only were it hard to be proficiency in it but when there were many people, it could even hurt the wielder. But if one manage to specialize in it, the power of the mace would be doubled.

Since those men were able to use such a weapon, it would appear that they had been highly proficiency in it. Not only were they co-operating very well, they would not even hurt themselves, and the display naturally were most extraordinary.

Mei Yinxue was worldly wise with experience that she had gained while she was roaming the Martial Fraternity therefore when she saw this formation; she actually had the intention to retreat. But when she saw Nangong Ping standing up to fight, she did not know why her heart was aroused too. Now she did not care for her own safety anymore and with a soft shout, she floated speedily in a wave of strong wind and blocked off the seven maces for Nangong Ping that were aiming at him!

Nangong Ping raised his long sword in all directions and ran towards the side of Di Yang who had fallen.

Mei Yinxue became very pale because she knew that the next instant when the maces struck, Nangong Ping will surely be wounded by those maces!

Now there were silvery light everywhere in that instant when she had been in thoughts. She heard Ren Fengping shouted. “Frost!”

Mei Yinxue turned her body around and dashed across to Nangong Ping. She heard a shout and immediately the waves of morning stars were withdrawn and all the attackers took ten steps back.

Ren Fengping who was directing the formation noticed something went wrong with his Array and was startled. This ‘Heaven Wind Silvery Rain Array’ was created to dealt with the top exponents of the Pugilist therefore a lot of efforts had been expended on it. What most intricate about this formation over the ‘Eight Array Formation’ was the use of ‘Heaven, Earth, Wind, Rain, Sun, Moon, Cloud, Snow, Frost’ totaling nine changes that could constantly attack and aided one another. Although the changes were not complicated but he strongly believe the strange array and formation created, had the ability to bring down any top exponent!

As he did not saw Di Yang who wounded by it and deeply afraid that this painstaking formation would be destroyed, therefore with a shout, he dispersed the formation. Now he gently floated into the middle of the array…

Nangong Ping lowered his body to inspect Di Yang who was bloodied but his left hand was holding the throat of a strong man in black Di Yang was holding so tightly that his fingernails continuously had blood flowing out. That man wore a leather glove on his left hand and his mace was clenched by Di Yang's right hand high in the air and it crashed onto the head of the man.

Nangong Ping was startled in his mind and he caught hold of Di Yang by his wrist and when Di Yang turned his head over, he noticed that he was covered with blood. This young man was wounded for the first time and it was also the first time he had ever killed some one. Therefore when he saw his own blood, his senses were in a state of confusion and he looked shockingly at Nangong Ping and at the mace.

The blood dripped from the mace coldly on Nangong Ping's hands. The icy cold blood affected him as much as Di Yang. From now on, he would never treat the lives of others lightly.

Ren Fengping who had drifted to the middle saw the scene and laughed coldly. "I see that 'Tianshan Divine Swordplay' is really nothing at all!"

Mei Yinxue coldly laughed. "But the so and so Tianshan Divine Swordplay has caused your array to be in a state of confusion. It lucky that you have the foresight to disperse the array or else…hehe."

Although she laughed it off but actually in a heart, she was secretly startled by the power of this array. She added. "Look at the broken head of your man, are you not afraid…"

Before she could finish, Ren Fengping broke into an eerie and hilarious laughter.

Nangong Ping appeared vex and said aloud. "Why are you laughing? Do you think that the loss of lives and blood is a funny matter?"

Ren Fengping ceased his laughter and coldly said. "Do you know flowers and trees need to undergo trials to grow?"

Nangong Ping was startled for he did not why he suddenly said something so irrelevant.

Ren Fengping added. "Martial arts and arrays are the same as flowers and trees. In this world, no matter what type of martial skills, no matter what type of arrays if they are not tested in blood, they will never be nurtured and grow. Although one of my men had died but his blood will cause this 'Heaven, Wind, Silvery Rain Array to be more developed. It is indeed a joyous matter, why don't you laugh?"

This explanation caused Nangong Ping to be very upset and sorrow at the same time. Sorrow because he suddenly remembered the martial skills that he had learnt was developed in blood too. He could not help but sighed. Every single

words of this Ren Fengping were as sharp as blades that pierced deeply into the heart.

'Fragrance of a Thousand Miles' Ren Fengping smiled and said solemnly, "I am not here to make enemies of the people in the Pugilist realm. Therefore this Heaven, Wind, Silvery Rain Array is really not meant not to be used…"

He suddenly sighed deeply and added. "In Xian City, thousands of pugilists surrounded you and even your protégés are not understandable towards you. Only I, Ren Fengping at the risk of offending the wrath of everyone…alas! You have caused me to go against my own intention and was now trapped by my array!"

Nangong Ping sighed deeply.

Mei Yinxue coldly laughed and added. "You failed to intimidate us and are you trying to use a soft approach now?"

Ren Fengping said solemnly. "Since the three of you refuse to listen to my sound advise, therefore I will let you witness the true power of my Heaven Wind Silvery Rain Array."

Mei Yinxue softly shouted. "Hold it!" And her body floated in an elegant flash, seemingly like she was flying across the field.

Ren Fengping secretly exclaimed. "What a terrifying swiftness skill!" And Mei Yinxue had landed in front of him. He laughed aloud. "Do you really think by retaining me in the middle of this Array, it will not be able to unleash its power?"

Mei Yinxue replied. "That is right." She softly laughed and added. "I want to retain you here." And her hands moved to hit Ren Fengping on his Ping Jian Jin accupoint!

Ren Fengping lowered his glance, as he did not dare to look at the captivating smile on her face as he tried to evade. At the same time his left hand reached toward her beneath her waist as he said coldly. "Forgive me for not accompanying you!" And he lifted his body up by the force of his right leg.

Mei Yinxue laughed most lovingly as she exclaimed. "You will not be able to leave." She lifted herself up like a python using the strength of her right shoulder as her dress fluttered as she hit his ankle!

Ren Fengping was very startled as he immediately once again tried to lift up again and his hands homed toward her but could only hit her sleeve.

Mei Yinxue captivating laughed as she danced in mid-air. "You should come down!" And some bits of the clothing from her sleeve dropped to the ground.

Before she had finished, Ren Fengping was forced to the ground and guarded his front with two hands. He looked intently at Mei Yinxue. Just now when she exhibited the stance of 'Flying Cloud swiftness skill'. It was done so casually but her mastery of the gravity, her flow of vital energies was actually in the acme of perfection. Even the present Chief of the Wudang Sect, Priest Tingxin

did not have her martial ability.

Nangong Ping was secretly startled. Until now, he had never witnessed Mei Yinxue actual martial ability. It was much higher than he original thought. When she hit the ankle of Ren Fengping in such a causal way with her hand, she seemed to guise several other moves as well but because she had not meet any worthy opponent, she did not use any.

He was puzzled and at the same time admiring her. During those ten years while she lay in that dark narrow coffin, not only was it suffocating to be inside, it could drive anyone insane. And then this strange extraordinary maiden had not only regained her destroyed martial ability, it was such a painstaking and hard thing to do, she also managed to master the hardest skill in the inner strength category, the art of longevity. And her stances and strokes also seemed to have been greatly improved tremendously. He really could not guess how she managed to lay her hands on such a secret and extraordinary martial ability to create this miracle that was never seen for the hundred of years in the Pugilistic realm.

All those thoughts flashed in his mind while Di Yang slowly got up.

Ren Fengping coldly laughed and slowly said. “Do you wish to surrender or fight, decide it now.”

Mei Yinxue exclaimed. “I purposely want to delay the time! Is it not allowed?”

Ren Fengping coldly added. “Then you should hastily prepare for the burial of Di Yang!”

Nangong Ping was startled and asked in shock. “What did you say?”

Ren Fengping looked up at the sky and then slowly added. “On the surface of the silver mace, there is poison. If it contact with blood, it will act. There is no antidote…” He looked at Nangong Ping and continued. “If you wish to save your friend, you should make a decision now!”

As he was afraid of Mei Yinxue martial skills therefore he finally revealed this secret weapon of his.

Nangong Ping grew very pale and turned over to glance at Di Yang who was now looking rigidly and losing his normal countenance.

Mei Yinxue rolled her eyes around and coldly said. “I will not be bowed by mere words!”

Ren Fengping coldly laughed. “I afraid that in your heart, you know that it is not mere words! Although you are cold hearted and cold blood, you don’t even care about the life and death of your friends but…” He looked at Nangong Ping and added. “Nangong Ping, are you such a person too?”

Nangong Ping felt his heart stirring.

Mei Yinxue softly exclaimed. “If I capture you, will I be afraid that you will

not hand over the antidote?"

Ren Fengping coldly laughed and said. "I don't have the antidote on me and moreover...Hehe! Can you really capture me?"

Mei Yinxue looked perplexed and suddenly laughed coldly. "It really so funny. Alas it is so funny! I thought how great is 'Fragrance of a Thousand Miles' Ren Fengping but he is only so and so!"

Ren Fengping pretended not to hear while Mei Yinxue coldly laughed. "Using this method to force others to join you is the dumbest thing to do. Even if others will to join you, will not that person betray your secret after that? When that moment occur, you will deeply regret it."

Ren Fengping laughed. "Not to worry you, maiden. If I do not have the ability to subdue dragons and tigers, I will not suggest it."

Mei Yinxue secretly exclaimed. "Haiz!" She knew that her stratagem of attacking him using psychology did not work.

The two of them were strong willed and in this round, none of them managed to use words to move one another. As they were astonished by the ability of one another, they tried not rushed into a senseless fight first and hope to use words to move one another, hoping to score a victory without a fight.

Mei Yinxue was once again filled with a beautiful captivating smile. She suddenly had a thought. She would first attack Ren Fengping unprepared and hit his accupoints. If she did not succeed in the first attempt, she would immediately back off and before the Array could be activated; she would take Nangong Ping with her and break free of the Array.

But suddenly there was a sudden shrieking from the sky. It came from a crow!

Mei Yinxue was startled for this crow suddenly plunged on Ren Fengping face and seemingly wanted to gouge his eyes.

Although Ren Fengping was startled, he immediately retaliated with his hand! This hand was so fast and this crow was flying headlong towards him and could not have avoided it. But the crow suddenly evaded his attack by flying backward! And it flew up into the clouds and disappeared!

Ren Fengping looked on in shock. His hand was still in a offensive position and he seemed reluctant to put his hand down. Although there were many strange and wondrous creatures but a crow that can fly backward, from ancient times till now, there were never any occurrences! He thought. "Can this bird be a wondrous bird that looked like a crow?" He could not help wondering over it.

On the other hand, Mei Yinxue and Nangong Ping were puzzled as well.

Suddenly there was a queer shout coming from afar. "Move aside, move aside!"

And there was some initial confusion in the Array as they opened a path.

'Fragrance of a Thousand Miles' Ren Fengping looked on unhappy and said aloud. "To be confused even before a fight cannot be forgiven. Have you all forgotten?"

Even before he had finished, a white hair thin priest in robe of blue walked in strides into their midst all the while shouting. "Move aside, move aside!"

This priest looked imposing and his left hand was on his front. On that hand sat a crow. When Ren Fengping glanced over, he noticed that the queer sound came from the crow. He was suddenly very startled within him and he broke into cold sweat. A crow that could fly in reverse direction was startling enough. But a crow that could talk was even more startling. Ren Fengping had a wealth of experience from roaming the Pugilist and his cunning was even more unfathomable. But at this moment, his countenances underwent a great change.

Mei Yinxue rolled her eyes to glance and immediately she too lost her composure.

This priest carried a smile on his face but it was his crow that shrieked. "The moon is not dark, the wind is not high, how can you commit murder and arson in the vicinity of Xian City?"

Although its voice was crude but every single word was clear.

Mei Yinxue felt her legs growing soft and she almost wanted to cry out in surprise.

As for Nangong Ping, he too was very startled and he immediately thought of one man and he said. "You…"

The priest looked at him and silenced him, therefore Nangong Ping stumbled and looked at the priest startled.

Ren Fengping tried to suppress the terror in his heart and he asked. "What tidings brings a secular priest here?"

That priest laughed merrily while that crow shrieked. "Why did you only greet him, did you not see me?"

Ren Fengping was shocked beyond words. To greet a crow was really very ridiculous.

The white hair priest laughed. "My crow friend here is haughty but his seniority is very high. Even if you greet him, what does it matter?"

Ren Fengping was stunned for awhile before he raised both hands in the most unwilling manner to greet the crow. He seemed to be deeply affected by the strange crow and the expression of the priest therefore he obeyed.

There was a tingle of laugh in Nangong Ping's eyes, as he seemed to think it was very funny. Mei Yinxue was secretly puzzled for she knew that with his character, he would never poke fun at a senior pugilist. Therefore her suspicious

was aroused. Although she was exceptional smart, she could not guess the reason.

The white hair priest laughed. “Very good. Very good manner child. It seem that my trip is not being made in futile.” He looked solemnly at Ren Fengping and said. “By accidental, I saw an ominous outlook here as I was passing through. As I could not bear to witness the calamity that is to befall a hero therefore I am here.”

Ren Fengping looked confused and slowly asked. “I do not quite understand the meaning of the words of Senior.”

White hair priest sighed. “Do you know that your luck is at its lowest now and if you are involved in bloodshed, you are sure to invite calamity. Although you and them have a deep grudging vendetta but today you should try to wash your hands, the earlier the better.” He did not look at Nangong Ping and Mei Yinxue, seeming disliking them. He solemnly added. “If the two of them try to fight you, for the sake of that respectful greeting, I will help you to fend them off.”

Ren Fengping expression changed and he was seemingly shocked for words before he slowly asked. “But…”

The white hair priest looked perplexed and said aloud. “But what? Do you not believe me?”

“Calamity befalls and still do not wake up from your senses. What a pity, what a pity.” The crow shrieked.

Ren Fengping remained rooted to the ground and he was terribly pale. He looked at Nangong Ping, Mei Yinxue and then at the priest and the crow and slowly said. “It is not that junior do not believe you but today I have to settle something and…”

The priest coldly added. “And what I say, is too mysterious and you find it too hard to believe, right?”

Although Ren Fengping did not say anything but in fact, his silence was the best indication that the priest was correct.

The priest laughed aloud. “In my entire life, there are no one that ever doubted my predictions because I have never predicted anything wrongly. Since you do not believe, are you really trying to end your own life?”

The crow shrieked and laughed in a strange manner. “Since you want to die, it is really easy, easy…”

Suddenly Ren Fengping thought of a person and he became very pale. “Senior, are you the renowned Heavenly Crow Priest who know all things in advance and whose prediction is always correct that is so famous in the Pugilist years ago?”

The priest laughed. “Very good. At least you know my name. That is right. I am that Heavenly Crow priest that reported disasters and not fortune!”

Ren Fengping slowly asked. “But…but according to the rumors of the

Pugilistic Fraternity, Senior had long…passed away…"

The priest laughed. "More than ten years ago, I am weary of the illusion of living, therefore I fake my own death. I can't believe that so many in the Pugilist actually believe that."

Still Mei Yinxue was feeling very surprised inside of her. She had long ago heard of this priest that was so famous in the Pugilist for his uncanny ability to predict the future. He only predicted disasters and was never for once wrong. As long as he told someone that a disaster would befall him, it would surely happen. Therefore the people in the Pugilist nicked him as the Heavenly Crow Priest. Although crow sounds disrespectful but everyone in Pugilist lavished him with much respect.

The doubts in Ren Fengping mind totally disappeared.

The priest turned over and asked Mei Yinxue. "Did the two of you heard me?"

Mei Yinxue glanced at Nangong Ping and gently nodded.

The white hair priest 'Heavenly Crow Priest' continued. "I have the intention of rescuing him from this calamity, do you have any objections?"

Mei Yinxue was more than intelligent. How could she not know the priest was secretly helping them? Therefore she replied, "Since Senior has spoken, naturally there will be no objection."

The white hair priest 'Heavenly Crow Priest' waved his hand slightly and turned to look at Ren Fengping. "Then leave while you can. If you delay it, it will be too late."

Ren Fengping secretly sighed. "I am grateful by the kindness of Senior and I will want to extend my thanks to you again at some other time." He shouted. "Let go!" He had a upper hand in this situation but now he left in a mercifully released manner and he did not even harbor any hatred or unhappiness. In fact he was very grateful to the Heavenly Crow Priest.

Ren Fengping men had long wanted to leave ever since they had saw the talking crow for they were frightened by it. So when they heard the order to retreat, it seemed like a pardon from the emperor and they respectfully bade the priest goodbye before they left hurriedly.

Ren Fengping looked viciously at Mei Yinxue for awhile as if he wanted to say something but at last, he sighed deeply, turned and left hurriedly. In a flash or two, he had disappeared into the darkness

Nangong Ping did not say anything till Ren Fengping was far away. He suddenly sighed deeply. "You have use trickery again, alas! If it isn't for the sake of Brother Di, I…" He suddenly felt so guilty.

Mei Yinxue was left wondering by Nangong Ping.

That white hair priest suddenly laughed. “This is a tooth for a tooth. To dealt with such a cunning heretic, what wrong with tricking him one or two times?”

Nangong Ping sighed. “It's not honorable…to trick”

Mei Yinxue was startled. And she was even more puzzled and could not resist asking. “What trick?” Although she possessed the fruit of wisdom but she could not tell what was the trick all about.

As the white hair priest knew the character of Nangong Ping, therefore he did not blame him for faulting him. He gently pat the crow feathers and laughed. “Crow friend, crow friend. It is all thanks to you!” He turned his wrist as though he wanted to severe something and raised up his right hand. “Go now!”

That crow shrieked and spread its wings to soar into the darkness.

When Mei Yinxue saw that he set such a wondrous spiritual bird away, she was very startled and puzzled inside. Therefore she could not resist asking. “Haiz…will it still return?”

The white hair priest laughed and laughed. “Maiden, you don’t have to feel pity. There are so many crows around, I can capture ten of them anytime I want.”

Mei Yinxue glanced at Nangong Ping and slowly added. “What is going on around here, I really cannot figure it out…” She was so sure of her unrivalled intelligence that when she encountered something that she could not solve, she could not help feeling frustrated.

The white hair priest laughed. “It is a form of psychology attack that is used on a strong foe. It really unbelievable that this trick of mine managed to fool the ‘Fragrance of a Thousand Miles’ Ren Fengping and that even the world famous Peacock Concubine was fooled.”

Nangong Ping sighed. “After seven years, I really did not expect to see you again outside Xian City. And you even rescue me from this difficulty. And I really did not expect…alas! It been many years and your behavior did not changed at all…” He sighed and shut up. His speech was filled with delight but also regret.

The old white priest ceased his smiles and slowly said. “To tell the truth, I did not use this trick for many years already. But when I saw the crisis that had befall you, I am forced to…”

Nangong Ping sighed. “You have come to save me, naturally I am grateful. But this method of yours, is not honorable. You have drifted in the Pugilist all your life, don’t you want to create for yourself a respectable, honorable, righteous reputation and did something earth shaking so that future generations will know?”

Although Nangong Ping voice was composed but it was sparking with righteousness and the white hair priest countenance was sunk and he lowered his head.

Nangong Ping slowly walked up to him and patted him on his shoulder. “If

my words are strong, please do not blame me. You must know that if I do not feel proud of a friend such as you, I will not say it. Moreover, your kindness caused me to feel extremely grateful in my heart."

The white hair priest lifted his head and smiled and basked in the light of friendship. He grasped Nangong Ping's hands and asked. "All…these years, are you good?" He asked with great concern.

Nangong Ping nodded and replied. "I am good. What about you?" His calm composure was moved as well and his eyes shone with tinge of reflective light.

Mei Yinxue was lost in deep thoughts of her own. Suddenly she clapped her hands and softly laughed. "I know it!" She turned around and was besides the white hair priest in an instant as she caught hold of his wrist.

Nangong Ping asked solemnly. "What is the matter?"

Mei Yinxue captivating laughed. "You look, there is really a black string in his hand. Haha! The crow that can fly in reverse was actually caused by the string in his hand when he pulled it."

The white hair priest laughed. "Maiden you really have a most exceptional intelligence, there is nothing that can hide from you."

Mei Yinxue was smiling proudly while Nangong Ping looked at her. She looked more delighted than any child that was given delicacies and beautiful clothing did. He could not help thinking. "Although she look very cold and frosty and unapproachable. But in actuality, she has an innocent heart but…Alas! The people in the Pugilistic Fraternity only know of her cold outlook but none of them know the kind heart that is within her."

Mei Yinxue ceased her laughter and she looked perplexed. "But…that crow that knows how to speak in our tongue really muddle me!"

White hair priest laughed aloud and he suddenly used that strange shrieking sound and said. "Maiden you have been walking in the Pugilist for a long time. Did you ever heard of a strange magic trick used by wandering peddlers?"

Mei Yinxue listened carefully and observed that from the chest of the white hair priest echoed the shrieking sound of that crow. She was immediately stunned and asked. "What magic trick?" Although she had long roamed the Pugilist realm but all her associates were top exponents in the Pugilistic Fraternity, naturally she did not know of this unorthodox trick.

Nangong Ping explained. "This skill is call 'Ventriloquism'. It makes use of the air channels in the body and emit is out from the muscles inside. It is a high art in the eyes of the wandering peddlers and also extremely hard to train…"

The white hair priest laughed it off. "It's just an unorthodox skill, there is nothing to be proud of it."

Nangong Ping said solemnly. "Any skills that are mastered are not to be

taken lightly. It just depends if it is used correctly."

Mei Yinxue softly sighed and slowly said. "I will never expect to know that from the lower echelons of the pugilists, there is such an wondrous skill. If you say it is an unorthodox skill, I think otherwise and feel that it is a amazing skill. But a pity that I have never heard of it before."

Nangong Ping slowly added. "The world is big and the creatures that dwell in it wondrous. It is not something based on just a person foolish intelligence to grasp all its mysteries. Those people that try to know everything, usually do not know anything." (Referring to Mei Yinxue)

The white hair priest sighed, feeling grateful inside.

Mei Yinxue secretly sighed in her heart but still she retained a captivating smile on her face and asked. "Since you are not that 'Heavenly Crow Priest', then who are you?" She had always been very strong willed. Although her most innermost thoughts had been hit right on the mark by other but she did not show it.

Nangong Ping composed face floated a smile. He seemingly almost wanted to burst out in laughter at the thought of that priest name.

The white hair priest sighed and replied. "My name is Wan Da, a guest under the residence of Nangong Master." He suddenly smiled. "But the people in the Pugilist nicked me as some one who knows everything, therefore I am forced to be acknowledged as Wan Shitong (Someone who knows many things)."

In his laughing fits, he lifted his glance and saw that Mei Yinxue remained solemn and did not have any tinge of jest. So he asked. "Don't you feel it is a funny name, maiden?"

Mei Yinxue sighed and said in a serious tone. "Unless it is someone who is exceptional brilliant, unless it is someone that pursue knowledge, unless there are tens of years of hard work, how will anyone nick you as "Wan Shitong". I greatly admire this name and I don't find it to be funny."

Wan Da was startled and he was greatly moved for he found someone that could understand him.

Nangong Ping sighed. "If it not someone who is exceptional brilliant, who else is able to say aloud such an extraordinary line." (Referring to Mei Yinxue)

Mei Yinxue was delighted and she laughed captivating for awhile.

Wan Da sighed. "Ever since you become the protégé of the Divine Dragon Clan, those who were your proteges had now scattered. I wandered throughout the Pugilistic Fraternity with no accomplishments…Alas! Today I come to the Northwest hoping to witness the duel between the Phoenix and the Divine Dragon. And at the same time pay you a visit. But I was late and when I arrived at Xian City, I heard that the Peacock Concubine has returned to the Pugilist realm. I also heard of your heroic duel with the Chief of the Zhongnan Sect at the Eternal

Restaurant."

He sighed and added. "I know then you have finally accomplished something in your martial ability after many years. I feel very happy but I was also very worry for your safety therefore I searched the fringe of the city hoping for your news. But…"

Mei Yinxue laughed and interrupted. "But your psychology attack aided us to beat off Ren Fengping or else even if we were all injured, it seemed that we would still unable to break loose of that…"

Suddenly Nangong Ping shouted. "Oh no!" As he rushed to Di Yang and under the starlight, Di Yang countenance had darkened.

Ren Fengping did not lie when he said that the mace had been applied with poison.

Nangong Ping asked Di Yang with great anxiety. "Brother Di, how are you?"

Di Yang eyes were in a daze and he could not hear him.

Nangong Ping clenched his fists tightly and broke off in cold sweat.

Wan Da took a look and immediately his countenance changed. Nangong Ping turned around and asked solemnly. "Is there any hope?"

Wan Da was silence for awhile before he sighed. "The poison that was afflicted to him is not the type that is commonly used in the Central Plains. And the poison has already been…I afraid…afraid…"

Nangong Ping paled and exclaimed. "Is there really no hope?"

Wan Da sighed. "Unless we have Ren Fengping secret antidote, and the long gone miraculous pill 'Against Heaven's Will' by the Saint of the Physicians, I afraid that even the wondrous saving pill of physician 'Pu Ling Xian' cannot neutralize such a strong acting poison. I can temporary stop the poison from reaching the heart but…"

Before he had finished, Nangong Ping was already on his feet. Mei Yinxue gently blocked him and asked. "What are you trying to do?"

Nangong Ping said solemnly. "Brother Di was injured because of me. How can I watch him die?"

Mei Yinxue expressions changed and said. "If you want to get the antidote from Ren Fengping, would not it be as difficult as negotiating with a tiger?"

Nangong Ping coldly replied. "Even if it meant negotiating with a tiger, I have to try."

Mei Yinxue melancholy sighed. "Then…let me accompany you."

Nangong Ping exclaimed. "You are now the target of the entire Pugilistic Fraternity. How can you risk yourself?" Although he was expressionless but he accidentally leaked his concern.

Mei Yinxue asked. “Why must you always think of others and not think of yourself?”

Nangong Ping sunk his expression. “If everything is for ourselves, then life will be very pitiful.” He looked up and saw that the ‘Cold and Frosty’ Cold Blood Concubine was filled with looks of concern and emotions. So he unwittingly changed his tone. “Wait here awhile with Brother Wan, if I did not succeed, I will be back very soon.”

Mei Yinxue lovingly laughed and asked. “If you do not succeed, will you be back?”

Nangong Ping said aloud. “I will definitely be back!”

Mei Yinxue melancholy sighed. “If you promise me that if you do not succeed with the first attempt, you will retreat. Only then will I not follow you.”

A hundred emotions flooded in the heart of Nangong Ping, as he could not control it anymore. He slowly said, “Even if I were to crawl, I will crawl back. But…you must be careful too.”

Mei Yinxue slowly moved her body aside for Nangong Ping. She lowered her head and said. “We will be careful!”

Nangong Ping looked at her intensely only to hear her said in a clear voice. “If you are not careful with yourself, I…I…anyway I will wait here for you, no matter how long.”

Nangong Ping slowly extended his hands but suddenly he lowered it and he solemnly said. “I go now.”

Wan Da who was looking intensely sighed. “Is this maiden, really the Peacock Concubine?”

Nangong Ping was startled. “Naturally is real.”

Wan Da said. “If I did not witness it myself, I really cannot believe that the Peacock Concubine will…” He sighed and shut up. He really could not believe that the Cold Blood Concubine Mei Yinxue would show such heart wrenching concern and feeling for anyone.

Nangong Ping was standing rigid onto the ground. He could only felt an unspeakable warm feeling coming from his heart. Once again he looked at Mei Yinxue and said. “I'll go now!” As he left.

Mei Yinxue held her dress as she watched him disappeared into the darkness. She softly said. “Do you think that he will…Alas! If you really the ‘Heavenly Crow Priest’, it will be best. You can tell me what facing him will be a fortune or a calamity!”

Even if it were the most intelligence person, when they encountered something that really concerned them, they would unconsciously inquire the Fates. The Cold Blood Concubine was carefree and did not concern herself with the lives

of others. Therefore the thing that everyone believed, she did not. Because she did not have feeling for anything therefore she did not have anything to concern or worry about. She had no fears and having no fears, she would not respect the Fates and the lives of others.

Now that she had beginning to show signs of concern and fear. She started to regard his life much more precious than hers had ever been. This feeling had came so sudden and dyed red the plain white environment of her life.

Wan Da sighed deeply and slowly said, “Nothing can overcome his righteous heart. Maiden, do you agree?”

He looked at her and saw that Mei Yinxue was looking in the sky for Heavens to protect his well being and did not heard him.

Chapter Nine
Heroic Spirit, Dry Cloud

Nangong Ping breath in deeply the cool air as he secretly entered Xian City. Although he knew that to retrieve the antidote from Ren Fengping hands were an almost impossible task but he had already made up his mind. In his dictionary, there was only, should he or should he not, and as long as it was the correct thing to do, even if he was to be killed by a thousand blade, he would never change his mind.

This courage caused him to neglect win or defeat, even beyond the façade of life and death. The people on the streets avoided Nangong Ping as they could feel his righteousness air that caused them unable to look into him directly.

Mulong Manor was quiet as well but it was unusually heavily guarded. Eight men wielding halberds were seen. They seemed to be searching the fog for the Cold Blood Concubine intensely with their eyes!

A young man appeared from the fog, his sharp and shining eyes asked them solemnly. “Is Master Wei in?”

“It so early in the morning, naturally he is in.” One of the men replied.

The young man solemnly said. “Please hurriedly ask your Master to come out. I have something important to see him!”

They were startled and one of the men laughed aloud and said, “Please ask our Master to see you!” He said in jest. “The sky has not even brighten yet and the Master is still in bed. If you want our Master to come and see you, haha. It is really laudable.”

The young man remained composed and coldly said. “Why don’t you go and report to him and say that…”

The same man laughed. “What there to say? Go back and wait until noon. Prepare a name card and write your intention. Our Master may not still want to see you. Just a few words, you expect our Master to wake up and to receive you, you must really be dreaming.”

Another man laughed. “If you are a famous person, maybe there is still room for negotiations. But it is a pity that you are not the famous Iron gut Long Fei and you are also not the recently renowned Nangong Ping!”

The young man slowly said. “I am indeed Nangong Ping!”

Everyone was immediately struck dumbfounded when they heard it was Nangong Ping and they all rushed inside the manor muttering. “Nangong Ping…Nangong Ping…” They had never dreamed that Nangong Ping who had

battled Jaded Hand of the Positive Nirvana last night would appear alone in Mulong Manor!

Nangong Ping was not moved by this recently founded fame.

The quiet Mulong Manor was suddenly startled by the name of Nangong Ping. There were mutterings and it spread like wildfire as hundreds of eyes peeked from the corner to look at this young man that had fought with the Chief of the Zhongnan Sect who was known as the Jaded Hand of the Positive Nirvana! But none dared to step forward openly.

Suddenly there was a powerful voice that electrified all the way to the entrance. “Where is Nangong Ping?”

Nangong Ping was very startled and he thought. “Who has such a powerful internal strength?”

One must know that although 'Flying Rings' Wei Qi and the Jaded Hand of the Positive Nirvana were two top exponents of the Pugilist realm but he could tell that the person that was emitting the shouts possessed very strong internal power. It was not Wei Qi or the Jaded Hand of the Positive Nirvana.

There was another voice shouting now. “Where is Nangong Ping?”

Nangong Ping was perplexed, as the man that was shouting was Wei Qi but he looked differently now; Gone was his haughty air. Could another top exponent be hiding in the manor?”

Wei Qi stared at Nangong Ping and he coldly said. “Nangong Ping, why did you come here? Do you really not afraid to die?” His voice stumbled as he suddenly began to shout. “Mei Leixue, Mei Leixue, are you here as well?” He seemed to use two different tones.

Nangong Ping was feeling strange but he asked. “Where is Ren Fengping?”

Wei Qi was startled but he shouted. “Where is Mei Leixue?”

Nangong Ping became perplexed and he shouted too. “Where is Ren Fengping?”

But Wei Qi also shouted at the same time. “Where is Mei Leixue…”

Suddenly a strange voice silenced them. “Why did want to seek Ren Fengping?”

Another man appeared and he was Ren Fengping who laughed merrily. “Nangong Ping, you have come! Very good, very good…” As he welcome him like he was his guest. “Please come in!”

Nangong Ping secretly sighed and he appeared to be thinking.

Ren Fengping laughed and said. “If there is anything to discuss, we talk inside!”

Who was the top exponent in the mist? Who could that mysterious man be? How startling were his martial art skills? Nangong Ping took a deep breath as he

stepped inside.

Wei Qi knitted his eyebrows and wanted to say something. But when he looked in the darkness, his eyes were frightened and he followed Ren Fengping and Nangong Ping at the back.

The mysterious voice asked. "Nangong Ping, are you here to retrieve from Ren Fengping the antidote?"

Nangong Ping looked around him, inspecting the hall and the darkness but he could not see the mysterious man.

Inside the Mulong Manor, Nangong Ping asked Ren Fengping for the antidote.

Ren Fengping asked Nangong Ping what would he offer in exchange for the antidote reminding him that he had no use of rare treasures and riches.

Therefore Nangong Ping offered his life in exchange for the antidote which startled Wei Qi. Nangong Ping told him if he was given the antidote, he would be back within one day to surrender his life.

Ren Fengping coldly exclaimed. "Why should I trust you!"

Nangong Ping furrowed and offered. "If you let me swallow a poison that enact one day after, I will surely be back!"

Therefore Nangong Ping took the poison and asked for the antidote from Ren Fengping.

Ren Fengping coldly laughed. "What antidote?"

Nangong Ping was angry that Ren Fengping had broken his promise that he attacked him. "You're a liar!"

But suddenly he was knocked forth by a force and the same mysterious voice said. "Who ever promise to give you the antidote?"

Although Nangong Ping was furious but still he felt weak and could not say a word out (The poison had acted). Only to hear the voice said slowly. "The instant you enter the manor, your life is forfeited. What right do you have to use a life that is already forfeited to me, to exchange for the antidote?"

Nangong Ping felt like he was being tore apart by rage and sorrow. After he was tricked, he now felt a sense of hopelessness and pain that was cruelly tearing apart his life and feeling. "You…You…You are not human! Antidote…Hand over the antidote…"

The voice laughed it off and said. "Antidote? Give up this hope. Not only will you die here but your stupid friend will also die as well. Can you hear his pain and dying cry now? Now the same fate awaits you and you can feel the horror of what it is to die."

As Nangong Ping lay dying, the voice jeered. "Now do you know that life is precious. But it is a pity that you can only live once right? Now you will enter into

eternal rest."

Nangong Ping struggled to open his eyes as he used the last of his strength to charge out but when he had moved a feet, he was knocked out.

On the other hand, Shi Chen and Guo Yuxia got up from the same bed. Shi Chen was startled when there was a knocking sound. It was the tavern servant who asked outside. "Guest, do you want some tea or water?"

Shi Chen wiped away his sweat and shouted. "No!"

Guo Yuxia calmed him down and the Shi Chen who was very paled sighed and said in a low voice. "I…I keep thinking that Big Brother is outside the door. Yesterday night, I have a lot of nightmares. In my dream, Mentor Master is whipping me and punishing me while Big Brother is scolding me loudly. And I also dream that…that…"

Guo Yuxia lovingly laughed. "That in your dream, Fourth Sister laughed coldly at you, am I right?"

Shi Chen sighed and lowered his head.

Guo Yuxia asked, "Chen…Chen. If Big Brother really comes, what will you do?"

"I…I…" He was unable to answer and could only sigh.

She gently brushed her beautiful hair and melancholy sighed deeply. "Chen…Chen, I know that you really like me."

Shi Chen looked at her idiocy at this beautiful adulteress and sighed. "I…really like you but if Big Brother…he will come anytime…I…I am really very afraid."

She smiled mysteriously and slowly asked. "What if Big Brother will never return?"

Shi Chen was stunned and asked. "Big Brother will never return?"

Guo Yuxia coldly said. "If he have not died, won't he be here in Xian City?"

There was a change in Shi Chen's expression as he asked. "What…What do you mean? I…"

Guo Yuxia coldly explained. "That day while I was on the summit of Huashan, I have already noticed that there is an ominous look on the side of the cliff where that man had died. That man when he had died seemed very shocked. And there was no wounds on his body, he was really frightened to death."

Shi Chen was startled. "Frightened to death?"

Guo Yuxia nodded and explained. "After that, when you have found me, did you not saw my slight smile?"

Shi Chen replied. "But…I thought you are happy to see me that was why

you smiled."

Guo Yuxia softly laughed. "When I saw you, naturally I was very happy but that smile was because I heard a terrible cry on that summit coming down."

Shi Chen looked confused. "A terrible cry? Why did I not heard it?"

Guo Yuxia laughed. "At that time you are focusing on me that why you did not notice. But I heard it very carefully. That terribly cry that was so startled and imposing cry was made by your Big Brother. Think about it. With your Big Brother temper, if…If he did not meet with any accident, would he make such a terribly cry?"

Shi Chen looked very confused and he appeared stunned. He did not know if he should feel happy or sorrow.

Guo Yuxia explained. "I did not dare to be ascertained but these few days when your Big Brother did not appear, I become sure. Think about it, with his behavior, if he did not die, would he not be here? With his fame and his imposing look, the instant he entered Xian City, would no one took notice?"

Shi Chen sighed deeply as he turned his head around to wipe away his tear in his eyes.

Guo Yuxia rolled her eyes and said. "I afraid that Fifth Brother although he had escaped last night but he can never appear boldly in the Pugilist realm ever again. Therefore Zhijiao Manor only you and me are left. I can't handle such a big establishment alone. I need you to help me."

Shi Chen did not turned his head for there were tears in his eyes now.

Approaching noon, Shi Chen and Guo Yuxia stepped out of the Inn. Shi Chen followed Guo Yuxia respectfully behind like a respected fellow protégé. But his eyes were constantly on her waist up – This was not the glance that a protégé brother would look at his protégé Sister in law.

The streets of Xian City were different. Maybe it was caused by the pandemonium last night that cause the people to become jittery. And the shops with its famous red and black that were owned by the Nangong Family did not opened for business today. Maybe something happened to the Nangong Family.

Gu Yuxia looked calm as she made her way to Mulong Manor. But her eyes were constantly on the lookout for the changes in the city. That was the reason why she forsook the comfort of the carriage and took a walk.

Suddenly there were several riders. Leading them was a young man in handsome clothing. He looked most arrogant and looked at everyone with disdain. But when he saw Guo Yuxia beautiful eyes, he pulled the harness of his horse and hurried it besides her. And he smiled at her.

Shi Chen was cold in his face and he did his best to suppress his anger and not to look at him. But Guo Yuxia looked lovingly at him for awhile before she lowered her head.

The young man on the horse became more and more outrageous as he smiled boldly at her and on her body.

Shi Chen could not endure this outrage anymore and he walked besides Guo Yuxia and coldly said to the young man. “What an arrogant heretic!”

The lad who looked like a girl on the young man right stared at him and asked. “What did you say?” While the teenager on the left said in a low voice. “Let us go and not be involved in any troubles!” As he whipped the horse.

The young man nodded and the three riders continued on their way.

Guo Yuxia smiled and said in a low voice. “Shi Chen, can you guess who this young man is?”

Shi Chen laughed. “Eight out of ten, he is a fresh protégé. Maybe he is also the son of a wealthy family.”

Guo Yuxia rolled her eyes and looked at the three riders. “I think his martial skills are not weak. I think he comes from a famous clan.” Her eyes were thinking of something but Shi Chen did not notice.

After turning into two more streets, they were finally within the vicinity of Mulong Manor. Just when they reached the entrance, there was a neighing sound. It came from the three riders earlier.

Shi Chen expression had a change as he coldly said. “That young man seems to be following us!”

Guo Yuxia softly laughed. “Let us not create trouble.”

At the same time, the young man got off his horse and with a coincidence, he was besides Guo Yuxia.

Shi Chen stared at the young man with a malicious look.

The young man coldly said. “Friend, you…”

Before he could finish, ‘Flying Rings’ Wei Qi and that 'Fragrance of a Thousand Miles' Ren Fengping came out of the manor. Ren Fengping said, “Please forgive me for receiving such distinguished guests late.”

Shi Chen secretly thought. “What is the background of this young man? Even ‘Flying Rings’ Wei Qi is out to welcome him in person.”

He saw Wei Qi gestured to the young man with both hands but hurried to Guo Yuxia and laughed. “Mistress Long you did not want to stay in my humble dwelling. I wondered did you have a good rest last night?”

Guo Yuxia smiled and softly replied. “Old Senior Wei is too hospitable!”

Shi Chen secretly became embarrassed. “He is here to welcome us!”

That young man was surprised and looked startled at Wei Qi and Guo

Yuxia. When he looked at the haughty eyes of Shi Chen, he became angry and coldly asked. “Is this the Mulong Manor?”

Ren Fengping laughed in a clear voice. “Indeed, indeed.”

Wei Qi turned his head and smiled. “You are traveling with Mistress Long?”

The young man coldly said. “I am from the Western peak of Mt. Kunlun, Tong Tian Gong. Who is this Mistress Long, I do not know.”

Guo Yuxia, Shi Chen, Wei Qi and Ren Fengping were slightly startled.

Wei Qi replied. “You are a Kunlun disciple, welcome…welcome. Let me prepare a humble feast to welcome you if you are willing!”

One must know that Kunlun disciples were rarely seen in the Pugilistic Fraternity. And very few pugilists went to Western Kunlun too. Ever since in the past when the Immortal Divine Dragon had won the Chief of the Kunlun Sect, Priest Ru Yuan on the top of the peak of Mt. Kunlun in a duel; the only news that regarding Kunlun was that of the foremost disciple of Priest Ru Yuan, ‘Cloud Breaker Hand’ Zhuo Bufan who with his superior swordplay came to dominate the new heroes of the Pugilistic Fraternity. He established his fame and became one of the strongest swordsmen of the new generation.

Since this young man was a Kunlun disciple then even Wei Qi had to look at him with respect. 'Fragrance of a Thousand Miles' Ren Fengping looked even happier as he extended his welcome to the young man and it appeared that he was the owner of Mulong Manor instead of Wei Qi.

The young man was not shy and went in.

Shi Chen whispered in a low voice to Guo Yuxia. "He belongs to the same clan as that ‘Cloud Breaker Hand’ therefore he is an enemy of Zhijiao Manor. I want to test him and see how great is the disciple of Kunlun.”

Guo Yuxia furrowed and secretly held his sleeve. “Let see what happens first, don’t be rush, alright?”

The tables and seats had already been arranged. Wei Qi laughed and said. “Mistress Long…”

But before he could finish, that young man who did not look shy at all immediately sat down at the foremost table unabashed. It was like he deserved to sit there.

Even Wei Qi appeared to be very unhappy inside him. He thought. “Even if you are a Kunlun disciple but you shouldn’t be this arrogant.” Suddenly he had another thought and laughed secretly. “If he knows that there are disciples of the Divine Dragon Clan here, his attitude will surely change.”

Shi Chen coldly hummed but that young man only looked upward and did not seem to care.

Guo Yuxia smiled and sat down casually. Shi Chen suppressed his anger and

sat besides her.

And Wei Qi being the host naturally could not lose his cool too. He introduced the names of Guo Yuxia, Shi Chen and Ren Fengping thinking that with the reputation of these three people in Pugilist, the young man would be startled.

But the young man only coldly said, “I am Zhan Donglai.” And refused to say anything more but looked several times at Guo Yuxia and others wondered if he were being arrogant or just fresh from the protégé of his clan that he did not know the names of the three famous pugilists.

Wei Qi furrowed and angrily thought, “What an arrogant young man. Even your elder protégé brother Zhuo Bufan dare not try to be rude in my presence.”

Wei Qi laughed. “Brother Zhan although you are new to the Pugilist but you are not an outsider. Many years ago, ‘Cloud Breaker Hand’ Young Hero Zhuo when he first stepped into the Pugilist also pay me a visit once. He had shown utmost courtesy to me and respected me as his Senior. Haha…”

Zhan Donglai coldly laughed and added. “Zhuo Bufan is my protégé nephew.”

Everyone was startled and Wei Qi ceased his laughter.

Zhan Donglai raised the wine cup and drank from it, then pointed at the two lads outside. “These two lads are the younger protégé brothers of Zhuo Bufan.”

Ren Fengping was startled as he got up from his seat.

Wei Qi forcefully smiled. “I am sorry that I do not know. Please forgive me for my rudeness. Please have a seat.”

The lad who looked the most composed said. “Protégé Uncle is sitting, I dare not sit.”

The other lad laughed merrily. “Next time when we visit the manor, just don’t ask us lead the horses.”

Wei Qi flustered with a slight red and he heard the lad exclaiming. “I didn’t expect that protégé brother Zhuo will be so famous in the Pugilist. When Grand Teacher knows of it, he will be very happy.”

Zhan Donglai swept his eyes and coldly said. “I come without inviting as I have heard of the hospitality of the master of Mulong Manor…” He looked at Wei Qi who flustered.

Zhan Donglai added. “Secondly, I am here to search for the news of my protégé nephew. My protégé nephew ever since he had come down the mountain, we do not have news of him for several years…” Suddenly he looked at Shi Chen and asked solemnly. “Friend Shi, do you know his whereabouts? If you know, please say it out.”

Guo Yuxia softly laughed. “I have long heard of Cloud Breaker Hand’s fame

but did not have the chance to know him. So I really do not know where is his whereabouts."

Zhan Donglai looked at her now and coldly asked. "Really?"

Guo Yuxia smiled even more beautiful and said. "You should believe the words of the disciples of the Divine Dragon Clan." As she poured the wine from her cup onto the table and then cup was suddenly onto the table as it caught the flowing wine. Her movements were as fast as lightning. All that happened in an instant!

Zhan Donglai expression changed as he looked at her beautiful and captivating smile. Suddenly he laughed. "Even if you are not from the Divine Dragon Clan, I will believe the words of Mistress."

Shi Chen hummed while Ren Fengping laughed. "The wine and the food are getting cold. Let enjoy it first lest we overlook the hospitality of our host."

Suddenly before he could finish, seven eagles flew inside the hall.

One of the lads laughed. "Who will expect to see such a big eagle. It is really so fun." Suddenly he moved through the mid-air and caught the eagle with both his hands.

He seemed to catch it so effortless that Guo Yuxia lovingly clapped her hands and said. "Good!"

Suddenly there was a shout. "Attack!"

Suddenly the other six eagles began to attack the lad.

As soon as Guo Yuxia praised the lad, now she said. "Not good!"

Ren Fengping, Wei Qi and Zhan Donglai were startled as they rose up.

The lad that was being attacked tried to evade the eagles while the other lad shouted. "Attack" as he shot out seven silvery lights at the eagles.

One of the eagles was struck by the projectiles and fell down to the ground.

Suddenly a chopstick flew past and struck at the lad who threw the secret projectiles. The power of the chopstick was like an arrow and immediately the lad was knocked back!

Zhan Donglai solemnly said. "Is this the hospitality of Mulong Manor?" He looked at Wei Qi.

Wei Qi muttered. "The Hall of the Seven Eagles…"

There was a man in black outside the hall and in his hand was a red color invitation card. He threw it towards them and Wei Qi caught hold of it. He opened it and there were no words on it. Instead seven soaring eagles with the color of red, yellow, black, green, white, blue and purple were drawn on it.

Wei Qi shouted. "Please come in!" As he rushed to the outside the hall.

Ren Fengping was left muttering. "The Hall of the Seven Eagles…The hall of the Seven Eagles!" His eyes shone as he extended his hands to Zhan Donglai,

Shi Chen, and Guo Yuxia and rushed to the outside of the hall.

Zhan Donglai eyes were filled with malevolent air as he turned and looked at the wounded lad. “Yu Er, are you injured?”

Yu Er shook his head. But his face was very paled. If he had not evaded in time, he would have died.

Guo Yuxia melancholy sighed. “What amazing martial skills for such a young tender age. It is really not easy. What does it matter if he got startled once a while?”

Zhan Donglai coldly laughed and said. “How could the disciples of Kunlun Clan be…”

Before he could finish speaking, the wounded eagle that was on the ground began to recover and was about to fly off. All of a sudden, a powerful windforce was extended out from the hands of Zhan Donglai and the eagle was seemingly trapped by an invisible hold. After trying to move for a few times, it dropped to the ground.

Guo Yuxia was very startled. “Outer Heaven Life Force!” She turned and looked at Shi Chen whose countenance had completely changed. The two of them did not expect that this arrogant young man would have such an astonishing supreme skill. He was even much stronger than the Chief of Kunlun was when he first started to roam the Pugilist by several notches!

An imposing man in red dashed like lightning into the hall and gently picked up the dead eagle. He appeared to be very upset as he picked the dead eagle with his hands shaking. Following him were six other old men.

He shouted. “It's dead…it's dead…Who kill you…who is the one that kill you…”

The old man in red belt was the leader of the Hall of the Seven Eagles whose fame was established more than thirty years ago! And he was the also the leader of the leading Escort Agency in the entire Pugilist.

He looked malicious at Zhan Donglai and he attacked him.

But the amazing thing happened. Zhan Donglai with his left hand behind him had struck the man with the red belt on his Jian Jin, Shang Da Tai Yin, Tai Yin accupoints at the same time!

Guo Yuxia rolled her eyes and said softly to Shi Chen. “Can you believe the world famous Startling Heaven Seven Eagles will not be able to handle a young man.”

Shi Chen softly said. “I think they come here to because of Fifth Brother. Do you think we should help them?”

Six other old men all with different color belts appeared in the hall.

The old man with the red belt had fall and another old man with white belt was at the back to support him and carried him to a side. He was very dexterous and did the feat in an instant but did not attack Zhan Donglai. But three other old men attacked Zhan Donglai to prevent him from stopping the old man with the white belt from carrying the injured man in red belt to safety.

The two lads although young, when they were facing a strong enemy, they did not lose their composure and did not show any fear.

Two other old men with purple and yellow belts looked at one another and were initially surprised that it was only lads that attacked their eagles. So the old man with yellow belt said. “The fame of the Hall of the Seven Eagles have long been established tens of years ago. We will not fight with two lads.”

Zhan Donglai laughed. “Using a wolf pack tactic and even use animals to aid you, hehe…I see that the pugilists in the Central Plains have such mediocre fighters.”

The eyes of the old man in black belt tingle and he looked at the old man in blue belt as he stepped backward and stood beside another old man with a purple belt.

The old man with the green belt laughed and said in a loud voice. “Sixth brother, you step aside first while I sound out how great is this young man!” Seven windforces accompanied him as he finished. Although he looked thin and small but his fists were very startling.

The old man with the black belt although he had stepped aside was staring at Zhan Dong frostily.

The old man with the white belt carried the old man with the red belt aside and was examining him when Guo Yuxia walked over and lowered herself to ask. “Is this Old Senior injuries heavy? I have some medicine for treating internal injuries.” She looked very concern.

The old man with the white belt smiled and said. “Thanks for the concern of maiden. My brother has his accupoints hit and after awhile he will recover.” His eyes moved and looked carefully at Guo Yuxia into her eyes. In that instant, he had developed a good feeling towards this caring maiden.

Guo Yuxia sighed, reached out her hands to arrange the white hair of the old man in red and said in a low voice. “This Old Senior is really careless.”

Suddenly the old man in red belt opened his eyes and looked at Guo Yuxia but quickly closed his eyes. He was pretending and basking in bliss.

Shi Chen secretly sighed and thought. “Why is she so gentle to everyone, does she really have such a merciful heart?”

At that instant after that old man in green belt and Zhan Donglai exchanged

more than ten blows. And the old man strong blows seemed to have weakened and the rest of the old men underwent a slight change in their expressions.

Zhan Donglai who had been fighting with only one hand laughed in disdain at them.

Two other old men in blue and purple belts looked at one another and said. “Let teach this obnoxious young man a lesson!”

Zhan Donglai was purposely provoking them and it was obvious he looked down on them by fighting with one of his hand behind his back.

The old man in yellow belt came to Guo Yuxia’s side and asked solemnly. “Is that young man and you together?”

Guo Yuxia lifted her head and softly sighed. “If he and me are together, he will not be this rude to all the Old Seniors!”

The old man in white belt put the red belt old man aside and did not lift his head but said solemnly, “That young man is from Kunlun Clan and his martial skill foundation is not weak. Ask Sixth Brother to be wary.”

The man with the yellow belt appeared to be startled and he furrowed. “Seventh Brother accupoints have not been unseal yet?”

The old man in white belt did not reply and the old man in yellow belt sighed and looked at Wei Qi with hatred in his eyes.

The rest hesitated to fight him for it was not really a honorable thing to bully him with human wave tactics but Zhan Donglai was seemingly too arrogant.

Shi Chen was looking at the fights with interest. His eyes did not even blinked as he sighed. “I did not expect that Zhan Donglai will have such a astonishing martial ability. He is only around twenty years of age…Alas! Is there really a shortcut to progress martial arts in a short time?”

Ren Fengping cold laughed. “The Eagles have come to the west. It is because they have come for Nangong Ping. If Nangong Ping disappeared, even if Brother Wei have a hundred excuses, this matter will still be held accountable by Mulong Manor.”

Wei Qi turned ashen, as he was looking stunned.

The old man in white said. “How long since we last fight together?”

The old man in yellow sighed. “Ever since…” He looked at Zhan Donglai and slowly asked. “To fight such a young man, do we brothers need to…”

The old man in white sighed and added. “Although if we win by numbers, it is not honorable but it is better than letting Forth brother and the rest be defeated by him!”

White Eagle Bai Quantian said, “Let's go!”

Yellow Eagle Huang Jintian sighed. “Big Brother is really angry today.”

Black Eagle Leng Yetian laughed. “Indeed!”

‘Fragrance of a Thousand Miles’ Ren Fengping looked on leisurely and he slowly said. “Startling Heaven Seven Eagles cannot be underestimated. In another few strokes, that Kunlun disciple, I afraid…”

Wei Qi suddenly sighed and lowered his head. “Even though I have joined your esteem gang but what is the use? I…I am already old and useless. Why did you keep trying to force me!”

Ren Fengping solemnly said. “Who is forcing you? If you are not willing, you can choose not to join in the fight.”

Wei Qi sighed. “The lives of my family, alas…”

Guo Yuxia turned her head and asked, “Chen…Chen, did you see the torturous look on that Wei Qi face? And the expression on that Ren Fengping? Are you able to guess the reason why?”

Shi Chen sighed and slowly added. “Today what happen at Mulong Manor, no matter who win or lose, ‘Flying Rings’ Wei Qi will have a hard time resolving it…Alas! The feuds of the Pugilist are sometimes so unreasonable.”

Guo Yuxia smiled and asked. “And?”

Shi Chen was startled. “And what?”

Guo Yuxia smiled. “When we first arrived at Mulong Manor, the mannerism of that Wei Qi and Ren Fengping already don’t look normal. Ren Fengping looked like a guest in fact he is more like a host. Surely he has a wild ambition for coming to the Central Plains. He could have even try to force Wei Qi to join forces with him by taking his family hostages. Wei Qi is old and doesn’t have any ambition but he is afraid of Ren Fengping. I do not know the exact details.”

She smiled awhile and added. “That Zhan Donglai possess extraordinary martial skills and it is his first trip into the Pugilist. Other than searching for that Cloud Breaker Hand, he also wants to seize the opportunity to gain fame. That why he acted so arrogant and full of troubles. And the Startling Heaven Seven Eagles easily provided him with such a good opportunity. He looked down on those pugilists that originated from Escort Agencies and moreover the Seven Eagles are all so old. But unexpectedly, he now found out that things are out of his expectations. Not only did he unable to find fame but he also cause Wei Qi to be in a difficult position. Ren Fengping is now gaining advantage from left and right and must be feeling delightful in his heart.”

When she had just finished, there was a soft laugh behind her. “Mistress your observations are the same as exactly as what you witness. It is really a admirable thing.” The voice was clear and seemed to come from her ear. She was startled and lost her composure. She turned her body and saw that the Red Eagle Hong Xiaotian was still sitting on the chair. And there was no other person.

She felt startled in her heart and she could not resist asking. “Who?”

Shi Chen turned his head around in surprise. “What is the matter?”

Guo Yuxia softly said. “Did you not hear something just now?”

Shi Chen was puzzled as he asked. “What thing?”

Guo Yuxia was startled and she shook her head and turned her body back. She thought to herself. “Is this the ‘Secret Whispering Skill’?” Her eyes rolled and once again she thought. “Among these people, who can possibly possess the knowledge such an inner supreme skill?” Although her heart was still startled but her face had regained her calmness.

The voice sounded again. “Ever since I has come from the Pass, from what I have heard or seen only Mistress you are considered to be truly heroic. If I can join hands with Mistress, there will be nothing we cannot do. If Mistress you are willing to co-operate with me, please nod your head gently three times.”

Shi Chen looked at Guo Yuxia and saw her looking perplexed. She seemed to be listening to something and then suddenly she nodded a few times and broke into a smile. There was a strange glow in her eyes. Therefore Shi Chen could not resist asking. “Sis…Sister in law, what is the matter?”

Guo Yuxia smiled. “Nothing…” As her beautiful hand pointed to Zhan Donglai.

Therefore Shi Chen turned and look and saw that Zhan Donglai attacks were getting slower and slower. As for the Startling Heaven Seven Eagles, their attacks were not as furious as before, they were also looking very tired and the combatants were all forcing themselves.

Suddenly there was a fog coming from all directions and Shi Chen felt that although this strange fog was fragrant, it was a little strange. His eyes started to blur and he could no longer witness the fight as sharply as before. In fact, he felt sleepy and slowly falling asleep…

Suddenly his mind jolted as he forced his eyes to open and he saw some one coming to his side. He could only see a beautiful shoe and from the fog, a voice sounded in his ears. “Startling Heaven Seven Eagles have come to the west to have their wings clipped. Kunlun disciple come eastbound to his feathers plunked…”

After that another haughty hilarious laughter was heard, it was from Ren Fengping. “The distant mountains although high, the fragrant wind and rain, descended upon the Pugilist Central Plains and enveloped it in a white intense mist…”

After that all was tranquil as Shi Chen finally succumbed to sleep and let the darkness enveloped him.

Chapter Ten
Where am I?

Nangong Ping opened his eyes. He did not see anything or hear anything. All he could see was the darkness and all he could hear was quietness.

He sighed deeply and thought. “Am I dead?”

Death was not as frightening as he thought but it was certainly very lonely. “Although death takes everything away from me but did not take away my voice.”

So where was he now? In the Western Paradise or the Depths of Hell? Suddenly he unwittingly forced a smile. “If there are really ghosts and the Judges of Hell are rumored to very strict in determining justice. Then I afraid I will be in Hell. But…” He sighed deeply.

“If it is the Western Paradise and it is so lonely. Then I rather to go Hell and not suffer this unbearable loneliness.”

When he thought of this eternal darkness, he suddenly saw an extremely beautiful yet pale face that appeared from the darkness and softly said to him. “No matter how long, I will wait for you…”

Now he felt a sense of hopelessness that numbed his entire body.

Suddenly he heard a voice, accompanying by sorrowful music. “Nan…Gong…Ping…” The voice sounded so far away yet so near his ears. His mind jolted and he could help it but broke into cold sweat. “Have…you…come…already…?”

Nangong Ping wiped away his cold sweat and shouted. “Who is you? Are you a ghost? I, Nangong Ping is not even afraid of ghost, will I be afraid of ghost?”

The voice seemed to drift off.

Nangong Ping was startled and loosened his fists. He had to admit that death was indeed very frightening.

Suddenly that sorrowful voice laughed and rung in his ears. “After you have died, you left behind your parents, therefore you are not filial. You did not contribute to your country or your countrymen therefore you are disloyal. And because of your death, you cause the death of a friend because his poison reacts. Therefore you are not righteous. Since you are not filial, not loyal, and not righteous. If you do not enter Hell, who will enter Hell?

Nangong Ping was startled and he thought with cold sweat breaking out. “Am I really such a not filial, not loyal, not righteous person?

The sorrowful voice asked again. “Nangong Ping, did you die in peace?”

“If I really return your soul to you, will you listen to me?”

There was a jolt in Nangong Ping's mind as he got up and said aloud. "Who are you? Why are you pretending this act?"

From the darkness arose a laughing voice and then it became a hilarious laughter. "I am just trying to let you know the taste of dying and know that being dead is not easy to endure. Then you know that to live is actually precious."

"Although it isn't hell here but it is not far off. Although you have not died yet but I have more than ten chances to take your life. Even if I want to take your life now, it is a piece of cake. Since you have tasted the feeling of death, I am sure you know how scary it is to die…"

Nangong Ping suddenly laughed. "Therefore you want me to listen to you, is that right?"

The voice in the darkness said. "Indeed!"

Nangong Ping laughed. "Since I have already died once, even if I will to die a second time, what does it matter! To ask me to listen to such a pretentious coward like you, I will never do it!

After a while, the voice coldly asked. "Do you really want to be a unrighteous, not filial, disloyal person?"

But Nangong Ping did not bother with it anymore therefore he did not try to reply anymore. Because in his heart, was a strong sense of righteousness that not even threats would work, even wealth could not corrupt him and death could not stray his heart.

But a couple of things caused him unbearable pain but it still would not shake his determination. The longing of his parents, his Mentor Master last will, Di Yang life and death situation and Mei Yinxue who was waiting for him. All these caused him unbearable pain but in his innermost place, hid an unshakable principal.

Suddenly there was a sweet fragrant. It was the aroma of delicious food.

Nangong Ping thought. "It stupid to seduce me with food." But the aroma was getting more and more tempting. He had to secretly agree in his heart. "Using this method to seduce others is indeed tempting."

The voice asked. "Nangong Master, how is the feeling of hunger? Is it unbearable?"

There was a sound as the voice said. "In front of you are two plates of chicken, if you are hungry, you can take it."

Nangong Ping laughed as he angrily retorted. "I have already made up my mind and nothing will ever change my mind. Why are you still here wasting your breath?"

The voice sighed. "A person such as you, if you do not join hands with me is really the regret of my life. Because I treat you as a hero, I cannot bear to kill you.

I did not even drug you to cause you to lose your senses and play you around. Therefore I jail you here. If I were to let you go, would it be like releasing a tiger to the wilderness? There will be a day when my plans will be ruined by you."

The voice sighed again. "I am really forced to jail you here. I hope that you will not blame me when you die. I will surely hold a grand burial for you."

There was a 'dang' sound besides Nangong Ping. The voice said. "I have thrown a dagger besides you. If you cannot resist the feeling of loneliness or hunger, you can take the dagger to suicide. If you change your mind, you just need to shout loudly and I will release you. Iron walls six feet thick and five meters in height surround you. The only way out of here is up. You can try to escape if you want. If you do not have enough strength, the two chicken in front of you have no poison. If you eat it, you may regain some strength."

Nangong Ping sighed deeply. "You treat me so respectful. Even if you will to kill me now, I will not blame you."

Suddenly a woman captivating voice laughed. "The two of you are like good friends but you must know…" Suddenly the voice weakened and ceased.

This voice was very familiar in Nangong Ping's ears as he was jolted. "Who? Who are you…"

The voice sighed. "If I have meet you ten years ago, I will surely be your buddy. But it a pity...alas. What is your dying wish? Say it loud, I will do my best to accomplish it."

But Nangong Ping was only thinking about that captivating voice. "Who is the woman that is talking besides you? You only need to let me take a look at her will do."

There was silence and the voice slowly said. "Only this matter?"

Nangong Ping replied. "Indeed."

The voice asked. "Is there no heirlooms, no last words to bring to your parents and friends. Do you really have no words of comfort to tell your girlfriend? Do you really have no unfinished wishes for me to accomplish for you? Are you not interested to see my face?"

Nangong Ping was startled. Now he realized that he had too many unfinished things left undone.

But he said. "You don't have to worry about other matters."

The voice strangely said. "The person you want to see…"

Nangong Ping said. "I don't wish to look now."

The voice said. "But since I have already promised you, why don't you take a look up?"

The hatch above opened up and a ray of light shone through.

Although Nangong Ping suspected that the woman he had in mind was

someone he knew and very close to, he did not want to lift his head now to look at her. Because he did not want to hate anyone after he had died.

The hatch closed and the voice said. “Farewell to the heroic Nangong Ping…” As the scores from the Distant Mountains that were tall and the Fragrant of the Wind and Rain were heard from the scores of the zenith as he left.

Nangong Ping sighed and muttered in a low voice. “Farewell…farewell…” He suddenly discovered he had wept. A hero’s tear was not easily wept unless he had reached the point of hopelessness and great sorrow.

During this sorrow, he developed courage, a courage that stemmed from life itself as he reached out to rub the hilt of the dagger.

Then he slowly walked to the side of the wall and used all his vital energies to hit against the wall. His hands vibrated. The walls were really made of iron.

He did not wish to destroy the body that his parents had given him but he could not endure this feeling of waiting for his death anymore. He leaned on the wall lost in hopelessness. After sometime he was startled for the wall behind him became soft and he fell behind the wall.

He turned around and saw an old man carrying a torch. He looked very solemn and he gripped Nangong Ping by his sleeve and pulled him inside and closed the secret door.

Nangong Ping was stunned and realized that he had escaped from the vicinity of the death. He did not know to feel happy or gratefulness. Therefore he stood on the ground, stoned.

The old man that was carrying a torch was the Master of the Mulong Manor, ‘Flying Rings’ Wei Qi! He looked very troubled and waved slightly for Nangong Ping to follow him. The secret passage was like a maze and extremely intricate. There was dust all over; this passage seemingly was not used for a very long time.

Nangong Ping looked at his imposing back and he felt grateful. In all his life, he had never felt such a strong intense feeling of gratefulness for he had left ‘Death’ and the ‘Hopelessness’.

He tried to say something but found out his voice was marred as he slowly said. “Old Senior...”

Wei Qi did not turned his head but said in a low voice. “Shhh!” As he turned to another passage. Suddenly he pressed against the side of the wall and the wall in front moved. He muttered. “Seven Eagles haiz, Seven Eagles, do not blame me for unable to save you. I already did my very best…” Before he had finished, he entered through the secret door.

Nangong Ping was startled and soon came Wei Qi came out carrying a unconscious young man and solemnly said. “Carry him.”

Nangong Ping obeyed and carried the young man up although he was feeling

puzzled.

After several turns, Wei Qi lead him to out to a forest.

Nangong Ping could not resist anymore and softly said. “Old…”

Wei Qi interrupted and he solemnly said. “You do not need to thank me in appreciation.”

Nangong Ping said. “But…this…”

Wei Qi sighed deeply and added. “There will be a sudden change in Pugilist very soon. The malicious stars from outside the Pass are now inside the Central Plains. The accomplishments that I have painstaking fought to have over the years will soon be gone.”

Nangong Ping was puzzled and about to ask him when Wei Qi continued. “This young man that you are carrying possess extraordinary martial skills and he is a Kunlun disciple. He is Zhan Donglai but at this moment he had been drugged. I don’t have any medicine for that but I believe that after awhile, he will soon awaken. The two of you are the young heroes and have a bright future. I hope that after the two of you escape and if you can, prevent that Demon to dominate the Pugilistic Fraternity.”

Nangong Ping furrowed and asked solemnly. “Who is that person? Is he…”

Wei Qi did not wait for him to reply and added. “Not only does this person possesses unfathomable martial skills but he also knew various use of drug and secret weapons. Among his henchmen that help him to do evil, are the Heavenly Piercing Life Stealing Twin Spears and the Four Swords of the Life Stealing Mystery Wind. These two men are very startling and very few men can hope to challenge them. You and me are definitely not their match.”

Nangong Ping asked. “Is this man Shuai Tianfan?”

Wei Qi was startled that Nangong Ping actually knew the name. Wei Qi slowly word by word replied. “Indeed, he is Shuai Tianfan!”

Wei Qi sighed. “At this moment, there are many other pugilists that are also trapped by him inside Mulong Manor. But with my limited strength, I can only save the two of you as only the two of you are placed in the secret rooms. Luckily for the both of you. You are young heroes while the other pugilists are old heroes. But I hope that you do not forget my words. This man is really unfathomable. Please do not rush blindly into things!”

Nangong Ping was stunned and he asked. “Old Senior Wei, why did you…you not leave with us? We can wait for time to be ripe and in future return for revenge.”

‘Flying Ring’ Wei Qi sighed deeply. “I am old and I no longer have any wild ambitions…”

Nangong Ping worriedly exclaimed. “But Old Senior, if you remain here,

you will be in danger!"

Wei Qi sighed, lowered his head and he forcefully smiled. "My achievements over the past forty years in the Northwest is still useful to them. Even if they knew that I am one that release the both of you, they will not harm me."

He lifted his head and shouted. "I am the Master of Mulong, who will dare to ask me to go!" He turned around and said to Nangong Ping. "Go now!"

Nangong Ping was forcefully pushed out of the passage into the woods outside. He said. "Old Senior…"

Only to hear him solemnly said in the dark recedes of the passage. "The Dragon have nine sons, each sons are different. The same protégé disciples are like tigers and wolves…" And his voice disappeared.

Nangong Ping watched on with tears of appreciation. "Old Senior Wei, I hope you be living in comfort and everything will go smoothly for you…" He lowered his head and looked at the unconscious Zhan Donglai. "Zhan Donglai alas Zhan Donglai, I hope that you will not forget this kindness to live again and also not to forget the kind intention of Old Senior Wei." He muttered.

His heart was suddenly very heavy again as he thought of Di Yang who had been poisoned and Mei Yinxue that told him that 'she would always wait for him'.

If he entered Mulong Manor again to retrieve the antidote for Di Yang, he would once again lost his freedom and so would his life. Since he had regarded his life as minor to that of his friends but if he died, would he disappoint the hopes of 'Flying Rings' Wei Qi who had risked his life to save him?

If he returned empty handed, would not his actions last night be meaningless? How could he watch Di Yang die of poisoning?

These hard choices caused him to be in extreme difficulties. It was even harder than the situation when he was doomed to die.

Suddenly from behind him in the darkness, a swift hand gently pressed against his Ling Tai accupoint. This Ling Tai accupoint consisted of twelve accupoints and every one of them was connected to the heart. Even if it was some one that did not know the intricate accupoint skill of the soft art, if a person will to receive a hard kick, it will very well be fatal.

He did not move because this coming death was a release to the hard choices that he had to make. But after awhile, that hand did not press forth.

Nangong Ping furrowed and coldly said. "Friend, why did you not make your move?" He was not even interested who was the surprise attacker and only interested to have a quick end.

A sweet voice sounded out from behind and softly said. "Fifth Brother, are you really not afraid to die?" This voice seemed to be the same as the voice he

heard in the cell.

Nangong Ping was startled and he turned around. “Sister in law!”

Guo Yuxia was smiling captivating at him. “Guess what I have in my hands?”

There was a jolt in his head. “Antidote? Is this the antidote?”

Guo Yuxia laughed lovingly. “Fifth Brother you are indeed very intelligence. I am indeed holding the antidote.” She gently released her hand and a red color pill was seen under the starlight.

She melancholy sighed. “I know that because of this antidote you have risked your life. But still, you did not get it, right?”

Nangong Ping sighed and lowered his head.

Guo Yuxia continued. “In this world, there is many things that cannot be solved by martial skills alone. Do you know?”

Nangong Ping wanted to say something but he kept quiet.

Guo Yuxia continued. “When I reached Mulong Manor and heard your situation, I was very upset. But no matter how you treat me, you are still my protégé brother. How would I not try to protect you?” She was filled with concern but her eyes were analyzing but Nangong Ping did not notice.

Nangong Ping sighed and was guilty.

Guo Yuxia looked at his face and slowly added. “Therefore because of you, I am forced to co-operate with that Ren Fengping and finally managed to get his antidote. I even tricked him to take me to the place where you are imprisoned so that I can secretly come to rescue you. But I did not expect that you have escaped. I was really very happy for you but at the same time, frustrated. For knowing your temper, I know that you will not escape even if you will to die therefore I take the risk to come after you.”

Nangong Ping felt even more guilty and grateful. “Sister in law is indeed still my Sister in law. I have wronged her!” He thought. “She is doing all this for us protégé disciples.” He lifted his glance and looked into her beautiful eyes and thought. “Big Brother is really a lucky man.”

Guo Yuxia smiled but she sighed soon after. “I do not know what happen to Big Brother and Fourth Sister. Adding to it are the sorrows and anxieties…alas! Fifth Brother, you will not be able to understand.”

Nangong Ping felt even heart wrenching inside him. After awhile, he said. “Sister in law…I think that Big Brother is already back at Zhijiao Manor. After I…finish everything. I will go back to Zhijiao Manor.”

Guo Yuxia melancholy sighed. “I am after all just a woman. And your Third Brother doesn’t know any tact. If you were to accompany us, we can take care of one another but…”

Nangong Ping said in a clear voice. “Although I cannot take care of Sister in law but…” He took out a Han Jade and placed it into Guo Yuxia’s hands. “With this jade Sister in law, no matter where you go, you will always be taken care of in the proprieties of my family business.”

He did not look directly in her eyes therefore he did not saw the expression of Guo Yuxia who looked on proudly. He could only feel that her hands were on his hands.

Nangong Ping was startled and moved back but as he moved back, he noticed that Guo Yuxia had placed the red pill into his hands and softly said. “Fifth Brother, after you finish all your things, do not forget to come back and visit your Sister in law. If you see your Big Brother, remember to ask him to hurry home.”

Nangong Ping all the more did not dare to lift his head.

She sighed and said. “Sister in law have done so many things for you, I wonder if you can help Sister in law to do three task?”

Nangong Ping was startled and he said firmly. “Even if Sister in law did not do anything for me, I will also do my best for Sister in law. This is the right thing.”

Guo Yuxia said. “This man that you are carrying is a Kunlun disciple and he and us have some misunderstanding. His martial skills are extremely high and I afraid that even if the five of us together are not his match. For the sake of uprooting this source of trouble, help Sister in law by hitting him on his death accupoint.”

Nangong Ping widened his eyes and was startled. He said in a clear voice. “If this man is rude to Sister in law, when he has wakened, I will challenge him to a life and death duel. Even if I have to die, I do it without regrets. Now that he is still unconscious and moreover he was handed over to me by someone therefore I cannot touch him now.”

Guo Yuxia said sunk her countenance and coldly said. “You have taken the antidote from me and now you won’t listen to Sister in law anymore. I wonder what will you do in the future.”

Nangong Ping turned ashen and said. “I…I…” He suddenly returned the antidote to her hands and said solemnly. “I rather not take this antidote than do something that goes against the conscious.”

Guo Yuxia suddenly lovingly laughed. “Sister in law is only testing you to see if you have forget the teachings of Mentor Master. How can you be serious with your Sister in law.” She returned the antidote to Nangong Ping.

Nangong Ping flashed his eyes and saw that she had a upset look in her eyes. So he said. “As long as it is not this matter, I will undergo the tribulation of fire and accomplish any task for Sister in law.”

Guo Yuxia asked, “Do you treat Big Brother and Sister in law the same? If

you treat Big Brother and Sister in law exactly the same, then Sister in law will be very happy." She extended her hand and added. "I want you to hold Sister in law hand to show that you will not forget what you think today."

Nangong Ping lowered his head and in the darkness saw her beautiful hand that was like jade. Somehow he became guarded and said. "I…I…"

Guo Yuxia asked. "Do you feel that Sister in law hand is too dirty?"

Nangong Ping sighed and extended his hand only to feel her soft hands suddenly tightened around him and a gentle and sweet feeling was felt in his heart from his hand.

Guo Yuxia softly said. "Fifth Brother, hope you do not forget what happen tonight…"

Nangong Ping felt a shiver in his heart. Before she could finish, he had loosened from her hands and sped away.

Guo Yuxia rolled her eyes and saw him disappeared into the darkness. She was smiling in a strange way. Suddenly a man speeded towards her in the darkness and caught her hand. He loudly said. "What are you holding in your hand?"

The man that suddenly appeared was Shi Chen. Not only was he upset but jealous too.

Guo Yuxia sunk her countenance and loosened her hand from him. "Who are you to me? That you can involve in my matter?"

Shi Chen turned ashen and angrily said. "You…you…you are a…" Suddenly he sighed and said. "After what you have done to Big Brother, I…but how can you be so…towards him…"

Guo Yuxia coldly laughed awhile and opened her hand. "This is what Fifth Brother had given me. With this jade, in a single day, I can withdraw tens of hundreds of thousands of silver. Can you do it?"

Shi Chen was startled and the rage on his face became torturous. He clenched his fists tightly.

Guo Yuxia looked at him coldly and turned around.

Shi Chen suddenly cried out and caught hold of her shoulders tightly. He seemed to want to tear her apart and to spill her cold blood out of her body.

Guo Yuxia expression changed and her right hand suddenly reached out and hit him in his Jiang Tai accupoint. But she could only touch his sleeve and not hit him. Her malevolent air that flashed suddenly was gone in the same instant as she attacked.

Now she was smiling most lovingly and softly said. "What are you doing? I am feeling so painful." This captivating voice was much more painful to bear than when she had tried to hit him on his accupoint just a moment ago.

Shi Chen sighed and let go of his hands while she was gently rubbed her

shoulders.

Guo Yuxia said. “It so painful, hurry and help me to rub.”

Shi Chen extended his hands unwittingly and began to help her to rub her shoulders.

Guo Yuxia looked lovingly at Shi Chen and said. “That is right…This is it…be gentle…”

Following her seductive fragrant, Shi Chen began to increase the speed of his rubbing…his eyes slowly betrayed a tinge of a desire of a beast…

Guo Yuxia dreamily said. “You silly. What do you think I will do with Fifth Brother? (En, no)…I just want to help them by contributing a little…(En, be gentle) … (Here)… (You… cannot)…

Suddenly she slipped out like a fish from Shi Chen’s hold and Shi Chen gave a cry out!

Guo Yuxia loving laughed. “I told you cannot. If you do not listen, you will have to suffer a little!” She brushed her long hair as she giggled for awhile. This laughter caused Shi Chen to forget his pain, his reasoning and once again plunged on her.

But suddenly her smiles and laughing ceased as she coldly said. “What are you doing?” She became as serious and inviolable as a sacred maiden was.

Shi Chen was startled and freezes in his track. It was like suddenly doused by a pail of cold water on his head.

When Guo Yuxia looked at him, she felt very proud within. She knew that this young man had totally fallen into her trap and became her slave. She was secretly delighted that all she had to do was to show some flesh and she could gain such a huge reward.

Therefore she softly sighed and said. “Chen…Chen, you know how much I feel toward you but why do you always want to let me feel upset and angry?”

Shi Chen stood upright on the ground but painfully looked down.

Guo Yuxia rolled her eyes and slowly said. “If you follow me, I will never allow others to take advantage of you. As long as you are obedience and not let me angry, how will I not like you?” She was solemn as she added. “But you must know although I like you but I cannot elope with you. There is going to be many changes in the Pugilist that will soon occur and it will be beyond our understanding. But for the sake of our future, I am forced to do many things. Do you know?”

Shi Chen nodded and Guo Yuxia explained, “Therefore no matter what is going to happen, you must not interfere. If you agree, you can be with me forever or else…”

She did not continued but slowly turned away to walk away.

Shi Chen bit his teeth and used his hands to cover his face. He felt angry yet painful. He felt like killing her with a blow from his fist and ate her piece by piece inside him.

But Guo Yuxia turned around and softly said, “Why are you still standing here? Let us go. It is windy tonight.”

Shi Chen could not resist the urge to follow her sweet charming voice. Although he had a thousand thoughts, he cast it aside.

Nangong Ping ran in the darkness carrying Zhan Donglai. Although this darkness hid many secrets and guilt that some people wished to conceal but now, in his eyes, the world was so beautiful and kind. Although there were a lot of evil men but those who were kind far exceeded the evil.

He had placed the red pill into a small sack and it was more precious to him than hundreds and even thousands of precious pearls. For no matter how valuable those pearls were, how could it compare to the life of a good friend?

It was not before long that he finally reached the areas outside Xian City. He remembered the same place where he shared with her. But now his eyes swept the area. The place was desolate of any people and there were only the wind, tree and grass. He increased his pace to comb the area. His eyes looked carefully around but still he could not see Mei Yinxue.

“Did she forsake her promise and have left already?” His heart sunk at this thought as he said aloud. “Maiden…Mei, Maiden Mei…” This was the place where she supposed to be. As long as she did not leave this area, how would she not have heard him?

Nangong Ping could only feel his breathing becoming as cold as the cold breeze as he thought. “She did not wait for me, why did she have to lie to me? What about Di Yang, is he still all right? Did she bring him away as well? Then all my efforts to bring this antidote…”

He sighed heavily and did not want to think over it anymore. Suddenly the dark cloud moved and the Moon was seen. A ray of light shone down and when he followed this ray of light, it was shone on Mei Yinxue’s face.

His heart jumped with exuberant joy as he shouted. “You are here!” He increased his pace and was besides her in an instant. But Mei Yinxue’s pale face and her exquisite beauty were cold and frosty and she looked idiocy. The only hint that she was aware was the light in her watery eyes. Other than that, there was totally no expression on her face. It was as though her accupoints had been hit and she temporary lost her strength. But then it also looked like someone used magic on her and now she was sitting idiocy beside a broken wall.

Nangong Ping began to have a heart wrenching feeling in his heart, as he knew that something had befall her. “What happen to you…”

Even before he had finished, her eyes moved and glance in front of her in idiocy. She did not even glance at Nangong Ping.

Nangong Ping followed her glance and turned his head and suddenly discovered that five meters away on the opposite under a poplar tree was also another person sitting in a similar position. Only her eyes shone brightly in the darkness.

He focused his eyes and got a shock of his life. He exclaimed. “Maiden Ye, how come you are here!” He had not expected the person that was sitting under that poplar tree would be Danfeng Ye Qiubai disciple, the exquisite beautiful but cold yet noble Ye Manqing!

But Ye Manqing appeared not to hear or see after hearing him called out after her. She remained sitting motionless on the ground.

Nangong Ping was very puzzled and he put Zhan Donglai down. He looked intensely at the two extremely beautiful beauties that sat like rocks opposite one another and seemingly afflicted by magic.

He was stunned beyond words for awhile before he walked to Ye Manqing and asked. “Maiden Ye, did some one hit your accupoints?”

There was a tinge of mocking from the eyes of Ye Manqing yet she sat unmoving and refused to reply him. Nangong Ping looked at her carefully at her for a while and noticed that she was sitting in a noble and cold exquisite manner but shown no signs of being hit in her accupoints.

Nangong Ping was even more puzzled as he walked to Mei Yinxue who looked hatefully at him, seeming blaming him why did he show so much concern to someone else. He was very startled and he asked. “What is going on around here?” But she did not reply as well and became as dumb and deaf. He was startled and feeling anxious as he looked around. He asked aloud. “Where is Di Yang? Where is he?”

Mei Yinxue stared without blinking at Ye Manqing. Ye Manqing stared without blinking at Mei Yinxue. Both of them did not even look at him and seemed like they had never even saw him.

For a moment, Nangong Ping looked at Ye Manqing who was on his left and then on Mei Yinxue who was on his right. He was so confused inside him that he could not tell what had happened.

Suddenly from the grass was a long green snake. The snake hissed and was just besides the knee of Ye Manqing. Although Ye Manqing looked extremely frightened but she did not move.

In the wilderness, most snakes were poisonous. In a panicky, Nangong Ping

rushed to Ye Manqing and tried to catch the snake. He tried to catch hold of it but the snake moved like lightning speed to bite his exposed fresh.

Although Nangong Ping possessed martial ability but he was totally inexperience with snakes. With a startled cry, he flipped his hands and the snake slipped from his hand. Following his glance, he was startled to see the green snake had landed on Mei Yinxue body and it was now climbing onto her neck.

Mei Yinxue totally turned white with fright. And she had broke into a cold sweat yet she did not move.

Women were naturally afraid of snakes. No matter how brave a woman was when she saw snakes and rats, she would feel frightened. But why did she rather let a snake crawl over her, rather let herself be frightened till she turned white, rather let the snake bit her, rather than move her body. Why was it so?

Nangong Ping moved hurriedly to Mei Yinxue and extended his fingers to catch the snake. Now that he had some experience, he was prepared to grip it and crushed the snake to death.

But before he could do it, someone said from behind him. “Wait.” He turned around, startled by the voice. “You…”

It was Wan Da who had spoken and he was looking intensely at the green snake while pulling him behind his back.

Wan Da waved for to keep quiet while he walked gently but slowly towards Mei Yinxue. His face was very solemn and was like a pugilist fighter that was facing a life and death duel.

When Nangong Ping saw his solemn face, he knew instantly that he had been right. That snake was extremely poisonous. If he had failed to catch it, then Mei Yinxue would have to lose her life. When he thought of this, he broke into a cold sweat.

There was silence all around and he could only hear the sound of his beating heart.

The ugly scaly snake had by now slipped up to Mei Yinxue shoulder. Its tongue was constantly hissing out and hissing against Mei Yinxue’s face. Even Ye Manqing who was sitting opposite could not help but felt frightened in her eyes.

Wan Da footstep became even more lighter, slower…

Nangong Ping clenched his fists tightly as Wan Da hands moved lightning speed to catch hold of the snake and he threw it away seven feet away and took a dagger and threw it. It pierced the snake and after a soon, the snake did not move.

Finally Wan Da breath a sign of relief and Nangong Ping hands was covered with cold sweat.

But Mei Yinxue and Ye Manqing was still sitting rigidly and did not move. It was like that the scary situation did not happen at all.

After Nangong Ping calm himself down, he heard Wan Da muttering. “It so close…so close…”

Nangong Ping could not resist but asked. “What is going on around here?”

Wan Da replied, “This type of green snake is not commonly seen in the Central Plains. But it is greatly feared outside the Pass. The poison of this snake is extremely venomous. Even if you had straggle it to death, from its poisonous fangs; it can even spit a poisonous liquid. I really never expect to see such a poisonous snake here.

Nangong Ping sighed and he felt very lucky within. If it was not for this old pugilist, the worse could have happened. And he turned his glance to the dead snake.

“But I am not asking about the snake. I ask you…this…” He pointed at Mei Yinxue and Ye Manqing gently and asked. “What is going on here and where is Brother Di?”

Wan Da sighed as he retrieved his dagger and cleaned it with a white cloth. “Maiden Mei and I had been waiting for you all day and Di Yang poison was worrying us. Maiden Mei wanted to seal off his accupoints but I am afraid that the poison will enter deeper into his bloodstream and endangering him even more.”

He glanced at Mei Yinxue for awhile before saying. “Therefore I try to find a cool place for Di Yang to rest and to await you. But Maiden Mei refused and that since she had promised to wait for you here. Even if she has to wait till the heaven collapsed, the ground give way, the ocean dried up and everything crumble into dust, she will not move a single step away.”

Nangong Ping felt a warm feeling in his heart and could not resist giving Mei Yinxue a look. Mei Yinxue happened to glance at him with her frightened eyes and they looked at one another and his heart jumped. “And then?” He asked.

Wan Da replied. “Until dusk, I have to go and find some food and water. But Mei Yinxue refused to eat and only drink two mouthful of water and keep looking in the direction that you have gone. Although she never said but I knew why she was feeling anxious about. Actually how could I not be anxious for you as well? When it was dark, I went to gather some wood to build a fire…”

He paused again and looked at Ye Manqing awhile. “At this moment, Maiden Ye after hearing the cries of Di Yang found us…” He looked around and said in a even lower voice. “This Maiden Ye seemed to be looking for you too. When she saw Maiden Mei, there was a change in her countenance. And she asked. ‘Nangong Ping, are you injured?’ She must have guessed who is Maiden Mei and have deducted that the one with her must be you.”

Nangong Ping unwittingly sighed and did not know whether should he be happy or feel warm. He tried his best not to look at Maiden Ye, yet he could not

resist and glanced at her. Therefore two glances met and Nangong Ping's heart jumped again. He quickly asked. "And then?"

"And then…" Wan Da sighed and softly replied. "Mei Yinxue asked her sarcastically who was she? Then the two of them…haiz, haiz…they seemed to instantly clashed with words…haiz, haiz…" He cold not help sighing because it was so hard to explain in words. How could he say that they quarrel only because of Nangong Ping?

Nangong Ping sighed and asked. "After…then…what…happen…" He had guessed the meaning in Wan Da speech.

Wan Da said. "The two maidens were talking there, naturally I did not dare to interrupt and did not try to listen to their conversations. I only heard the last part…haiz, haiz…" He looked sheepishly around him.

Nangong Ping could not resist interrupting. "What did they say?"

Wan Da replied. "I only heard Maiden Mei sarcastically laughed. 'That is right. I am already thirty-four years old. Naturally I am fit to be your Old Senior. Now I want to teach you this Junior for your rudeness.'"

Nangong Ping was perplexed and secretly puzzled. "So it seemed that Ye Manqing had addressed her as Old Senior. Why then did she say that Ye Manqing is rude?"

Although he had exceptional intelligence but he could never guess what a woman was thinking. Ye Manqing was reminding Mei Yinxue of her age that she could only be fit to be Nangong Ping 'Old Senior'. So how could Mei Yinxue not be angry?

Wan Da interrupted his thoughts. "Therefore Maiden Ye is naturally…becomes angry. At this moment, Di Yang was crying out in pain so I hurried to attend him. They quarrel a few more lines of words before I heard Maiden Ye coldly said. "The people in Pugilist has nicked you as the Cold Blood Concubine. I guess that it was because you are extremely composed and calm. You and me will have a challenge on mediation. No matter under which circumstances, whoever moves first, it is considered a defeat."

Nangong Ping was startled and thought. "That Ye Manqing is really extremely bright. She and that Danfeng Ye Qiubai trained under that chilling cold environment on Huashan for ten years. Not to mention her other martial abilities but just this 'Sit' martial principle, she is stronger than everyone else."

He could not resist glancing at Mei Yinxue and then asked. "Did she agree?"

Wan Da slowly said. "How could Maiden Mei possibly not agree to it?…"

Before he had finished, Nangong Ping suddenly remembered that Mei Yinxue could bear even ten years of loneliness and heartache in a coffin. The willpower to do so is not possible for anyone to endure. Therefore, would

mediation prove to be hard for her?

Nangong Ping sighed deeply. And glanced at both Mei Yinxue and Ye Manqing. And he thought. “In the training of inner strength, ‘Sit’ is a superior technique. If it were other girls, the challenge will soon be over for hunger, cold, darkness, terror, loneliness…excluding these factors, just based on this eerie woods where any disturbances would occur, it will be extremely hard for other girls to be as composed. But these two women have a different experience from the rest, and their behaviors are also different too. Therefore it is impossible for them to move within a day or two.”

Wan Da saw Nangong Ping startled look and he did not know whether to feel sorry, worry, admire or happy for him. Although he was curious, he did not ask.

Nangong Ping sighed deeply. “They…I wonder in what year, which month will their challenge end.”

Wan Da softly said. “Let not talk about this first. But no matter who win, what will you do?”

Nangong Ping was stunned and he slowly asked. “Then what shall I do?”

Wan Da sighed. “What you going to do?”

Suddenly Nangong Ping shouted aloud. “Then what happen to Brother Di Yang?”

Wan Da sighed deeply. “The poison on 'Fragrance of a Thousand Miles' Ren Fengping mace not only kill but it could also a person’s senses to be disorientated. Di Yang had been behaving in a wild manner for a day now and when the first starlight was seen, he became crazed all of a sudden. As I was observing Maiden Mei movements and also I had to take of him, I was momentarily distracted when Maiden Mei and Maiden Ye made that challenge. At the same time Di Yang suddenly broke free of my hold in my lapse and ran off in the darkness.”

Nangong Ping expression changed. “Did you all not go after him?”

Wan Da said. “Maiden Mei and Maiden Ye had began their challenge on the mediation technique and will not move. Naturally they will not go after him.”

Nangong Ping expression changed. “What about you?”

Wan Da sighed. “I immediately go after him but that friend Di Yang although he was afflicted by a powerful poison but his movements are so shocking. I have never seen such a display before. I don’t know if it was because his swiftness movement skill was originally extremely good or the poison caused such an effect. No matter how hard I tried to chase after him, not even awhile, I can’t even see his figure anymore.”

Nangong Ping clenched his fists and looked hatefully at Mei Yinxue. “You did not manage to find him therefore you have returned, am I right?”

Wan Da sighed. “I did not manage to find him. After shouting in several places and lost for ideas, I returned and saw that green snake.”

Nangong Ping said aloud. “Which direction did he go?”

Wan Da pointed to the west and Nangong Ping said. “Take me there.”

He extended his hand to grip Wan Da and the two of them ran across the field.

Wan Da could only feel a strong force holding him and he was lifted up. He thought. “After a period of separation, his martial abilities have indeed tremendous improved but…alas! But who will expect that although he is composed and calm but still he is ever so rush in matters of emotions. It is just like before.”

Therefore the night became even quieter. Mei Yinxue and Ye Manqing unwittingly took a glance to the direction at which Nangong Ping had gone. But their eyes were instantly staring at one another once again…

The semi-conscious Zhan Donglai had began to wake. He looked at his surrounding in a daze. Mei Yinxue and Ye Manqing did not know who this young man in cotton clothing was. Was he sick? Was he injured? Was he Nangong Ping’s enemy? Or was he a friend of Nangong Ping?

Suddenly he rose up and he looked very startled yet very puzzled. He looked around and saw Mei Yinxue and Ye Manqing and he looked even more weird. And his eyes widened and he asked. “Where is this place? And why am I here?”

Now he discovered that sitting in front of him were two extremely beautiful women that even if he had walked across the entire fraternity, he would not be able to find such peerless beauties. Their expressions were like stones and although their glances were on him but it seemed that none of them had heard it.

Although he was usually a brave person, he could not help feeling startled. He looked stunned for awhile before he shouted loudly. “Yu Er, Dan Er…”

Suddenly he turned around and said loudly. “What is this place? How did I reach here?”

Zhan Donglai heart shivered as he looked at these two extremely beautiful women who remained motionless and they were not even looking at him now. He thought. “Did I encounter ghosts? Or else how can I be here? I suppose to be at Mulong Manor.” Suddenly he moved away like a meteor after he sighed.

Mei Yinxue and Ye Manqing could not help but feel a shiver within them as they thought. “This young man has such a terrifying swiftness skill.” Both of them were quietly praising yet when they thought of his expressions, they could not help feeling funny.

But after awhile, this young man in cotton clothing with his hands behind,

was back. He walked slowly and looked carefully at Mei Yinxue awhile and then looked carefully at Ye Manqing for awhile. He walked back to Mei Yinxue and with his head lowered and said. “Hello, hello, hello…Can you hear me?”

Mei Yinxue did not move her head or her eyes. Zhan Donglai looked at her from up and down with his hands behind and then walked to Ye Manqing. He lowered his head and said. “Hello, hello, hello…” But Ye Manqing did not move too.

But in her eyes and Mei Yinxue, flashed a tinge of anger. How could this young man be so arrogant and rude in his gesture?

Suddenly he shouted. “Hello!” This shout was very loud and reached to the heavens. Mei Yinxue and Ye Manqing was startled. Although their composure were extraordinary but their eyelids unwittingly moved.

Zhan Donglai laughed. “I see that the two of you are not deaf. Haha…I am original feeling sorry for the two of you. Young and beautiful but if you are deaf or mute, it will be such a pity!” Suddenly he became solemn. “If the two of them are not deaf or mute, why did you not reply me? Are you trying to ignore me? Or looking down on me?

Mei Yinxue and Ye Manqing felt that this young man although possessed very high martial abilities, handsome yet his attitude was really arrogant to the point of hateful. Therefore the two of them were even angrier but still, they did not move.

Zhan Donglai looked at Mei Yinxue and then at Ye Manqing before he laughed aloud. “Very good. I know it. It must be that Heaven is afraid I be too lonely and send me two beautiful maidens.” He looked at Mei Yinxue and asked. “Am I right?” And he looked at Ye Manqing. “Am I right?” And laughed again. “I think it is right. Silence is consent.”

Mei Yinxue tried to suppress her anger and hope that Ye Manqing would be the first to move. So that she could get up and teach this arrogant heretic a lesson.

Ye Manqing looked at Mei Yinxue and wished for her to move. Her desire was no less than Mei Yinxue was.

The two of them stared at one another and were really anger to the bursting point. But none of them moved.

Zhan Donglai clapped his hands and sighed. He looked very perplexed as he said. “Alas Heaven, Heaven. You are so kind to me but also a little playful. These two are both so beautiful. What shall I do then? I have only one body and one of them have to be the wife and the another a concubine. One first, one last haiz! Then who shall be the wife? Who shall be the concubine? Who shall be the first? Who shall be the last?”

He was muttering and then he slowly walked over to Ye Manqing and

touched her on her cheeks and sighed. “This one is so young, so beautiful. How can I bear to let you be the concubine? How can I bear to let you wait awhile for me?” He was play-acting and muttering as he walked over to Mei Yinxue and touched her on her cheeks. “But, this is not as worse as the other?”

Mei Yinxue and Ye Manqing glances almost spat fire. The two of them did not look at Zhan Donglai but viciously at one another and hoping to see which among them would make the first move.

Although he was angry, he was also feeling afraid and worry. As Wan Da and he ran around, he hatefully said. “How can she be so muddle-headed and let Di Yang ran off. It obvious that she knew that Di Yang was severely poisoned and obviously she knew that I had risked my life to get the antidote, alas! If I cannot find Di Yang…alas! Di Yang’s life will be as good as losing in their hands.”

Wan Da asked. “Master, these two maidens who are sitting there, I afraid…afraid that they may be in danger.”

Nangong Ping stopped for awhile and he suddenly hatefully replied. “Then what about the life of Brother Di?”

Wan Da sighed. “But no matter what. If he had once befriend a friend such as you, it really a blissful thing.”

Nangong Ping explained. “Brother Di was poisoned because of me and …now …he …he …he …alas! Can I still be considered a friend of his? I…I simple…” Now his voice was in a state of turmoil and could not form words. Although he could risk his life but when he thought of the sacrifice made by another, he could not help feeling anxious and his tears dropped.

Wan Da was silenced for awhile and he said. “In every ten hundred thousand people, if there is anyone that thinks like you, this world will be more peaceful and joyous.”

Nangong Ping was shouting. “Brother Di, Brother Di, can you hear me?”

Wan Da sighed. “His senses are now confused. Even if you shout in his ears, he would not hear you.”

Nangong Ping sighed. “Then what should I do? Do we…”

Wan Da said. “Now it is very dark. If you want to search for anyone, it is really as hard as ascending the sky. Although he is deeply poisoned but I have already protected his heart. With a day and a half, his life will not in a danger. Now you and me, we should go back and ask these two maidens to stop their challenge. They have no vendetta against one another therefore they would listen to you. When it is dawn, the four of us will go in four directions to search.”

Nangong Ping legs had not touched the ground after running for a long time

as he sprang in great haste on the grasses. And he was extremely tired therefore when he tried to talk; he was breathless as well.

Nangong Ping sighed deeply as he slowed down. “But…but…” Suddenly there was a “Hello” loud coming from faraway. Although this shout came from far, but it was very clear due to the strong internal strength of the person shouting it.

Nangong Ping asked. “Who is this person?”

Da Wan asked as well. “Who is this person?”

The two of them asked at the same time and ended at the same time. Suddenly they turned back and ran.

Wan Da looked troubled while Nangong Ping exclaimed. “It is exactly as you said. In this dark recess of the night, if something happens to the two women…”

Wan Da asked. “These two maidens possess extraordinary techniques. If they really meet with an accident, will they really remained motionless just because they want to fight for their pride?”

Nangong Ping sighed. “These two people’s norm, sometimes you can never use normal deduction to analyze…”

Before he could finish, there was another wave of laughter as Nangong Ping loosened his hand and said. “Let me go ahead first!”

He increased the flow of vital energies as he speeded hastily in front. After some time he finally reached the place where Mei Yinxue and Ye Manqing was.

He glanced around and saw Zhan Donglai who he had rescued from Mulong Manor was now touching Mei Yinxue’s hair and laughing. “What a soft and beautiful hair. It just like as smooth as a sculpture. It must be my karma from my previous lives…”

Nangong Ping was angry as he shouted. “Come here Zhan Donglai, stop!”

Zhan Donglai was feeling strange and only thought that the angry eyes of the two maidens only increased their charm. For he thought that if they really disliked him why then did they not struggle and instead suffered in silence?

This shout jolted him to his senses and he turned around to see a handsome young man. He was startled, angry and strange that he would know his name. So he said aloud. “Who is you? How did you know my name?”

Nangong Ping said solemnly. “I carried you from Mulong Manor, naturally I know your name.”

Zhan Donglai was startled “You carried me…”

Nangong Ping said. “You had been drugged and had been unconscious. If it wasn't Wei Qi that has saved you. Now you would be probably be dead.”

Zhan Donglai muttered. “I was drugged…Wei Qi saved me…”

Nangong Ping angrily said. “Indeed! You just escaped from a dire situation

and how could you be so rude to a woman who you did not know?"

Zhan Donglai waved his hand slightly. "Wait, wait. I really can't get it now. So you mean, these two maidens are your friends?"

Nangong Ping replied, "Indeed they are!"

Zhan Donglai laughed and said. "No wonder you are so anxious. But…don't you worry. I always have been very generous. And moreover you have help me and these two maidens are your friends. Therefore I will share with you one of them, other matters can slowly wait."

This man speech was really arrogant, shameless and hateful!

Nangong Ping could not believe that such words would come out from the mouth of this handsome young man. He clenched his fists and angrily exclaimed. "Is this the word of a human being? Do you feel any shame at all by saying such words?"

Zhan Donglai looked solemn and said aloud. "What did you say?"

Nangong Ping solemnly said. "I want to punish you in the place of you parents and elders. You heretic disciple."

Zhan Donglai laughed and said. "You want to teach me a lesson? Oh good…"

Nangong Ping shouted. "What oh good?" As he struck toward Zhan Donglai. This attack had no strokes; it was simply that of a father disciplining his child or a strict teacher disciplining his protégés. "Base on this…"

Zhan Donglai laughed. How could he take much notice of such a simple attack? In his eyes, such an attack was puny. He knocked aside Nangong Ping wrist and there was a strong invisible force that seemed to extend from his hands.

Nangong Ping would never expect that Zhan Donglai would be capable of using such strong vital strength as he felt he felt his body getting numbed and he backed off several steps.

Because of the wishes of Wei Qi, Nangong Ping did not want to hurt anyone but because he could not tolerate Zhan Donglai egoistic ways, he wanted to teach him a lesson.

Nangong Ping attacked seven times at Zhan Donglai who was using just his right hand. Although he had blocked all of Nangong Ping's attacks but his right hands felt numbed.

By now Wan Da had reached the scene and was surprised to see the two men fighting. Wan Da could not separate the two figures that were fighting for they were simple too fast. Although his martial abilities were not high but he had roamed the Pugilist and was knowledgeable. After a hundred blows flew by, he could not help wondering about the intricate of both their attacks. He really could not tell who had the upper hand.

Mei Yinxue and Ye Manqing both looked on solemnly as their eyes followed Nangong Ping. Suddenly Zhan Donglai yelled and he began to use both his hands now. The power of both of his hands were not to be underestimated as his strokes got more and more ingenious and fast.

Wan Da looked at Mei Yinxue and Ye Manqing and was startled. He thought. “Their expressions have turned ashen. Is Nangong Ping losing?”

Now he hoped that one of them would lend a helping hand to Nangong Ping. He thought. “If one of them will lend a helping hand, then surely she has placed Nangong Ping’s safety above that of herself. But these two cold and frosty maidens, would they be so warm hearted?”

Suddenly he was interrupted by a shout from Nangong Ping who spread his hands and jumped up!”

Wan Da was delighted in his heart. “He is going to use his benevolent teacher secret technique and soon in an instant, he will overturn the table and become the victor.”

But Mei Yinxue and Ye Manqing countenance underwent a great change as the two of them cried out together as they flashed like lightning towards Zhan Donglai.

Because Nangong Ping had been exerting a lot these few days and his vital strength was not at his peak. Therefore his strokes and changes were also slower. When he used this stroke ‘The Dragon Ascending’, was really under pressure and rage. He wanted to sacrifice himself so he could hit his opponent as well.

But Mei Yinxue and Ye Manqing who was observing by the side knew instantly that with his present vital strength and stamina, this stroke once it was used, was really suicidal.

Zhan Donglai coldly laughed and he just dodged. When he was about six inches from Nangong Ping and was about to use his killer strokes, he senses two windforces behind him. Startled, he withdrawn his hands and back off seven feet in an instant.

Nangong Ping fell to the ground like a meteor. After he had used the ‘The Dragon Ascending’ Stance, he had no more strength and when Zhan Donglai suddenly retreated, he could not withdrawn his stance in time.

But suddenly two soft and gentle hands held him by his arms as it supported him down. He only saw Mei Yinxue and Ye Manqing watery eyes looking at him. Their eyes were filled with concern and a deep appreciation. Then all of a sudden, together they rushed toward the direction of Zhan Donglai.

Chapter Eleven
Many Love, Many Sorrows

Nangong Ping could only feel jubilate coming from his thoughts.

These two lonely solitary, cold and frosty women, the darkness could not shake their hearts, the poisonous snake could not frighten them into moving, even if it was a life and death situation they remained as tranquil as the firm mountain. Even if it was the humiliation and molestation by others, they could endure. But when Nangong Ping was in danger, they forgot everything.

Wan Da looked on with a sigh in his heart. He was secretly pleased for Nangong Ping but the old and wise person that he was, he knew that this happiness would hide many foreshadows.

In between his sighing, Mei Yinxue and Ye Manqing had flashed to the midst of Zhan Donglai. The two of them had really hated this arrogant and insulting young man to the bones.

Therefore four beautiful hands were all hitting on Zhan Donglai most vulnerable positions.

Zhan Donglai by now had recovered his composure and was laughing arrogantly. “The two maidens want to fight with me? Good, good. Let me show you some of the rarely seen famous techniques of mine so that the two of you would be impressed.”

Although he had started off laughing in a loud hilarious manner but it became weaker and weaker. When he had finished the last word, his face was solemn and he could not laugh anymore.

For when he had said the second or third words, he had suddenly discovered that the strokes used by these two alluring and very beautiful women were extremely sharp and vicious.

He could only see them dancing with their dresses and robes fluttering. Even their beautiful fingers were brighter than the starlight and looked like ten lightning fast sharp swords. After more than ten strokes, Zhan Donglai did not dare to be careless. And after another ten strokes flew by, he sweated profusely.

Mei Yinxue attacked with her right hand; her hand gesture was like that of a orchid. She hit against Zhan Donglai Jiang Tai, Xuan Ji, Qi Men, Cang Xue accupoints. Those four accupoints were scattered far apart but she seemed to hit those accupoints at the same time and he could not tell which was the first or last. Zhan Donglai tried to protect his body as he back off five steps and looked at Mei Yinxue who was gently brushing her loosen hair.

Mei Yinxue lovingly said, “Little Sister Ye, do you think this person martial skills are not so bad right? No wonder when he talks, his words are so inhumane.”

Ye Manqing was startled as her right hand slanted defensively before she attacked with three more strokes. Failing to comprehend the wordings of Mei Yinxue, her only response was a cold hum.

Mei Yinxue turned her slim body and gently extended her hands to the left of Zhan Donglai offside by one foot. Though it was offside but if Zhan Donglai were to evade Ye Manqing three strokes, Mei Yinxue would have struck him.

He was startled as he hastily extended both his hands in an awkward position as he evaded all the attacks.

Mei Yinxue tenderly touched her hair and lovingly said. “His martial ability aren’t bad at all. Little Sister Ye, you just take a step in the shade. Don’t stay here to be cumbersome, alright?”

Ye Manqing secretly bit her teeth, extended her shoulders and execute seven more strokes.

Mei Yinxue giggled. “What an excellent martial skill, what an excellent stroke…Good sister, it is not that I think your martial skills are not on par. But if you are to deal with his Kunlun Celestial Palace skills, you still need a little bit of work. Why don’t you listen to sister me and back off!”

In between her laughs, she had attacked with just a few simple strokes. Although simple, all were extremely sharp and vicious. Some of her blows seemed to hit offside but were in fact the only retreating position that Zhan Donglai could move if he evaded from Ye Manqing's attacks. Some of her blows were on the right but ended up on the left.

Zhan Donglai was jolted as he thought. “Who is this maiden? What a vicious stance, what a vicious eyesight that she could actually know my martial origins.” Suddenly he gave a great shout. In his anxiety, he used the Kunlun Flying Dragon swiftness skill that was so renowned throughout the Pugilist.

Mei Yinxue giggled a laugh and said. “Good sister, since you don’t listen to elder sister, sister will only have to leave.” Before she had finished, she had moved back one meter away.

Nangong Ping was startled and solemnly said. “What are you doing?”

Mei Yinxue was all smiles as she lovingly said. “It so embarrassing for two to fight one. Let her try awhile, why are you so worry about?”

Nangong Ping became solemn and did not bother with her anymore as he observed Zhan Donglai movements. His body seemed to be able to change in mid-air and also when he just landed; he could immediately jumped up again as he borrowed Ye Manqing windforce. In that instant, Ye Manqing seemed about to succumbed to Zhan Donglai strange and ingenious blows.

But after several blows had gone by, Ye Manqing remained strangely as she was before. Even though she was in a disadvantage position but she was undefeated. Her hands were like the wings of a phoenix, as sudden as the soaring Phoenix. Her legs seemed not to move but in fact it was moving bit by bit in a very intricate unnoticed movement yet she never moved one inch from the same position.

Mei Yinxue was slowly perplexed. She was wondering why Ye Manqing could hold out for so long and still remained undefeated. Then her watery eyes moved and she laughed captivating. “I see that Danfeng Ye Qiubai has taught her a special movement skill to deal with such a martial technique. But I afraid that Ye Qiubai would never have thought that she did not use this technique to deal with the disciples of the Divine Dragon but instead on the Kunlun disciples.”

Nangong Ping coldly hummed but did not look at her.

Wan Da quietly moved to him and said. “I am afraid that Maiden Ye…”

Nangong Ping said. “Even if it mean two versus one, I will still lend her a helping hand.”

Wan Da secretly looked at Mei Yinxue and saw that she looked quiet, lowered her head down and melancholy sighed. “Don’t you worry. I…I…” Suddenly she sprang like a arrow and gave Zhan Donglai a blow.

By now Ye Manqing was already breathless as she breathe softly. As her strength was not as before, so when Zhan Donglai attention was switched to Mei Yinxue, she secretly sighed and moved back one meter. She looked idiocy at Zhan Donglai shadowy figure with great intense.

When Nangong Ping looked at her, he almost wanted to walk to her side but he did not do so.

Wan Da sighed in relief and said in a low voice. “No wonder the Peacock Concubine is known throughout the Fraternity…” Although he did not finish but his meaning was very clear – He was greatly impressed by Mei Yinxue martial art techniques.

Ye Manqing secretly sighed and lowered her head. She glance at the shadows of everyone under this starlight before she sighed again before turning her back and slowly walked away.

Nangong Ping softly called out after her. “Maiden Ye…” He was besides her in an instant. “Are you going?”

Ye Manqing did not lift her head and slowly said. “I…I am going.”

Nangong Ping said. “But benevolent teacher…”

Before he could finish, Mei Yinxue suddenly exclaimed. “Hold it!” She was heartbreak when Nangong Ping talked to Ye Manqing with such concern.

Nangong Ping, Ye Manqing turned at the same time and saw Zhan Donglai

halted too just as he was about to attack with a stance. Everyone turned around and was startled.

Zhan Donglai asked. “What is the matter?”

Mei Yinxue touched her hair gently and her composed face suddenly broke into a captivating and loving smile. “You and I have no feuds with one another, why are we fighting for our lives?”

Zhan Donglai was puzzled and looked idiocy into her watery eyes and her alluring smile that was looking at him. So he unwittingly patted himself on his chest and laughed. “That true, you and me have no feuds, why are we fighting for our lives?”

He was laughing and talking at the same time but his hands were secretly wiping his sweat from his forehead.

Mei Yinxue captivating laughed. “Not only do we not have to fight for our lives but with our martial skills if we could only exchange pointers, in the Pugilist, who will be our match?”

She kept saying “We,” that Nangong Ping countenance changed greatly after he heard it.

Zhan Donglai broke into an idiocy laugh and he could only nod. “That's so true. If only we could exchange pointers…haha. This is too great. It is simple too great.”

Mei Yinxue smiled. “Then why don’t we exchange pointers?”

Zhan Donglai laughed loudly. “That so true, then we…”

Nangong Ping could not resist it anymore and he thundered. “Shut up!”

Mei Yinxue sunk her countenance and coldly asked. “What is the matter?”

Zhan Donglai look perplexed and stared and he too shouted. “What is the matter, are you…”

Mei Yinxue interrupted. “Let's ignore him.” She turned and looked coldly at Nangong Ping. “You and I are not related or friends. What I want to do is none of your business. As for Long Bushi last will, it is also none of my business. You have better go with your Maiden Ye to finish his will.”

Nangong Ping stood motionless rooted to the ground, bit his teeth and clenched his fists.

Mei Yinxue turned to look at Zhan Donglai with a captivating smile. “Let us go and find a place to eat. I am really hungry.”

Zhan Donglai was delighted and it was shown on his face. “Let go!” The two of them looked at one another in the eyes and were all smiles.

Zhan Donglai turned his head back and said loudly. “If you want to challenge me to a duel, you should go back and train for another three years. By then, I will still let you with one hand.” When he had finished, Mei Yinxue and

him had disappeared into the darkness, leaving behind his cruel laughter.

Nangong Ping stood motionless rooted to the ground. The laughter pierced through his ears and he shivered in his most innermost heart. He clenched his fists and secretly exclaiming. “Mei Yinxue, Mei Leixue, Mei Yinxue, Mei Leixue…” In his head, he was just repeating those two words.

After Mei Yinxue was far away, Ye Manqing suddenly hummed. “Why did you not go after her?”

Nangong Ping sighed but from his mouth he coldly laughed. “Why must I go after her?”

Ye Manqing coldly said. “What a heartless person!” She flicked her dress and turned her face around.

Nangong Ping was startled and looked at her idiocy. He questioned himself. “I am heartless? The way she treats me, the one that is heartless, is me…?”

Suddenly Ye Manqing turned her head and said. “She is so nice to you, do you not know or do you never even place it in your heart?”

Nangong Ping was startled and slowly asked. “The way she is, she is nice to me?”

Ye Manqing coldly hummed and said. “If she is not nice to you, why will she be so concern about your safety? She was not moved by anything just now but when she saw…haiz, haiz…” She ceased her words for she remembered that she was the same. After sighing more two times, she lowered her head and there were two tinge of red on her alluring face.

Nangong Ping could not resist sighing. His heart was really very confused and numbed. Because of Mei Yinxue past reputation, her strange behavior and her strange ways with the other people, caused him unable to believe that she would love him. It was because of this same reason, that caused him to unable to forgive her for what seemed to be forgivable things.

This was a very complex feeling and also the weakness of the human race. He could not explain it to others and he could not explain to himself.

Because she did not take care of Di Yang, because she purposely let Ye Manqing be humiliated. Although she had once purposely treated himself with coldness but the upright and righteous Nangong Ping after he had fallen in love, he unwitting became selfish too. He could only thought. “I did not treat her like this but why did she treat me like that?” Therefore he sighed and asked. “Why did she treat me in this manner? Why did she treat me in this manner?”

Ye Manqing lifted her head and said. “Do you know how much she likes you. When she saw other girl looking for you, she…she…” She purposely acted very sternly and said. “She does not know that I am looking for you because I ever promised your Mentor Master to do something for him.”

Nangong Ping was now in a wave of confusion. Was it sorrow, or anger or delight? Suddenly he found out that everything that Mei Yinxue did deserve to be forgiven. It just that he was thinking of too many things (jealousy) and wronged her. Now he blamed himself greatly in his heart. But suddenly he thought that not all things she did deserve to be forgiven when he remembered how she smiled so lovingly at Zhan Donglai. Therefore he started to feel a throttling heartache in his innermost place…

Alas! A young man with too much feeling would surely find it to be such heartache.

The old Wan Dan looked at these young man and women who were troubled by matters of the heart, he immediately thought of when he was young and he was exactly the same. Therefore he sighed and felt pity.

Therefore he was not surprised by Nangong Ping reaction that looked suddenly delightful and suddenly sorrowful. He only felt pitiful for Ye Manqing who was looking melancholy and sorrowful and who spoke out for Mei Yinxue because she was sympathizing for her and had understand her feeling. It was because he had already observed that although this young woman looked cold and frosty but she was in fact, surrounded by many emotions.

Therefore he could not resist sighing. “Although Maiden Mei is gone but it is because she did it in a fit of anger. I only pity that arrogant and egoistic young man, he will surely…”

Nangong Ping cold hummed and interrupted. “No matter how arrogant and egoistic Zhan Donglai is, she shouldn’t use that usual method to deal with him.”

Wan Da said. “Although it is correct but…” He sighed.

Nangong Ping suddenly said aloud. “The Fallen Autumn Leaf!”

Wan Dan was startled and asked. “Fallen Autumn Leaf, is it the…”

Nangong Ping exclaimed. “That is the sword that is left behind by benevolent teacher to me. I left it besides Di Yang.” As there were too many things that had happened, he remembered the sword only now.

Wan Da was startled and he said. “When Di Yang ran off, his hand seemed to shine…”

Nangong Ping turned around and said. “Let's go. I want…”

Ye Manqing glanced at him and coldly asked. “Where are you going?”

Nangong Ping replied. “I…”

Ye Manqing did not wait for him to reply and interrupted. “No matter where you are going. It not too late to read your benevolent teacher last will first and then go.”

Nangong Ping sighed. “Is benevolent teacher last will with maiden?”

Ye Manqing took out a letter slowly from her clothing. Her watery eyes

rolled and she gently put it on the ground.

Nangong Ping picked it up and asked solemnly. “But according to benevolent teacher’s order, there is still three more days before end of March.”

Ye Manqing coldly said. “At this moment, you are surely not going back to Zhijiao Manor anymore. So what does it matter if you read it first? If your benevolent teacher unfinished wishes require you and me to accomplish it, it is best we finish it fast. If it isn’t for your Mentor Master’s request, I would have washed my hands off this matter already.” In between her words, her intentions were clear. She did not want to have anything to do with Nangong Ping. But in her eyes, it was full of melancholy.

Nangong Ping stood rigid for awhile and slowly tore opened the letter. The ever so familiar words floated in his eyes. “Ping Er as you know, Zhijiao Manor is not a place where you should spend all your life. Your father businesses need you to help him to take care of it. Both your parents are kind to all and they disdain wealth…”

His eyes stopped reading for awhile. He secretly felt grateful for his Mentor Master’s respect for his parents. He was feeling greatly appreciated. He continued to read. “You have an extraordinary background, have a good memory. Your future will be bright but a great man cannot do without a wife. Her help will be very much needed. Maiden Ye Manqing is young, beautiful, intelligence and understanding. She is good enough to be your pillar of strength. That is my first wish.

If Long Fei had no son, I hope that you will name your second son after my surname so that the Long line would not be extinct. That is my second wish.”

Suddenly Nangong Ping felt a rush of warm on his face and did not dare to look at Ye Manqing. He really did not expect that his Mentor Master unfinished wishes will be ‘That matter’. Therefore he sighed and continued to read. Thirdly, in the mythical origin of the Pugilist, there is a mysterious legend. All the martial techniques in the Fraternity do not come from the sacred ground of Shaolin Mt. Songshan, or Kunlun, Wudang but from a temple and an island. The island name is called ‘Devil Flock’ and the temple is called ‘Divine Creator’. These two places are hidden in the most desolate of places and are extremely difficult to find. The Devil Flock Island is said to host the most cunning and most evil people while the Temple of the Divine Creator is the place for those with great loyalty and great benevolent. But unless you have supreme martial abilities, it is impossible to step into these two places.”

Nangong Ping was bewildered and thought that it was too mysterious and strange. He continued to read. “When I am young I have heard of the legend of this one island and one temple. But the one who told me warned me severely that in my

entire life, I can only pass this secret only once or else even if I could travel to all the places in search, I would never be able to find it. Therefore I specifically passed this secret to you and Ye Manqing. Please remember that you must not pass this secret lightly. Please remember. If fates forbid, I hope the two of you can find the two places so as to fulfill my wish."

When Nangong Ping had finished, he unwittingly closed his eyes and from his mind were two images…

One of them was a place of white golden palace temple that was built of white jade. Inside the temple, were many old men that discussed the various theories on martial techniques and displaying its unfathomable prowess. Outside the palace temple were heavenly creatures, young boys and girls that were playing around.

On the other hand, in a darken place where the waves rose terribly, in a valley on an island, were the dark creepy forest. The malevolent air and the smell of blood could be detected ten miles away. Those ships from the open seas from time to time would be taken away by the devils on the island…

Ye Manqing looked on suspiciously. She only saw him holding the piece of paper and suddenly flushed. Then suddenly he was startled, then there seemed to be a laughter in his eyes, then perplexed. Therefore she became curious and could not resist asking. "Have you finished reading yet?"

Nangong Ping was startled as he woke up from his dream like thoughts and said. "I'll finished." And he hid the paper behind his back.

Ye Manqing coldly laughed awhile and said. "Since you are not willing to let me read your benevolent teacher last will, it doesn't matter to me."

Nangong Ping stumbled. "It…it…not that I am not willing…"

Ye Manqing was as composed as water and coldly interrupted. "I only want to ask you. The three unfinished wishes of your benevolent teacher, is it related to me?"

Nangong Ping softly sighed and stumbled. "This…yes…this…" He sighed in his heart and said. "Not only is it related to you but alas…"

Ye Manqing looked perplexed as she said, "If it have nothing to do with me, I am going." She brushed her longhair aside and walk away in strides.

Nangong Ping said, "Maiden Ye…"

Ye Manqing coldly replied. "What is the matter?"

Nangong Ping said, "Yes…this…." His heart was anxious and embarrassed. He really did not know what to do and was secretly sighing. "Although Mentor Master has his orders but…This is really impossible to be realized, alas! Farewell.

After we parted today, we may not meet again. I hope that you…" Before he could finish, the paper in his hand was snatched by Ye Manqing.

As Ye Manqing walked away in strides, she suddenly turned around when she walked past him and snatched the paper away from him. She coldly said. "Your benevolent teacher orders you and me to read it together and you disobey him. But I can't bear to disobey the orders that your benevolent teacher has given me." As she said, her eyes moved. But after reading for awhile, she was suddenly very red and the cold and frosty countenance totally vanished. After reading for another while, she suddenly 'moan' and used her beautiful hands to cover her face and said. "You…you…"

Nangong Ping stood rigidly onto the ground feeling embarrass as he stumbled. "I…I…" Although he felt embarrassing and troubled but there was a warm sweet feeling. He could not resist taking a look at her. Only to see her watery eyes coincidentally looking at him at the same time and their glances locked. Ye Manqing moaned again. All of a sudden she started to walk away.

Although she was walking in strides yet she did not exhibited her swiftness skill. It was like she wanted to wait for someone to hold her back.

Nangong Ping looked at her back view but he did not move at all. Suddenly there was a loud strange shout!

Ye Manqing stopped in her tracks and heard a tearing shrieking sound in the distant.

Nangong Ping expression changed and he could feel the piercing sound of that scream deeply in his heart.

Ye Manqing shivered and her slim body jumped back and was besides Nangong Ping. "What…is…this?" The terrifying cry that was heard caused this cold and haughty maiden to stumble in her speech.

Nangong Ping looked at Wan Da and asked. "What is going on here?"

In the darkness, he saw Wan Da looking nervously in front. His hands were in his sleeves and seemed to be shaking. He did not even noticed that Nangong Ping had called out to him.

Nangong Ping was very startled inside him but he turned and smiled at Ye Manqing. "You don't have to be afraid, there is nothing…"

Before he could finish, a man appeared in the distant. He was walking backward as though something happened in front and caused him unable to turn and run. And there was music composed by flutes coming forth from his direction.

The sound of flutes became hurried as the man became even more tensed and totally did not move.

Nangong Ping sighed and shouted. "Friend…" Before he could finish shouting, the man turned around and ran towards them. He had a most terrifying

look on his face and he was also bald.

Nangong Ping was stunned. “Fri…end…” Before he could finish, this bald man ran behind him.

Ye Manqing glanced at him and looked in the front. She was startled for she saw tens of dozens of poisonous snakes crawling all over. With a startled cry, she moved into the embrace of Nangong Ping unwittingly.

The sounds of the flutes were playing from high pitch to low. Behind those snakes, were several mysterious beggars and they were eerie looking.

Therefore Ye Manqing right wrist moved and hugged Nangong Ping even more tightly. Suddenly she discovered that Nangong Ping was shaking too. She felt strange and her watery eyes glance around and saw that it was because it was strange bald man that was shaking Nangong Ping for he too had caught hold of him.

Nangong Ping took a glance at Ye Manqing. He did not know if he feels startled, surprised or delight because he could protect her. Maybe it was some of each of the three feeling.

The swarms of snakes crawled onto the ground. Although their movements seemed slow but it was in fact extremely fast.

Wan Da scattered some yellow sulfur around. His eyes looked intensely at the snakes. Luckily the snakes halted as soon as they were near the sulfur.

Nangong Ping keen eyes saw a ground of around sixteen beggars approaching. They were all eerie looking and filled with an air of malevolent but said as they beg. “Merciful Master, will you do some good as to give me something from your sack.”

Nangong Ping was startled and feeling strange at the same time. Therefore he could resist and turned to looked at the strange bald old man. He was dressed poorly and carried a hemp sack. And the sack looked like it got nothing inside. There seemed nothing worth begging for.

He really could not figure out the intricate of all what it was about. But a righteous spirit rose from him, one that required the strong to help the weak caused him to feel sympathy with this pitiful bald old man.

Wan Da suddenly asked. “Friends, did you come from the Hell of Hell’ that is from beyond the Pass?”

Some of the beggars were surprised and one of them step forward and said word by word. “Do you know me?”

Wan Da shivered for the voice was ghastly and he stumbled as he tried to gather his voice. “Are you the Ghastly Beggars’ that everyone in the Pugilist has been whispering about?”

The eerie beggar coldly hissed and said. “That is right, Hell of Hell, Ghastly

Beggars, Poor malicious Spirits, Malevolent Spirits…hehe. If you have not descend to the nineteen levels of hell, how did you know us malicious spirits?"

"Hehe," He laughed coldly for a few times before he sung mysteriously. "Us hungry ghosts will never go back to Hell unless we given a offering, or else calamity will befall those we haunt."

Wan Da solemnly said. "The Ghastly Beggars is called call the Hungry Ghost Gang and never extort anything less than one thousand gold and the thousands silver. Friend, is there a mistake?"

Nangong Ping searched his memory for accounts of those strange beggars. He could not resist glancing at the bald old man as he asked. "The Ghastly Beggars that never step into the Central Plains would enter the Pass for this bald old man that looked like a beggar?"

The eerie man coldly reply. "It is not you we are looking for. Do you want the ghosts to come knocking at you too?"

He was in front of Nangong Ping in an instant as he warned coldly. "Young children do not antagonize the ghosts and moreover shall not block the ghosts, do you understand?"

Nangong Ping said in a clear voice. "Are you Chief Yi Feng or Chief Song Zhong? He was solemn, neither afraid nor startled.

Suddenly the eerie man laughed. "Although Malicious Ghost Song Zhong is not here but I Hungry Ghost Yi Feng is here. Since you know our background, are you waiting for us to eat you?"

The beggars around stomped and clapped, laughed eerily. "Eat you up! Eat you up!"

Ye Manqing had already calmed down by now. Suddenly she hummed coldly and said, "Pretending to be deities and playing ghosts, so useless."

'Hungry Ghost' Yu Feng laughed. "A eighteen nineteen grown up girl that has crumbled into the embrace of a man can still say so many tall words. There is no place for a shameless female ghost like you in the nineteen level of hell."

Ye Manqing cheeks turned red; she was flushed and looked vexed as she called out softly. "What did you say?" As she waved her hand to deal him with a blow.

But before she could do so, Nangong Ping gently hold her on her sleeves and said. "Wait awhile."

Ye Manqing asked. "These gang of people are playacting as deities and ghosts, obviously vile people. Why must we talk so much to them?"

Nangong Ping was solemn as he said. "As beggar, they have a right to ask others for aid. There are all kinds and types of people in the Pugilist. Even if they want to be ghost, it is not really a evil thing. They have no ill intentions toward us

and were merely asking us to go away. How can we come to blows with them?"

'Hungry Ghost' Yi Feng was full of mocking but when he heard those words, he became startled. Ever since he was in Pugilist, there was none that ever analyzed him the way Nangong Ping did.

Ye Manqing was startled as well and gently lowered her hands.

This cold demeanor and haughty maiden suddenly became very demure all of a sudden.

The bald old man stumbled and exclaimed. "You…you…you…Do you really want these gang of hungry ghosts to steal a poor old man's things?"

Nangong Ping smiled and said in a clear manner. "I have long heard that Ghastly Beggars Gang traveled the mortal realm to take from the rich but it will never take more than half from their target and they take to help the poor. But today I am surprise that you will force a poor old man!"

Hungry Ghost Yi Feng laughed and said. "I did not expect you will know so much about our gang for someone so young as you." He changed his tone and the eerie manner was gone.

Wan Da secretly sighed. "Many years ago, I mention a few things about the Ghastly Beggars to him. I never expect him to remember so clearly."

Hungry Ghost Yi Feng ceased his laughing and said. "Since you know about us in such detail, you must also know that we never go back empty handed. Therefore it better for you don't to be a nosy porker."

The bald old man shrieked loudly. "Save me…"

Nangong Ping solemnly said. "If you want to force such a poor old man, I will be very disappointed with the reputation of your gang."

Hungry Ghost Yi Feng suddenly laughed. "Poor old man? You say he is a poor old man? If he is not wealthier than you by ten times and if his wealth is not ill-gotten, will the Ghastly Ghosts be after him?"

Nangong Ping was startled and the bald old man pleaded. "Don't listen to him, how will I have money…"

Ye Manqing asked. "The one with the surname Yi, you say this man is richer than him by ten times?"

Hungry Ghost Yi Feng laughed. "Indeed."

Ye Manqing asked. "What if you are wrong, so what will you do?"

Yi Feng mocked. "The Ghastly Beggars have eyes like lamps. If we are wrong, we will go hungry for ten years and we will turn back tonight…"

Ye Manqing asked, "Really?"

Yi Feng sarcastically laughed. "Ignorant naïve girl, what do you know? Although this old thing looks poor but in fact his wealth numbered in the tens of thousands. Today we just want to take half of his riches from his sack, it is

considered to be of great courtesy. The Ghastly Beggars have never take from the poor or else we will never allow a little girl like you to say so much."

Ye Manqing coldly said. "Do you know who he is?"

Hungry Ghost Yi Feng looked at Nangong Ping for awhile before he took five steps to the left and right. Nangong Ping looked perplexed and took another five steps as well so that he could face him.

Yi Feng suddenly laughed and coldly said. "Maybe you look like a scion of a wealthy family but it a pity that you do not have even ten silver."

Nangong Ping was suddenly very startled and secretly thought. "I have heard that in Pugilist, some people have such excellent eye sight and hearing that they can hear from the foot steps and movements of the other to discern whether they are carrying valuables. I never expect that this Hungry Ghost would have such sharp eyes and hearing."

Ye Manqing questioned. "This old man have silver on him?"

Yi Feng replied. "Although no silver but many bank notes. But what I want is not the bank notes but…"

Before he could finish, that old bald man suddenly turned and ran away.

Hungry Ghost Yi Feng mocked. "Old thing, can you run?" Before he had finished, the bald old man had returned because in front of him were many green snakes.

Yi Feng said. "Little maiden, it is useless to say so much. Unless it is the young master of the Nangong Aristocracy Family, there is no one else in the world that can be richer than this old thing. Why get into so much trouble because of this matter? It is lucky that you have seen me today. If it is the Malicious Ghost, you are going to suffer."

Ye Manqing coldly laughed awhile. "Do you…"

Nangong Ping was solemn as he said. "I am indeed Nangong Ping."

Yi Feng eyes widened and he backed off three steps then suddenly hit toward Nangong Ping with a blow.

This surprise attack was as fast as lightning but Nangong Ping covered his chest with his left hand and his right finger extended out, hit against his Qu Chi accupoint.

This stance can attack and defend at the same time was one of the secret techniques of the 'Four Stances of the Ascending Dragon'. But before he could complete his strokes, Hungry Ghost Yi Feng had backed off another three steps.

He sighed. "Indeed is the disciple of the Divine Dragon and from the Nangong Aristocracy Family. Fine, fine…Old thing, today we spare you."

He waved his hand and the music changed. All the snakes in the area suddenly flew into the sleeves of the Ghastly Beggars.

Nangong Ping said, “Chief Yi, please wait.”

Yi Feng said. “After losing a gamble, naturally we have to leave. Although the Hungry Ghosts Gang is hateful by everyone but we are not one that break our promises. Even the green snake that this old man had killed, we will not ask him for payment!”

Those Ghastly Beggars indeed moved like the spirits. In an instant, they were all gone.

Ye Manqing lovingly smiled. “Although these group of people enjoy acting like deities and ghosts, but they are not that bad!”

However Nangong Ping was left pondering in his thoughts. “The Ghastly Beggars Gang must have some connection with my Mentor Master. Or else how will he be able to determine my martial origin based solely on just one stroke?”

Wan Da said. “Although the Hungry Ghost Gang are not evil or good, but those that they targeted are wealthy that got their wealth in an ill gotten manner.” He looked at the bald old man.

The bald old man on the other hand was looking stunned and at Nangong Ping. He seemed to be admiring yet envy at the same time. Suddenly he bowed three times respectfully to Nangong Ping with his hands together.

Nangong Ping was startled and said. “This is a small matter and I did not do my best. Old Sir, you are too respectful.”

The bald old man said. “Indeed, indeed. It is a small matter. I just need to show just an small appreciation of thanks.”

Nangong Ping and Ye Manqing was surprised only to hear him adding. “But you have saved my possession and not my life, therefore that was my first bow and it must be done very respectfully.”

Nangong Ping and Ye Manqing looked at one another for awhile.

The bald old man continued. “The Nangong Aristocracy Family have wealth that are so exceedingly and surely must be richer than me. Therefore how can I not bow to you? Therefore my second bow must be as just as respectable.”

Ye Manqing was stunned for awhile before she asked. “From what you mean, this second bow is for his riches?”

The old bald man answered. “Indeed.”

He continued. “This third bow is to congratulates him for having such a rich parents. Other than the Emperor, his parents can be considered number one. Such fortunate thing, if I do not respectfully bow, then how can I know what's good for me?”

Nangong Ping was totally stunned. He had not expected to hear such a “ridiculous” theory coming from this world.

When Ye Manqing had heard the bald old man explanations, she could not

help laughing. “Therefore you mean to say that even if others were to save your life, you may not be grateful or respect him?”

The bald old man replied. “Naturally.”

Ye Manqing asked. “Is riches so important?”

The bald old man answered in a very solemn manner. “In all the creations, there is nothing more important than riches. In all the creations, the most valuable is silver. More valuable than silver is two silver, more valuable than two silver, is…”

Even before he had finished, Ye Manqing could not help but broke into an alluring laughter.

Nangong Ping was too embarrassed as he asked. “If…” He did not finish it as he was trying to suppress his laugh too.

When the bald old man saw that they were laughing, he was puzzled and said. “Did I say anything wrong?”

Ye Manqing replied. “Indeed, indeed. More important than two silver is three silver, more important than…” Suddenly she fall into Nangong Ping’s embrace and could not stop laughing.

Wan Da laughed. “Then those Ghastly Beggars are not wrong, you must be really very rich.”

The bald old man turned ashen as he gripped his sack even more tightly as he said. “I have no money, I have no money…” In his anxiety, he switched to his dialect.

Nangong Ping could not help laughing aloud and said. “Old sir, the way you treasure riches, I am filled with admiration…”

Ye Manqing added. “But those people that want your money, they are gone now and you can leave now…” Suddenly she remembered that she had to go too so her smiles ceased and she said softly. “I have to go too.”

Wan Da sighed and said. “It most fortunate to meet you again. Now that I know that you are safe, I am really very happy. But now, I have to go beyond the Pass for a time. I wonder where you be going?”

Nangong Ping said. “I…”

He suddenly felt very lonely and he was no longer laughing. He sighed. “I want to go home for awhile and then…alas…” He lifted his head and his eyes swept the around surrounding.

Ye Manqing bowed her head and asked. “Then…then…”

Nangong Ping sighed and asked her. “Maiden Ye where will you be going?”

Ye Manqing lifted her eyes and looked at him. “You…you…”

She was still holding the Immortal Divine Dragon’s Will in her hand and she was clenching it tightly now. In her eyes, it was filled with much melancholy

and wishful hopes. She wished for Nangong Ping to tell her ‘that word’ and she would follow him forever, till the end of time.

Nangong Ping his heart aching as he tried to say something. “I…I…” He could not force himself to finish. On what ground, what right did he have to ask her to stay?

Wan Da sighed and said. “If Maiden Ye have nothing much to do, why not go with him to tour Jiangnan. Please take care, both of you. I have to go now.” He turned around with his head lowered, and left.

Nangong Ping lifted his head and asked. “Di Yang is now heavily poisoned and his whereabouts are unknown. Don’t you want to accompany me to search for him?”

Wan Da halted his steps and turned around.

The bald old man suddenly asked. “Does that Di Yang has a sword in his hands and is heavily poisoned?”

Wan Da answered delightfully. “Indeed.”

The bald old man said. “He has already been taken away by the Glamorous Soul of the Hungry Ghosts Gang. That Glamorous Soul Second Mistress Yi Luo had taken him beyond the Pass to seek treatment. I’m afraid that I was unable to escape if not for him. It seemed that she has taken a liking to him and definitely will not let him suffer. Therefore you don’t have to worry about him.”

Nangong Ping sighed in relief but he could not help feeling perplexed. “I wonder what sort of a woman is that ‘Glamorous Soul’ Second Mistress Yi Luo?”

Wan Da said, “I will search for Di Yang on my way beyond the Pass. From what I think, that Second Mistress Yi is not a bad person. Moreover unless she has fallen in love with Di Yang, why will she take him away in a hurry to seek treatment? If she really fallen in love with Di Yang, then she will try her best to save him. What is love that can split even gold into half? Love is something that is as mysterious as magic, when it comes, it cannot be fend off.”

Ye Manqing felt her heart beating very fast and her ears were repeating the last line of Wan Da. When she lifted her head, Wan Da had gone far.

So she unwittingly sighed melancholy while Nangong Ping looked very troubled.

Suddenly from afar, Wan Da sung. “*Too many love will surely bred sorrows, too many sorrows will surely lead to love, hope that all the lovers in the world…*”

Ye Manqing stood motionless on the spot before she suddenly turned her head and walked away. She had waited for a long time for Nangong Ping to say ‘that word’ but he did not say it. Therefore this girl finally walked away holding on to her pride.

Nangong Ping looked at her in idiocy from her back view. And he too recalled Wan Da song. "*Too many love will surely bred sorrows, too many sorrows will surely lead to love…*"

Suddenly his vision became a blur and many images appeared in front of him. Sometimes it was Mei Yinxue, sometimes it was Ye Manqing.

After many days of hunger and exertion, the mental blows caused by emotions, the use of too much vital energies and the sorrows that was caused by love…he suddenly felt as light as cloud and finally collapsed with a stump onto the ground.

The bald old man cried out in surprised. Ye Manqing who was walking from afar, the Ye Manqing who was walking in ever slowing pace when she heard that startled cry could not help but turned her slim body around. When she saw that Nangong Ping had collapsed on the ground, even if she had to fly, she would do so. In the world, there was no force that could stop her from abandoning him.

If a person with a strong internal strength foundation were to suddenly fall sick, then it would be a very serious sickness.

A big horse carriage appeared in the misty road as it left Chang An, past Mt. Zhongnan and traveling to Xun Yang in great haste.

That bald old man tightened his hands onto his sack as he heard a sorrowful, melancholy sighing. He shouted loudly so that his voice would be heard and not drowned by the moving wheels of the carriage. "Little maiden, do you have silver on you?"

After a while, an indignant voice was heard. "Yes!"

The bald old man said in a serious tone. "No matter where we go, silver is definitely a must have."

He then relaxed to smile and close his eyes and to regain his mental strength.

When the horse carriage reached Xun Yang, it was nightfall. He opened his eyes and shouted. "Little maiden, how much silver do you have on you?"

An icy cold voice was heard. "Not few." (Sarcastically)

The bald old man shouted again. "Let find a big Inn with the best food then."

The bald old man pointed at the sick Nangong Ping and asked the inn assistant to carry him to the room. Ye Manqing lowered her head as she alighted from the carriage.

Then he asked her. “Little maiden, take five silver here to pay for the driver.”

The driver was very happy and broke into many thanks and appreciation. When the bald old man took the silver from Ye Manqing, he began to mutter. “Five silver, five silver…” as he placed it in the hands of the driver who was still thanking him profusely. “But first you must give me a change of three silver thirty two copper.”

The driver was stunned and gave him the change, cursing him in his heart.

The bald old man walked proudly inside the Inn and placed the silvers in front of the shop assistant and told him. “Go prepare a big accommodation with adjacent rooms and a ten silver feast.”

The inn assistant thought. “This man although he looked poor but he is generous with his tips.” And he thanks him with all his heart and shown him to his accommodation.

After awhile the inn assistant was back. He asked happily. “Old master do you want to have some wine?”

The bald old man solemnly said. “Many accidents happen because of wine. If I am drunk, I will lose my money and belongings anytime. You are young and you must know that money is not easy to earn.”

He was stunned but he kept praising him nevertheless.

The bald old man asked again. “Just now, where is the silver I give you?”

He forced himself to smile and said. “It is still with me.”

The bald old man said. “Go and change it all to copper coins and hurry back.”

He was stunned and almost stood rooted to the ground. After awhile, he secretly cursed him and went off.

The bald old man looked at the feast on the table and rubbed his hands. “Little maiden, you need to take care of a sick person. Therefore I will eat alone.”

There was a cold demeanor sound coming from the hall of the room.

The bald old man muttered. “If I did not know how rich is the Nangong Aristocracy Family, no matter how charming and alluring you are, I will never travel with you.” Then he began to put down his sack, lift the chopsticks and began to eat and drink heartily.

He really ate very heartily and there were no leftovers at all.

When the shop assistant returned with a dispirit look later and placed the copper coins on the table, the bald old man counted every single coin and placed three copper on his hands. But after some muttering, he placed another two copper coins down. And he said most painstaking. “It is to reward you.”

The shop assistant was stunned and finally he coldly said. “It better that you

keep it yourself."

The bald old man was very happy as he said. "Fine, fine. Then I keep for myself."

He started to gather all the coins, placed it in his sack and then walked to another room and closed the door tightly.

When the shop assistant went to the main hall, he could not resist telling another of his colleague as he shook his head. "In this world, there are many misers. But I never seen such a horrible miser in my life."

Lit by just a lamp, Ye Manqing held a bowl of dense medicine as she gently blew. This is her own prescription and she boiled it herself. Therefore she must first tasted it herself.

There were all sorts of noise from outside the door and the moaning sound of Nangong Ping caused her to be very confused in her thoughts. She extended her shivering hands to the unconscious Nangong Ping and placed the bowl of medicine for him to drink.

Although she had not known him for a long time, the number of times that she met him were even more pitiful but she had already had a fond feeling for this young man who seemed to radiate light and warm that never seemed to end. This fondness became unforgettable.

"Friendship is linked together but love can happen in an instant." She remembered a philosopher once told her that. Not once but many times did she question and belittle this saying. But now, she had understood the true meaning of that phrase.

She remembered Gu Hong, Di Yang and that outstanding young hero 'Cloud Breaker Hand' Zhuo Bufan. She had once shared her loneliness, her hardships with them on the peak of Huashan. After many years of mutual sharing the same loneliness, hardships, she had began to understand their feeling, their resolute, and the price they had to pay for their 'hatred' and 'honor'. Therefore under the accumulation of a long period of sharing together, she began to feel the formation of friendship that was between them and her.

But the feeling that she had for Nangong Ping and her happened in that instant when they had first met. The attachment and affection that she had for him continued long after she walked away with her Mentor Mistress's maids, when she returned to the bamboo hut, when she carried her longings for her Mentor Mistress with sorrowful tears, when she go down of Huashan. Ever since, she had not stopped thinking about Nangong Ping during those days that seemed never to end, she simply could not forget about Nangong Ping's composed face and his sharp

speech.

She was unable to guess what happened in that bamboo hut in Huashan just like she was unable to guess what Nangong Ping feel about her.

Three days had past, for the whole of three days, she was still trapped in the confused state of her feelings. After three days that seemed never to end, her eyes became puffy, her senses lost. Although the medicine quantity that she had to boil, taste and feed became fewer and fewer each day but her worries and burden increased and not decreased because the unconscious Nangong Ping was still unconscious.

She had already started to loathe the nameless bald old man deeply. She refused to have anything to do with this vile old man whether it was in words or looking at him. But she could not refused staying with this old man. She had many reasons of her own. She had to take into consideration the views of others, the dignity, the proper propriety rites of the times, the gossips, her natural coyness coupled with her shyness caused her unable to dare stay alone with Nangong Ping in the same room. Therefore she did not dare to refuse this wall; this greedy vile old man and stayed in the same common room.

The next day at noon, Nangong Ping had regained conscious and he slowly regained his movements. Ye Manqing gently carried him to sit onto the bed. This cold demeanor beautiful maiden had now become so tired, so fragile. Nangong Ping did not dare to look at her, he lowered his head and sighed. “When I am sick, it must be really hard on you.”

Ye Manqing softly laughed and said. “As long…as long as you recover from your sickness, no matter what I have to do, I will be happy to do so.”

Nangong Ping was jolted. He had never dreamed that she would say such gentle words. This was so different from what he had known. He did not know that in this short three days, a kind of womanly softness that was in her heart changed the way Ye Manqing regarded her attitude to life. A type of irresistible force that caused her feeling to flow out to Nangong Ping unwittingly and she was unable to use her cold haughty words and attitude on him as a pretense anymore.

Nangong Ping could not help but looked at her and saw that her face was flustered lightly with red but it could not hide the tiredness and fragile of her look. He suddenly thought of a poem as he lowered his head and watched her leave the room. He felt a conflict in his heart from the many emotions. He tried to control his feeling but failed miserably.

Suddenly from the dinning room, was the laughing sound of that bald old man. “Is your sickness better now?”

Nangong Ping replied. “Thanks for the concern of old sir, I…”

The bald old man laughed. “If I were you, I would surely fall sick for a few days more.”

Nangong Ping was startled.

He added. “If it isn’t for your serious sickness, how would that baby girl allows me to stay here, eat and drink heartily? If it weren’t for your serious sickness, how would that baby girl show her affections for you? If you are sick for a few days, I can eat a few more days and you can enjoy some blissful and warm moments. This is a joyous thing so why are you not happy?”

Although he looked hateful but what he said was so sharp and direct.

Ye Manqing bowed her head and her face flustered with red. She became shy and coy because it hit her in her innermost heart.

Nangong Ping forced himself to smile as he said. “If old sir, if you are free, you can travel with us…” Because he suddenly realized that he could not travel together with Ye Manqing or he would surely be unable to control his feelings. He quickly added. “When my illness is over, I will accompany old sir to eat and drink heartily. This, I can still afford to pay.”

The bald old man laughed. “Marvelous, marvelous…” Suddenly he ceased his laughter and said solemnly. “Even though the two of you invite me but I will never feel appreciated or grateful. This is because the two of you have a hidden intention for me to accompany you. As for me…haha! I only get to eat and drink heartily.”

Those few words hit right on the mark in Nangong Ping and Ye Manqing innermost hearts.

Nangong Ping sighed and said. “If old sir, you have any needs, I can render you with some assistance…”

The bald old man laughed for awhile before he said solemnly. “Do I look like some one that need pity from others?”

Nangong Ping said. “I can ask the shop assistants to get a few good clothing for old sir.”

The bald old man shook with both his hands and solemnly exclaimed. “You and I have no feuds with one another, why then are you trying to harm me?”

Nangong Ping was shocked and asked. “Harm…you?”

The bald old man got up and walked to Nangong Ping, pointed to his robe that did not look like robe, clothing that is not clothing and said. “Can't you tell how convenient and comfortable is my clothing? Next he pointed to his smooth head that was bald and said. “Do you know why I become a bald head? I spend a lot of efforts and blood to be a bald. Now I don’t have to cut my hair, don’t have to wash my head, don’t have to tie my hair. Do you know how much efforts and

blood for me to research this efficient and not wasteful method to save my time and money? Now that you want to give me clothing! If I use your clothing, I will have to worry for that clothing all the time and will surely waste a lot of my time that should be use on earning money. So you are harming me."

Nangong Ping and Ye Manqing looked at one another in astonishment for they had never heard of such logic in their entire life. Therefore for sometime, they were unable to answer him.

The bald old man angrily hummed and returned to the table to eat. As he was eating, he was asking. "If the both of you want me to accompany you, please do not ever mention this matter ever again. Haiz, haiz! If it isn't for the fact that your riches are indeed worthy of my respect, or else I would have left already."

Ye Manqing secretly hummed and turned her head while Nangong Ping sighed deeply and asked. "Is riches really so important?"

The bald old man sighed and said. "Even if I use a thousand phrases and words, I can never explain the importance of riches to a rich man like you. But after you have undergo a tribulation, then without a need for me to explain, you will know the importance of riches."

Nangong Ping suddenly paused to ponder. "I wish I can have a taste of being poor. But how difficult is it for me to be poor." He laughed when he thought of that.

The bald old man in all his seriousness asked. "What I say is all true. Why are you laughing?"

Nangong Ping slowly said. "I am laughing because I did not know old sir's name yet."

The bald old man said. "Name is not important. You can simple call me Qian Chi (One that is obsessed with money).

Nangong Ping smiled. "Qian Chi…Qian Chi…" Suddenly he became serious. "Just now I was laughing not because of this reason. Old sir, you…"

The bald old man 'Qian Chi' said. "The thoughts that are inside a man heart, no one have a right to ask and no right to guess. What you are thinking doesn't concern me. To me, their words and actions are sufficient. Even if they hate me in their heart, I don't care. If I am always thinking very hard of what others are thinking about me, then won't I become a mad man?"

This word whipped Nangong Ping hard into his most innermost heart. He lowered his head and was silence for a long time.

By then Qian Chi had finished eating as he got up, he turned and looked at Ye Manqing and said in a monotone. "Maiden, I advise you not to bother about others think in their hearts then your troubles will be lessen a lot."

Ye Manqing bowed her head in deep thoughts. When she lift her head, the

bald old man had already gone to the courtyard.

Suddenly there appeared several men with sabres and another strong man with a red flag carrying a wooden chest and they walked into the another courtyard.

There were all alert and tense. The last man of their group looked at Qian Chi carefully before he closed the door to the courtyard.

Qian Chi eyes glow as he smiled. “The Red Flag Escort Agency, the Red Flag Escort Agency…”

Nangong Ping was in sober thoughts for a long time before he walked into his room.

Qian Chi began to mutter. “After eating, one must sleep. Alas, alas…” Therefore he walked to his room too and closed the door tightly.

Ye Manqing lifted her head and looked at the door of Nangong Ping’s room and looked at the bald old man too. She suddenly sighed and slowly walked into the courtyard…

The sounds thin down and the lights began to dim but Ye Manqing did not know how long had she been standing. She only heard the dong of the watchmen…First watch, second watch and soon it was the third watch!

Ye Manqing looked alone at the empty sky for a long time. She aspersed for a long time in her heart and asked why she had been forgotten. She hated herself for falling for a man whose heart belongs to another. Why?

Suddenly from the back of the roof, there was a soft laughter. A man whispered. “Who are you forlorn for?”

Ye Manqing furrowed and her slim body rose up and she asked in a low voice. “Who?” By now her slim body had landed on the rooftop and saw a man running in the darkness and mocking. “Who are you forlorn for?”

This man was very fast which startled Ye Manqing. His mocking struck hard into her soul as she said in a low voice. “Stand where you are!”

She turned around and noticed that the light in his room had not vanished yet. That lonely room looked exactly like she was.

Facing the vast rooftop, she felt very angry because she was unable to vent it out. She expended all her best efforts to search for that stranger. She did not know why she wanted combed the area in a frantic search, was it for the stranger or the anger inside her that needed to be vent.

Nangong Ping did not know that Ye Manqing was in the courtyard. Although he tried to mediate but his mind was in a state of confusion. He did not

know that Ye Manqing was now on the rooftop.

After some time he managed to calm himself down. Slowly his mind becomes peaceful and cast him into a blank…

After a long time, he suddenly heard a voice from the courtyard and he was alerted to it and saw a man shadow jump down from the roof. His swiftness movement skill was not weak.

Nangong Ping was startled and opened the window and suddenly he saw Ye Manqing with her long hair in a mess, the melancholy Ye Manqing looking idiocy outside his window.

At this moment when their eyes looked at one another, there was a spark. In his heart came a wave of ripples and he did not know if he should avoid her alluring watery eyes.

Ye Manqing sighed in her heart but asked. “You have not sleep yet?”

Nangong Ping shook his head and suddenly asked. “Maiden Ye, did you see someone?”

Ye Manqing said. “Earlier, I saw a man in night clothing when I am in the courtyard. I try to follow him but I did not manage to!”

Nangong Ping was startled and his eyes widened. “Even with Maiden Ye’s swiftness movement skill, you are still unable to catch up with him!”

Ye Manqing flustered and bowed her head. “I also do not know that in this place, there will be such a martial exponent. What is even strange about this man is that I don’t know if he is a bad or good guy, an enemy or a friend, why did he come here? It is indeed very puzzling.”

Nangong Ping was wondering as well and slowly said. “He shouldn’t have any bad intention or else why did he not attack?”

Although he had say so just to comfort her but he was secretly sighing. He knew that at this moment, his enemies in the Fraternity far exceed his friends. Because of her, because of such a heartless cold blood maiden, why did he have to sacrifice so much?! There were so many powerful enemies around to face. How could he face and explain his feeling?

As the two of them faced one another but there were no words, Nangong Ping sighed. “The cold wind is strong tonight, Maiden Ye you should come in!”

Although his words contain only a slight concern but that was enough to make Ye Manqing very delight.

She walked into the dining room with a alluring smile while Nangong Ping welcomed her inside. He lit a lamp and both of them sat inside but none of them dared to look into one another directly.

Suddenly the bald old man walked into the dining hall in a sleepy manner. He laughed. “Alas both of you are such romantic staying overnight just to chat,

haha…young people."

Just then the shop assistant approached and said. "You guests are awake so early!" As he poured them tea, he asked. "Please forgive me for asking but the meal and room fees are due…"

When the bald old man 'Qian Chi' had heard those last words, he suddenly turned around and walked into his room and closed the door.

Nangong Ping smiled. "It alright. You just have to tell me the accounts."

The shop assistant smiled broadly. "Not much not much. Although that old sir have the lion share because of his feasting, it is only ninety-three silver and seven copper coins."

This was indeed not a small amount but in Nangong Ping's eyes, it was like dirt. But on second thought, he realized he had no silver on him so he turned his head and smiled. "Maiden Ye, can you help to pay for the lodging first." As he was born from a wealthy family, he thought very lightly about money. Therefore he can ask in such an unintentional way.

Ye Manqing was startled and she too smiled. "I rarely bring silver."

She knew Nangong Ping's background therefore she did not mind at all.

Nangong Ping was slightly startled and he saw that the shop assistant was now staring at him without a single trace of smile.

Nangong Ping suddenly realized that he had given everything that was valuable on him to others therefore he calmly said. "Go fetch a brush and ink for me, I will write a I.O.U and you can instantly get the silver."

The shop assistant looked most unwilling and just when he was about to turn his back, the bald old man opened the door a little and said loudly to him. "What are you afraid of? Do you know who this master is? Not to mention one hundred silver, even a few tens of thousands of silver, if he is willing to write on that IOU, you can get it instantly."

The shop assistant looked questioning at Nangong Ping.

The bald old man 'Qian Chi' laughed. "Let me tell you, he is the Young master of the Nangong Aristocracy Family!"

The shop assistant turned ashen and Nangong Ping thought. "These people are atypical. When they heard that…"

The shop assistant suddenly laughed and his thoughts were interrupted. He coldly said. "Although I have seen many people who cheat for their food and drink but I have never saw anyone that as vile, stupid as your group. To think that you can think of this…"

Ye Manqing opened her apricot eyes and said sternly. "What did you say?"

The shop assistant unwittingly took a step back but his mocking face remained. "You don't even know that all the businesses that belonged to the

Nangong Aristocracy Family for hundreds of miles have been sold three days ago to others. And the workers under the Nangong Aristocracy Family have all been dispersed. And you even dare to impersonate as the young master of the Nangong Aristocracy Family, heng, heng! If you don't pay out by today, heng, heng.." As he looked angrily at them.

Nangong Ping had been shocked beyond words and he was now on the ground while Ye Manqing looked lost and did not know what to do.

What a sudden change of events, it happened so suddenly. Why did the Nangong Aristocracy which had wealth that could rival a kingdom suddenly sold all its businesses?

The reasons were beyond understanding!

Even the bald old man who was standing by the side of the door was stunned.

It was the most extremely embarrassing moment of Nangong Ping life. Just then there was a commotion outside.

Many terrified cries were heard. "Oh dear…Oh dear…"

Even the shop assistant was startled by it and turned to look.

Nangong Ping suddenly remembered the incident last night and Ye Manqing remembered the strange man that she had saw.

"Is it because there occurred murders last night?"

Without thinking, Nangong Ping moved into the courtyard, followed by Ye Manqing. But no one noticed the movement of that bald old man 'Qian Chi'.

There were a lot of commotion and people in the courtyard. "Very strange, very strange. Last time we did not hear anything."

Some say. "What is more strange is that it happened to even the renowned Red Flag Escort Agency. I wonder who is the extraordinary people that commit this crime."

Nangong Ping swept his eyes around and he saw blood all over, it really horrible. Just as Nangong Ping was about to rush inside, a man stopped him and said. "It is forbidden at the moment to enter…"

Before he could finish, Nangong Ping had pushed him away and the man almost fall. One must know that Nangong Ping had been stricken with an illness and his strength had not recovered yet. But in his anger and surprise, he had exerted all his might therefore even though he feels regretful for his action but he did not hesitate to push opened the door and witnessed with such appalling at the corpses that were all over the place!

Chapter Twelve
Astonishing changes to the Nangong Aristocracy Family

Those people had all died differently but the reason for their deaths were all the same – They were pieced by their own red flag in the chest and lost their lives instantly. Some of them did not even have the chance to pull their sabres.

Nangong Ping stood at the entrance in shock for awhile. Ye Manqing was looking extremely pale. The guard that was pushed aside looked at them but did not dare to open his mouth.

Those men were all fighters under Sima Zhongtian's Red Flag Escort Agency and his fighters were all famous fighters in the Fraternity. Not only were their martial abilities high but their keen sense of alertness were extraordinary.

The reason why Sima Zhongtian Red Flag Escort Agency could be so renowned throughout the entire fraternity much was owned to these fighters who were much feared.

But now, those much feared fighters were all killed in this very small Xunyang City, this very small Inn and they all died so terribly, so horrible and in a state of fright. This was really unbelievable!

Who had the courage to rob the Red Flag Escort Agency? Who had the martial skill to cause all these expert fighters to die even before they could even attack? It was simply not possible to be accomplished by the power of a human ability and more like the act of the devil!

Nangong Ping lowered his body and examined the body that was closest to him and was startled. He had discovered that the body was still warm. He examined this man various accupoint channels and found no trace of poisoning or signs of being immobilization. Then how could so many people have died? How could so many people be present, yet none could retaliate!

Suddenly there was a sound from the body and Nangong Ping was startled and happy. He softly said. "Friend! Hold on tight!"

The wounded man asked. "Who?…Who are you?"

Nangong Ping said. "I am Nangong Ping. I have ties with your Escort Agency, I hope that you will say out the killer…" Before he could finish, the wounded man turned ashen with his face smiling and muttering. "Nangong Ping…Nangong…fin..ish…finish…"

Nangong Ping was surprised and asked. "Finish! What finish?" But the wounded man could only look on idiocy as he repeated the same mutterings. "Finish…fin…"

Then his body stumped and he could forever not speak.

Nangong Ping sighed and looked around and saw that the wooden chest had been taken away by someone. “Robbery.” He thought.

He tried to figure out the meaning from the man’s last words. Did it have something to do with the Nangong Aristocracy Family? Suddenly he grew chilled when he thought of that.

Ye Manqing walked behind him and with a solemn look, she muttered. “Nangong…finish…” Suddenly she lifted her eyes and softly asked. “Does this Red Flag Escort often escort goods and riches for your family?”

Nangong Ping nodded. “That is right.”

Ye Manqing replied. “Then this time, they could be possibly escorting for your family too. Therefore when he was robbed, he felt guilty and heart wrenching, that is why he said those words.”

Nangong Ping thought it over and sighed deeply. He was very downcast.

Ye Manqing asked. “What are you sighing for? Although the Nangong Aristocracy Family had been robbed but the amount stolen is like a drop in the ocean, therefore what does it matter.”

Although her words contained some satire but she had said so unintentionally and with all sincerely and frankness. No matter how vile and sharp words were, if it come from the mouth of a person with good intention and frankness, it sounded different to the ears of the listener.

Nangong Ping sighed. “How will I sigh for that.” He forced himself to smile and added. “Some things are actually very simple and obvious but I have to use the most complex reasoning to solve it, am I stupid?”

Ye Manqing smiled alluring. At this moment, there was a sound of a bark. The bark was way above that of a normal dog.

Suddenly a large fierce golden dog strolled hurriedly toward them. And a man in black was holding it with a thin chain.

One voice was heard. “Never to expect that the Xihe most famous constable ‘Jin Xian Ru’ will be in Xunyang. Since he is here, this case will probably be solved.”

The man in black looked at Nangong Ping and Ye Manqing before he furrowed and turned his head around. “Proprietor Lin, how can you allow just anybody to enter even before I have reached the scene!” He coldly hummed and sunk his face.

Ye Manqing thought that this dog looked strange and special, therefore she could not help reaching her hand to rub it. But before she could do so, the fierce dog barked aloud.

The black man countenance changed and he shouted aloud. “The maiden

besides it. Hurry away! Do you not value your life?"

Ye Manqing raised her eyebrows only to feel Nangong Ping tagged her on her sleeves. Before she could open her sarcastic angry words, she swallowed it and saw the man in black blending down and patted the dog and saying. "Don't be angry, don't be angry. They will not dare to touch you anymore."

And the dog barked two times in a low voice.

The man in black got up and thundered. "Who are the two of you? Why are you still standing here?"

Ye Manqing coldly said, "What does it have to do with you if I am standing here?"

The man in black laughed coldly. "What an ignorant girl. Do you know who I am? You dare to interfere with my official task?"

Ye Manqing coldly mused. "How will I not know who you are. No matter how I look at it, you are but a slave to that little dog."

Her voice was crystal clear and the crowd that was at the entrance turned ashen and was secretly worrying for her.

This fierce dog was called 'Jin Xian'. Not only was it strong but fierce. The average pugilists would find it very difficult to fend it off if it rushed at them. And its sense of smell was very sharp and extraordinary. No matter how homicide a case was, as long as it reached in time, just a sniff, it could track the criminals to their hiding place.

And he solved many cases and became the famous constable in the entire constabulary because of the dog.

Although his nick was 'Jin Xian Ru' (Ru means slave). He really hates others to mention about it. Now that Ye Manqing had unwittingly used such a sharp tone to pierce his inner most and caused a heart aching feeling therefore he had turned ashen to green. He shouted. "Men! Arrest this artful girl!"

Ye Manqing coldly laughed for a few times looking in the heaven. "Dog should be a slave of a Man, not a Man become a slave of the Dog…hehe, hehe." Suddenly she lifted her right hand and she looked at the other four constables with chains and rankles, her cold demeanor piercing them all of them. "If any one of them dare to move one step in front, I will immediately kill you with my hand."

'Jin Xian Ru' asked. "Really?" As he slowly loosened his grip on the chains…

Even he could finish, Nangong Ping was in front of Ye Manqing and said. "Please wait!"

Jin Xian Ru looked at this man, who had a noble look. Therefore he tightened his grip on the chain again. He was about to loosen the chain and set the golden dog upon the artful maiden. "Who are you? Are you with this girl…"

Nangong Ping smiled and added. “I have long heard of your fame in the constabulary. So how can you not discern between good and bad?”

Jin Xian Ru exclaimed. “How will a crime scene have good people!”

Nangong Ping sunk his countenance and said. “Then Constable Jin, so you have already decided that I am the mastermind or the accomplices? That I am guilty and you are here specifically to arrest me?”

Jin Xian Ru cast his eyes around and saw the crowd who was eagerly trying to know what he would say. He coldly hummed and said. “Although I cannot decide now but very soon, we will know the truth.” He patted the golden dog and said. “Jin Laoer (Referring to the dog which he address as his Second brother), I have to bother you again.”

The golden dog suddenly rushed forth and stopped in front of Nangong Ping and Ye Manqing. It began to sniff their shoes and then ran around the place several times.

Jin Xian Ru asked. “LaoEr, have you found anything yet? LaoEr, have you…”

Ye Manqing who was glancing the sky, coldly laughed for awhile.

Then the golden dog stopped awhile then turned toward the outside of the door.

Jin Xian Ru was relief as he proudly looked at Nangong Ping and Ye Manqing, then he solemnly said. “Brothers, do not let them go.” And he followed the dog and the crowd moved aside for him.

Nangong Ping softly said. “If he can really find the real culprit, then I must really be thankful to him.”

Ye Manqing said. “Let us follow.”

The four constables with the shackles asked. “Where are you going?”

Ye Manqing turned her slim body around and gently reached forth her hand. There were a series of ding dang sound as the shackles that were in their hands fell onto the ground.

The four of them had never seen such startling martial arts before, therefore they were stunned and just watched with open eyes as Nangong Ping and Ye Manqing went out of the door. No one dared to move.

The golden dog had now reached the courtyard. Suddenly it jumped over a small wall and without hesitating, Jin Xian Ru followed as well. Then it began to howl aloud at the door in the courtyard.

Jin Xian Ru turned his head and thundered. “Who are the people that stay in this courtyard?”

Nangong Ping and Ye Manqing had just reached when dozens of eyes looked at them.

Jin Xian Ru shouted. “So you are the ones that are staying here!”

Ye Manqing said. “Does it matter if I stay here?”

Jin Xian Ru said. “Then you must be robbers and the killers!”

Everyone was startled and moved back three steps and did not dare to stand beside them.

Nangong Ping asked. “Are you willing to be responsible for your actions?”

Jin Xian Ru replied. “More than ten years ago, I have solved so many cases and is never wrong. I advise the two of you to surrender quietly.”

Suddenly Nangong Ping remembered the greedy and mysterious old man ‘Qian Chi’ and his expression changed. Without a word, he ran to the door and pushed it opened and found out that was empty and there was no sight of the old man!

Jin Xian Ru laughed. “Although your accomplice had already slipped away but I only need to capture you and I will know his whereabouts. Or unless the both of you want to resist arrest?” And the chains in his hands became a silver spear!

Nangong Ping said. “You have not investigate and want to…”

Jin Xian Ru replied. “The best evidence is my golden dog’s nose. What there to investigate?”

He whipped his chain at Nangong Ping. Ye Manqing worrying that Nangong Ping had not recovered from his illness yet, gave a soft grasp as she stepped in front of Nangong Ping at the same time Jin Xian Ru released the golden dog.

The golden dog although it looked bulky but when it rushed forth, it was without a sound, there was no denial that it ranked as a top swiftness movement expert! And it rushed for Ye Manqing’s neck!

Everyone was startled for they were about to witness such a beautiful maiden losing her life in that instant.

Ye Manqing inclined her slim body and dexterously dodged three feet away. This swiftness skill of hers was almost very close to the most profound of all the swiftness movement types ‘The Movement Transfiguration’. But she did not expected that the golden dog could move in a zip zap and attacked very fast much like a man with two swords in his hands.

Ye Manqing secretly thought. “No wonder this golden dog can become famous, its swiftness movement is really dexterous.”

She had no intention to hurt this golden dog in her heart as she found this golden dog more and more adorable. So she lifted her left hand and patted the golden dog lightning speed on its head and softly grasped. “Go back!”

On the other hand, although Nangong Ping was still afflicted by his illness but to deal with Jin Xian Ru, was still enough. He used a very ingenious movement skill to evade all of Jin Xian Ru attacks – His silver chain spear although swift was

unable to touch him.

The crowd was taken aback and there was a low muttering among them. “These two young man and woman look like they really the accomplices of this case. Or else why will they have such astonishing martial abilities?”

But when the golden dog ‘Jin Xian’ once again rushed at Ye Manqing for the second time, they could help but moaned out in fright.

Ye Manqing softly grasped. “Beast!” She turned her body and this time she used four folds of her vital strength. But this time, the golden dog actually dodged her attack and it seemed that unless it bit her, it would never give up.

Suddenly there were the sounds of boots coming from behind as more than ten constables had arrived. They were all flashing sabres. Nangong Ping looked perplexed and he just managed to dodge the ‘The poisonous snake seeking Nest’ stance by Jin Xian Ru. “If you still do not stop it and investigate properly, don’t blame…”

Before he could finish, a voice thundered. “Stop it!”

This voice was thunderous and everyone was startled by it. A spear with a red flag banner flew from above and buried itself onto the ground in the midst of Nangong Ping, Jin Xian Ru, Ye Manqing and the golden dog. The spear seemed to pierce through the ground seemingly like it was composed of mud, and it pierced three feet deep into the ground!

The same voice thundered. “Constable Jin, have you found the killers yet?” When he had said the last word of the sentence, an old man with silver hair dressed in beautiful clothing appeared from the crowd.

Jin Xian Ru was full of delight on his face as he said. “Old Escort Chief is here, very good, very good…” he turned around and pointed. “The killers are over there!”

The old man suddenly became very angry and solemnly said. “He is the killer?”

Jin Xian Ru replied. “That is right. But other than this young man and woman, there is yet another accomplice…”

Suddenly the old man thundered. “Shut up!”

Jin Xian Ru was startled and he took three steps back. The old man waved at Nangong Ping and laughed apologetically. “I have come late and caused nephew to suffer indignantly.”

Nangong Ping smiled and said. “I really never expect grand uncle to be here…”

The old man gripped his arms and turned his head. “Constable Jin, please come here.”

Jin Xian Ru was very startled and walked slowly over sheepishly. Even his

chain looked like a dead snake now.

"You say that the killer is him?" The old man asked.

The haughty famous Constable Jin Xian Ru was now speechless as the old man cowed him.

The old man said solemnly. "If you handle your previous cases like this too, then I really need to start worrying."

Jin Xian Ru glanced over at his golden dog. Even the golden dog after the old man had come became like a puppy and very gentle.

Jin Xian Ru said. "Junior dare not believe too but the truth is…"

The old man sarcastically laughed. "The truth? Then do you know who he is? He is the young master of the Nangong Aristocracy Family and disciple of the number one most renowned man 'The Immortal Divine Dragon', Nangong Ping!"

Jin Xian Ru was stunned and he looked at Nangong Ping with startled eyes.

Nangong Ping smiled. "Actually this is…"

Before Nangong Ping had finished, a projectile flew from the crowd. Nangong Ping dodged it.

The old man shouted and raised his hands and rushed into the direction of where that projectile had been thrown. Ye Manqing without a word flew into the crowd. Coincidentally, both the old man and her reached the exact spot at the same time.

But there were people everywhere. They cast their eyes and saw that everyone was startled and so how could they discern who was the secret attacker!

Both of them raised their eyebrows to think.

Ye Manqing smiled gently and asked. "Elder, are you Old Hero Sima of the Red Flag Escort Agency?"

Sima Zhongtian replied. "That is right." He looked up and down at her and added. "Maiden, are you the renowned 'Peacock Concubine'?"

Ye Manqing shook her head.

Suddenly a man with long sleeves pointed to a direction. "He is gone…" He said in a startled voice. "Just now I saw him shoot the secret projectile but I did not dare to say. But…"

Sima Zhongtian and Ye Manqing did not wait for him to finish and immediately flew towards the direction that he was pointing.

This man with the long sleeves smiled cunningly and he was about to disappear from the crowd when Nangong Ping blocked him and coldly said. "Friend, where do you think you are going?"

The man with the long sleeves was startled.

Nangong Ping said. "You and I have no vendetta and we do not know one another. Why did you want to hurt me using secret projectiles?" He slowly opened

his hands and the projectile was in his hands. “What a vicious secret projectile. If there is no strong vendetta, why did you use it?”

The man in long sleeves turned ashen. “What are you saying? I…don’t know anything.”

Suddenly he surprised with an attack on Nangong Ping who just coldly mused. Before he could attack with more strokes, he was startled from behind and turned his head and saw Sima Zhongtian looking at him and shouting. “Despicable junior, how dare you try to be funny with me!” And he was lifted up and thrown him upward.

Nangong Ping sighed and thought. “This old man is already so old and yet he is still so hot temper. If he accidentally thrown the man to his death, then how will we going to find out more on his origin.” He had just recovered from a serious illness, although he wanted to save him but he had no strength to do so.

In that instant, another person flashed by and was like lightning and following the direction of Sima Zhongtian’s thrown, had sped past and gently caught the man who was about to knock against a wall and she fluttered down.

Sima Zhongtian asked. “Maiden, what a beautiful swiftness movement skill! Are you a protégé of Mistress of Shi Zhu, the Fairy Danfeng?”

Ye Manqing smiled and smiled and said. “Elder, you have very sharp eyes. Junior is Ye Manqing, I am indeed a protégé of the Fairy Danfeng.”

Sima Zhongtian laughed merrily and said. “Maiden, your swiftness grace is like the phoenix that is dancing across the nine heavens. Other than the Fairy Danfeng, who will produce such a disciple? The young people that is continuous appearing in the Fraternity really cause me much joy.”

Ye Manqing gently placed the man who looked very solemn but was breathing breathlessly, in front of Sima Zhongtian.

Nangong Ping asked. “Friend, what is the reason that cause you to assassinate me? As long as you are willing to say, I will never put you in any difficult position.”

The man with the long sleeves sighed for a few times and swept his eyes around. Suddenly there was a startled expression on his face and he bit his teeth and refused to say anything.

Jin Xian Ru walked over and said. “I have a method to make others talk. I wonder if everyone will be willing to me to try?

Sima Zhongtian hummed and said. “This person may not necessary have anything to do with this case. You can be rest assured. Although there are many robbers and stupid people around but there will never be anyone who is so stupid so as to stay behind after they commit such a big case. Moreover…heng heng, even without Constable Jin help, I have my own way to make him talk.”

Jin Xian Ru was startled and he felt flustered. He turned around and shouted. “Who ask all of you here to just watch?” The rest of the constables immediately dispersed to do their tasks.

Sima Zhongtian coldly laughed awhile and then extended his hands like a wind and caught the man firmly on his shoulders and solemnly said. “Who orders are you following, say it truthfully now.” Before he had finished, the man had already broke into a cold sweat but he was still biting his teeth and refusing to say a word more. Sima Zhongtian furrowed his eyebrows and tightened his hands. The man screamed out in pain.

Nangong Ping looked at the man and said. “Since he refuses to say and I am well, let it be then.”

Sima Zhongtian said. “Nephew, you may not know it yet. There are great dangers facing the Nangong Aristocracy Family now. Since this person had come to assassinate you, there must be a great ploy behind. How can we let it be?”

Nangong Ping expression changed as he asked. “What great dangers?”

Sima Zhongtian sighed and his words seemed heavy. “It is very hard to explain in short notice. It is a good thing that Nephew you are on your way back home…Alas. By then, you will know naturally.”

Nangong Ping was ignorant of what had happened to his family. He lowered his head and was lost in thoughts. Suddenly he noticed that there was a white shroud of mist on the ground and was slowly lifting up.

He was jolted and he shouted all of a sudden. “The mist is poisonous, everyone run!”

Sima Zhongtian was startled as he loosened his grip for awhile and the seized man took the opportunity to muster all his strength to run away.

Sima Zhongtian ran after him shouting. “Where are you running?”

Nangong Ping said in a hurry. “Let us hurry and leave this courtyard or else the worse could happen.”

Ye Manqing extended her hands to hold his shoulder and gently lifted them up to the roof. She cast her eyes around and saw that the man they had caught earlier had now disappeared into the crowd during the state of confusion.

Sima Zhongtian was in the crowd like a fish, trying to seize the man. Jin Xian Ru pulled his chain back but that fierce golden dog refused to obey and was following behind Sima Zhongtian.

Ye Manqing softly said. “You stay here. I going to lend a hand to Old Chief Sima.”

Nangong Ping sighed. “There is no need to. I already know of his background. I did not expect that those group of people can have such extensive influences in such a short time.”

Ye Manqing asked blankly. “What people?”

She suddenly saw Nangong Ping turned ashen and grasped. “Oh no!” He tried to leap but he could not muster enough vital strength and he almost fall…

Ye Manqing held his shoulder just in time and asked. “Where are you going? Alas! Why is there always some things that you always refuse to tell me?”

Nangong Ping sighed. “I really don’t know what happening and I cannot even guess the reasons. But…alas, how I wish I could sprout a pair of wings and fly home immediately…” He had an ominous feeling about his family. Therefore his worries increased.

Ye Manqing melancholy sighed. “Do you want to return home?”

Nangong Ping said. “You…you…”

Ye Manqing watery eyes began to shine as she asked. “Do you want me to accompany you?”

Nangong Ping nodded quietly, his head was in a whirl. Besides his secret worries, it was also burdened with the matters of the hearts.

Ye Manqing delightfully exclaimed. “Then, let us hurry.” She pulled Nangong Ping and lifted him with her hand as they traverse away from this place. As long as Nangong Ping was with her, other matters, she would not place it to heart. This comes from a girl’s heart as well most of the girls in this world. They always had a place in their hearts to accommodate love and other things they could well cast aside.

Sima Zhongtian clenched his fists tightly. He was furious because he actually let a junior pugilist escaped from his own hands. He was feeling frustrated, surprised when Jin Xian Ru appeared besides him.

The golden dog was standing besides Sima Zhongtian like a puppy.

He patted the dog on its head and said. “The Fraternity is filled with dangers. Constable Jin, don’t want you to retire?”

Jin Xian Ru lowered his head and said. “Junior I,…”

Sima Zhongtian said. “This dog, you should send it home now…”

Jin Xian Ru said. “Jin Xian has followed me for more than ten years, I…really…”

Sima Zhongtian sighed. “Everyone has to part one day, moreover…You should know that its owner needs it more than you now.” He felt his heart growing mournful, his heroic spirit and his vital energies had vanished in this strange mist.

Jin Xian Ru was stunned for awhile till he saw five people approaching in the distant from the mist. A lovely laughter was heard. “Senior Sima, do you still recognize me?”

Sima Zhongtian glanced over and saw a beautiful woman with green gown, her beautiful eyes and smiles looking happily at him. “My eyes are still good so how will I not recognize you alas…Marvelous, marvelous. Even Shi Chen is here. Where is Long Fei? Where did he go?”

The woman was indeed Guo Yuxia. She ceased her smiles and softly sighed. “I…I have searched everywhere for him but…Alas. It is really all my fault. Maybe I did something that cause him to be upset with me or else…Alas, how will he…” She looked melancholy now.

Sima Zhongtian furrowed and then ask again. “Where is Susu? Is she with him?”

Guo Yuxia gently nodded her head.

Sima Zhongtian replied. “Haiz, that child.” He wondered if Long Fei and Wang Susu were…

Shi Chen composure was like stone and the other man besides him step forward and greeted him. “Is this the world renowned Old Chief Sima of the Red Flag Escort Agency? Ren Fengping greets.”

Sima Zhongtian said. “Ren Fengping…Alas. Marvelous, marvelous. I didn’t expect to see Hero Ren today.” He glanced past him and saw that the other two men were the green and yellow Eagles of the Hall of the Seven Eagles who once commanded the prestige of the Escort Agencies thirty years old. Therefore he was very delighted and walked in stride toward them. “Brother Huang and Brother Ling, do you not recognize old brother me anymore?”

But the ‘Yellow Eagle’ Huang Jintian and ‘Green Eagle’ Ling Zhentian only took a glance at one another and did not look like they know him.

Sima Zhongtian was stunned and he sighed. “Brother Huang, Brother Ling…” But Huang Jintian and Ling Zhentian ignored him.

Sima Zhongtian shouted. “Brother Huang…” Suddenly he stomped his leg hatefully and said aloud. “The Red Flag Escort Agency and Hall of the Seven Eagles shared the same profession but we never handle the same route as you. I never expect that you brothers will be so petty.”

Ling Zhentian and Huang Jintian were unmoved. Guo Yuxia and Ren Fengping glanced at one another and their eyes laughed while Shi Chen had a sympathize look.

Guo Yuxia gentle tugged Sima Zhongtian sleeves and whispered in his ears. “Senior Sima, some friends are not worth making. What does it matter? Do you agree?”

Sima Zhongtian said aloud. “Indeed, indeed. Some friends are not worth making.”

Guo Yuxia rolled her eyes and said. “Alas, look at the mannerism of this

dog, it is so majestic. It must be the famous 'Jin Xian'."

Jin Xian Ru stepped forward and bowed respectfully and said. "I am Jin Xian Ru, if Mistress you have any tasks…"

Sima Zhongtian interrupted by clapping his hands. "I almost forget to tell you. PingEr is here too!"

Guo Yuxia said. "Nangong Fifth Brother?"

Sima Zhongtian said. "Indeed."

They took a look around but they could not see him even with the thinning crowd.

Sima Zhongtian shouted. "PingEr, PingEr…"

Guo Yuxia gently smiled. "I am afraid, he has gone now."

Sima Zhongtian asked. "Gone?"

Guo Yuxia said. "Nowadays I don't know what happen to him. When he saw Three Brothers and I, he will try to avoid us but actually…Alas! Even if he did anything wrong, how will we as fellow protégés not forgive him!" Her voice grew even softer as she melancholy sighed. "This child…is intelligence as well as capable. He is good in all areas and I wish he could accomplish a huge achievement in the future. But he…Alas!"

Sima Zhongtian widened his eyes and asked. "What did he do?"

Guo Yuxia said. "Alas, he is after all still young. But because of a woman with a wolf like reputation, he goes against everyone, because of Mei Yinxue, he actually kill the old hero 'Flying Rings' Wei Qi."

Sima Zhongtian was now very furious and shouted. "Really?"

Guo Yuxia sighed deeply.

Ren Fengping shook his head and said. "Lust is like a knife…alas!"

Sima Zhongtian clenched his fists and muttered. "The Nangong Aristocracy Family is now facing great dangers and he still have the audacity to be so artful, audacity to be so artful…" He lifted his glance and hatefully said. "Do you know that the maiden with the surname Mei, has taken his prized token, the Han Jade and have withdrawn from the North and the areas around Xian all the silver that is from the Nangong business?"

Guo Yuxia glanced over at Ren Fengping and she looked so surprised. "Really?"

Sima Zhongtian said. "A few hundred thousands silver is not a big amount to the Nangong Aristocracy Family but now…alas!"

He looked around and lowered his head in frustration.

Guo Yuxia rolled her eyes and asked. "Something unusual happens to the Nangong Aristocracy Family?"

Sima Zhongtian said. "Unusual happening, unusual happening…"

Suddenly a man in black with a red flag on his back appeared in great haste and shouted. “Old Escort Chief, something terrible has happened…” The man fell to the ground in exhaustion.

Sima Zhongtian expression changed as he asked. “What is the matter?”

The man said. “Wuxian, Zhangye, Gulang, Yonglang, Xincheng, Lanzhou areas, after converting and selling all the Nangong business and precious items, were robbed of a million forty hundred thousands silver! These silver were sent to Qinan and then…then…”

Sima Zhongtian asked hurriedly. “And then?”

The man grasping as he said. “It was stolen without a single trace! It was because I was scouting the road in front that I was spared. All the brothers, are all, are all…killed by their own red flag and from the looks of it, they did not even have the chance to retaliate.”

Before he could finish, the man had fainted.

Guo Yuxia and Ren Fengping looked at one another in surprise too. Because they completely did not know what was happening too.

After passing through Shanxi and entering Ejing from Xunyang till Yan City, along the way, were some villages and a few isolated shops.

Outside Yan City, in the out laying village, approaching dinner time, there were five to six bare bodied man who were eating at a small eatery. The rates are one copper for some peanuts, two coppers for biscuits, three coppers for white wine, and four coppers for meat.

Suddenly a man whispered to the Proprietor of the eatery and said. “Look, what a beautiful pair of couple. Proprietor, it seem that you have some big business on your way.”

The Proprietor turned to take a look and saw a couple, although they looked very tired and fragile but they carried a noble air around them.

The humble proprietor smiled and whispered back. “Definitely they will not come here, I think you all…”

Even before he had finished, this young man and a young maiden had walked toward his direction. The young maiden who was wearing an emerald dress and had the looks of a fairy took four coppers out and softly said. “Buying four coppers worth of biscuits.”

Everyone was stunned.

These four coppers were tied to a red string. The shocked Propriety took a while to recover and he tied tightly a big bag of biscuits.

The young maiden in emerald dress took it from him and softly asked. “Is

Yan City close?"

Many mouths said together. "It is just in front."

The young maiden in emerald dress gently gave her thanks and walked hurriedly.

After awhile, all the shocked man began to mutter and discuss. From the looks of it, it would be the hot topic for a few more days.

The young maiden in emerald dress broke the biscuit into two and gave the biggest piece to that downcast, fragile but very handsome young man. She softly laughed. "I never expect that four coppers can buy so many biscuits." She took the small piece and ate it deliciously, seeming chewing the taste of being poor.

That young man whom all the while had been looking down, looked at the biscuit in his hand and sighed in despair. "That copper coins with the red string, you shouldn't be the one that take it out."

The young maiden gently, laughed softly. "Why? I did not steal it."

The young man said. "I know from your eyes that surely it must be something dear to your heart but I…"

The young maiden smiled most alluringly. "Don't say it anymore, hurry and eat. I know that at this moment, the most important thing you need to do, is to eat. Only then can you have the strength to travel. When we reached Yan City, we can stopover at your family business and take two horses. Of course, we must take some silver too."

The young man sighed deeply in great appreciation and suddenly softly said. "These few days, if it isn't for you, I…I…alas!"

The young maiden watery eyes shone like two shooting stars because the rain of affection had washed the mist in her eyes.

When they reached Yan City, they asked around. "Do you know where are the businesses of the Nangong Aristocracy Family?"

"Ah! The Nangong Aristocracy Family? This city used to have a restaurant that belong to them but a few days ago, it was sold to others! Alas, it was so strange!"

While others were feeling strange, Nangong Ping was frightened and anxious.

The young maiden in emerald dress was stunned for a long while before she turned and looked at the young man. She lovingly smiled and said. "What is so strange about it? Maybe Nangong Master did not want to do anymore business."

She pulled the young man out of Yan City and still smiling, told him. “I really want to steal from Nangong Master and pay him back with interests next time but…but I don’t have the courage to do so.”

Her demurring laughs, her encouragement failed to lift the young man’s anxiety.

He kept thinking to himself. “What is going on? What is going on around here?” He could not guess, he could not explain.

Suddenly he felt a chill and lifted up his glance and saw that it was a mountain road. He forced himself to walk uphill.

The young maiden besides him looked worried and gently said. “Your body has not totally recovered yet. I am afraid…”

The young man said. “It is alright.”

The young maiden asked. “You are confidence to make across it?”

The young man did not reply but nodded.

The young maiden said. “Your Clan internal training must be really extraordinary.” She smiled and smiled. “It good to be on the mountain, the wind is cool and fresh, the fruits up there are all free and don’t need money.”

This young man suddenly sighed and added. “I wish that all the wealthy men in this world will have a taste of being poor…”

On the top of the mountain, was a melancholy sighing. A voice was heard. “This world sometimes look so vast, sometimes it look so small. Sometimes it looks very crowded but now…between the heaven and the earth, only the two of us are left.”

A pair of beautiful hand was seen appearing from the cracks of a ravine. Her beautiful cold demeanor and beautiful face surfaced, lit by the starlight, her eyebrows looked sorrow yet delight and her watery apricot eyes looking coyness at this young man…Nangong Ping who seemed to be thinking of something while they were making their way through this ravine. He was thinking the distance between Ye Manqing and him seemed so near yet seemed so far at the same time. Near because they are side by side now, far because he did not deserve her.

He could feel Ye Manqing’s coyness and her delight, that was why he was unwilling to talk.

Ye Manqing softly said again. “You look at this, this mountain vein is like a pearl necklace, and that mountain peak is just like a multi level Inn…the views…”

Nangong Ping forced a soft smile but still he did not talk.

Ye Manqing said. “You are tired. We really should rest now…”

But Nangong Ping did not reply and forced himself to carry on. After a

while of silence, there was a grrr sound coming from his stomach.

Ye Manqing laughed gently and said. “Ah, you are hungry again.” And she took a biscuit out and said. “It is for you.”

Nangong Ping felt a sense of appreciation from his throat and slowly said. “You…you did not…”

Ye Manqing said. “These two days I really eat a lot.” She lowered her head to laugh. “I know that you will refuse to eat alone.” She broke the biscuit into two pieces.

When he had the biscuit in his hand, he only felt that the taste of this biscuit was sour, yet it was also sweet. If it weren't a person with much affection, how would he get to taste this extraordinary biscuit?

He really could not differentiate the biscuit he had swallowed into his stomach was that of gratefulness or sighing.

Ye Manqing smiled. “No wonder that bald old man will become obsesses with money. I see that money is indeed very important…” She stumped and with a furrowing expression asked. “You think that case, do you think it has something to do with him?”

Nangong Ping said. “Just him alone, how could he kill those escort fighters in an instant?”

Ye Manqing asked. “Then, why did he secretly run away?”

Nangong Ping bitterly smiled. “I do not know too!”

Ye Manqing sighed deeply. “No matter how smart a person is, a person will still be unable to know the thoughts of others. What that bald old man had said, indeed make sense.” Suddenly Nangong Ping gripped her on her wrist and said. “Shhh”

There was a big laughter coming from above. A man laughed. “If I do not have an important matter, will I intentionally hinder you four priests?”

Ye Manqing expression changed and she softly whispered. “Who do you think this voice belongs to?”

Nangong Ping replied with hesitation. “Qian Chi!” This voice carried a Shanxi accent and was very hard to forget.

Ye Manqing whispered. “How will he be here…”

Nangong Ping said. “Shhh…”

Another voice was heard and it was solemn. “We are in a hurry to go up the mountain. If you have anything to say, say it quickly.”

Qian Chi said. “I follow you priests here all the way for two days now. Just to find a quiet place to talk.”

Another voice seemed startled but say. “What about that summit over that side?”

Qian Chi said. “Marvelous, marvelous. That will do.”

Nangong Ping and Ye Manqing was jolted and heard a few windforce carrying their steps to that summit.

Therefore they could not resist taking a look and saw four priests in green and white robe, each carrying a long sword.

Qian Chi was still holding his sack very tightly. One must know the outside was bright and the place where Nangong Ping and Ye Manqing were, was dark therefore they could see them clearly yet they could not spot them.

Those four priests were around fifty of age. And they were all very serious and solemn. One of the priests who looked the most imposing asked. “You can say it now right?”

Qian Chi waved his hands and laughed. “Please sit down.” And he seated himself first.

The imposing priest said. “Us priest usually do not like to joke around with others.”

Qian Chi laughed. “Time is money therefore I do have the leisure to play around too.”

All four priests glanced at one another and began to seat themselves.

The priest who looked the most solemn gripped his long sword by his side and coldly said. “What can we do for you?”

Qian Chi swept his eyes around and said. “It is now approaching the third watch right?”

The imposing priest hummed while Qian Chi continued. “Three days ago, on the third watch…”

When he said those words, the expressions of all the priests underwent a great change as they said together. “What did you say?” And they all gripped their long swords tightly.

Nangong Ping was jolted too while Qian Chi laughed merrily. “When you four priests were displaying your skills during the third watch, you never expect someone else to be watching too right!”

He did not wait for them to say anything but added. “But I really cannot expect the masked assailants will be the world most renowned ‘Wudang Four Swords’, from the leader of the Fraternity, the most righteous of all the orthodox sects!”

Ye Manqing heart almost jumped out when she heard that and then she noticed that Nangong Ping was holding his hands and began to shake. The priests of Wudang would become thieves, this was really the most startling revelation.

There were a couple of ting sounds as the four priests had got up and they had surrounded Qian Chi now. However Qian Chi still remained very composed on

the ground and said. “It better that all of you take a seat first. This is not something that weapons can settle!”

The imposing priest said sternly. “Rubbish! Slander! Don’t you believe that the Wudang Four Swordsmen can kill you now!”

Qian Chi coldly laughed. “Rubbish, slander…hehe. Then may I know what is in that yellow bag?”

The expressions of the four priests changed again.

Qian Chi told them. “I am sure all four of you are very smart people. Just think. If I have not already done all the preparations, would I dare to face the famous Wudang Four Swordsmen? If you really hurt me, then within five days, all the people in the Fraternity will know that the so call Wudang Four Swordsmen from the so call righteous orthodox sect of Wudang are anything but thieves!”

The imposing man said. “You are free to say it out but no one will believe you.”

Qian Chi laughed. “Will smoke appears if there is no fire? Surely there must be a reason. How many people in the Fraternity will actually believe and how many, I am sure you priests know it much more clearer than me!”

He coldly said. “It is wiser for you to put aside your swords.”

The four swords began to lower…

Qian Chi said. “Please have a seat. Let us discuss. I ‘Qian Chi’ is an understanding person.”

The ‘Wudang Four Swordsmen’ began to sit down and all of them had a surprised look. Although they possessed extraordinary martial abilities but their experiences in the Fraternity were too little.

Qian Chi said. “I really cannot believe that Wudang Four Swordsmen will do such a deed until I have witnessed with my very own eyes. I believed that it is the first time that you have committed such a crime therefore you must be feeling very nervous or else with your hearing and sights, surely you would have discovered that I am watching on top of a wall!”

The four priests were solemn and did not reply.

Qian Chi continued. “Since it is the first time that you have committed such a crime and I don’t wish to destroy your reputation. As long as the four of you agree to do two things for me, I will never again leak this matter out.”

The imposing priest, Priest Zi Bo asked. “What is it?”

Qian Chi said. “It isn’t too hard, only…”

Priest Zi Bo coldly added. “No matter how difficult is the task, as long as it is within our ability to do so, we will do our best. But how do we know that you will keep it a secret in future!”

Qian Chi sighed and said. “This…” Suddenly he got up, his left hand

guarded his chest and his right hand in front with his first three fingers pointing out. He took a brief breath and his body suddenly seemed to expand by half a foot. He added. “Now the four of you will believe in me?”

Nangong Ping, Ye Manqing was suddenly jolted. And they almost wanted to cry out in surprise. He looked extraordinary, imposing and his eyes seemed to pour forth an aura of living light. He did not look like Qian Chi they had known earlier at all!

The Wudang Four Swordsmen expression underwent a great change and all of them were jolted. Priest Zi Bo asked. “Senior, are you one of the ‘The Three Swashbucklers’ that occasional appears once in a while but whose fame are renowned throughout the Fraternity and then suddenly retired thirty years ago?”

Qian Chi smiled slightly and then his eyes returned to his pathetic state and sat down.

Priest Zi Bo sighed deeply. “Since Senior is the one that defeated the Six Malicious Men and stopped the swarms of evil men, I have nothing more to say. No matter what Senior orders us to do, we will listen and follow!”

The renowned Wudang Four Swordsmen who fame equaled the present Chief of Wudang Sect Priest Kong Xu would actually treat the ‘The Three Swashbucklers’ that appeared so briefly thirty years ago with so much admiration and respect. One must imagine how resounding thirty years ago was ‘The Three Swashbucklers’!

Nangong Ping and Ye Manqing exchanged startled glances and then they heard Qian Chi said. “First thing, please give me your bundle behind your back to me.”

The ‘Wudang Four Swordsmen’ were all stunned and exchanged glances with one another. Priest Zi Bo finally sighed with a heavy heart. He sheathed his long sword and removed the bundle from his back. Priest Qing Song, Priest Du Wu, Priest Gu Tong did the same likewise.

Qian Chi said. “Bundled them together.”

The amount of pearls and precious stones dazzled and startled Nangong Ping and Ye Manqing.

Qian Chi took over the big bundle once it was bundled and asked. “Do all these belong to the Nangong Aristocracy Family and escorted by the Red Flag Escort Agency?”

Nangong Ping clenched his fists tightly.

Priest Zi Bo said. “That is right.”

There was a strange light in Qian Chi’s eyes and he asked word by word. “The second thing that I want you to do, is to ask you, why did the four of you do it at a risk of destroying your name and reputation to steal these treasures?”

The Wudang Four Swordsmen expressions underwent a great change!

Qian Chi added. “There is no one around except for me!”

Priest Zi Bo slowly swept around carefully for awhile…

Nangong Ping tightly held Ye Manqing’s hands and their hands were icy cold.

Priest Zi Bo sighed deeply and said. “The Devil Flock Island! Did Senior ever heard of the Devil Flock Island ever before?”

Qian Chi was suddenly very startled and exclaimed. “The Devil Flock Island!” His voice filled with fright.

Priest Zi Bo said. “Untold years ago, there exist in the Fraternity a legend regarding the Devil Flock Island. And Untold years ago, the Devil Flock Island had…”

Suddenly his voice became very slow, his spirit tense and guarded. When he had said to that point, he suddenly shouted and waved his hand in anxiety and a silver light in his eyes broke the still air!

Nangong Ping, Ye Manqing was startled as they slightly rose up and they followed the direction of his body.

It was only the birds that were flying through and disturbing the leaves.

Priest Zi Bo slowly relaxed and he returned to his original position while Priest Qing Song, Priest Du Wu, Priest Gu Tong breath in relief. The Wudang Four Swordsmen fame was indeed not a rumor. Even the movements of the birds hundreds of meters away could not escape from their ears and hearings! But they overlooked two persons that were very near but far below.

Qian Chi could not resist asking. “Carry on.”

Priest Zi Bo calmed down and continued. “And untold years ago, the Devil Flock Island had made a secret pact with the seven major orthodox sects of the Fraternity. The followers of the Devil Flock Island will not interfere with matters pertaining to the Seven Major Orthodox Sects and will not even hurt any of their followers. But only if the various sects would agree to do something for the Devil Flock Island, no matter when, no matter what is the matter!”

He took a deep breath and continued. “This secret pact was made with Shaolin, Kunlun, Kongtong, Diancang, Emei, Huashan and our Wudang Sect. Only the Chief of Wudang and a few people knows of this. It is spread through word of mouth, pass through the generations and for an untold number of years, the Devil Flock Island has never use this right until…”

He sighed and added. “Until a few months ago, the Devil Flock Island suddenly sent its Envoy and ordered us to find out where the Nangong Aristocracy Family were to send its valuable riches through. And he ordered us to rob all those escorts for hundreds of miles around Wudang and killed everyone that were

escorting for the Nangong Aristocracy Family with their own tokens. As for the stolen valuables, we are allowed to keep it and free to dispose of it."

Something bright occurred in Qian Chi's eyes as he slowly said. "Although the Nangong Aristocracy Family have hundreds of years of establishment but other than dealing with the escort pugilists, I have never heard of them dealing with the other people of Fraternity so how will they make enemies of the Devil Flock Island?

Priest Zi Bo sighed. "We thought it is strange too that the Devil Flock Island all the while that had never use that right that they had made with the Seven Major Orthodox Sects, decided to do so. Therefore we thought it had to be a very serious thing. But who will expect that they used that right just to deal with the Nangong Aristocracy Family that never have dealings with the Fraternity! But the leaders of the various sects had to fulfil their pact and moreover did not want to be an enemy of the Devil Flock Island, therefore left with no choices, ordered us to do such a thing!"

Priest Qing Song added. "Not only our sect as well but Emei, Kunlun, Kongtong and others too, will do the same. Alas, what vendetta did the Devil Flock Island have to do with the Nangong Aristocracy Family, even if they have a wealth that can equal a kingdom, what is the use? How can they withstand the combine attacks of the Seven Major Unorthodox Sects?"

Qian Chi remained expressionless while the priests sunk into silence.

"You…" There was a faint voice coming down from the ravine. A young handsome man whose expression was wooden but he was staring at everyone, walked slowly out of the ravine and walked step by step towards the Wudang Four Swordsmen.

The Wudang Four Swordsmen were startled while Qian Chi grasped. "Nangong Ping!"

Priest Zi Bo was even more startled as he took one step back unwitting as he grasped. "Nangong Ping!"

Nangong Ping did not halt his steps and with a great shout rushed toward Priest Zi Bo.

Priest Zi Bo displayed a stance but because he had a guilty conscious inside, he decided to just display a careless attack stroke. He really did not want to fight with anyone from the Nangong Aristocracy Family.

But before he could finish his stance, Nangong Ping crashed to the ground!

In the split instant, a shadow flashed past, it was an emerald dressed young maiden who seemed to be flying. She plunged onto Nangong Ping's body and cried hilariously. "Hello…you…you…" Suddenly she turned her head and chided aloud. "What vendetta does the Nangong Aristocracy Family to do with you, do

you…you really want to kill everyone from the Nangong Aristocracy Family?" Before she had finished, her tears flowed.

The Wudang Four Swordsmen were still in a state of surprise.

Qian Chi looked carefully at Nangong Ping and gently examined his pulse. "Not to worry too much, he collapse due to constitution being weak, tiredness, startled and anger are also some of the factors. There are no sign of any internal injuries and after a day or two of rest with some medicine, he will recover."

Ye Manqing gently carried up Nangong Ping and hatefully said. "I only know, Wudang may be a righteous orthodox sect but it is actually peopled with vile and despicable petty people. From today onward, not only is Wudang the enemy of Zhijiao Manor but I will also tell everyone in the Fraternity, the truth face of your Wudang!"

She was full of sorrow and outrage, when she finished, she turned her head to leave. There was a flash of movement and the Wudang Four Swordsmen were in front of her. Priest Gu Tong said. "Maiden, please don't go yet!"

Ye Manqing raised her eyebrow and asked. "What do you want?"

Priest Zi Bo sighed deeply. "Our sect have no other choice but to do so. I hope maiden understand our difficulties."

Ye Manqing cold hummed and said. "What difficulties? Because of your selfishness, you make a pact with the devil. You can even do something that is against justice, righteousness and now you still have the cheek to explain. This is exactly like the same as the lowly dishonorable sects of the Fraternity!"

Her chiding caused The Wudang Four Swordsmen to become speechless.

Qian Chi sighed and said. "Maiden…"

Ye Manqing turned and looked at him hatefully. "As for you, isn't money the only thing that can delight you when you can lay your hands on them?"

Qian Chi was startled.

Ye Manqing turned her glances around and said. "Either you all are to kill me now with your swords now or else, move aside for me to go down the mountain."

Priest Gu Tong said. "We will not hurt maiden but we cannot let you go down the mountain too. We only hope to inconvenient maiden for some time to a place until…"

Ye Manqing said aloud. "Until when? Are you all dreaming? Just because Wudang Four Swordsmen have some fame in the Fraternity, I, Ye Manqing has never regarded you high in my eyes!"

Suddenly from the mountain, came a soft laughter. A very beautiful and captivating giggle was heard. "What an impressive little maiden!"

Everyone was startled and asked together. "Who?"

Below the cliff was non-stop giggling. “Little Sister! Don’t be afraid, it is your Elder Sister that is here.” Before she had finished speaking, two shadows had blinked from the side of the cliff like the soft grass in the wind and appeared in their views.

The Wudang Four Swordsmen were jolted as they exclaimed. “What extraordinary swiftness skill!”

It was a man and a woman. The man was handsome and outstanding but he looked haughty. The woman was extremely captivating like a vixen, her beauty was like a bright light and caused the priests to avoid looking at her directly.

Ye Manqing was startled as she grasped. “Mei Yinxue!”

The Wudang Four Swordsmen were once again startled.

Mei Yinxue laughed most captivating and asked her. “Little Sister, tell me. Did these priests bully you! Let Old Sister teaches them a lesson for you!”

Ye Manqing became solemn and coldly said. “Not to worry you, I can handle my own matters.”

Mei Yinxue rolled her watery eyes and giggled. “Yo, look what are you saying? In your hands you are carrying such a big man, how will you be a match for these four priests. If I have not coincidentally passed through here, a delicate little maiden like you will surely be bullied by others.”

Although she was talking, laughing at the same time and her captivating body was like a flower that was trembling but her water eyes were looking everywhere.

Priest Zi Bo solemnly said. “Maiden Mei, we have heard of your name before. But in the whole Fraternity, no matter who they are, when they are talking to us, they do so with respect!”

Mei Yinxue coughed a laugh and turned her glance. “Donglai, did you hear that? These four priests are really too arrogant in their speech!”

Zhan Donglai had been looking idiocy at her, had never left his stares off her, nodded many times. “Indeed, indeed. They are really too arrogant!”

Ye Manqing coldly said. “This matter does not concern both of you. Why don’t you go…go eat some snacks instead.” She held Nangong Ping even tightly.

Mei Yinxue laughed and said. “No matter if it really concerns us, this matter I have decided to be concerned with it. If you not willing to see me then you can just hurry and walked away.”

Ye Manqing secretly sighed and thought. “She is still so nice to him. No matter what happens, she still want to help him.” But she replied coldly. “I should have gone long ago!” And she walked away.

Priest Gu Tong softly shouted. “Please wait!”

Mei Yinxue said. “A little maiden wants to leave, why are you priests

holding her back?"

The Wudang Four Swordsmen swept their glances around and discovered that the mysterious old man, one of the 'The Three Swashbucklers' had vanished without a trace!

Priest Gu Tong displayed his steps and was in front of Mei Yinxue in an instant. He coldly said. "I have heard that maiden martial skill techniques consist of a hundred schools and say to be unfathomable. Now that maiden is rude to us, I sure you want to display your skills."

Priest Qing Song and Priest Du Wu were already at her back. Only Priest Zi Bo was left to face Ye Manqing.

Mei Yinxue gently laughed softly but she did not look at the three priests but at Zhan Donglai. "Donglai, look at these people that talk to me like this, what are you waiting for? Teach them some manners!"

Zhan Donglai raised his eyebrow and shouted. "Those of the monastic order shouldn't be this rude. I am about to teach them a lesson."

Priest Gu Tong exclaimed. "What an ignorant kid, how dare you to utter 'lesson' in the view of the Wudang Four Swordsmen."

Zhan Dong was slightly jolted. "Wudang Four Swordsmen?"

Priest Gu Tong said. "Indeed!" And his long sword was out of his sheath.

Zhan Donglai suddenly shouted. "What is Wudang Four Swordsmen?" Wudang and Kunlun had old ties but this young man all along was only obeying his own will, moreover his beloved was here, therefore all the more he disregarded the old ties between the two sects.

Priest Gu Tong coldly laughed awhile and unleashed an extraordinary attack stroke that homed towards Zhan Donglai chest. Behind him was a boulder and there was no way he could evade it. "Your martial standard…"

Before he had finished, Zhan Donglai leaped and he did a double leap as though there was a step in the mid-air and then plunge down like an eagle. (Flying Dragon swiftness skill)

Priest Gu Tong had calculated that even if he could leap, he still could not evade but that double leap was totally unexpected and he moved back three steps and solemnly asked. "Are you from Kunlun?"

Zhan Donglai who had just touched the ground, coldly replied. "So what if I am from Kunlun?" And he attacked with three continuous attack strokes.

Mei Yinxue softly laughed. "What neat palm technique, if you add the stance 'Unison Attack', this priest will not be able to handle it." The reason why Mei Yinxue seemed to know Zhan Donglai stances so well because he told her all the astute of the Kunlun techniques as he wanted her to gaze at him.

Priest Gu Tong coldly said, "That may not be the case!" And he attacked

with three very swift attack strokes. Although it looked like three strokes but it was actually one. The last stroke was like a wall that blocked his front.

Mei Yinxue laughed. “What a good stance is this ‘Firm Foundation, Area Swept’ but still it is useless against the Unison Attack...alas!”

In between her captivating laughs, Zhan Donglai had displayed his close movement skill and kicked the wrist of the priest that held his long sword and hurriedly hit him on the Qi Men and Jiang Tai accupoints.

Priest Gu Tong tried to regain his grip on his long sword first but before he could do so, Zhan Donglai had hit him on the Qu Chi accupoint. With a cry of surprise, he turned his body only to found his sword clapped by Zhan Donglai hands!

This one stance four attacking strokes was executed with one breath and was displayed in its full form in a lightning speed. Priest Gu Tong in his rage, mustered his internal force to pull his sword out but it was like struck inside a wall of iron. No matter how much strength he used, he could not pull it up.

Mei Yinxue giggled and said. “How is it? I did not lie to you.”

Zhan Donglai looked very proud and he shouted. “Up!” And he flinched his hands and Priest Gu Tong was knocked away.

Priest Qing Song suddenly sent the sword in Zhan Donglai hands flying away back to Priest Gu Tong while Priest Du Wu attack with a sword stance on his left side.

Mei Yinxue exclaimed. “So shameless…” And suddenly she felt a piercing windforce above her head.

Priest Gu Tong had merged himself as one with his sword as he leapt across the air. This sword stance was very strong and as swift as lightning. Even if it were a top exponent, it would be seemingly impossible to block it.

But Mei Yinxue did not attempt to dodge which cause Priest Gu Tong much delight. Suddenly she simply lifted herself in the air backward and she was out of danger.

Priest Gu Tong did not have time to withdraw his attack stance and his this sword pierced into the mountain rock.

The Wudang Four Swordsmen each had their own advantages. But in terms of swordplay and swiftness movement skill, Priest Gu Tong was the best among them. Because he was momentarily careless, he lost two fine attack opportunities. Because of anxiety, still holding his grip on his sword, he danced around his sword and kicked at Mei Yinxue’s on her front.

Mei Yinxue gently smiled and said. “Is this the stance of a priest too?”

When she started talking, her slim body had already began to drop off from the cliff after she dodged the priest’s kick. But when she finished the last word of

the sentence, she had once again scaled back from this thirty feet cliff. Her agility was so dexterous and astonishing that words could not be used to describe it.

Zhan Donglai on the other hand had no spare strength for a counter attack stroke for Priest Qing Song and Priest Du Wu had now surrounded him in a multitude of sword light, they were really those very rare fighters that the Fraternity had rarely seen. And at this moment, their internal strength had reached the point when they could use the most ultimate of all Wudang techniques, 'Equilibrium Swordplay'! And the fact they were using the Equilibrium Swordplay at the same time, caused their attacking strokes to be so perfect that Zhan Donglai could barely fend off their attack strokes.

Priest Zi Bo stood in front of Ye Manqing. He knew his status therefore if Ye Manqing did not move, he would also not attack her.

Ye Manqing asked. "You really will not let me go?"

Priest Zi Bo said. "Because it really concerns about the reputation of our sect. I have no choice but to do so."

Ye Manqing lowered her head and took a glance at Nangong Ping. His eyes were closed and his face was very pale. Even his breathing was very weak. She was really anxious and anger but what could she do? She could only endure it. She said. "What if I swear from now on, I will not tell anyone about this matter, then you should let me go right?"

Priest Zi Bo sighed deeply and suddenly he noticed his forth brother was in grave danger fighting with Mei Yinxue. His mind jolted and he immediately said. "Maiden, you are from a reputable orthodox sect. Today, I will trust you."

Suddenly he moved aside and extended his hand. "Farewell!"

Ye Manqing was startled. But because she was worrying about Nangong Ping who was in a critical condition, without a single word, she walked away in strides.

Mei Yinxue had hit Priest Gu Tong on his Ling Tai accupoint behind his back.

She softly laughed. "Will the other three priests now stop? If anyone will to move, then…" Suddenly she saw Ye Manqing moving down the mountain, she was stunned and gapped her words.

Priest Zi Bo said solemnly. "Hold it brothers!"

Priest Qing Song and Priest Du Wu withdrawn their sword stances and took three steps back while Priest Zi Bo walked in strides toward Mei Yinxue only to watch her looking idiocy at the back view of Ye Manqing. He wondered why and solemnly said. "That maiden has gone now, so maiden what do you still want now?"

Mei Yinxue thoughts were in a state of pandemonium much like the sudden

spring rain. She did not hear him while Priest Gu Tong was filled with resentment!

Suddenly he shouted and extended his hand to attack Mei Yinxue!

Ye Manqing who was carrying Nangong Ping hastily moved down the mountain. These few days, she had overworked herself to breaking point, and fighting off her tiredness. When her slim body just landed on a leap, she suddenly found her vital energy could not flow continuous and with a startled cry, she fell onto the ground.

This startled loud cry, this captivating cry from Mei Yinxue seemed to happen at the same time.

Mei Yinxue was startled and shocked. Her instincts took over her and she pushed Priest Gu Tong away for several steps just when Priest Gu Tong was about to hit her. He fell down flat and Mei Yinxue's slim body rushed down the mountain cliffs.

Priest Zi Bo, Priest Qing Song and Priest Du Wu gave a startled cry as they went to the side of Priest Gu Tong. Priest Zi Bo asked in a state of fright. "Fourth Brother…you…you…"

The Wudang Four Swordsmen may not be brothers but they were after all from the same sect. Their affection for each other was like brothers. For tens of years, the four of them had never been injured before and now the Gu Tong was badly injured. Zi Bo, Qing Song and Du Wu could not help it but feel confused. Zi Bo was even anxious to the point of not knowing what to say.

Zhan Donglai swept his eyes around for awhile before he turned around and rushed down too, all the while calling out. "Yinxue, Yinxue. We should really go now." He walked in high morale towards her. During those days that they were together, although he did not really got her affection yet but as long as his beloved was besides him, he was already very happy. As for the days in the future, he was moreover filled with confidence.

He heard Ye Manqing coldly said. "Not to worry you, I can already stand."

Zhan Donglai who had just arrived coldly smirked. "You look at this girl who is really heartless and unrighteous. We just help her and she immediately turned her face against us."

Although Ye Manqing was kneeling on the ground but she was still holding on to Nangong Ping. Now that she had changed her flow of vital energy, she stood up and coldly laughed. "Just now was it you who help me? Heng, heng!"

Mei Yinxue laughed. "Little Sister, I know. You walked out of it yourself."

Ye Manqing replied. "It is good that you know." And she turned around and walked away.

Mei Yinxue asked. "Little Sister, where are you going?"

Ye Manqing coldly said. "You and me walked our own paths. Why do you

care where I am going."

Zhan Donglai said. "Who will care about where you are going?" He gently pulled Mei Yinxue's sleeves and said. "She doesn't know what is good to her. Let us go now!"

Mei Yinxue ceased her smiles, waved his hands off and softly grasped. "Stop saying so much!"

Zhan Donglai was startled but Mei Yinxue did not even glance at him and she was in front of Ye Manqing in an instant. "Little Sister. You are carrying a sick person with you. Your own vital energies are not stable now. There are no villages around here and not to mention any shops. A lone girl like you, where can you walk to?"

Ye Manqing stopped and secretly sighed.

Mei Yinxue added. "Moreover his sickness does not look very light. If he is late for treatment, it quite possible…it quite possible that…alas! Don't you worry, I don't have other intention. It is because his Mentor Master has treated me not too badly and moreover he has saved me once. Therefore I will say such words."

Although she was smiling now but her heart was sorrowful. One must know that in her entire life, she was strong willed and haughty. Even she herself did not dream that she would be so concern to someone. And she had now even had to say words of pleading to another girl.

Ye Manqing bowed her head and she could not help secretly sighed again and again. When she thought of her vital energies that could not flow properly and she was even penniless now. She took a glance around and saw that it was dark everywhere, she really feel a little heart wrenching. If it was her alone, she was not really afraid but now because of Nangong Ping, how would she still insist on her will?

After awhile, she finally sighed softly and asked. "Then what are you doing to do?"

Mei Yinxue said, "Let me accompany the both of you and we must cure him of his sickness first."

Zhan Donglai expressions changed and he said aloud. "You want to go with them?"

Mei Yinxue smiled before she turned her head and said. "I cannot?"

Zhan Donglai said, "The two of us are so carefree on the road. If we have a sick man, that is so irritating!"

Mei Yinxue gently laughed awhile and asked. "Who want to be on the same road as you? Why are you still standing here? You should have left already."

Zhan Donglai expressions changed. "You want me to leave?"

Mei Yinxue gently nodded her head.

Zhan Donglai was stunned and said aloud. “You cannot leave with them, you…you cannot leave me.”

Mei Yinxue face became solemn and said. “On what right do you think you can meddle in my affair!” A chilling cold demeanor that was colder than winter had suddenly replaced her smiling countenances.

Zhan Donglai said. “I have told you everything, I have given you everything to you, you…”

Mei Yinxue coldly replied. “Everything is on your own willingness. Did I ever ask you for anything?”

Zhan Donglai was stunned for awhile before he began to shout loudly. “You cannot go, I cannot do without you…” He opened his arms and wanted to hug Mei Yinxue’s tightly in his embrace.

Mei Yinxue raised her eyebrows and she exclaimed. “What a shameless man!” And she extended her hand out.

Zhan Donglai did not even dodge it. There was a ‘Pa’ sound as he was hit on his left shoulder. He cried loudly before he flew five feet away and was instantly unconscious when he landed on the ground.

Mei Yinxue eyes were filled with disdain and loathing and then she was no longer looking at him. She pulled Ye Manqing on her shoulder and said. “Let us go!”

Ye Manqing turned her head around to look but eventually she followed her.

The two of them had many things in their hearts to think about and so they were silence for some time.

Ye Manqing thought. “No wonder everyone say her blood is cold. Her methods are indeed very cold and vicious. But…alas! To Nangong Ping, she did not even display any characteristics of being a cold blood… alas.”

Mei Yinxue softly laughed to say to her. “In this world, there are some men that are really hateful. They think they can demand something back in return just so because they have given you an advantage. If it is some years back, that Zhan fellow, would have died.”

Ye Manqing was silence for a long time before she could not help it and coldly exclaimed. “Will others not develop a true affection for you? Just like you will develop affection for others too!”

Mei Yinxue was stunned and she muttered. “Affection…affection…”

Chapter Thirteen
Everyone is lamenting over Love

Countless shining weapons rained down and countless devil heads flew out from the burning fire around and shouting: "Nangong Ping…Nangong Ping…"

Nangong Ping cried out and he sat up in cold sweat. He lifted his head and looked around. Where is the burning fire, the devils, the wicked blades…in this soft glow of the lamp, were two extremely very beautiful young women and on their exquisite beautiful faces, were the looks of anxiety and worries as they stood side by side beside him.

Ye Manqing said. "You…"

Mei Yinxue said. "You…"

They had rushed to his bed after hearing of his cries. But after they exclaimed together at the same time, they gapped at the same time too. Both of them took a glance at one another and then took a step back at the same time.

Nangong Ping looked idiocy at Mei Yinxue and said.

"You…have…come…"

Ye Manqing sighed in her heart and lowered her head.

After another two days, Nangong Ping had recovered but during those two days, he was always thinking about the sudden changes to his family and the sorrowful pain that love had caused in his heart.

Ye Manqing was knitting her eyebrows with her head lowered. She was filled with melancholy and resentment. As for the captivating laughs of Mei Yinxue, it seemed to contain a sorrow that could not be shaken off.

When Nangong Ping looked at them, listened to them, he was even more confused and he could not explain it. When they left his room to theirs, he wondered what were they thinking now?

He sighed deeply and turned aside the blanket and secretly put on his garments. He decided to leave secretly. Although he could not bear to but other than to leave in secret, what could he do? What other choices did he have?

He opened the window facing south of his room quietly. He did not know if his heart was feeling guilty or painful. Maybe it was both.

Ye Manqing sat on the side of the bed, her flowing hair in disarray. Her

heart was the same as her hair. “He still love her after all. Why must I torture myself in the middle.” She melancholy sighed and stood up.

After walking around two times in circles, she walked to the window.

She opened the window facing north and muttered silently in her heart. “I going now but I hope that the both of you will have everlasting happiness. As long as you can enjoy happiness, I…” Her eyes became puffed and two crystal clear tears dropped.

Mei Yinxue sat alone besides the lamp. Although the lamp shone brightly in the room but her sorrows crept far beyond the window.

The heavens and the earth looked so lonely to her. She raised her hand to wipe the tears from her face as she muttered quietly. “Mei Yinxue…Mei Yinxue, why did you become so sentimental. The best years of your life are over and you carried so many sins. How can you be worthy of him? His sickness has recovered and besides him there is a sentimental young woman accompanying him. Why then do you still want to remain here?”

She mournfully sighed and slowly got up. “Go now. Now is the time to leave. If it too late, you cannot bear to go.”

She quietly opened the window to the east and softly said. “I going now. Please do not blame me. It is for your own good. Actually…actually…how will I not want to accompany you till the end of time…” Before she had finished, more tears flowed down her cheeks.

Nangong Ping looked in the heavens and sighed. “Yinxue, Manqing, don’t blame me. I leave because for your happiness. Terrible events have now befall upon my family and my future is not certain now. How can I drag the two of you down.” He sighed deeply and went through the window.

In the darkness, there was a very sorrowful song. “…*The three of them left in three different directions, only to hope that their past will become a dream, is a dream real? Is real a dream? In the end, no one can differentiate anymore. Alas Heavens, what is love that causes everyone to lament over it…”*

A blind old man sung this as he held a pipa and walked alongside the wall. There was also a pale and fragile girl who was gently holding on the edge of his clothing. Was this old man lamenting over his past? How else then would he sing such a touching and sorrowful song?

Nangong Ping landed just behind them and looked idiocy at their back view

till they had disappeared. He found himself repeating the last two lines of the song. "*What is love, that cause everyone to lament over it…"*

A haggard young man but whose eyes were as bright as ever appeared in the rain. He was muttering to himself. "Nangong Ping, Nangong Ping, you finally reach home…" And he eyed the stone door that marked the border of the Nangong Manor.

Along the way, he had undergone untold hardships. From the North to the South, all the businesses that were owned by the Nangong Aristocracy Family had been sold. It caused this young man who had always enjoy a life of comfort to suffer what was it like to be poor and ignored. Even his outer garment had been taken off to exchange for sufficient food.

After he wiped the sweat and the rainwater from his face, just when he was about to run again, a stern shout was heard. "Stop where you are."

Blocking him were two men that were masked. The man on the right side said sternly. "Friend, you dare to burgle into the Nangong Manor, are you thinking of losing your life?"

The man on the left shouted. "Since you have already burgle here, do you think you can leave here alive?" And he immediately drawn his sword and aimed straight at his throat, the sword attack stroke was swift, vicious and fast and it was a stance that could end someone's life instantly.

Nangong Ping was stunned as he hurriedly evaded it, solemnly exclaiming. "The two of you hold your hands! Don't you recognize who I am…"

The man on the right hit Nangong Ping with a brush on his two vulnerable accupoints on the left side of his body. And he sternly said. "No matter who it is, no one within thirty miles of here can step forth for even a single step."

Nangong Ping took three steps back and solemnly said again. "The two of you hold your hands, I am Nangong Ping."

The man on the left that was holding a sword laughed hilariously. "Nangong Ping, Nangong Ping, you are already the fourth person that has impersonated as Nangong Ping." Even before he had finished, he made three attacking strokes at him.

Nangong Ping angrily exclaimed. "If the two of you do not believe me, then I, Nangong Ping will have to barge in."

The man on the right that was holding a brush sternly said. "At this moment this Nangong Manor have seventeen top exponents from the Fraternity protecting it. Even if you have the extraordinary ability, it is impossible for you to even move into the Manor by a single step!"

Although this man looked solemn but every one of his attacking strokes was

on the point that Nangong Ping must first save himself while the man with the sword took the opportunity to attack.

Nangong Ping was suspicious and hated the fact that he could not see his father for he was now being blocked by these two people. As he had to fight bared handed against the weapons, for a moment, he could not free himself.

Suddenly three other men appeared from outside the woods.

The man with the sword solemnly said. “Dan Laoer, there is more intruders coming in, go and handle them.”

Dan Laoer was the man that was holding the brush. He solemnly said. “These three men swiftness movement skills are not weak, you should release the signal…”

The man who was holding the sword coldly laughed. “If us two brothers cannot hold the ground here tonight, how would we face anyone in the future?” And he shot three shining projectiles toward them but one of the three men simple waved his hand and reflected all the projectiles back!

Dan Laoer who was waving two brushes on both his hands managed to deflect the reflected projectiles.

Nangong Ping heaved a sigh of relief for the man with the sword was forcing him to a corner. The arrivals of those three strangers were timely.

The three strangers gave a shout as they entered the fray.

Dan Laoer extended his arms in double quick time as dozens of beaming lights flew toward the front of the new attackers.

A masked old man evaded his projectiles, turned his body around and asked. “The friend who is blocking, are you one of the Diancang Duo, Danshi Kunzhong?”

Dan Laoer sternly said. “So what if I am? So what if I am not? If you do not go back now, don’t blame me for being ruthless.” He was attacking non-stop all this while and now he was attacking with the stance. ‘The Rain of the Plum Flowers’ three times in a continuous attack.

The masked old man coldly laughed awhile and said. “The two of you move back first and let me experience the Diancang techniques!”

After three attack strokes, the masked old man drawn a whip with wicked barbs as he lashed through the air. He moved like the wind as he displayed two stances and four attack strokes of the ‘Fluttering of the Wind through the Woods’ and ‘Trapping the Cloud with the Wind’ as he trapped Dan Laoer inside the furious attack of his whip.

Dan Laoer was jolted and grasped. “Ren Kuangfeng!”

The masked old man laughed hilariously. “That is right! I did not expect after I have gone into reclusion after twenty years that there will still be people in

the Fraternity that can recognize me."

There was a flash in the eyes of the man with the sword. He was using all his might to deal with Nangong Ping. When he heard that the old man was the renowned fraternity bandit twenty years, his mind was jolted and he immediately reached into his sleeves and fired up a flare signal into the sky.

Nangong Ping who was even more surprised. If the two of them were protecting the manor, why then must they be so secret about it? They were even masked and afraid that others would know their identity.

And this Ren Kuangfeng that was in seclusion for twenty years, why did he come here for?

Dan Laoer said. "Ren Kuangfeng, you deliberately broke the solemn oath that you made twenty years ago and went into seclusion. Are you not afraid that the 'The Three Swashbucklers' will be waiting for you?"

Ren Kuangfeng laughed aloud. "No one have ever seen the whereabouts of the three swashbucklers in the Pugilist for tens of years. I am afraid that they have long since died. My oath has been released and when I heard that there are hundreds of thousands of silver here, my hands began to itch. But I am only feeling strange that the famous Diancang Duo will be here as a watchdog. I wonder if you have a share in those hundreds of thousands of silver?"

Dan Laoer coldly said. "If you here to steal those precious riches, then you must be dreaming!" Although he had said that but he could only defend and not attack.

Nangong Ping suddenly shouted. "Hold your hands!"

The minute the man with sword hesitated with his sword, Nangong Ping had turned his body and hit to the back of that Ren Kuangfeng. This palm carried much windforce for he used all his strength.

Ren Kuangfeng turned his body and dodged it but the whip in his hands was tore by Nangong Ping by half a feet.

'Danshi Kunzhong' was startled while Ren Kuangfeng was jolted and he solemnly said. "What are you doing, young man? If I can attack through this manor, you will have a share of those hundreds of thousands of silver. Hurry off and defeat that Dan Laoda!"

That Dan Laoda who was holding a sword after he fired his flare signal saw that his reinforcements did not arrive yet, he was secretly began to feel anxious and shouted. "Friend, don't be deceive by him. That Ren fellow is like a wolf as well as vicious. After he has robbed all he can, he will never give you a share. If you help me to beat them off, us two brothers will give a share as your travel expenses."

Nangong Ping did not know whether to feel it was funny or rage when these

people were discussing how to share him a piece of his family wealth and looked upon him as a robber as well. Although he was suspicious of the intentions of the Danshi brothers but they were after all protecting the Nangong Aristocracy Family and were friends and not enemies. As for this Ren Kuangfeng, he was obviously a robber.

Therefore he did not cease his attacking strokes.

After tens of blows and strokes had been exchanged, he had discovered that this infamous robber that had been over lording the Pugilist twenty years ago, his martial skills were indeed extraordinary. His whip after he had lashed it, was like the furious wind and very difficult to block.

Ren Kuangfeng was startled too. For this young man with bared fists, he could hold on so long under his relentless attacking strokes and shown no sign of a defeat.

Dan Laoer moved back to Dan Laoda and they muttered something in the back and suddenly they rushed towards the other two men with sabres in their hands.

Suddenly there were a several flashes of sabre lights that danced out. Dan Laoer coldly smirked. “Indeed, it is the Li brothers ‘Flower Sabres’ from Mt. Taihangshan.”

One of the masked men with the sabre laughed coldly. “Hehe, Dan Laoer is indeed haughty.” And the sabre on his right hand attack with the stance ‘Cleaving through the Five Hells’ while his sabre on his left lifted up and removed his mask, as he laughed hilarious. “I, Li Tieqiu of the ‘Flower Sabres’ will let you see my true face.”

‘The Snow Sabres’ Li Feiqiu removed his mask too and sternly said. “At least we are better than you people who are masked and hiding your identities. Let you look at my face carefully so that you can tell the King of Hades who was the one that kill you.”

The two of them had imposing voices and the sabres in both their hands were indeed flashing and blinding like flower and snow.

The Danshi brothers looked coldly without a word while Nangong Ping thought as he fought with Ren Kuangfeng. “These people are all the very best fighters of the Fraternity. Why did they gather here in the Nangong Manor? Did father sell all his business and transport the silver here? Why then, did father wants to do such a thing?”

As the wind got bigger and the rain was pouring harder, there were fire flares that flew up the sky on both sides of the dark woods.

After that, there were sounds of weapons clashing all over and the dying cries that the deadly wind carried over to them. There was malevolent air all over.

Ren Kuangfeng, the Li brothers and the Danshi brothers had a big sudden change in their eyes.

Dan Laoer solemnly said. “More intruders have come from over that the checkpoint over that other side!”

Dan Laoda said. “Ren Kuangfeng and Qin Luanyu are always side by side. Since you Ren Kuangfeng is here, surely Qin Luanyu is here as well!”

Ren Kuangfeng laughed heartily and said. “I tell you honestly then. All the good friends from the thirteen provinces of the unorthodox sects are also here as well. Hurry and hand over those precious treasures to us, why lose your lives for Nangong Changshu?!”

He dealt three more furious lashes of the whip at Nangong Ping who was getting even more anxious now. He thought. “Father do not know any martial art skills, if these people are to attack up the manor, what can be done?” In his haste, he yelled aloud as he tried to leap across and caught the tip of Ren Kuangfeng whip with his left hand and landed with his right hand on the ground. This one stance, two dividing strokes were like the Divine Dragon.

Ren Kuangfeng hesitated for a while before he took three steps back in startled surprise. “The Divine Dragon swiftness skill of the Zhijiao Manor!”

The Danshi brothers glanced at one another and grasped. “It is indeed Nangong Ping.”

The wind blew even more relentless in the rain while the shouting cries grew even hurriedly and suddenly a shadow charged across the woods to here, exhibiting the ‘The Swallow moving through the Wood’ swiftness movement skill!

Dan Laoda eyes shone with a tinge of light and said. “It is time.”

Ren Kuangfeng expression changed as he said. “Diancang Yan is also here!”

Nangong Ping gave a shout when Ren Kuangfeng was momentarily distracted and snatched his whip.

Diancang Yan who had just landed on the ground immediately coldly smirked. “Ren Kuangfeng is indeed here! Who is this friend?” He asked the Danshi brothers.

Dan Laoer replied. “He is Nangong Ping!”

Diancang Yan said. “Really?”

Dan Laoer said. “He has displayed the Divine Dragon Swiftness movement skill, it cannot be wrong.”

Nangong Ping secretly sighed in relief and thought. “At last these people have recognized me.”

He raised both his hands together and solemnly said. “That everyone will come here in righteous to protect the Nangong Manor, Nangong Ping is very grateful in my heart. But I hope that everyone will protect for a little while longer

while I go in to see my father."

As he was about to go in, Diancang Yan blocked him!

Nangong Ping asked in surprise. "Do you not believe that I am not Nangong Ping?"

Diancang Yan whose face was extremely compose coldly replied, "Precisely that you are Nangong Ping, you cannot go in!"

Nangong Ping was startled and asked in surprise. "This…this is for what reason?"

Diancang Yan replied. "This you do not have to ask. Hurry and go!" He extended his hand to hit Nangong Ping.

Nangong Ping was even more surprised and startled as he moved backward to dodge his sudden attack. He felt his wrist loosened and Ren Kuangfeng snatched the whip away. And both Diancang Yan and Ren Kuangfeng began to attack him at the same time!

These two people were the very best exponents of the Fraternity, their attacking strokes were powerful and their stances impossible to block. After Nangong Ping forcefully evaded a stroke, Ren Kuangfeng laughed aloud. "I thought that you Diancang Sect is here to protect the Nangong Manor but you did not have such good intention…"

Before he could finish, Diancang Yan attacked with both his hands, left on Nangong Ping, right on Ren Kuangfeng.

Ren Kuangfeng was startled as he changed the direction of his stances that were meant for Nangong Ping to Diancang Yan as he changed his stance to that of an 'Opportune Efficacious Snake' and aimed at his left rib.

Nangong Ping left fist and right palm, left fist extended out at Ren Kuangfeng, right palm in a slashing cut at Diancang Yan. The three of them were exchanging blows non-stop. Nangong Ping was like one versus two opponents yet at the same time, it would suddenly become two versus him. Who was the friend, who was the enemy? He was already so confused now that he really could not know what was going on now.

Nangong Ping sternly said. "Diancang Yan, you come from a reputable orthodox sect. Since when you have become a robber that goes after others wealth?"

Diancang Yan coldly laughed. "Who wants your wealth!"

Ren Kuangfeng added. "Since that is the case, why then did you block us then?"

Nangong Ping sternly replied at the same time. "Since that is the case, why did you not let me go in?"

But Diancang Yan kept his composure and did not reply, in fact, his stances

became more and more furious.

On the other hand, the Danshi brothers were slowly gaining an upper hand for Dan Laoer had drawn his sword and had used a stance 'The Dance of the Returning Dragon', piercing 'Snow Sabres' Li Feiqiu on his right shoulder.

Li Tieqiu was startled. "Second brother are you alright?" And he slashed his sabre on Dan Laoda and at that instant all four of them were bloodied all over with no signs of backing off.

Ren Kuangfeng shouted aloud as the battle got more and more furious. "If the three of you are not after wealth, why then are you fighting and throwing your lives for Nangong Changshu?"

Nangong Ping angrily said, "If the three of you are indeed helping Nangong Manor, why did you not let me go in?"

Diancang Yan, Danshi brothers did not even say a word but concentrate on their fights.

Suddenly in this rain filled with blood, a man came from the woods with his chest punctured with a hole as he collapsed.

Li Tieqiu suddenly yelled. "No good! 'Fierce Tiger' Zhao Gang is here!"

Dan Laoer coldly laughed. "If you don't go now, you will be able to leave here alive!"

Before he had finished, there was another wounded man that rushed through the wood with a sword and he vomited blood as he collapsed in front of Li Tieqiu. There was no injuries on his body at all, seeming killed by someone with a very powerful internal force!

Dan Laoda turned ashen as he said. "No good, fifth brother have been killed!"

Li Tieqiu coldly laughed. "Now that the friends from the thirteen provinces of the unorthodox sects are here. I am afraid your Diancang Sect will all have to perish here today!"

Dan Laoer angrily shouted as he said. "Bullshit!"

Nangong Ping was jolted as he decided to ignore Ren Kuangfeng and attack with seven strokes continuously on Diancang Yan, all were close melee techniques.

Ren Kuangfeng got a boast in his spirit and decided that it was time to get rid of Diancang Yan and attacked with his very best.

Diancang Yan was indeed very disturbed as he tried to retaliate.

Nangong Ping did not hesitate for even an instant as he sprang with all his might towards Nangong Manor while Diancang Yan was momentarily entangled with Ren Kuangfeng!

Chapter Fourteen
The Cold Wind and the Bitter Rain

When Nangong had sprang, Dan Laoda shouted behind him as he tried to hit him from the back! But Nangong Ping did not turn his head or evade. He just mustered all his strength forward therefore although his back appeared to be hit; it was just a rub as he narrowly escaped from a dire situation!

A light of opportunity darted in Li Feiqiu eyes and his malevolent instinct was arisen. Now Dan Laoer sword had come at the same time, but he did not try to evade it but flashed his sabres on the top of Dan Laoda head and blood spilled out.

Dan Laoda cried out hilariously as he plunged his body backward and Li Feiqiu sabres went through his body but Dan Laoda suddenly gripped his ten fingernails and squeezed into Li Feiqiu neck and blood spurred out from his eyes, nose and ears.

Dan Laoer in a furious rage ran his sword through Li Feiqiu side and Li Tieqiu shouted. “Surrender your life!” And he chopped off Dan Laoer right arm but Dan Laoer seemed to not notice as he kicked Li Tieqiu underneath his Xia Yin Shu Yu accupoint! (In between the leg) and he gave a terrifying howl and he fell down dead.

The Taihang Double Sabres had all died in that instant.

Dan Laoer smiled as his body wavered for awhile as he muttered. “Big brother, I have avenge for you.” And then he fainted on the spot.

Diancang Yan and Ren Kuangfeng who was fighting witnessed the horrendous scene and felt a heart wrenching pain that chilled them as the Danshi Kunzhong and the Taihang Double Sabres all died together.

Suddenly Diancang Yan shouted. “Hold it!”

Ren Kuangfeng was surprised but he pulled back his whip nevertheless.

Diancang Yan glanced at the blood pool around him for awhile and was solemn. He secretly sighed and thought. “Fellow protégés, please do not blame me for being a coward but how can I allow all of Diancang Sect best fighters to all perish in this fight!”

Composing his thoughts, he bit his teeth and solemnly said. “You, ‘The Wind and Rain Double Whips’ have gathered so many friends from the unorthodox sects here just because of the riches right?”

Ren Kuangfeng laughed hilariously. “These unorthodox friends if they aren’t here for the riches, then what for did they come? Are they all crazy then?”

Diancang Yan bit his teeth and said. “After when you have taken all the

riches, if you agree to leave in haste and return to the mountains. I, Gongsun Yan will let you all across!" Diancang Yan real name was Gongsun Yan.

Ren Kuangfeng laughed hilariously and said. "After we have the riches in our hand, naturally we will leave. Why should we remain here? Everyone say that Diancang Yan is a intelligence person so why would you say such a thing now?"

Gongsun Yan focused his eyes and his hand reached into his clothing.

Ren Kuangfeng was jolted and he immediately took three steps back expecting he would use secret projectiles.

But Gongsun Yan simple released three fire flares into the sky and a general whispering went around the area. "Hold it…hold it…"

Ren Kuangfeng knew now he had recalled all his protégés.

Suddenly a very tall and big man flew besides Ren Kuangfeng and asked. "Big Brother Ren, what is happening?" It was an old man with white hair with a whip. He was one of the two infamous 'Wind Rain Double Whips', Qin Luanyu!

Ren Kuangfeng replied. "Diancang Yan has hold his hands!"

Qin Luanyu was stunned and he 'hehe' laughed. "Good…good…" But when he saw the bodies of the 'Taihang Double Sabres' on the ground, he ceased his laughter.

From the two sides of the woods, more than twenty men appeared and they began to form lines across one another.

A priest with purple adornment that had just appeared grasped. "Big Brother Dan, Second Brother Dan Erge…they…" He could not stop shivering.

Diancang Clan had sent seventeen top fighters and now nine had died! Excluding the numerous Diancang swordsmen that had perished too…

Qin Luanyu swept his eyes and was stunned too as he muttered. "… Sixteen… seventeen…eighteen…" He shouted. "Is there anymore in the woods?"

A priest with black ornament said. "You don't have to ask. I have not killed for a long time but tonight I have killed seven!" And he pointed his sword at him.

Qin Luanyu shouted. "What an evil priest, you…"

Ren Kuangfeng reached out and held him by his shoulder. "Second brother, shut up!" And he looked at the priest and said. "I have long heard that the Diancang 'Black Heavenly Goose' swordplay is as swift as lightning and vicious too. What I have saw today is indeed true!"

The priest with black ornament stared and sternly said. "That is right. I, the Black Heavenly Goose is vicious but so what? Today I going to massacre all you bandits!"

Ren Kuangfeng coldly laughed.

Gongsun Yan sighed deeply and said. "Third Brother, let it be today!"

The Black Heavenly Goose Priest was startled. "Why let it be?"

Gongsun Yan was solemn and he said. “Let them go over!”

The Black Heavenly Goose Priest expressions started to change and he swept his eyes around to look at the Diancang followers who were all looking pathetic. Some were wounded and some even lost their swords.

This Diancang swordsman who had the heart of a burning fire was stunned for awhile before he finally shouted. “We who are from the Diancang Clan, would we be cowed just because our enemies are stronger?! Even if we were to all perished here, we will fight to our deaths!”

Gongsun Yan was downcast but shouted. “Shut up!” And he waved his hand to silence him. “Let them all go over!”

The Black Heavenly Goose Priest clenched his fists tightly and his whole body shivered.

Ren Kuangfeng gave a command as more than eighteen top unorthodox fighters rushed forward with their followers.

After they had run past them, the Black Heavenly Goose Priest said. “Second Protégé Brother, you…you really want to end the reputation of our Diancang Sect?”

Gongsun Yan sighed deeply and said. “Third Brother, why you always are unable to understand the heart your Second Brother…”

Suddenly there was a malevolent air in his eyes as he said. “These unorthodox fighters after they reach the manor, once again there will be a bloodshed. When that happens, no matter who is the winner, there is bounded to be heavy losses. If we wait here, we can rest our strength. No matter who it is, as long as they want to send the treasures out, will we let them pass?”

The Black Heavenly Goose Priest was startled and he immediately sheathed his sword and bowed respectfully. “Second Brother has planned it well, I am not worthy. Please forgive your third brother for my rashness.”

Gongsun Yan looked at the surviving Diancang members. He sighed in silence as he muttered. “Alas, for that devil pact that was made tens of years ago. Today if our Diancang Clan have anyone that survives, it is really not easy. I…alas! I can only hope that the Nangong Aristocracy Family will not send the treasures out of the manor. Then I will die without regrets but our Chief of Diancang he…alas! Only third brother you are still in your prime and also our Diancang number one fighter. Our Diancang Clan survival will now depends on you alone.”

The Black Heavenly Goose Priest did not react for sometime, only to slowly turned his head over, unwilling to let anyone witness his tears. All the disciples and followers of Diancang that were around had all lowered their heads and no one lifted their heads for a long time.

Nangong Ping was feeling high. Finally he could be home, finally he would have all the answers. He spotted the lights of the Nangong Manor at a distant but it was so different from the past.

Nangong Ping ran even more madly in the rain and the winds were like knives piercing through him.

Finally moving like the wind, he saw the flight of twenty stone steps that were so familiar to him. As his shoe touched the cold icy steps, his heart felt warm.

But suddenly, from the house on top, there was a soft shout. “Go back!” And three starlight projectiles flew and seemed to form a word and two of the projectiles flew past with a startling speed while one was slow.

Nangong Ping was about to evade the projectiles when the slow starlight projectile at the back suddenly increased its speed and flew like shooting star. He got a big fright as he just managed to dodge it, he heard the windforce of the other two projectiles that almost deafen him his ears as it flew in circles on his left and right shoulders. He had to leap backward and after several summersaults and back to the bottom of the stair, only could he evade the attacks, as the two projectiles lit the ground with its sparks.

The hand that threw these secret projectiles was not only ingenious but also very powerful. This was something that Nangong Ping had never saw and he did not expect to find an expert top exponent with such powerful internal strength within the manor!

After the secret projectiles were thrown, there was silence again and it seemed that nothing had happened.

“Is there a hidden danger inside?” He thought. “Father and mother…they are not in the house anymore?”

Nangong Ping did not dare to think anymore as he once again attempted to plunge forward while shouting. “Who is this friend inside the house! Nangong Ping has come home!”

Before he could finish, a startled grasp was heard. “Is that Pinger?” A person flew past like lightning that followed the position of his sound. Even before Nangong Ping could even dodge, that person had already caught him by his shoulders. Nangong Ping tried to shake it off but failed and he was greatly surprised. He tried to look at the person that had caught him, only to see that person whose long hair was in a mess and a pair of eyes filled with compassionate yet so bright, was looking at him, was his mother!

Ever since he was born, even in his wildest dreams, he had never known that his mother would have such astonishing martial ability. He was so stunned while

Mistress Nangong pulled him into her embrace and with trembling voice said. “Child, you are back. It just nice that you are back!” His warm and compassionate mother caused him to forget all his tiredness, hunger, fright, suspicious. In that instant, it was his best reward.

In the hall, were many lamps and rows of red wooden chests. On those chests, were projectiles and arrows. And there were many other men too, all looking fatigue, some were wounded, some had difficulties breathing, some closing their eyes to rest. All of them had been through many terrible battles.

In this messy grand hall, was a very composed and calm old man in beautiful clothing. Although there was a storm outside, it could not shake his magnificent aura and his firm and steady eyes.

Nangong Ping softly greeted. “Father” And he rushed forward and kneel down before him.

Nangong Changshu gently patted on the head of his beloved son and did not say anything for a long time.

Mistress Nangong gently took out a handkerchief to wipe away the rainwater and sweat from his head and gently said. “Child, it must be hard on you all this while. In future, I afraid…afraid that it will be even harder for you.”

Nangong Changshu just laughed it off but did not talk.

Nangong Ping saw his father quiet face, saw his mother fragile face, saw the messy hall, his heart was already carrying many doubts, and therefore he cast aside the family formalities as he rose to ask. “Father, you have sold all the businesses in Jiangnan, what is the reason? And we do not usually have any dealings with the Diancang Sect, why are they surrounding the Nangong Manor? Although they seem to protect the Nangong Manor but they does not have any kind intention to us. And, the Devil Flock Island that is only heard of but never seen. Why did they want to pit against us? Father, please tell me everything. I am really very anxious to know.”

He said everything in one breath and looked tellingly at his father.

Mistress Nangong melancholy sighed and said. “If there is anything to say, say it slowly child. Why are you still as impatience as before?”

Nangong Changshu was very solemn as he walked in strides toward the main entrance of the great hall. Suddenly he turned around to say. “Please forgive me for my rudeness!”

Everyone was surprised and some even rose on his or her feet to ask. “This…this…”

Before he had finished his words, Nangong Changshu suddenly flashed

around. All the men in the hall suddenly collapsed and crumbled on the chairs. They had all fainted or slept now.

Nangong Ping saw his father in that instant had hit their 'Sleep' accupoint (An accupoint technique that caused those hit to be knocked down without unnecessary pain and loss of strength), he was shocked to see it and asked. "Father, you do know martial arts!"

In this whole world, there was no one that knew that Nangong Changshu was actually an upper echelon fighter, even his own son did not know and it was the first time he ever witnessed it.

Nangong Changshu did not turn his head over and asked. "Pinger, you have always have good food and clothing. Everything we allow you to be willful. Even if you have committed a wrong, your father and mother did not even reprimand you. Do you know the reason why?"

Although Nangong Ping could not his see his father face but he could his father's trembling shoulders. He looked very emotional.

Nangong Ping was startled and frightful. "Child…do not know!" He immediately kneels down and grasped. "If child has committed a wrong, father is right to beat and reprimand me."

Mistress Nangong was very pale, covered her face as she said. "Big Brother…why…this child has to be so ill-fate!"

Nangong Changshu did not turn his head but was trembling even more. "I treat you in that manner is because from now on, not only you cannot enjoy any of the luxuries and happiness of this world and you have to suffer the unbearable torture that will soon be your fate, can you endure it?

Nangong Ping could not bear it anymore as his tears flowed. He said, trembling uncontrollably. "It is only right that child suffer hardships for father and mother but…father at least you should tell me, what…what is going on?"

Nangong Changshu clenched his fists and his voice became even solemn.

"The Nangong Aristocracy Family is the richest in the whole world, do you know the source of this wealth?" He solemnly asked.

Nangong Ping was jolted and said. "Is it…is it…"

Nangong Changshu added. "Your forebear, was once a very poor man. He suffered all types of torture that was atypical to a poor man and swore that he wanted to become the wealthiest man in the world. Painstakingly, he saved a sum of money and set sail with some seafarers to do business from outside the Central Plains. Who would expect that the ship would meet with a storm along the way and your forebear drifted on a plank to a desolate island. Luckily he did not die but he was empty handed and have nothing."

He clenched his fists even tighter and added. "Your forebear's lofty

ambition was destroyed and he lost everything. He was so overcome with grief that he could not help it but to cry aloud. Unexpectedly, he suddenly discovered that the island actually had many old men in ancient robes. In the Fraternity, the oldest legend and the most mysterious legend is the rumored existence of the Divine Creator Temple. And that island is the Divine Creator Temple."

Nangong Ping was jolted, only to hear his father continuing. "Those old men questioned your forebear about his history and background. They examined him carefully and then bade him to stay. For three years, your forebear suffered exceedingly hardships and torture until one day, he was suddenly taken to a beach. On the side of the beach was a big ship, on that ship was incalculable amount of precious stones and artifacts!"

"Your forebear was stunned. Never did he expect that those old men would want to give that ship to him. But they wanted him to swear a deadly oath and make a pact. From then now, every generation of the Nangong family would have its eldest son to bring a certain amount of silver to the Divine Creator Temple. Every generation, the amount of silver would have to be doubled. This pact will never end unless the Nangong line is extinct, and this pact forever cannot be voided…"

Nangong Changshu added. "Till my generation, the amount of silver that was needed had reached an exorbitant amount. Your grandfather gathered all the silver he could mobilize to send your uncle and the silver away to fulfil the pact. At that time…alas! I am not yet married. But your uncle had already a son."

It was only now that Nangong Ping had finally came to know of his family secret histories. When he had heard to this point, he was already trembling all over and had broke into a cold sweat. He could not help but ask. "Where is my uncle? Where is my that cousin?"

Nangong Changshu trembled and said. "The day before your uncle was gone, he killed his newly wed wife and baby with a blow on their hearts. Because he had calculated, in another generation, even if the Nangong Aristocracy Family were to sell away all their properties and asserts, we still could not raise enough silver. He could not bear to let his descendants to suffer and did not want me to marry and to have sons. He left behind a heartbreaking testament. Then he was gone along with the silver and there have been no news of him ever since…"

When he had said to this point, his voice was filled with sorrow and a chill that crept into the hearts of everyone. Although everyone knew that the Nangong Aristocracy Family was exceedingly rich and unparalleled but who would know of this mysterious history of the Nangong Aristocracy Family that was filled with blood, sorrow and tears?

Mistress Nangong covered her face with her hands and sobbed. "Big

Brother, you…don't need to say it anymore."

Nangong Changshu said slowly as he faced the wall. "After your uncle departed not long after, your grandfather passed away. I mourned in piety for three years and then I went to search for your uncle. Every generation without fail, when we send the silver away, there will an Envoy from the Divine Creator Temple that will send us a Note indicating the harbor. Not only did we not know where is the exact position of the island but in this vast expanse of the ocean, not even one person even know where is the Divine Creator Temple. I drifted for many years in the Pugilist Realm until at last having lost all hopes, met your mother."

Mistress Nangong wipe her tears from her face, using her hand and walked over to the side of Nangong Changshu. She gently held his hands and said. "If you really must say, let me say in your behalf then!"

"When I first met your father," Mistress Nangong said. "I had already developed affection for him. But your father was always avoiding me. I am strange and upset. In a fit of anger, I decided to marry another person and that was your father's friend. But unexpectedly one day…one day your father was ambushed and was heavily poisoned. After his poison enacted, he told me all the sad history of his family and finally I know the reason why he was always trying to avoid me. Because it was going to be a heartbreaking affair. Because the Nangong Aristocracy Family would be penniless and poor. Because he did not want me to suffer. Because he could not bear…could not bear that our children when they grown up, they will grow up just to help their forebear to repay a debt and to suffer!"

Nangong Changshu suddenly turned his body around and his eyes were watery. He looked at her with gentleness and solemnly added. "But your mother is not afraid of all this, she isn't even afraid of being poor. In a single night, she carried me on her back to Tianshan to find the antidote. Therefore I…"

Mistress Nangong leaned besides him and added. "Therefore from then onwards, I can never leave your father, and after that, we have you. We want you to enjoy all the luxuries of life, we don't want you to learn martial arts because we don't want you to experience hardship therefore we also did not teach you any martial art skills. But who will know that you are born to like martial arts and we did not want to go against your wishes, therefore we sent you to the Divine Dragon Clan just as you wanted. Child…we are so sorry to you…" Before she could finish, she began to sob and her words could not be heard.

Nangong Ping cried out in sadness as he ran to his mother. In the midst of the storm that was raging outside, the three of them embraced one another. Although they were all filled with grief and sorrow but it was also filled with understanding and empathy.

Nangong Changshu caressed his beloved son's head and said. "I only wish that the secret note of the Divine Creator Temple would not come so soon. Therefore I did not want you to be married. But who would expect that they have already calculated that the Nangong Aristocracy Family would have no more source of income, therefore they did not wait for you to get marry and to have the next generation and sent their Secret Note. Once we gathered all the silver that we could possible mobilized, that Messenger would still come and take you away. It is the oath made by your ancestor, your father…your father and your mother, although we adore you so much but how…how can we…" Before he could finish, his tears flowed.

Nangong Ping lifted his chest and said. "Father, mother. This is the debt of our Nangong family. Naturally we have to repay…"

Mistress Nangong said with her tears flowing. "But, Child, you…"

Nangong Ping bit his teeth, with his eyes focused and firmly said. "Your child will surely return. No matter how mysterious is that Divine Creator Temple, I will also swear to come back to take care of both of you. Even if there is a wall of iron, it will not stop me. Moreover, those people with the reputation of 'Divine Creator' how will they force others to do things that are not filial?"

Mistress Nangong quietly said. "My good child…"

Nangong Changshu sighed. "But this time...alas! Those people from the Devil Flock Island have appeared in the Fraternity again. And they are determined not to let us send the silver to the Divine Creator Temple."

Nangong Ping said. "No wonder they use the secret pact to force so many major orthodox sects to steal the silver from us."

Nangong Changshu lowered his head and sighed. "At this moment, the disciples and followers of Diancang Sect because they failed to steal forcefully from us, therefore they remain outside the manor. Although they look like they are protecting the Nangong Manor but in fact they are trying to prevent us from sending the silver out. Not only that, there is also a few infamous bandits from the Fraternity that are also thinking of laying their hands on the silver. For many days, this Nangong Manor had already been involved in many bloody fights, so many people lost their lives, alas…Wealth, only bring the Nangong family untold troubles and sufferings. What other trouble did it bring? Child, if you are born in a poor man family, how would you need to suffer like this?"

Suddenly from outside the window, a man sighed deeply in the midst of the storm. "I am wrong!"

Nangong Ping was startled and he shouted. "Who is it?"

But his father was already at the window in an instant and he waved his hand and the windows were forced opened, sending the wind and rain in.

Nangong Changshu was about to hit with his hands again when outside the window, the voice sighed again. “Big Brother, you do not recognize me?”

Mistress Nangong was startled and she was at the window in an instant. “Lu Yixian!”

Nangong Changshu cried out in surprise. “Second Brother, is that you?”

Nangong Ping was shocked to see that the person outside the window was that bald old man ‘Qian Chi’ that loved money more than his life. That he was actually his father’s Second Brother! For a moment, he was stunned beyond words.

That old man lowered his head as he blinked inside in an instant.

Nangong Changshu caught him by his shoulders and said. “Second Brother, we have not seen one another for many years. Why did you…you become like this?”

Qian Chi eyes looked idiocy as he muttered. “I am wrong, I am wrong…”

Mistress Nangong quietly said. “The past is over. Why must you mention it. Big Brother and I did not blame you and in fact…in fact we are sorry to you.”

Qian Chi suddenly laughed aloud. “I am wrong!” And he kneels in front of Nangong Changshu with tears flowing down and said. “Big Brother, I am so sorry to you, I am so sorry to you…”

Nangong Changshu as he held his shoulders, kneeled too. “Second Brother, please get up...”

Qian Chi said. “If I did not say everything, even if I were to die, I would also not get up! All these years, it has been inside me for twenty years!”

He lamented. “Twenty years ago, I had thought that Third Sister was after the wealth of the Nangong Aristocracy Family and the riches and glories therefore she had left me and marry you. I did not know that she had already fallen in love with you. I did not know that she married you not because she wanted to enjoy the luxuries of life but to suffer hardship and pain with you. I…left without saying a word and even attracted a great deal of enemies to harm you…”

Nangong Changshu sighed. “Second Brother, I and Third Sister we are all well. Why do you want to reproach yourself?”

Qian Chi shrieked. “If I cannot reproach myself, I will not feel good. All these years, I was cursing both of you secretly every day and every night. I was obsessed with finding more money, except for stealing and robbing, I tried all sorts of unscrupulous methods. I hid my name and identity, I eat sparely, everyone thought that I am a madman. I swear I will gather a wealth that is even vaster than the Nangong Aristocracy Family but…”

He suddenly threw his sack on the ground and lamented. “So what if I have a million now? So what can it do? Only till today that I know that wealth cannot buy true affection, even with a million, it cannot remove the heartbreaks that are

inside the hearts of others. Big Brother, I…I am wrong. I am so sorry to you!"

Nangong Changshu was silence for awhile. "You have overheard just now?"

Qian Chi nodded with tears still flowing down his face.

Nangong Changshu gently lifted him up and said. "But no matter what, today the three of us are finally together, is indeed a joyous occasion." He smiled and turned over. "Pinger, come over here and greet your Second Uncle. This is the famous 'Shadowless Bronze Fist and Iron Hand', your Second Uncle Lu Yixian."

The Nangong Ping who had been stunned earlier recovered enough to walk over.

Lu Yixian, his tears had not dried yet, laughed. "Child, you didn't expect to have such useless Second Uncle right!"

Mistress Nangong blinked her eyes, she did not know whether to laugh or cry, whether to feel sorrow or happy in her heart but tears flowed down as she croaked. "I didn't expect we can finally see you again. I didn't expect that you who always love to cloth yourself beautifully will become like this, are you…you poor to the point till you become crazy that you can't even bear to buy a proper clothing."

Lu Yixian laughed. "I am not poor till I am crazy but I am petty till I become crazy. In my sack I have a million silver but I am unwilling to even spend one copper."

Nangong Changshu exclaimed. "You did all these just for her, alas! Really you!"

Mistress Nangong said. "Look at you. In front of our child, you should have said something more respectful." In between her tears, she had started to smile.

These three people although they were filled with worries but they were now filled with the joyous moment of reunion. In that instant, they had returned to that beautiful moment when they were younger, twenty years ago when they had traverse so carefree in the Fraternity.

When Nangong Ping looked at the tears of joy, somehow he felt his sorrow had also started to diminish. He laughed. "Second Uncle you have a good capacity for drinks, do you want nephew to…

Before he could finish, there was a loud sound outside and three arrows that carried the sound of bells flew into the hall and struck upon the top of a red wood chest.

Lu Yixian expressions changed but he was laughing. "Marvelous, marvelous. Never did I expect the these wild bandits will use musical arrows and they actually shoot into Big Brother's home!"

Nangong Changshu laughed awhile. "The one that shoot the arrows, his wrists strength is not weak. I wonder where this hero is from."

At this moment of time there was a shout from the outside. “Ren Kuangfeng, Qin Luanyu have brought the heroes from the three mountains and eighteen strongholds to request some traveling expenses from the Master of the Nangong Manor. To open the door to welcome or not, we leave it to the Master of the Nangong Manor to decide.” His voice was clear and his morale was very high.

Nangong Changshu slightly raised his eyebrows and said. “Why did the Wind Rain Double Whips return from seclusion?”

Lu Yixian said. “If it is other unorthodox friends, I afraid they will not even go through this formalities and have already barged in."

He added. "When they charge in, we will immediately react.”

Mistress Nangong laughed. “No wonder you have a million wealth now, because you know the behavior of the present bandits so well...” When she laughed, she accidentally glance at Nangong Ping and did not continue.

When the enemies were at hand, the three of them could still laugh and made jokes. And they seemed like they had never even placed much importance to the infamous bandit ‘Wind Rain Double Whips’ in their eyes. Nangong Ping secretly muttered to himself. “I see that mother when she was young, she loved to joke around.”

Another shout came through the window and said. “You must know your limitations, hurry and reply us. When I shouted to ‘three’, my brothers will charge through the door! ‘One’!”

Lu Yixian flexed his arms, his body became larger and laughed. “I am not old yet, what about big brother?”

Nangong Changshu laughed. “I am not old either.”

Lu Yixian laughed aloud and said. “ Very good!” And suddenly he clapped his hands and there was a tingling sound. “Do we do it now?”

Nangong Changshu said. “Naturally.”

Mistress Nangong laughed softly. “Very good. Both you brothers still have your ‘Flower Guarding Bells’ but I, this flower, is now old.”

“Two!” Shouted from outside the window.

Lu Yixian laughed hilariously. “Us brothers have not grown old, how will you be old? Big Brother, am I still the one that gets to be the vanguard?”

Nangong Changshu replied. “Alright.”

When he had said ‘Alright’, Lu Yixian suddenly leapt into the air and did a somersault and then he landed on Nangong Changshu shoulders.

Nangong Changshu shouted. “Go!” And turned his hands over to push forward and Lu Yixian body became like a speeding arrow that flew across in great speed across the hall.

There was a ‘Pong’ sound as the door opened, followed by a tingling sound,

and a golden light that was actually from a golden string flew past with the speeding person. And yet another golden string flew through the air from the hand of Nangong Changshu!

Yet another tingling sound and the golden strings seemed to merge, then Nangong Changshu sounded. “Back!” There was a cry of surprise from outside the entrance.

Before the cries could settle down, Lu Yixian was back at a startling speed and he had caught hold of the golden string in his left hand and on his right hand was the imposing body of an old man.

Lu Yixian gently released his hand and Ren Kuangfeng who was one of the ‘Wind Rain Double Whips’ landed heavily onto the ground!

Nangong Ping heaved a sigh of relief. Was he startled? Impressed? Looking carefully at the golden strings, he saw that attached to it were a pair of golden bells. When Lu Yixian made use of the strength of Nangong Changsun hands to fly across, he also released the golden bells on his hand at the same time. After he had flown across, Nangong Changshu released the bells in his hand after him.

These two pairs of golden bells when they hit one another also merge their golden strings that were attached to it. In that instant, when Lu Yixian had caught Ren Kuangfeng, he made use of the combine golden strings to fly back. It was indeed really like a speeding arrow and back like a wind. The speed was so instantaneous, so swift like a lightning bolt that even if the target was an expert fighter, he would be taken completely off guarded and could not defend in time.

Nangong Ping felt his hot blood rising to his head as he shouted without thinking. “What a good Flower Guarding Bells!”

There seemed to be confusion outside the hall as an old man greeted hilariously outside. “Is that the Three Swashbucklers that are in the hall?!”

Nangong Changshu and Lu Yixian laughed and laughed while Ren Kuangfeng slowly got up. His face was very pale and he looked very frightened as he trembled. “It is indeed the Three Swashbucklers!”

Lu Yixian laughed. “We have not met for many years. To think you can still recognize us brothers?”

Ren Kuangfeng sighed deeply with his head lowered. “I really cannot recognize the three of you. But this ‘Wondrous Rainbow, Lightning Bolt’ and the ‘Life Ending Golden Bells’ techniques, I will never forget.”

Lu Yixian laughed merrily as he said. “This wondrous rainbow, lightning bolt and that golden bells, when the bells start tingling, the soul will be taken away…haha! Big Brother, never expect that the occasional plaything that we invented will be called a epitome technique by the people in the Pugilistic fraternity.”

Suddenly he ceased his laughter and turned around. “Since you still remember us brothers, did you forget the deadly oath that you make in front of us years ago?!”

Ren Kuangfeng sighed, his head still lowered. “If I have known that the Master of the Nangong Manor is the ‘Compose Green Gown Swordsman’, of the Three Swashbucklers, even if I have the guts, I will never even approach a single step into the Nangong Manor.”

Lu Yixian coldly said. “Now that you know, what do you think should be done then!”

The confusion never ceased outside the hall. Ren Kuangfeng turned his head and shouted aloud. “Second Brother Qin, hurry and bring the brothers one mile out of the Nangong Manor. The Three Swashbucklers, they are here!”

Qin Luanyu rushed inside, he moved his glance around and his expression changed. “Indeed the mighty heroes are here, for the past twenty years we put in a lot of painstaking efforts to train but we are still unable to handle even one stroke from Hero Lu extraordinary stance.”

In the rainstorm outside, someone shouted. “What is the ‘The Three Swashbucklers’? Don’t tell me base on that, having come from afar, we have to go back home?” And then more than ten people had entered the hall.

‘The Three Swashbucklers’ looked solemn and did not say a word.

Qin Luanyu turned his back around and said. “Who say that?”

A man in a jacket on the left step forward and coldly said. “If you want us good friends to disperse, at least you should display some real prowess and not base on a few words and expect us to leave, am I not right to say so?”

The man on the right shouted. “Brothers, do you all agree?”

There was a muttering by the intruders and Ren Kuangfeng laughed awhile. “I see that it is the Chief of the White Stronghold.” He smiled and walked to their front and asked. “What do the two of you propose then?”

The man on the left said in a low voice. “Us brothers have come from thousands of miles, at least we should be given some traveling expenses. Although the two of you are Seniors but you should have think of us poor brothers.”

Ren Kuangfeng laughed. “Is one thousand silver enough?…Take it…” Suddenly he extended his hands outward. There were two sounds as the Bai brothers cried out as they vomited blood and fell to the ground.

Ren Kuangfeng laughed. “So which other brothers want their traveling expenses?”

There was no reply from the surrounding only the cries of the Bai brothers that grew fainter and fainter and finally they are dead. Tens of men stood together yet none of them dared to mutter a word.

Ren Kuangfeng became solemn again and shouted. “Go back now.”

Tens of men all without a trace of emotions turned back. None of them dare to turn their heads to look.

‘Wind Rain Double Whips’ turned their backs together toward Nangong Changshu.

Nangong Changshu sighed. “You brothers and I have known for a long time and you did not forget about us brothers. We can be called acquaintances. But now I have a sudden event here, therefore I cannot prepare wine as farewell. But if the two of you have any needs, I can still render my aid.”

Ren Kuangfeng lowered his head to say. “That you did not fault us, us brothers are greatly appreciated…”

Nangong Changshu said. “Since that is the case, I shall not force. I bide you brothers farewell.” He raised his hands together.

Just when Ren Kuangfeng and Qin Luanyu had turned, Lu Yixian suddenly asked. “Wait awhile. When the two of you first came, did you encounter the Diancang members?”

Qin Luanyu said. “More than half the Diancang Clan have been wounded or dead. Except for Diancang Yan and Black Heavenly Goose, only a few can still fight.” He replied after a pause. These two people were indeed experience old pugilists, they knew the reason why Lu Yixian had asked them. After they had finished, they left.

Lu Yixian solemnly said. “Now we know that it quite alright to send the chests out, Big Brother why don’t you seize this opportunity now?”

Nangong Changshu smiled. “The Envoy of the Divine Creator had already come once but he did not say where to send the chests. Even if we can send the chests out but to where?”

Lu Yixian was stunned but after awhile, he suddenly laughed. “But no matter what, no matter who will be there to stop us, just us alone, who can stop us when we want to go out!”

When he moved his body, the golden bells in his hands began to tingle. Its sound could be heard very clearly all around even with this heavy thunderstorm.

Nangong Ping looked at the golden bells that was in Lu Yixian hands, he began to think about how heroic the Three Swashbucklers were, he began to recite the poetic lines in his mind. ‘This wondrous Rainbow, lightning bolt and that golden bells, when the bells start tingling, the soul will be taken away’ and his eyes were joyous.

Lu Yixian laughed. “Child, can you hear what is so mysterious about the bell’s sound?”

Nangong Ping could only shake his head.

Mistress Nangong said. “These golden bells are actually your father’s family heirloom. There are a total of three sets. They don’t have anything special but when one of the golden bells began to vibrate, the other two will also start to vibrate. Although these golden bells are not really music instruments but they can be akin to that – when one began to sound, the others will follow.”

She took out a pair of golden bells from her clothing and passed it to Nangong Ping.

Lu Yixian shook the golden bells in his hand and the golden bells in Nangong Ping began to vibrate in a clear and beautiful tingling sound.

Nangong Ping was very startled and astonished. He did not know that in this vast world, there were even more unexplained things that cannot be explained by the norm.

Nangong Changshu said. “When the three of us roamed the Fraternity, only your mother martial ability was the weakest. Therefore we were afraid that she would be in danger when she was alone, so each of us took one set of bells. When she was in danger, she would sound the bells and our bells would sense it and also vibrate. Then we would go hastily to save her…”

Lu Yixian laughed and added. “Therefore your father give a strange and wondrous name to these bells and call them ‘The Flower Guarding…’”

Nangong Changshu laughed and resumed. “This ‘The Flower Guarding Bell’ is not something that I have made up. In ancient times, Emperor Han Xian loved flowers very much but he was afraid that the swallows would come and destroy the flowers. Therefore he placed uncountable numbers of golden bells in the garden. If one swallow landed on the flower, the golden bells would start ringing and the palace Flower Guarding Protectors would immediately be alerted and they would come and drive away the swallows. Therefore the people of the Jin Dynasty called it the ‘Flower Guarding Bells’ and later poets would also compose the saying of ‘A hundred thousands golden bells protecting the flowers.’ So my Flower Guarding comes from these two parables.”

Mistress Nangong softly laughed. “These matters are tens of years ago, why talk about it. Pinger, if you like the bells, this set of golden bells you can keep it. In future, when you are roaming the Pugilist realm and have the chance of meeting…” She suddenly remembered that her beloved son would be going to a faraway place. Therefore her smiles ceased and it was filled with a sorrow.

Nangong Changshu sighed and gave his set of the golden bells to Nangong Ping. “Your father and mother did not have other things to give it to you. These two sets of golden bells, you must treasure it properly. In future…” When he said ‘in future’, he could not help but sigh and he became silence.

Nangong Ping held four golden bells in his hand and lowered his head in

silence.

Lu Yixian looked at them and laughed to break the silence. “Your parents have given you the golden bells. If I did not leave behind mine, you will think that your Second Uncle is petty. “Come, take it. Keep it properly. If in future if you meet a maiden that is close to your heart, try giving her the golden bells!”

Nangong Ping bowed respectfully to receive the golden bells.

Mistress Nangong forcefully laughed. “But no matter what, it a good thing that we can finally gather again. We need to celebrate this occasion. I go and prepare some small dishes and wines. Second Brother Lu and Pinger are here now and I can cast aside my worries to cook.”

Lu Yixian said. “Third Sister…alas, Sister in law, why bother to cook yourself?”

Mistress Nangong eyes were downcast but she forced a smile. “We have already sent all the servants away…” Before she had finished talking, she had already turned around and exit the great hall.

When Nangong Ping saw how worry his mother was for him, he secretly sighed deeply in his heart. He swore he would restore the family prestige and not to let his mother suffered.

Nangong Changshu cleared the channels of the escort guards and apologized several times to them. When they learnt that this bald old man was actually the Lu Yixian, that was so famous in the past for his swiftness movement skill, fist and palm technique, they were all startled. And when saw that Nangong Ping was the disciple of the Divine Dragon Clan, their fighting spirit rose. Because many of them were feeling sorry that they could not be able to help having depleted their strength or were wounded very badly. Nangong Changshu sent them to the rooms behind to recuperate.

When Lu Yixian looked at their back view, he sighed softly. “If in the Pugilist, there is no one that is hot blooded and courageous, I am afraid that no one will be willing to teach their sons martial arts anymore.”

Nangong Changshu said. “Second brother, I wonder how many people in the Fraternity actually remember us ‘The Three Swashbucklers’?”

Lu Yixian asked. “Big Brother, are you thinking of returning to the Fraternity?”

Nangong Changshu said. “This manor I have already sold and at the end of the month, I will have to move out. In future, I will be forced to be a wanderer.”

The dishes and wines had been prepared but everyone looked so troubled in their hearts.

Nangong Ping expression changed. “Nangong Manor is sold?”

Nangong Changshu replied. “After selling it but the amount is still not enough…”

Lu Yixian lifted his sack and laughed. “Then what about this million in my sack? Big Brother, how much do you need?”

Nangong Changshu looked up and laughed. “In my whole life, I have not experienced what it is to be poor. How can I give up this chance so easily? Second Brother, let not talk about it and let me toast you thrice.”

When Nangong Ping saw the heroic air that his father displayed, he toasted his father a cup.

Lu Yixian said. “What is the taste of being poor? Actually it is...” Suddenly he gave a big shout as he rose from the table. “Who is that?”

Lu Yixian dashed across the hall and pushed opened the main door of the great hall open but there was no one around, only the rain and the wind.

Nangong father and son, Lu Yixian expressions changed. A breeze happened to blow in and they could smell a fishy stench. Coincidentally, Mistress Nangong had just carried a delicious dish of chicken into the hall and saw that outside have two chlorine green fire outside. It was the eyes of a giant snake. Her mind was jolted and she grasped. “Snake!” And she dropped the dish.

The two green fire seemed to be getting closer and closer when Nangong Ping grasped in a low voice and he was about to move when Lu Yixian caught hold of his wrist and said. “Wait!” And he shot a silvery projectile from his mouth towards the direction of the green light.

In this fishy stench, it was suddenly filled with the sweet aroma of wine. Nangong Ping knew that Lu Yixian had used his internal strength to force out the wine inside him, to form a liquid projectile. The power of the projectile could not be estimated and instantly, the green fire was extinguished.

Nangong Changshu furrowed and said. “Ever since the Wanshou Manor had been burnt down, in the Fraternity, there isn’t anyone that has the ability to tame wild snakes and beasts. This snake that is here, is simply too weird.”

In between his speech, the green fire began to lit again in the darkness outside accompany by music and the pair of green fire began to rose even higher with the music.

Nangong Changshu expression had changed. He took a jar of wine from the table and ran to the entrance to empty it. And then he took a lamp, dropped it and a strong fire was started at the entrance.

Because of the bright light caused by the fire, they could see a green scale giant snake had started to move back a few feet on the stone steps outside the entrance.

Lu Yixian cried out in sudden fright and he was at the far end of the hall now.

Mistress Nangong smiled and said. “I didn’t expect that Second Brother Lu will be so afraid of snakes.”

Yu Yixian looked at her and said. “Not only me, you are frightened of snakes too!”

Nangong Ping thought to himself. “ No wonder he looked so scared of the Ghastly Beggars. He is not afraid of them but their snakes.”

As the flames started to die at the entrance, Mistress Nangong threw two silvery starlight projectiles and the giant snake turned over and slipped down the long stair.

The music did not cease as a fierce tiger appeared and charged headlong at them but Nangong Ping flew forward, evaded it and kicked it down the steps in a beautiful and graceful manner.

Lu Yixian clapped his hands and laughed. “Marvelous display, marvelous display. The disciple of the Divine Dragon is indeed…”

But before he could finish, four giant golden apes appeared and each of them looked like they could even crush a tiger to death.

Nangong Changshu expression changed and he grasped. “Pinger, come back here.”

But Nangong Ping did not turn his head, clenched his fists tightly and face those giant golden apes.

A mysterious voice began to emit from the darkness. “Nangong Changshu, why are you still fighting for your life in the hall? Hurry and run away. Once the divine beasts attacked, you will die and there will be no one to bury you!”

Immediately when the mysterious voice had finished, the music changed and the four golden apes began to charge at them headlong.

But Nangong Changshu, Lu Yixian and Nangong Ping plunge forward and kicked three of the giant golden apes down the stone stair. The fourth giant golden ape dared not fight anymore and ran down the steps on its own accord.

Lu Yixian extended his hands and patted Nangong Ping on his shoulder as he laughed. “Good Child, very good martial display!”

Nangong Changshu stood facing the rainstorm that was outside and said in a loud and clear voice. “All of you that are outside, all the wealth and riches are right inside the Nangong Manor. If you have the interest, come and get it with your ability. Why hide in the dark woods and ask beasts to make a clown of itself!”

Suddenly the music changed again and it becomes so tender and beautiful that it seemed to touch the hearts of everyone. And a strange fragrant began to surface.

Coming up from the flight of giant stone steps, were six beautiful young maidens in a pure white satin and white veils as they danced gentle and beautifully to the entrance.

As the rainstorm never ceased, it made the fabric of their clothing almost invisible and displaying their beautiful bodies…

Nangong Ping raised his eyebrows and turned his head away.

Lu Yixian laughed. “Pinger, why did you turn your head for?”

Nangong Ping was stunned by his question and did not know how to reply.

Lu Yixian laughed. “A person in life must experiences all things. These Soul Snatching Music and the Bewitching Enchanting Dance, is rarely seen. If you miss it, won’t it be such a pity?”

Mistress Nangong smiled. “Why you, can you be more serious. Pinger is so young and you teaching him to look. How is he going to have this look but not notice, hear but not care willpower? Although not looking is such a pity but for his age, he will have to make do with it.”

Lu Yixian laughed heartily. “I ask him to watch, is precisely to train his mind and willpower so that when next time he encounters such a situation again, he will not be confused and create a blunder.”

Nangong Ping saw that these three people when they encountered such a bewitching and enchanting situation, they could still be so composed and natural. If they did not have such a magnanimous hearts, how would they such a joyous attitude? Therefore he sighed, praised them in his hearts and turned his head to say. “Child, I can’t bear to watch their behavior only, how will such a crude showing of flesh affect me?”

Lu Yixian laughed aloud. “Indeed, indeed. If your heart already have an extraordinary beautiful sweetheart whose looks are out of this world, how could you be affected by their crude showing!” He was referring to Ye Manqing.

Nangong Ping face was slightly reddened.

Suddenly a voice emitted from the darkness again. “Do you enjoy this beautiful extraordinary dance and music? Is your heart moved by it? As long as you decide not to be stubborn anymore, all these beautiful beauties will be yours to enjoy. Why must you be so stubborn as to give all your riches to some others to enjoy?”

Nangong Changshu was as composed as ever. Then he slightly furrowed and said. “Second Brother, do you still remember this tactic of first scaring, next to use beauties to charm. Who in the Fraternity is fond of using it?”

Lu Yixian glanced his eyes to and for in thoughts and then solemnly said. “Big Brother, do you mean that it is the Mistress of the Wanshou Manor, the Proud Concubine?”

Nangong Changshu said. “Ever since Wanshou Manor was burnt down by a fire years ago, the Proud Concubine had also disappeared. Although today, these tactics are not as deadly as her method but the style is exactly the same. If you do not believe, when the scare and the seduce tactics failed, there will surely be another tactic coming soon.”

Lu Yixian unwittingly became perplexed. “If today, it is also involved the Proud Concubine, then it will be a very troublesome thing. Ever since that Wanshou Manor was burnt down, there had been no news of her ever since. Could it be that the solitaire demoness has a successor?”

In between their conversations, as the music became more hurried, the young beautiful dancers had also began to intentional or unintentional revealed some mysterious part of their body. They looked very seducing but it was also very obvious that they too had been bewitched by the music.

From the dark woods, another four young women in white satin appeared on the flight of the stone stairs carrying a lamp each. Every one of them moved so gracefully and beautifully. The two foremost young women also held a red umbrella to shelter another young woman with long hair and in purple satin that had also appeared, she herself covered her face with a fan. Although no one can saw her face but her movements were extremely beautiful.

Nangong Changshu expression changed as he said. “Wearing a thin purple satin, this is the style of the Lady Proudness. Did it mean that Lady Proudness have made her appearance in the Pugilistic Fraternity again?”

Lu Yixian was very solemn and did not talk. Suddenly he gave a shout. “Who is that?”

He turned his body around and saw several people jumped into the great hall through the windows.

In that instant, the young woman in satin began to dance, charming everyone with her beautiful figure.

Her slight movement had already surpassed all the other young women in terms of grace and beauty as she danced up the flight of stone stairs.

The other ten young women began to follow her behind, in a slow dance and then took off their almost invisible clothing piece by piece…

In the great hall, there were two leaders who seemed to lead the men. They were the strongest fighters of Diancang Sect, ‘Diancang Yan’ and ‘Black Heavenly Goose’.

Although the music and the dance were very tempting but the mood of everyone in the great hall were very solemn. Everyone was very still face and stared at one another.

Lu Yixian coldly laughed awhile. “I have thought that Diancang Clan is a

righteous orthodox sect but the activities are all sneaky and cannot be seen by others. Barging in the middle of the night to other people's home, is this the usual way of the Diancang Clan?"

The Heavenly Goose Priest was in a rage while Diancang Yan did not even looked at him and coldly said. "We only want to say something to the Nangong Master."

Nangong Changshu coldly said. "Your ways disgusted me, I feel I have nothing more to say to you."

The Heavenly Goose Priest immediately drew his long sword.

Diancang Yan remained unmoved and added. "I hope that Nangong Master will hear a advice from us priests. It is recommended that you leave all these chests with us for three years. After three years, we promise we will not even touch it and will return it to…"

Lu Yixian coldly laughed. "The hungry dog will borrow buns from a person? Hehe, laudable, laudable. It really laudable."

Diancang Yan pretended not to hear and added. "I can guarantee with the reputation of the Diancang Sect that we will never touch the riches in the chests at all."

Lu Yixian laughed hilariously. "Diancang Sect has a reputation? It is the first time I have ever heard."

Heavenly Goose Priest flicked his long sword with a shout but Diancang Yan stayed his hand and said. "Third Brother, let us hear what Nangong Master has to say."

Nangong Changshu was solemn when he said. "My answer, do I need to say? It obvious."

Diancang Yan said. "If Nangong Master will not listen to a good advice, I afraid that today that I have to…hehe." He coldly laughed two times and gapped.

Lu Yixian said. "Old black priest, you come over here. Let me see what you Heavenly Goose is made of."

Before he had finished talking, the Heavenly Goose Priest had attacked with a sword stance. Lu Yixian evaded it and both of them began to duel.

In the midst of the enchanting music, those ten young maidens had almost nothing left on their bodies, their bodies were white and amber that they could almost cause others to lose their willpower.

Only that young maiden in purple, who was waving a fan, did not undress but she occasional gave out an enchanting laugh. And her voice and mannerisms were seducing to behold.

Nangong Ping shouted aloud. "Go back!"

But those young maidens laughed gently as they danced in a slow movement

and looked at him with seducing eyes, seeming wanting to swallow Nangong Ping.

Nangong Ping was in a dazzled. He could not attack, could not retreat. Although he was trained in martial skills but it seemed useless now. How could he attack those maidens that wore almost nothing?

The Heavenly Goose Priest eyes were chilling and piercing. His swordplay vicious and every stroke were aimed at Lu Yixian most vulnerable positions. Diancang swordplay was usually very swift and flexible and this Heaven Goose Priest swordplay was even more extreme as he attacked sword after sword non-stop seemingly like it was so natural to him.

Lu Yixian evaded his body and carried a cold smile on his smile. These vicious sword stances were unable to touch even his clothing. He was purposely playing along and did not use his killer stances yet. Although he had attacked with a stroke but it was offside. His body moved around him, trapping the priest in the middle like a cat playing with a mouse as he mocked. “Black old priest, when did you Diancang Sect starts to train this dancing swordplay? Those dancing maidens are definitely much more better than your swordplay.”

The Heavenly Goose Priest ignored him and his swordplay got even more ruthless and vicious and seemed like until he could pierce him with his sword, he would not relax his attacks.

The sword energy from the Heaven Goose Priest became even more pressing and Lu Yixian gripped a table as a shield to block. In that instant, the dishes, lamps were overturned and the great hall became dimmer.

At that moment, the four lamps that were carried by the other four maidens began to glow on them, showing their bodies as they danced in a slow pace as they finally reached the top of the flight of the stone steps…

Nangong Changshu furrowed and said solemnly. “Second Brother, it is a critical situation! Please be serious!”

Lu Yixian echoed back. “Alright.” His stances and strokes began to change as with just five fists cornered the Heavenly Goose Priest to the wall.

Nangong Changshu did not turn his head and solemnly said to his wife. “My dear, you take care of the people outside the hall while I handle the inside!”

Although the hall was heavily filled with a malevolent aura but in fact the outside of the hall was even more precaution and dangerous. Those maidens with their flesh and fingers were even more direful than that of the sharpest sword.

The beautiful young maiden in purple satin had already danced toward Nangong Ping. He could only smell a sweet fragrant in the air as he shouted. “Go back where you come from!” He waved his hands to hit her on her Jian Jing accupoint.

But that young maiden in purple did not even try to evade it as she raised her

body forward.

Nangong Ping quickly withdrew his attacks. How could he have attacked her on her front?

Mistress Nangong raised her eyebrows and said. “Pinger, move aside!” But four maidens surrounded her and obstructed her while another four maidens had surrounded Nangong Ping with their legs and bodies.

Nangong Ping had to decide quickly. If he move back, he would allow these maidens to enter the great hall. If he did not, he would be in grave dangers from their charms. He had a very strong willpower but this Soul Snatching Music and the Bewitching Enchanting Dance caused his resolve to weaken and unable to endure. And these four maidens had now come closer and closer, their seducing eyes were like fire…

The Heavenly Goose Priest blocked with his sword, his attacking stances had now become defending stances that were like a reflective wall. For a moment notice, Lu Yixian found out that he was unable to break through his defenses.

As for the other Diancang swordsmen, they had already started to move around.

Diancang Yan drew his long sword at his back and said. “Today is not a duel, even if we attack with many, it doesn’t matter!”

Lu Yixian felt three swords coming from his back while the Heavenly Goose Priest seized the opportunity to exhibit an attacking sword stance…

Nangong Changshu said. “Diancang Sect usually do not commit evil and today although I am unwilling to hurt anyone but your ways and methods forced me to act. So don’t blame me.” He raised his palm and sent a windforce to his back across to the four young maidens who were fast approaching Nangong Ping.

Although he did not turn his head, he was all knowing. He knew that Nangong Ping may look tough outside but was soft in the inside and would be unwilling to attack those maidens. He had used nine folds of his strength on this palm technique, so how could these maidens withstand it? Instantaneously, two of the maidens flew backward and down the flight of steps.

Nangong Ping was jolted and said. “Father, you come here. Child, I…will deal with those Diancang swordsmen!”

Before he had finished, Nangong Changshu had attacked to his back with another windforce from his palm again. And the young maiden in purple was jerked by it. Nangong Ping took the opportunity to hit her on her Qu Chi accupoint.

Note that windforce cannot kill, just imagine the speed of the wind that is caused by a typhoon which is even more furious. The two maidens that flew away had little or no martial ability when they were suddenly caught off guarded by the

Windforce but the maiden in purple simply received just a jolt.

But the maiden in purple waved her fan and exhibited a stance 'The Wondrous Bird slicing through'. She almost sliced Nangong Ping's wrist. Aided by the dim glow from the lamps, Nangong Ping finally saw her beautiful captivating face.

Nangong Ping flashed his eyes to look and he was immediately shocked and he grasped. "You…you…" He had not expected to see this beautiful young maiden that was wearing a purple satin to be his own protégé – His Protégé Sister, Wang Susu! (Gu Yihong)

Gu Yihong was smiling in idiocy and her eyes looked seducing and as she attacked him with her fan again, urged on by the music.

Nangong Ping turned ashen as he called after her. "Fourth Sister, what happens to you? Don't you recognize me anymore? Where is Big Brother now?"

Gu Yihong giggled and laughed. "Who knows you? Who is your Big Brother!"

Nangong Ping was very startled as well as shocked and he moved several steps behind and he was now in the hall.

Nangong Changshu furrowed and turned his glance at Nangong Ping awhile and solemnly said. "I am afraid this girl has been drugged and lost her senses. Move aside first…"

Before he could finish, Diancang Yan seized the opportunity to deliver a killing sword stance. Nangong Ping with a shout kicked his wrist to deflect his stance.

Diancang Yan coldly said. "So it is you again?" He attacked with three more sword stances.

Although Mistress Nangong was a woman herself but when she was facing these four seducing maidens, she did not know how to start.

Nangong Changshu removed the belt from his waist and attacked with his left hand seven continuous times. But Gu Yihong evaded it. Suddenly he shouted. "Lady, beware of their drugs on their hands!" He fell another maiden as he spoke.

Mistress Nangong immediately held her breath at the same time those four young maidens forced out a dust like powder around her from the tips of their fingernails.

Nangong Ping was fighting with two young Diancang swordsmen. His heart was very startled, afraid, doubtful and at the same time worrying for the whereabouts of his Big Brother Long Fei. He was also worrying for Gu Yihong who had become like this. Because he was distracted, his attacking strokes naturally became weaker.

He turned around to shout. "Father, don't hurt that girl in purple!"

Nangong Changshu had just hit the maiden in purple on her 'Xiao Yao' accupoint and knocked down another maiden. He solemnly said. "Not to worry, I only hit her on her…" But he failed to notice that Gu Yihong had wavered and almost about to fall off the steps.

Before he could finish, a shadowy figure charged up the stairs with a big shout and caught of Gu Yihong's body. He was wearing a cotton garment, very big size and very strong build and he turned out to be Long Fei.

Nangong Ping had just turned his glance around to look at the one yelling and was startled to see Long Fei. "Big Brother…"

Nangong Changshu was startled as well. "This person is Long Fei?"

Nangong Ping replied. "Indeed!" Then he shouted hurriedly. "Big Brother, your little brother Nangong Ping is here!"

But Long Fei face was blanked and did not seen to hear as he carried Gu Yihong down the flight of steps.

Nangong Changshu called out after him. "Hero Long, please wait!" And he was by his side in an instant.

But Long Fei did not say anything and just attacked with his right hand with a stance 'The Claw of the Cloud Dragon' straight into the face of Nangong Changshu while holding Gu Yihong with his left hand.

Nangong Changshu dodged it but Long Fei followed by a kick. Although Long Fei's attacking strokes were all fierce but he had opened up a defensive loop. As Nangong Changshu did not want to hurt him, therefore he did not exploit it.

Having just evaded his kick, Long Fei suddenly put Gu Yihong on the ground and shouted. "I will fight with all of my everything with you vile thieves!"

Nangong Ping shouted hurriedly. "Big Brother, you…what happens to you! …" Suddenly he felt a pain in his shoulder as Diancang Yan stabbed him with his long sword.

Nangong Changshu solemnly called out. "Pinger, you just concentrate on your fight. Your protégé brother, just let your father handle it!"

Nangong Ping ignored his injuries and said anxiously. "Is it because he is drugged?"

Nangong Changshu replied. "It appears to be the case!"

Nangong Ping said. "What good protégés of Diancang, fancy using drugs!" At the same time he caught a Diancang swordsman's sword point with three fingers and snapped it and then kicking him away. That Diancang swordsman gave a terrifying cry after he had rolled ten feet away and then fainted.

Diancang Yan hatefully said. "So vicious!" And he picked up the broken sword and was about to attack when Mistress Nangong happened to knock the four surrounding maidens down and was now patting him gently on his Jiang Tai

accupoint on his back.

Diancang Yan suddenly gave a terrifying cry as he vomited blood.

Nangong Ping spirit was jolted while the Black Heavenly Goose called out in startle. “Second protégé brother, second protégé brother…”

Diancang Yan who was foaming blood said in a trembling voice. “Third brother, hurry…and…go…” And he fell to the ground.

In the darkness were the sounds of many horses. A shout was heard in the dark woods. “Brother Nangong, your brother Sima Zhongtian is late in coming!”

Then a rider charged in great haste and up the mighty stair. It was indeed Sima Zhongtian of the Red Flag Escort Agency. “Brother Nangong, don’t be frighten, Sima Zhong has come!” And he charged at Long Fei.

Nangong Ping from the corners of his eyes had saw the horse that Sima Zhongtian was riding, its hoof was about to step on Gu Yihong.

In haste, Nangong Ping charged forward and caught the horse by its foremost hoofs before it could step onto her.

Long Fei in a rage caught hold of Sima Zhongtian’s spear and Sima Zhongtian was startled for he had started to recognize that it was Long Fei.

Long Fei lifted Sima Zhongtian up through his spear, and unhorsed him from the horse before he picked up Gu Yihong and ran away to the dark woods.

Lu Yixian was startled to see Black Heavenly Goose made five continuous attacking stances before he kicked the window opened and sprang away.

Lu Yixian was afraid that there might be an ambush outside, therefore he did not give chase.

The malevolent music in the dark wood caused even the horse to disobey Sima Zhongtian and it charged straight into the great hall. Sima Zhongtian tried to control his horse by gripping around it but it charged headlong into those heavy chests and then it stopped and toppled over.

Sima Zhongtian was holding the body of his horse tightly before he finally got up and said in a low voice. “My cherish horse, my cherish horse, are you alright?”

One must know that this horse had been with him for many years and was also the only one of its kind from a hundred thousand breeds. He loved this horse more than his life and ignored the pain from his fall and asked the horse instead.

Nangong Ping was calling in a low voice. “Big Brother, Big Brother…”

Then a Diancang swordsman plunged forward upon Sima Zhongtian. Nangong Changshu saw and killed him but not before his sword energy cut Sima Zhongtian’s horse into half.

Nangong Changshu caught hold of Sima Zhongtian’s wrist and solemnly said. “Brother Sima, that horse is hopeless now.”

Sima Zhongtian was shocked for words as tears flowed from him as he muttered. “My cherished horse…my cherished horse…”

Suddenly Nangong Ping caught hold of Diancang Yan and hatefully said. “Tell me, tell me. What drug did you Diancang Sect use to control my big brother?” One must know that other than his Mentor Master, Long Fei was the one he respected the most, therefore at this moment, he was very grief.

Diancang Yan slowly opened his eyes and said. “In the Diancang Clan, there is no one that will use drug.” Although his voice was weak but he was firm.

Nangong Ping angrily said. “Bullshit. If it is not Diancang Sect, then who is the one that administrate the drugs?”

Diancang Yan closed his eyes and refused to answer him.

Nangong Ping in his rage was about to hit him when Nangong Changshu said. “Pinger, stop it!” And he helped Diancang Yan up and solemnly sighed. “I know that Diancang disciples will never use drug. And I even know that you are forced to do it…”

Although Diancang Yan did not say anything, his eyes were now opened.

Nangong Changshu added. “Although today, your Diancang Clan have suffered a heavy losses but the hundred of years of foundation that your clan has established will not be destroyed so easily!”

Diancang Yan seemed to smile.

Nangong Changshu continued. “But in future, when Diancang has rebuild its strength, won’t the people in the Fraternity remark that Diancang disciples will only use drugs and beautiful women…”

Diancang Yan opened his eyes and shouted. “Shut up!”

Nangong Changshu said. “If you are unwilling to let the good name of Diancang to be tainted, you should say the truth, or else…alas! So many eyes have witnessed it. Even if I don’t believe it, I have to believe it.”

Diancang Yan was stunned and he looked around. “Where is my third brother?”

Lu Yixian said. “Although your Diancang Clan decide to be our enemy but we have not decide that you will be our enemy. I have already let the Heavenly Goose Priest go.”

Diancang Yan was silence for awhile before he finally sighed deeply. “If you are thinking of making it out of the Nangong Manor alive today, it is as difficult as ascending the sky.”

Nangong Changshu asked. “How do you explain it?”

Diancang Yan said. “If you want to live, you can only send all these chests of riches out or else…”

Nangong Changshu expressions changed as he interrupted. “Is it because

there is people from the Devil Flock Island that is here?"

Diancang Yan closed his eyes and nodded.

Everyone in the great hall turned ashen.

Nangong Ping was startled. "So it means that my big brother is now in the hands of those people from the Devil Flock Island!"

Diancang Yan nodded and said. "The people from the Devil Flock Island had underestimated your Nangong Manor. Therefore they did not send their top exponents here. They only send one Envoy with some maidens and some beasts to aid us to break down the Nangong Manor. But who will expect that Nangong Master and Mistress will hide your martial abilities so well and you are all such top expert exponents. Now that they temporary stop the battle, surely they are preparing something even deadlier." After he had said here, his breathing became irregular.

Sima Zhongtian with tears in his eyes shouted. "We fight anyone that dare to stop us. I, Sima Zhongtian will like to see how great those people that are from the Devil Flock Island actually are."

But Nangong Changshu looked worried. He sighed deeply and said. "I deeply appreciate your advice. I have some life saving medicine in the manor…"

Diancang Yan smiled and added. "I have already been hit in the heart by your Lady. Even if your son did not kill me with a sword, I already hopeless."

Nangong Changshu sighed. "This…this…"

Diancang Yan sighed. "Nangong Master you rest assure. Even though I will die but I do not blame anyone of you. Or else why will I say all these. I only hope that in future when all of you have the chance, you will aid my younger protégé brother to rebuild the foundation of Diancang." His voice was irregular and his breathing faint.

Nangong Ping suddenly had an idea in his head as he said. "Those people from the Devil Flock Island, after they have failed in the first attempt will try a second attempt. But for the second attempt, they will have to seek help. Therefore outside the manor, surely it must be very empty. Why not we go now rather than stay here to be attacked."

Lu Yixian added. "Indeed. Let us charge out now and think of a way to contact the Messenger of the Divine Creator…"

Sima Zhongtian said. "It is indeed a marvelous idea. Brother Nangong, I still have tens of ironclad men and horses outside to receive us but…"

Nangong Ping understood his meaning and added. "Senior Sima, there are still many men from your escort agency that are resting inside. Nephew can seek them out."

Sima Zhongtian coldly hummed and stared at Nangong Ping for awhile. He

had already been mislead by Guo Yuxia malicious intents therefore he was already unhappy with Nangong Ping. Because it was not the right time to reveal all of Nangong Ping's deeds, therefore he did not say anything yet.

But Nangong Ping did not notice his attitude and went off into the inner halls.

Although they sounded like it was easy, Nangong Changshu could only secretly sigh for he was still worried even though he looked composed.

Lu Yixian said. "Big Brother, Sister in law. Do you have anything to pack?"

Mistress Nangong melancholy sighed and said. "Your big brother and I from now on will be homeless. What is there for us to pack?" There was a tinge of sadness in her eyes.

Lu Yixian was startled and lowered his head but Nangong Changshu laughed. "Lady, all these material things, when we are born, it is not with us and when we died, we can't take it away with us…"

Suddenly Nangong Ping had run into the great hall with a startled expression.

Nangong Changshu asked. "What is the matter?"

Nangong Ping was still very startled. "Everyone is dead!"

Everyone was stunned!

Nangong Ping said. "They are all hit by a blow to the heart. Their bodies are still warm, obviously they did not die long. But when I opened the doors, there is no sign of anyone."

Everyone was very startled and his or her hearts sunk. All these people were killed in the inner halls. Yet with so many top exponents in the main hall, there was not even one that notice it.

Diancang Yan slowly opened his eyes and trembled. "Too late, too late…The devils of the Fraternity…have already…come…" He did not finish for his breathing pulses were cold now.

Chapter Fifteen
The Noble Lord with the Almighty Laugh

Nangong Changshu slowly put Diancang Yan down.

Mistress Nangong took out a handkerchief to bind the open wound on Nangong Ping's shoulder. She gently said. "Child, try to swing your arm and check if you have hurt your nerves."

Nangong Ping swung a few times and felt warm by his mother's concern. He muttered. "Don't…have…"

Lu Yixian when he looked at this mother and son remembered how lonely he was. So he unwittingly lowered his head.

Suddenly there was the sound of horses outside.

Nangong Changshu lifted his head and asked. "Brother Sima, are they your reinforcements?"

Sima Zhongtian rushed to the entrance.

In the rainstorm were four horses carrying a red banner but there was no one else within sight.

Sima Zhongtian was jolted and moved back three steps as he muttered. "It is all over…all over…"

Nangong Changshu was flabbergasted. "Are those brothers that are outside the manor come to harm too? …"

Sima Zhongtian slowly said. "Only horses but no people, naturally it will mean…" Suddenly he shouted. "The rats of the Devil Flock Island! Cowards! If you have the guts to come out and fight with me, Sima Zhongtian instead of making sneak attacks. Are you not man enough!?"

These four horses were startled by his loud voice and trotted off. Nangong Changshu said. "Brother Sima…"

Before he could finish, there were three dark flying objects flying from the dark woods. Sima Zhongtian grabbed his spear and pieced through the three dark objects only to see that it was three bloodied heads!

Everyone's hearts chilled when they saw it.

Nangong Changshu was afraid that Sima Zhongtian would be rash therefore he hit him on seven of his accupoints to calm him down. "Brother Sima, calm down first!"

Sima Zhongtian looked at the three heads and looked idiocy for awhile before he said. "My brothers…" And he dropped his spear.

Lu Yixian clapped his hands with his fist and hatefully said. “The people of the Devil Flock Island, are they all rats that only know how to do sneak attack…”

Then he shouted. “I don’t care how omnipotent they are. With my skills, do I really…”

Nangong Changshu interrupted. “Second Brother.” His voice seemed to have a calming effect. Just a soft call and immediately Lu Yixian was calm and did not say anything.

Nangong Changshu began to analyze. “Let us first not determine who is strong or weak. We are now in a disadvantage position. The enemies are in the dark while we are in the open. If we do not calm down first and use inaction to counter action, before we even fight, we will have lost.”

Nangong Ping lowered his head.

Lu Yixian said. “How long do we have to wait?”

Sima Zhongtian turned his head and said loudly. “I rather charge into the darkness and fight them to the death than to wait here. It is really much more unbearable than death to wait here.”

Nangong Ping slowly looked at his father. Although he did not say it but he rather fight to the death than endure this unbearable waiting.

Nangong Changshu sighed and added. “Life and death is not important. But losing a promise is important. In the entire history of our Nangong family, from the start to the end, we have never done a single thing that breaks the faith. Now that our Nangong family are facing a breakdown, all the more we shouldn’t do anything that will break our pact with the others. No matter what happens, I, Nangong Changshu must wait for the Messenger of the Divine Creator to come and take the chests away. Or else even if I were to die, I will not die in peace.”

When he had finished, he seemed to have an authority over the others that could not be resist. Now no one was talking and looked at the rain that was outside.

Mistress Nangong softly said. “Pinger, can you change into something clean?” Her attention was forever on her beloved son.

Nangong Ping shook his head but he was feeling appreciated.

Lu Yixian laughed merrily. “Look at his clothing, who will believe that he is the sole son of Nangong Master. I think if you put him and me together, it will be more alike.”

Mistress Nangong softly sighed. “If today your Big Brother and I have come to harm, you really have to look after this child in the future, he…”

Lu Yixian looked into the heaven and laughed. “If something happen to the two of you, do you think I will want to remain in this world?”

Mistress Nangong said. “Why can’t you remain alone in this world? There is still many things left for you to be done!”

Lu Yixian said. “Why should I want to remain alone. Although there are many things to be done in this world, I don’t care for it. As long as I can die with the both of you, at least when we are in the underworld, it is merrier. It is better than when in future when I die, I will become a lonely ghost. Big Brother, you say, am I right?”

Nangong Changshu sighed and then smiled awhile.

Sima Zhongtian spirit was suddenly arose as he shouted. “They have come…”

Three figures appeared on the steps of the stair. Although they moved very slow but everyone was feeling very nervous. They looked very peaceful and did not have any ill intention.

Lu Yixian shouted. “Who are you? If you do not tell us your name, I will treat you as bandit and deal with you according!”

One of the three was a monk who walked to the front of Lu Yixian and said. “I do not move around in the Pugilistic Fraternity often. Even if I tell you my name, you will not know me.”

The monk looked solemn and serious. The other two people had also appeared into view. One of them was carrying a sack, wearing a straw hat and looking like a beggar. It was almost impossible to see his face. The another was a priest in blue white robe.

Although all three of them looked different but their expressions were that of a pacifist.

Yu Yixian said. “There is a sudden event here. What brings the three of you here?”

The monk with white eyebrows raised both his hands to greet and smiled. “It is precisely the reason why we are here, for the sudden event of the Nangong Manor. If you are all doubtful, let me go in and explain to you.”

Lu Yixian took some time to move aside for them to enter the great hall.

Nangong Ping was jolted suddenly and thought. “At this moment, the malevolent aura outside the manor is so heavy. How could they have come through here without any harm?” Therefore he was suspicious of them. But when he lifted his glance to look at his father who appeared to be very composed, he calmed down as well.

When the monk stepped into the great hall and saw all the appalling scenes, he slowly closed his eyes and said. “For a sheer material thing, so many people lost their lives. Don’t you all feel it is sinful?”

Nangong Changshu sighed. “It is not my intention and it is under a forceful circumstance. After today, I will surely go to the temple to pray for forgiveness and to wash away the sinful consequences of the bloodshed!”

The monk widened his eyes to say. “The way Mister say it, It seems like you have not yet been touched by kindness. I will advice you to turn over a new leaf and put down your weapons. Why can’t you remove the root of the source of the misfortune and turn it over to be the cash offering for Buddha? For the sake of your grandson and granddaughter, do some good.”

Everyone expressions underwent a slight change.

Nangong Changshu said. “Although I do have this intention but most unfortunate, all these chests of riches are no longer mine.”

The monk smiled. “It is hilarious talk, isn’t it? These riches are obviously still by your side so why you say it doesn’t belong to you?”

Sima Zhongtian shouted. “Even if it is his, we will not give you as alms. Do you want to force us to give you alms?”

The monk was still smiling, it seemed like he did not mind. “If Mister are not willing to give alms, then what happen next is none of my business.” He raised his robe and took three steps back and said. “Since I have the fate to know you, when next time you happen to die, I will surely say prayers for your soul.”

Everyone looked at one another while Sima Zhongtian shouted. “Even if I will to die, I will not bother you. Get out of here…”

The blue robe priest laughed and said. “Mister, your countenance is dark and your color do not look good. Remember to control your temper or else you will surely have a cataclysm heading your way. Remember in heart, remember in heart.”

Sima Zhongtian was even angrier by the looks on his face.

The old man with the sack walked in front of him, adjusted his straw hat and coldly said. “Do you not believe what he say?”

Sima Zhongtian retorted. “So what if I do not…” He lifted his glance to look at this man with the straw hat and saw a knife scar above his nose and did not continue.

Nangong Master and Mistress, Nangong Ping was silent while Lu Yixian was even more regretful that he had allowed them to enter.

The old man with the sack laughed. “Don’t be afraid, don’t be afraid. Although I may look malicious but in fact my heart is like gold. I am an honest businessman while the other two are here for alms and are empty handed. As for me, I have a business proposal and will use my goods to conduct a fair trade.” He started to smile when he finished.

Nangong Changshu smiled and said. “What goods did you bring, why don’t you show it to all of us?”

The old man said. “Nangong Master is indeed a businessman…” He reached into his sack and took out a bloodied head. “This goods is guaranteed to be fresh.

One head for a chest, I say it is a very good trade!" And he started to laugh evilly.

Nangong Changshu coldly said. "One head for one chest, this offer can be considered. But a pity the goods are not as fresh."

The old man that looked like a beggar asked. "You want something more fresh?"

Nangong Changshu flashed toward a chest and lifted it up. And said. "If you will agree to cut off your own head then this chest will be yours!"

The old man laughed. "Although the trade is off but righteousness remains. Why did Mister forcefully wants my life?" He started to put his hands on his back and then turned around to leave.

Suddenly the old man turned around again and lifted his left leg to kick a head directly into Sima Zhongtian's face, right hand on Nangong Changshu chest and left palm on Mistress Nangong shoulder. Then he lifted another head to kick towards Yu Yixian. His actions and swiftness was like a shooting star.

Sima Zhongtian was unable to evade in time. So he punched the flying head and sent it shattering. The blood was still warm when he hit it. Suddenly remembered that it was his own man, he felt nauseating.

Yu Yixian simply just evade and the head hit headlong against the wall with a mighty impact.

Nangong Changshu with five fingers gripping the chest felt a very strong force asserting from the top of the chest.

Nangong Mistress evaded the attack with some swift leg movements to hit the old man on his wrist.

But the old man simply laughed and slipped away from her attacks.

Nangong Ping was too startled and thought. "This old man can use his hands and legs at the same time. One stance four strokes to hit four different people at the same time and yet have such almighty force. His martial ability is very frightening. Why is that in the Fraternity, no one has ever heard of his name and background?"

The monk smiled and said. "Nangong Master internal strength isn't too bad, Mistress Nangong Mistress is swift with her movements and reflex. If I were to use literature to describe their martial ability, then the two of them are like two top scholars. As for that Mister…" He looked at Sima Zhongtian and laughed. "He is only a kindergarten kid. If he wants to be the top scholar, he has to put in a few years of efforts."

Lu Yixian coldly said. "Then what about me?" His body flashed and he was besides the monk in an instant and attacking him.

The old man said. "I am the examiner. You have looked for the wrong person." And he stepped in between Lu Yixian and the monk.

Lu Yixian immediately turned his fists around in a stance 'Iron Chains

Locks'. If that old man could not evade it, he would break both of his shoulders.

The monk smiled to say. "Good!"

The old man simply turned his fingers to poke at Lu Yixian eyes. Lu Yixian saw that his stance would not work now and his own eyes would be hit instead. Therefore he raised a kick.

But the old man simply blocked with his left hand and continued the attack on his eyes in split second.

Suddenly Lu Yixian opened his mouth to bit the old man's fingers.

The monk laughed. "Not bad, not bad. Just this bite you can save your eyes."

The old beggar exclaimed. "Is that consider a stroke too?"

Lu Yixian replied. "You never seen it before? Hehe! You are so ignorant."

In another split second, both of them had exchanged more than ten strokes. Lu Yixian stances were fast and slippery, almost illogical but his attacks were all very sharp that even the old man began to focus just on him now.

Sima Zhongtian stood on the same spot, seeming stunned by their display.

The priest in blue sighed slightly and said. "I never expect that in the entire Fraternity, there is still three to five of these types of expert exponents. To ask me to kill them all, makes me feel a little unbearable."

Nangong Ping coldly said. "If on the Devil Flock Island, the people are just like you, then the Devil Flock Island that everyone have feared like a tiger, may not appear to be so fearsome after all."

The priest in blue widened his eyes and said. "Young man, how did you know that we are from the Devil Flock Island!"

Nangong Ping cold laughed awhile and said. "The appearances are kind, but the hearts are vicious, the language are slippery, martial techniques aren't too weak and old enough to enter the coffin. If you are not from the Devil Flock Island, where do you come from?"

The priest laughed. "Very good. Young people usually have some brains…" But before he could finish, Nangong Ping had picked a sword from the ground and make a sword stance at him.

But the priest did not even evade and raised his robe and exhibited the Iron Cloth Skill to deflect Nangong Ping's sword.

Although Nangong Ping's this stroke looks solid but it was actually a feint. It appeared to come from the left but in fact it now appeared on the right now.

The priest was startled for he missed with his Iron Cloth Skill and now Nangong Ping looked like he would pierce his throat. Immediately he moved back five steps. He did not expect to see such a young man demonstrating such a superior and flexible swordplay.

The monk was startled now and had furrowed his eyebrows. He asked

Nangong Ping. “How long have you been training in martial arts?”

Nangong Ping replied. “You don’t have to know!” And he did a whirlwind to once again attack the priest.

The monk said. “You are so young but such potential, such martial abilities. I feel so pity to see you getting wasted. If you come back with me, in ten years you will be a scholar of the Heretic Palace. In twenty years, you will be a top scholar.”

Nangong Ping said. “I, Nangong Ping who is an upright man will rather die than be in league with the devils!”

The monk was again startled. “Nangong Ping? You are the eldest son of the Nangong Manor?”

Nangong Ping shouted. “That is right!”

The monk slowly said. “I feel compassion for the Nangong family therefore I decide to bring the entire Nangong family to the Island to enjoy wealth. But if Mister you still want to insist on your own will, don’t blame me for a bloody massacre later. I just don’t want those ignorant and useless old men from the Divine Creator Temple to make use of such vast wealth and I also don’t wish that such a talent like you will come to waste.”

Nangong Changshu suddenly said. “Second Brother, Pinger, hold your hands!”

Nangong Ping turned his body and he was instantly besides his family.

Lu Yixian was breathing very hard as he had used all his strength to deliver a few fists to force that old man to move back three steps. He then turned around to stand beside Nangong Changshu and said aloud. “Big Brother, don’t be fool by this monk flowery words. The Devil Flock Island is said to host the most cunning and most evil people while the Temple of the Divine Creator is the place for those with great loyalty and great benevolent. Other than this, just base on the names itself speak volumes. ‘Divine Creator’ and ‘Devil Flock’, who is good, who is evil by now is quite obvious. Today, I only wish to fight with these Heretics till my last breath.”

Sima Zhongtian flexed his shoulders in agreement. “Indeed, let's fight them!”

Nangong Changshu said. “Who is good, who is evil is only from a legend. So how we use it as a comparison?”

The monk eyes were delighted as he said. “Praise the Merciful Buddha. Nangong Master is indeed a fair analytical.”

Nangong Changshu was solemn when he said again. “But the pact with the Divine Creator Temple have been going on for at least a hundred years. No matter who is good or evil, I cannot defy my ancestor’s pact. Today's fight is still undetermined. Escort Chief Sima, my Second brother, my son and I together may

not necessary win your two other friends. The key to victory lies between you and me. If you are to duel me, then the victory shall be determined very soon!"

The monk said. "Nangong Master analysis may not be far off but base on just your martial abilities, you are definitely not my match."

Nangong Changshu solemnly added. "This is the situation right now. Why should we want to be like the others, to rest till all are dead. We are not petty people…"

The monk interrupted. "Therefore you mean you want to duel with me."

Nangong Changshu replied. "Indeed that is my intention."

The old man with the sack said. "This method is not…"

Lu Yixian said. "Big Brother, let me take the challenge for you!"

Nangong Ping said. "Your Child is here, how can I let my father fight!"

The monk smiled and said. "Your brother and your son are afraid that something may happen to you, therefore they want to take your place. Why don't you understand their hearts…"

Nangong Changshu replied. "I have already made up my mind. What are your decision?"

The monk said. "What happens after you and I have determined a victor?"

Nangong Changshu said. "If I lost, the entire Nangong family will be up to you to be dealt with!"

Lu Yixian and everyone had all felt that this monk martial ability had to be unfathomable. Therefore they thought it was strange that Nangong Changshu would issue him a personal challenge. Nangong Changshu would never do anything that he was not confident of, although they were doubtful, they kept quiet now.

The monk laughed and said. "Although I have this intention but I am afraid that my two companions will not agree."

The priest and the poorly clad old man said in unison. "We definitely will not agree!"

Lu Yixian felt that it was strange. It was to their advantage but why did they firmly not agreed?

Nangong Changshu laughed. "My guess is indeed correct…"

The monk expression changed. "What's your guess?"

Nangong Changshu laughed for awhile before he replied. "Everyone say that Lady Proudness is a master in disguise. Now that I have seen it today, it is indeed measure up to your fame. But a pity, although Lady you are a very smart but you forget something."

Everyone was startled by this revelation.

The monk asked. "What did I forget?"

Nangong Changshu said. “Lady, although you try to act like a secular monk in your speech but you forget that a monk has dots on their head to denounce their worldly desires, your hands will carry beads, their hand are pointed in prayer. Even though you wearing a monk robe but you are wearing such beautiful shoes. And your facial disguise although is good but your eyes keep moving, it doesn’t look like a respected monk to me.”

Nangong Changshu paused a while before he added. “Although you try to be as detail as possible and are smart but if your martial abilities are higher, I will never have guessed who you are. But it is a pity that you know that your martial skills are weaker, therefore you did not dare to fight with me. It seems that all the tricks and flowery words in the Fraternity to boast a person’s martial ability are faked. Only actual martial ability is the true façade.”

The monk was stunned for awhile before she giggled. “This is because I have thought of your intellect as too low. Therefore I am careless. Although you have see through my disguise, I applaud you for that effort. I shouldn’t have use the ‘Soul Snatching Music and the Bewitching Enchanting Dance’ earlier and allow you to guess that Lady Proudness is nearby. The most unforgivable must be my eyes. Although I have disguised myself as a monk but which monks have eyes that lovely as mine!”

Everyone seemed to notice now that although she looked very solemn but her eyes seemed so seducing. They secretly praised her ingenious disguise, next they praised Nangong Changshu for his keen observations. Although when Lady Proudness first walked into the hall, everyone could see her eyes but none ever noticed she was actually Lady Proudness that had disguised as a monk.

In between her laughs, that monk rubbed with both her hands to reveal a beautiful radiant mature woman.

Nangong Changshu said. “Now that Lady your identity has been blown, you should go now unless you are really not afraid of the bloodshed later.”

Lady Proudness shifted her eyes and laughed. “The three of us against the five of you, we are indeed at a disadvantage…” Her voice had totally changed and was not that of an old monk anymore.

Nangong Changshu said. “Lady is indeed a fair analytical as well.”

Lady Proudness laughed. “But a pity, although Nangong Master has a brilliant mind but you forget something.”

Nangong Changshu asked. “What did I forget?”

Lady Proudness started to giggle before saying. “You forget that Lady Proudness other than knowing disguise, is also well known for another technique…”

Nangong Changshu expressions changed. “Using poison…”

Lady Proudness said. “That is right. You have guessed correctly again. But it is a pity that you have guessed it too late…”

Nangong Changshu moved back and grasped. “Hurry and hold your breath.”

Lady Proudness laughed. “I have said it is too late and it is too late. Now you have breath in all odorless, colorless and formless poisonous gases. In less than an hour, your body will rot and you will die. Even if you try to hold your breath now, what use will it do? Remember my nick is ‘Lady Proudness’. If I am always unable to be proud, then why then did the people in the Pugilist realm nick me as Lady Proudness?”

She continued in a captivating laugh. “If you have changed your mind now, you should listen to me. I can even be merciful and remove your lethal poison. Or else in another hour time, even if Hua Tuo (A famous physician in the three kingdom period) was to come back to life again, he would not be able to help.”

Nangong Changshu turned ashen and solemnly said. “Flowery and trickery words, what a load of rubbish. Although you can say it in such beautiful manner but no one will believe you.”

Lady Proudness rolled her eyes and laughed. “Although you can say so but in your heart, you have already believed. Because you have already heard of the rumors of Pugilist realm that Lady Proudness’ ‘The Proud Soul Snatching Cloud’ is colorless and odorless. If you do not take the antidote beforehand, within thirty feet, anyone that has contact with it will not live past two hours. It is a pity that this poisonous cloud cannot extend far enough. That is why I painstaking disguised myself as a monk, braved this rainstorm to move step by step into here so that all of you will be caught unaware by my act to invite me to the hall so that I can without any much effort, poison all of you.” She looked so sweet, so captivating when she said all that. Even her eyes lovely looked around.

Nangong Ping suddenly thought of Guo Yuxia and he said to himself. “Why is that all the vicious ladies are all the same!”

Lu Yixian shouted. “What a vicious Lady, let me fight you to the death!”

Sima Zhongtian picked the spear on the ground while the priest and the beggar appeared in front of them.

Lady Proudness coldly said. “Why don’t you all beg me now? Don’t you all want your lives anymore?”

Sima Zhongtian froze in his tracks as he suddenly remembered his wife and family.

Lu Yixian sternly said, “I have already lived long enough.”

Lady Proudness asked. “You have already lived long enough but what about the others?”

Lu Yixian stopped in his tracks and moved back three steps and looked at

Sima Zhongtian who looked pale and at Nangong Changshu whose face was as still as water.

Mistress Nangong was simply looking at her beloved son.

Lu Yixian sighed. “What to do.” He thought to himself. “Lu Yixian, Lu Yixian. You are lonely and have no sons or daughters therefore you have already placed your life as inconsequence. But what about the others? They have wives and families, are they the same as you? Moreover she is still in her prime, how could you in a moment of rashness, cause her to lose her life?”

One must know that he was a emotional person that was why he would lose his senses for twenty years because of a broken heart. That was why he tried all methods to gather wealth yet he seemed not to care about himself, his clothing was broken, he did not have enough to eat. So when he thought of Mistress Nangong, his head cooled down, he lowered his arms and did not say anything more.

Mistress Nangong thought to herself. “Second Brother Lu because of me, he rather endured this humiliation. Actually when did I ever place life and death in my heart. But Pinger…” She looked at Nangong Changshu who happened to look at her too. Both of them were thinking of the same thing. What could they do now except to sigh secretly.

Nangong Ping was thinking in his heart. “Although I have the intention to fight to the death but how could I cause the deaths of my parents due to my recklessness? But I have to ask about my Big Brother, Long Fei.”

Nangong Ping asked aloud. “Why did you cause my Big Brother Long Fei to become like this? Where is he now?”

Lady Proudness smiled. “As long as you are obedient, I will tell you all about your big brother.” Her eyes moved and added. “It is soon dawn and the poison will be acting very soon. You are not fighting and not surrendering. Are you all just waiting for your death?”

Nangong Changshu suddenly laughed awhile before saying. “Lady, let not be proud yet. In this world, there is no such thing as a poison that cannot be cured…”

Lady Proudness giggled and said. “You don’t have to say anymore. I know you are trying to talk in circles just to try to find out the origin of my poison. I can tell you honestly, only two groups can make the antidote. And one of the group is far away outside the Pass. Even if you can sprout wings, it will still be too late.”

Mistress Nangong sighed. “What you want us to do before you will…”

Before she finished, a black feathered Mynah (Parrot) flew from a window and landed on one of the chests. It shook off the rainwater from its body before it shrieked aloud. Although this bird was small but it looked magnificent.

Nangong Changshu suddenly exclaimed in delight. “Is here, is here!”

And that parrot spread its wings and landed gently on Nangong Changshu shoulder and mimic. “Is here, is here…”

At the entrance of the great hall, a tall imposing figure could be seen. He had a black eye cover on his left side of his eye and he clutched a staff. The parrot flew from Nangong Changshu shoulder to his shoulder now.

Nangong Changshu extended both his hands to greet. “We been waiting for a long time, please come in!”

The tall imposing man nodded and asked. “Is this your son?” And his eyes looked at Nangong Ping. “Very good…indeed an outstanding young man…”

Lady Proudness secretly moved her hands beneath her clothing.

The priest and the beggar appeared to be solemn too and looked at this single eye of a giant.

The tall imposing man smiled, did not even turn his head and said. “I advise you not to try. Your ‘The Proud Soul Snatching Cloud’ is useless against me.” Although he looked so relax and lazy when he said that but he seemed to command an authority all over the others.

Lady Proudness was jolted.

The tall imposing man walked over to the chests and said. “Very good. All this chests have been readied.”

The parrot shrieked. “Very good…”

The priest and beggar glanced at one another and slowly walked to the back of the tall imposing man.

The tall imposing man said. “Don’t move!”

He turned around and smiled lazily. “So many years already, how come the two of you still like to be so sneaky as ever before…”

The priest laughed. “It has been so many years since we last met, I am only trying to greet my enemy only. How can it be consider a sneak attack?”

The tall imposing man said. “Very good…” He caressed the parrot and continued. “The two of you have finally found that Devil Flock Island? Then today, you are here to oppose me, right?”

The beggar exclaimed. “That is right!” And he took a step back but did not act.

The tall imposing man looked at him for a while before he turned back laughing. “Nangong Master, since your son has arrived and all the chests have been prepared. If you still got some good wines, why not serve them now so that after we have eat, we can go!”

The beggar said. “I know that you look down on us. But if today if you want to take these chests out, it is as hard as ascending the heavens.”

The priest laughed and added. “Although our martial skills may not be as

good as you but with two of us versus you, you may not seem to be having it easy. Moreover…hehe! The Nangong family may even stand on our side."

The tall imposing man did not even blink his eye and said. "Very good…even if the two of you did not say all these, I know it as well. But if that Lady over there did not hand over the antidote today, can she walked out of the Nangong Manor alive?"

Lady Proudness expressions changed but yet she lovingly laughed. "Yo! If you don't want me to go, I will accompany you then."

The tall imposing man laughed lazily. "Very good…Wu Touwen, Hei Xinke, hurry and grab her here so that I can let her enjoy some pleasures."

Sima Zhongtian was startled. These two were actually the 'The Heartless Twin Evil'. No wonder their martial skills were so extraordinary, their methods so ruthless.

The Three Swashbucklers expressions changed too. Only Nangong Ping who was young did not that know the 'The Heartless Twin Evil' were the most vicious killers for the past hundred years or more in the history of the Pugilist realm."

The old man that looked like a beggar, Wu Touwen laughed. "Ask the two of us to capture her?…Hehe! After you joined the Divine Creator Temple, it seemed like you have become crazy."

The tall imposing man coldly asked. "Did the two of you happen to grow sick of living and don't wish the antidote anymore?"

Wu Touwen and Hei Xinke with their expressions changed, asked. "What do you mean?"

The tall imposing man laughed aloud. "I see that the both of you are still in the dark…good… good. Let me ask you, did the two of you sniff the antidote beforehand?"

The Heartless Twin Evil was jolted and they turned ashen.

The tall imposing man added. "The two of you only think that she says it to scare the Nangong family and that she did not really use poison because the two of you cannot tell when did she ever uses the poison, right?"

Lady Proudness laughed softly. "Don't listen to him." But her voice was shaking now.

The Heartless Twin Evil turned to her and asked. "Did you really use poison?"

Lady Proudness turned ashen as she said. "Have…don't have…" She really did not know to replay 'have' or 'don't have'. She did not look proud for an instant.

Wu Touwen moved step by step towards her and said word by word. "Hurry

and hand over the antidote!"

The tall imposing man added. "The real antidote after you sniff it, you will sneeze seven times in a row. Hope you do not get trick by her."

Lady Proudness took a step back and said with a frightened expression. "He…he tricking you!"

Wu Touwen rebuked. "If you do not hand over the real antidote, I will cut you into thirty-eight pieces and boil a stew with it."

Hei Xinke coldly said. "Her skin is smooth and white, surely the taste will be good."

Lady Proudness who had turned ashen now, trembling said. "I will hand…it over to you…" She reached into her clothing and out flew more than ten shining dots with a wave from her hands. She then turned around and ran through the window.

Wu Touwen and Hei Xinke raised their hands and robes to deflect the secret projectiles all the while moving. They shouted aloud together. "Where can you go!" And they went after her.

One of the secret projectiles was aimed at Nangong Ping, who lifted his fingers to catch the projectile and to check what kind of secret projectile was it!

Suddenly his wrist grew numb for the tall imposing man had caught his wrist and he did not know how the tall imposing man had deflected the secret projectile. He was startled to see how suddenly the tall imposing man had appeared before him!

The tall imposing man said. "This plaything is untouchable." The parrot that was resting on his shoulder shrieked. "Is untouchable."

Nangong Ping asked in surprise. "Untouchable?"

The tall imposing man rubbed his chin and laughed. "Although Lady Proudness did not really any use her poisonous cloud but those secret projectiles have been cloaked with lethal poison. Therefore you can't touch it. Look at my this piece of leg, I lost it when I come into contact with her husband secret projectile when I burned the Wanshou Manor down. I almost lost my life." He showed them his leg under his robe.

Everyone was startled while Sima Zhongtian asked. "What did you say?"

The tall imposing man laughed. "There is no such thing as a odorless and colorless poison in the world. If there is, won't that Lady Proudness be invincible then?"

He explained. "The Proud Soul Snatching Cloud' is only a slight poison cloud and can be seen with the naked eye. This, I have witnessed long ago. Just now why I say that to them is to cause them to fight one another. Haha! How would she going to have a antidote that cause others to sneeze seven times

but…that Lady is not to be trifle with. I afraid something may happen to the Heartless Twin Evil instead."

He was filled with smiles and laughter causing the stiff air of the hall to slowly revive.

Sima Zhongtian laughed. "Good, good. I was almost fooled by her."

The tall imposing man with the sole eye looked at him and coldly said. "If it is those that are not afraid of death, they won't be fooled by her."

Sima Zhongtian was startled and he shouted. "Do you not fear death?"

The tall imposing man said. "If I say I am not afraid of death, then all the people that are not afraid to die, will be fools."

Sima Zhongtian was startled and lowered his head to mutter. "You really is not afraid to die…or else why you could brave Wanshou Manor alone in the dark and burned a hundred beasts. You even fight the Lord Hunter of the Beasts…"

The tall imposing man laughed. "That is only a activity that I did when I was young. Today I don't wish to fight with anyone therefore I just pull some tricks instead."

Nangong Changshu smiled and said. "I know that your martial abilities are astonishing but never expected that Senior is actually Feng Mantian, Hero Feng. Ever more unexpected is that ever since the Huangshan gathering, you will be still be alive."

Feng Mantian laughed. "That Huangshan gathering, everyone in the Fraternity only know that all those old freaks have died to the last people standing, only to leave the Divine Dragon and the Phoenix. No one knows that those old freaks did not die but grows into older. I don't know how many of those old freaks are still alive up to this day but most of them have gone to either the Devil Flock or the Divine Creator. Honestly speaking, they are as good as dead."

Nangong Ping was startled and asked. "Hero Feng, are you the Adventurer Gentleman and also the Noble Lord with the Almighty Laugh?"

Feng Mantian laughed. "This is only the nicks assigned to me by the people in the Fraternity. I am not really a gentleman but I am not petty too."

When he laughed, he looked so spirited. Once his laugh ceased, his mannerism became lazy.

Mistress Nangong took out some good wine jars and a clean clothing. The wine jars were for Feng Mantian while the clean clothing was for Nangong Ping.

Feng Mantian and Lu Yixian without an exchange of word, sat across one another and started to drink. In an instant, they had drunk everything.

Feng Mantian laughed. "What good wine capacity."

Lu Yixian laughed merrily. "Your wine capacity is not that bad too. I really don't know why did you have to go to that Divine Creator Temple. Staying in the

mortal realm to ravish all the fine wines, isn't it a joyous thing instead?"

Feng Mantian suddenly became solemn and was lost in thoughts for awhile before he rose up and muttered. "Joyous thing, joyous thing…pui! There is no gathering without parting. Now that it is dawn, if it not the time to leave, how long must we wait?"

Mistress Nangong was startled. "You are leaving now?"

Feng Mantian said. "Before those beasts can return, it is better to leave now or else it will be troublesome."

Mistress Nangong looked at Nangong Ping quietly for awhile before saying. "There are some more wines in the cellar. Why not finish drinking it before you go?"

Feng Mantian solemnly said. "The wine will eventually be finished and we will eventually have to go. Am I right, Mistress?"

Nangong Mistress was quieted for awhile before she nodded her head. "Eventually have to go…"

She extended her hands to help Nangong Ping to button up his clothing. One must know that all the loving mothers in the world when they had to leave their beloved sons, they would attempt to retain them for as long as they can.

Even though Nangong Ping was closed to tears but he smiled. "It isn't the first time child is leaving home. I will be very careful on the road."

Lu Yixian turned his head around because he could not bear to watch any longer.

Sima Zhongtian was sitting on the chair with his head lowered. If at this moment, if anyone happened to see him, they would not believe that he was actually the Escort Chief of the Red Flag Escort Agency.

Nangong Mistress was trembling when she was buttoning for Nangong Ping. It seemed like it could never be finished.

Nangong Ping felt his hand go cold. He did not need to look and knew that it was his mother's tears that were dropping.

Nangong Ping suddenly said aloud. "Mum, you don't have to worry. Your child swears to return."

Lu Yixian clapped on the table and said aloud. "Good, good aspirations! No matter how solid is the cage, it can never trap a real man's aspirations and his determination. Hero Feng, do you agree?"

Feng Mantian opened his eye and said. "Yes? So what if it is yes? What if it is a yes?"

Lu Yixian was stunned. He sighed deeply and said. "Yes? So what if it yes…"

Nangong Changshu said. "Hero Feng, can the two of you carry all those

chests? …”

Feng Mantian asked. “Are you thinking of escorting me? Although we have to part sooner or later but it is good to have a accompany for awhile longer. Am I right to say so Nangong Master?”

Nangong Changshu glanced around and said. “Brother Sima, I wonder can you stay here for awhile until the new owner of the Nangong Manor has come?”

Sima Zhongtian slowly nodded his head and said. “Brother Nangong, don’t you worry. Although your little brother is old now but this is a small matter to me.”

Mistress Nangong smiled. “Sorry for bothering you.” And immediately that button on Nangong Ping’s clothing was fastened.

Sima Zhongtian said. “There is some horses outside the manor to serve as reinforcements. I wonder if it is still there?”

Lu Yixian sprang out. “I go and check.”

Nangong Ping exclaimed after him. “Second Uncle, wait for me awhile.” And he sprang after him.

The two of them were at the mountain path now and in the dark woods. They saw the place littered with corpses and weapons. Both felt the loneliness and grief of this battle. Finally they spotted a couple of horses without any riders.

Suddenly they heard a terrifying cry from a distant. They looked at one another in surprise and sprang together towards the direction of the scream.

Finally they spotted two poplar trees, which had been gnawed, and its barks stripped apart by the use of the inner aspect of martial strength.

The two of them glanced at one another before proceeding to check. Suddenly from the tall grasses and flowers, two figures stood up.

Nangong Ping was startled and grasped. “Who is that?” Before he could finish, he had seen that those two figures were the Heartless Twin Evil!

Their clothing appeared to be in shreds. Their ears, nose, mouth and ears were all bleeding. Although Lu Yixian and Nangong Ping were naturally very gutsy but when they saw them in such a condition, they shivered at the sight and their hands broke into a cold sweat.

Wu Touwen was laughing hilariously. “Antidote, antidote, give me the antidote…” Suddenly he plunged forward.

Nangong Ping was startled and he tried to move back but Wu Touwen suddenly collapsed onto the ground.

Hei Xinke shouted. “Give me back my life!” Before he collapsed, he shot a dart of dazzling light as it flew towards Nangong Ping. This dying attack was indeed very powerful and startling. One had to know before a man died, he could

muster a strength that normally he could not be able to muster when he was alive.

A sweet fragrant flew past and hit upon a tree that was far away. Lucky he had lost his senses and missed. It was actually a jade box. Unknown to Nangong Ping, he had been poisoned when he caught a sniff the sweet fragrance scent as it flew past him.

Nangong Ping and Lu Yixian was on guard now. They waited for some time before they finally approached the two collapsed men – They were dead now but from the looks of it, it was a most grievous death and they did not die in peace for their eyes were protruding out.

Lu Yixian turned to look at the jade box and sighed. “That Lady Proudness is indeed very vicious. She took out this box of poison and claimed that it was the antidote. The Heartless Twin Evil although they took all precautions, after they tortured her, this box was then hand over. Thinking that it could not be faked, they sniffed it. But it was a trick.”

He had traveled across the Pugilist realm and had a vast experience. His guess was almost like what he had seen. But he did not know that before the Heartless Twins Evil had sniffed it, they had also forced Lady Proudness to sniff it first. Only when Lady Proudness was all right did they sniffed it.

But unbeknownst to them, Lady Proudness was secretly laughing. For she had already sniffed the antidote beforehand. That box of poisonous powder if it were carried by the wind would kill tens or maybe quite possibly hundreds of people. But the Heartless Twin Evil was afraid that just one sniff was not enough, so they actually exhaled almost all the poisonous powder. So now even if the two of them possesses extraordinary supreme inner strength, they could not stop the poison from acting. Therefore Lady Proudness took the opportunity to escape when the poison had seized up.

Although the Heartless Twin Evil had so much blood in their hands and their evil deeds had been well known for so long but when Nangong Ping saw that they had died so horribly, he could not bear to watch. He gathered some grasses and branches as mats to cover their bodies before he walked out of the woods to gather back some of the horses to the manor.

When Nangong Ping returned with Lu Yixian, they saw that Nangong Changshu, Mistress Nangong, Sima Zhongtian was loading the chests to a horse carriage. All of them were looking so sorrowful and upset.

Lu Yixian picked up his sack that was more precious to him than life and wanted to give it to Nangong Ping who thanks him profusely but did not accept it.

Lu Yixian bitterly laughed awhile before he mused. “This sack is the result of my tens of years of painstaking efforts. When it is time to give it away, no one wants it.”

Sima Zhongtian said his farewell to everyone and his expressions were very solemn. Suddenly he grabbed Nangong Ping by his wrist and sighed. “Lust is like a knife, nephew, don’t you forget about it.” He was still unable to forget the slander that Guo Yuxia had imprinted on him.

Nangong Ping was startled and could only nodded. For he could not guess the meaning behind it. Because Sima Zhongtian was himself dispirited, he did not wish to elaborate upon it.

There were a total of twenty-six red wooden chests and was divided on two different horse carriages. Feng Mantian and Lu Yixian sat on the first carriage while the Nangong family sat on the second.

Mistress Nangong hoped that this journey would be long and never ending. That was because when the journey ended, she would have to part with her beloved son.

How could Nangong Ping felt any differently? But he suppressed it into his heart and did not wish to reveal it. Instead, he tried to tell his parents the many funny moments that had happened to him over the past few years.

So when others saw them laughing away, they would think that they were so happy. But in fact, they were all grieving in their hearts.

When it was night, they reached an Inn and booked some rooms. The horse carriages were parked in the courtyards. Feng Mantian drew a ‘Guan’ character on the two carriages and then left.

Lu Yixian asked. “Why did you not shift the chests down…”

Feng Mantian laughed. “With this ‘Guan’ word, in the whole wide world, who will dare to look at it.”

It was because the ‘Guan’ word was his insignia when he was so renowned in the Fraternity. Once, he helped a friend to retrieve back thirty thousand silvers from some bandits. In the vast wilderness, he pasted a ‘Guan’ word on it and hurried back to Ludong (a city or province) and asked the owner to retrieve it. The owner was afraid that it might be lost again so he hurried for three days and nights and found out that the silvers was all intact. It was because when the people in the Fraternity saw the ‘Guan’ word, not only did they not rob it but guarded it most carefully in the dark.”

Lu Yixian was listening most intently and he clapped his hands and said aloud. “where is the wine, serve it now.”

Mistress Nangong smiled and said. “Second Brother Lu, do you still remember the peacock brew that I have specifically made for you brothers?”

Lu Yixian sighed. “How can I ever forget it. All these years although I have tasted all the fine wines but none of them can ever compared to your peacock brew. Not even a chance.”

Feng Mantian was puzzled and asked. “What peacock brew?”

Lu Yixian smiled. “That is the wine that is created from 11 types of different wines. Although the wines have nothing special but after they were brewed together, it became heavenly. It is the same as the warrior-saint Master Zhu who created the ‘Thousand Flowers Fowl Tail Fists’. Although it is one of the most common seen martial techniques but after he has displayed it, his fist techniques are like a golden touch that become so effective. Unfortunately this ‘Thousand Flowers Fowl Tail Fists’ has been lost. But luckily you and me are lucky that someone else knows the peacock brew. It is our fortune.”

Those who loves wine, how could they resist the temptation not to taste it? Feng Mantian felt an itch in his heart as he said. “Mistress Nangong, Mistress Sister in law, if it is convenient, can you exhibited your extraordinary skills and let me have a taste of this beautiful wine?”

He was so imposing and strict but when he suddenly said, ‘Mistress’, ‘Sister in law’, Nangong Changshu and Nangong Ping who was feeling sorrowful could not resist to smile.

Nangong Mistress smiled and ordered the shop assistant to bring forth 11 types of wine. She then proceeded to mix the wine together to a bowl, each composite was different, and then she would shake it and then add three drops of clear water and a drop of tea.

Feng Mantian after seeing those 11 types of wines were actually those common types, he took it over from Mistress Nangong when she had done and asked. “Is this the peacock brew?” He was disappointed for it looked so ordinary.

But when he placed to his nose, its aroma was so fragrant and when he took a sip, it tasted heavenly and words could not describe it. And in three big gulps, he had finished the wine. He laughed. “Very comforting, very comforting…”

Lu Yixian laughed. “I did not lie to you. It is only through the hands of my Nangong Sister in law that this extraordinary wine can be brewed.”

Feng Mantian said. “It is not necessary. This peacock brew, I can brew it now too.” Immediately he started to mix those eleven types of wine together, adding three drops of water and one drop of tea. “Isn’t this the peacock brew too!” And he took a drink.

But his eyebrows were raised, his eyes were wide opened and found out that the wine that he could not longer even swallow that mouthful of wine. It was so bitter, sour, so spicy. It was not the same as the aroma wine that he had just drunk earlier.”

Lu Yixian clapped his hands and laughed heartily. “So how is it? Why did you not continue to drink? To tell you the truth, I have tried this method thirty years ago. Although the wine is the same but the mixture is not the same, therefore

even the taste will be different. It is the same as martial techniques. Or else that 'Thousand Flowers Fowl Tail Fist' I would have invented it too as well."

Feng Mantian forcefully swallowed that mouthful of wine and hurriedly poured away the wine that he had mixed, that not even a drop of it was left. He then extended his hands and respectfully said to Mistress Nangong while laughing. "Mistress, I, Noble Lord of the Almighty Laugh is really impressed with you. Please don't be offended by my antics earlier and can you brew a few more of this type of wine?"

Mistress Nangong cheerfully agreed and made more than ten bowls at a go. "Pinger, come and have a try too."

Nangong Ping said. "I don't wish to drink some wine but child will like to taste mum's cooking…"

Feng Mantian was jolted in his spirits and he immediately exclaimed. "I am sure with such extraordinary hands Mistress you have, your cooking must be very excellent as well…"

Lu Yixian interrupted. "Indeed, indeed. Spinach and tofu, sweet and sour fish, braised chicken are the specialties of my Sister in law.

Feng Mantian laughed most heartily. "Braised chicken is alright but what is there for spinach and tofu? I think you are too poor that even this dish tastes good."

Lu Yixian shook his head and said. "This you are wrong. One must know that in the great expanses of the thousands of thousands of creatures, all have their own specialties. Even if you and me have blown our heads, we still will be unable to think of that. The same dish of spinach and tofu, the taste will be different and varies from people to people. It is the same as that 'Shaolin Fist'. When it is used by Eminence Wuxin, it can even subdue tigers and dragons but when it is displayed by the artisans of the street, it become worthless."

He drowned a cup of wine before continuing. "How mature a martial ability is, depends on the level of proficiency, the internal force, innate talent. When two people fights with one another, the difference between victory and defeat also depends on the timing, terrain and the psychology human factor. It is the same as cooking. Not one factor must be lacking and it cannot be forced. The simpler a fist technique is, the more it can display some one's martial ability. The more simple a dish is, the more it can display my Sister in law's cooking skills. The tofu with spinach is indeed extraordinary. If you say that it is nothing, then later you just have to restraint from eating."

Feng Mantian laughed heartily. "The way you say it, although it sounds so logical. But it is still a tofu dish…haha, it alright if I don't eat it."

Mistress Nangong hoped that before she would part with beloved son, she would make him happier so she really went to the kitchen.

Nangong Changshu looked at his beloved wife and then his beloved son. Was he feeling sorrowful or delight? Or grieve? Or laudable? For although they were together now but soon they would part.

The parrot flew into the dining hall from the kitchen and shrieked. “It is so fragrant, it is so fragrant…”

A shop assistant walked into the dining hall and he appeared to be drooling too at the dish of spinach tofu that he was carrying.

Lu Yixian took the spinach tofu dish over and laughed. “He is not eating. Pinger, it up for your father and I to enjoy it.”

Feng Mantian took a glance over and saw that although the tofu on top were as white as jade, but it was very fragrant and mouth watering. He really found it hard to endure in his heart so he laughed heartily. “I say I not eating but actually I still want to eat it.” He reached out with a pair of chopstick and took a mouthful. After tasting it, he really found it hard to put down the chopsticks.

Lu Yixian said. “You say you are not eating, why did you want to eat it now.” He started to shift the dish around.

Feng Mantian said. “One more, one more.” As he attacked the tofu with waves after waves of chopsticks.

Although Lu Yixian had shifted the dish of spinach tofu around, but not one drop of it spilled over. But in an instant, Feng Mantian had eaten it cleanly. Nothing was left of the tofu and spinach.

Lu Yixian placed the plate down and sighed. “What excellent martial ability.”

Feng Mantian placed down the chopsticks and sighed. “What excellent spinach!”

The two of them looked at one another and laughed hilariously while the parrot was hovering above them shrieking. “What excellent martial ability…what excellent spinach…” It seemed that the parrot had already secretly took a few bites earlier.

This meal lasted all the way to the third watch. Feng Mantian and Lu Yixian was drunk and they did not even removed their shoes and was snoozing now.

Only the three members of the Nangong family were still awake. Nangong Changshu said. “Tomorrow you have to continue your journey. Pinger, you need to go to sleep!”

Nangong Ping said. “Child I need to sleep. Father and mother, you need to sleep too.”

Till the next morning, everyone was still muttering. “Go sleep.” But none of them even went to bed for this night was so precious to them.

When Feng Mantian was awake and saw that the discipline father, the

compassionate mother and the filial son expressions, his eyes became darkened. But he tried to laugh. “Mistress, I enjoy greatly your cooking and wine. If Mistress you are willing, can I still have the chance to try your skills today as well?”

Nangong Mistress was very delighted and said. “Naturally!” As long as she still could have the opportunity to be with her beloved son, she would be willing to do anything.

Along the road, she would brew the aroma wine and dished out delicious specialties for Feng Mantian. He would drink and eat everyday till he would be as drunk as dead. Although he wore a cold looks all the time but he was actually a warm person at heart. A typical one-day journey now took as long as three days.

Every time they reached a new place, Feng Mantian would go away for half a day and when he was back, he would always carry some goods back. There were big chests and small chests but all were tightly closed. No one knew what was inside. The biggest chest was as big as coffin and the smallest chest at least three feet long. In the end, the sheer number of the chests that Feng Mantian had brought back overwhelmed the treasure chests.

They were now heading eastbound and passed along many mountains and valleys. Mt. Huangshan, Tianmu, Qilishuang (A river in Guangdong) and Huiji were the places they had passed through. All these places were quite desolate and bandits, unorthodox pugilists, all sorts of undesirable people frequented there. Therefore this two horse carriages with its truckload of chests caught their attention.

Along the way, there were riders appearing and disappearing but Feng Mantian did not seem to mind. The unorthodox pugilists had already decided that those two carriage definitely were worth a lot but they were wondering why there was no escort chief at all, given the number of chests that could be seen. Since no one knew their background so none dared to seize the goods alone.

Finally one day, when they reached Dong Yang, Feng Mantian ordered several very large iron cages measuring ten feet length and width. No one knew his purpose and was feeling strange. He put all the chests into the two iron cages and then continued on his way.

Those unorthodox pugilists were secretly laughing when they saw the iron cages. They thought. “Since you have put all the chests under lock in the cages, don’t you know that we can simply carry off the iron cages too, along with all the chests? What a laudable idea” Therefore they thought of these five people as fools and decided to act this very night.

Nangong Ping, Mistress Nangong, Nangong Changshu as well as Lu Yixian

did not know the purpose why Feng Mantian had brought the iron cages. Finally they could not resist and ask.

Feng Mantian laughed heartily. “Long ago, there is a funny joke. One man was carrying a bamboo pole to the city gate. He could not enter horizontally or vertically with the bamboo pole. In the end he had to cart it over to the city walls. When a man saw it, he laughed aloud and said. ‘What a stupid man. Why did he not cut the bamboo pole into halve? Isn’t it much more convenient?’”

Lu Yixian was startled and barely recovered from his thoughts. He asked. “What did he not go through the city gate with the bamboo pole extending in…”

Feng Mantian laughed heartily. “If he extended in, then it won’t be a funny joke anymore.”

Nangong Ping could not resist a laugh although he was trying very hard not to open his mouth.

Lu Yixian asked. “So then what is the purpose of your iron cages?”

Feng Mantian laughed. “If I say it now, it won’t be funny.”

The parrot flew into the air and shrieked. “Jokes, jokes…” Then it flew back and shrieked. “The jokes had come, the jokes had come…”

There were dozens of horse riders coming from all directions. And they appeared to be muttering with each other.

Lu Yixian smiled and said. “It seemed that all these bandits have known one another. I actually wanted to see them fight among themselves but they are actually quite smart. I didn’t think that they would actually be discussing how to distribute the loots. It seems that we will be missing a nice show now.”

Feng Manqing raised his eyebrows and said. “There will still be a nice show. As long as all of you do not react and follow my intentions accordingly.”

When he had just finished, four men approached them in an arrogant and proud manner. One of them asked. “Who is the owner of the carriages? Please step forward to talk.”

Feng Mantian pretended to be in surprised and glanced around. “Who is talking?”

A thin and solemn man laughed coldly and said. “It is me.”

Feng Mantian asked. “What can I do for you?”

The thin man laughed. “I come from Fenglin Zhiyao, Autumn Wind Fortress, Autumn Wind Fallen Leaf Manor, I am Du Xiaoyu…"

Feng Mantian laughed heartily. “Autumn Wind Fortress, Autumn Wind Fallen Leaf Manor, what an elegant name.”

Du Xiaoyu said. “These three are from ‘Fen Shui Pass’ the left and right double sabres Hero Hu, one is…”

Zhao Xiongtu remarked. “Why talk so much to them, Brother Du? Don’t

you know well the intentions of us four brothers? Do away with all the idle talk and leave your valuables alive and we will spare your life."

Feng Mantian appeared to be shocked and said. "I really though that Lord Du is here to discuss poem with me. Why did you suddenly want to ask for my valuables!"

Another man by the name of Tie Dagan laughed. "If you want to recite poem, I will recite some for you… *This mountain is owned by me, I am the lord of this forest, whoever pass through here, have to drop their travel expenses*…" And he punched his fist on the top of a horse head and the horse immediately collapsed.

Nangong Changshu looked on ever so calm while Du Xiaoyu and the other three glanced at one another and grasped. "What great divine strength."

Tie Dagan laughed. "Now you understand my poem?"

Feng Mantian was startled and said. "I only thought that you are all elegant people. Never did I expect that you all would be bandits…" He tugged Nangong Ping slightly and shouted. "The bandits have come, where is my escorts? Come and fight the bandits!"

Nangong Ping was secretly laughing as he rose up. The bandits had all suddenly started to look all around them for possible ambushes when they saw that this escort was just a young man.

Therefore they calmed themselves down while Tie Dagan laughed. "What? It is your escort? Ha…ha. Escort chief, which escort agency did you belong to?"

Before he had finished, Nangong Ping slapped him.

Tie Dagan was stunned as he angrily shouted. "Inhuman…"

Before he could finish, he was clapped another time and he was forced to take a few step back.

Just when Tie Dagan wanted to plunge forward, Duan Xiaoyu tugged him by the back of his clothing and softly said. "Wait!"

Duan Xiaoyu laughed. "This escort has wonderful hand and leg techniques. I wonder what is your name is and who is your respected teacher? We are all from the Fraternity. Maybe we are even on the same side if you say it out."

Nangong Ping replied loudly. "I am the disciple of the Divine Dragon, Nangong Ping!"

Feng Mantian was startled. He did not expect Nangong Ping would say his actual name without hesitation. He did not know that Nangong Ping was a frank person therefore he would not purposefully concealed his name.

Tie Dagan, Duan Xiaoyu, Hu Zhenren, Zhao Xiongtu glanced at one another and turn ashen. "Are you really Nangong Ping?"

Nangong Ping only coldly hummed.

It seemed that ever since Nangong Ping famous fight with the Chief of the

Zhongnan Sect and his visit to the Mulong Manor of Master Wei Qi, his name and fame had spread throughout the Fraternity. Therefore the four of them felt a few shiver even though it was their territory.

Hu Zhenren moved aside and the other three followed as well. He then waved his hand and a man appeared. He caught hold of the man and hatefully said. "I ask you to scout very carefully and you only said that the carriage have only some old fellows, a bald man and a frail man. Then did Nangong Ping drop from the sky or sprout from the ground?"

The man was startled and replied in a trembling voice. "He…he is Nangong Ping?"

Zhao Xiongtu said. "Let calm down first. This Nangong Ping although he is a strong fighter but just with his two fists, he cannot fight four hands nor can he fight so many. With the four of us and the tens of our followers, do we still need to be scare of him?"

Hu Zhenren exclaimed. "It is precisely the case. With the four of us, do we still need to be scare of him? At the very least we should try!"

With the four of them secretly discussing at the side, Lu Yixian smiled and said. "I didn't expect to know that nephew you are so famous. But it is a pity that you have revealed your name. If you managed to scare those bandits away, we will not get to see the joke anymore."

Nangong Ping smiled and saw that the four men had started to approach them once more and looking overbearing.

Duan Xiaoyu took the opportunity to speak. "Since this escort is Nangong Master's, usually on account of Old Master Long or your account, we should usually have leave your escort alone. But…hehe, these three friends will like to have the opportunity to learn some pointers in martial skills from you. It is also to let our followers give up their hopes."

In a few mutterings, he had easily pushed the blame on the three others.

Nangong Ping coldly laughed awhile before he extended his hands and asked. "Who will like to come first?"

Du Xiaoyu had already moved back while the other three were looking at one another. None of them dared to fight one to one. Da Dagan swollen face had not subsided yet, all the more he did not dare to make the first move. These bandits were all used to bully others with numbers, although they looked big sized but in actually they had small guts if not why did they have to bully others in the first place with superior numbers?

Mistress Nangong was very proud of her beloved son who looked so dashing now.

Duan Xiaoyu coldly said. "The three brothers do not need to fight over who

will be the first to display your skills. You are indeed so humble."

The three of them had a slight red on their face. Although they were afraid but in the presence of their followers, they had to have some face to show.

Hu Zhenren turned his head and laughed. "Why did Brother Du stand at the back? It is something that I am puzzling over."

Du Xiaoyu coldly said. "If Brother Hu do not want to make any moves, you can stand aside too!"

Hu Zhenren shouted. "Who say I don't want to make any moves?" And he stepped forward and drew his big sabre.

Feng Mantian suddenly shook his hands and said. "Wait awhile."

Hu Zhenren stopped in his tracks puzzled while Feng Mantian added. "Nangong Escort, this fight you are not to fight."

Nangong Ping was surprised.

Feng Mantian said. "If this fight carry on, no matter who wins or loses, all these pugilists will surely attack together. When that time comes, won't they accidentally kill us old people? I hire you to be my escort because I want to use your fame and name to scare others away. But now, it seem that not only will I lose all my possessions but my life as well."

The way Feng Mantian had said it sounded as though it was real.

Hu Zhenren was delighted and he exclaimed. "Old sir, you are indeed a understanding person. I promise that no one will cause difficulty for you."

Tie Dagan straightened his back and laughed, "Luckily you are wise enough." When he noticed that the situation had changed, he immediately became full of himself again.

Nangong Ping though it was laudable and moved back to a side.

Feng Mantian continued in a serious tone. "The iron cages are not locked. Just take anything you want and leave me with some traveling expenses, that will do."

Nangong Ping and the rest knew that Feng Mantian was planning something but until now, they still could not figure out.

The three of them were very delighted and was about to order their fellows to take the chest when Zhao Xiongtu suddenly said solemnly. "Wait awhile!"

Hu Zhenren asked. "What is the matter?"

Zhao Xiongtu said. "Brothers, today's loots aren't small, there is small chests and big chests. Although we are good brothers but we should have a fair distribution. If the henchmen under us, are to randomly snatch, then it will be a pandemonium."

Hu Zhenren exclaimed. "Indeed that will be the case. But just now I am the one that make the first move therefore these chests naturally shall be my followers

and I to grab first. As for Brother Du, hehe. Because he wanted to watch just now, I will have to invite him to watch now as well."

But Du Xiaoyu remained unmoved. Because he had already sensed something was not right with this matter - It was too easy. Among the four of them, he was the most cunning and his martial ability was also one notch higher than they were. Once Hu Zhenren had successfully seized the chests, he would strike him down and seized the loots for himself.

Zhao Xiongtu coldly laughed. "Did Brother Hu make the first move? Brother Tie, did you see? I did not see."

Tie Dagan said, "If you want to say who has made the first move, it should be me instead." When he remembered he had taken two slaps, his face became a slight red.

Hu Zhenren expression changed and waved his big sabre around, shouting. "Then in your opinion, how should we distribute the loot?"

And the three of them started to quarrel with words.

Du Xiaoyu had observed that although Nangong Ping and the rest looked their usual self but he detected a tinge of laughter. When Hu Zhenren shouted. "Let Brother Du help us to distribute the loot then since his martial ability is the best and he is well known for his planning."

But Du Xiaoyu said, "I don't wish to have the loots anymore. How can I help the three of you to distribute?"

When he said that, his followers from the Fallen Autumn Manor were in a state of unrest but he waved his hand and walked far away.

Feng Mantian laughed and said. "If the three of you still can't decide, I do have a very good idea."

As Zhao Xiongtu was afraid that Hu Zhenren and Tie Dagan would conspire to deal with him, he delightfully said. "Marvelous, marvelous. A wise man like old sir will surely think of a fair distribution."

Tie Dagan and Hu Zhenren glanced at one another. But as they were also suspicious of one another too, they agreed.

Feng Mantian said, "I am most afraid of seeing blood therefore I will be willing to hand over my riches. Since the three of you have agreed, you must not go back on your words, or else…"

He looked very solemn and then continued. "If my this escort were to lose his temper, it will not be beneficence to the three of you."

The three of them felt a chill in their shiver. Zhao Xiongtu said. "As long as your method is fair, we have no opinion."

Feng Mantian laughed. "Naturally it will be fair. Since everyone is an unorthodox pugilist, those with the bloodiest hands will be considered a hero. This

will include all the pugilists at the back too. If anyone can say a deed that can be considered worthy to be a hero, you can stand in front. When I clap my hand as a signal, everyone can pick one chest. If you unable to say anything heroic, then please stand at the side."

He stopped for awhile and pointed to a chest that was inside the iron cage. "And I can tell everyone, that the chests closest to me are the most valuable. When it is everyone turn to snatch the chests, it is also the chance for you to display your martial skills."

When everyone heard his weird method, they were already suspicious but when he opened a chest that was filled with precious pearls, in that instant, everyone eyes had turned red and their greed got the hand on them and immediately agreed.

Tie Dagan patted his chest and shouted. "At one time, in Linhai City, in a single night, I did seven blood cases that even my sabre became blunt. This is something that everyone knows about, I am sure it is a heroic matter." When he finished, he laughed.

How could Hu Zhenren display any weakness? So he immediately added. "That is nothing compared to me. In a single day outside Taishun City, during the broad daylight, I rounded out ten fragrant women and girls and…"

Du Xiaoyu who was looking by the side, thought it was very suspicious and his hands and legs become cold now therefore he moved even further away. His men trusted him the most. When they saw that he did not rush to the front, they forced themselves to resist the temptation and without a word, stood by the side too.

Fifty to sixty men took nearly two hours to finish all their 'glorious deeds'. And they were now eyeing the iron gates greedily.

Feng Mantian laughed hilariously. "Very good. Everyone is indeed a hero. When I clap my hand, everyone can display your skills!" And he opened his hands and watched him his hands for the signal but they did not see the malevolent air that was in his laughter.

When Feng Mantian clapped his hands, there was a big rush to the iron cages.

Nangong Ping and Lu Yixian after hearing of their disgusting deeds, was filled with anger while Nangong Changshu and Mistress Nangong remained composed, as they knew that Feng Mantian had something up to his sleeves.

When all the men were inside the iron cages, Feng Mantian suddenly shouted. "Lock the cages."

Immediately Nangong Ping, Nangong Changshu, Mistress Nangong, Lu Yixian moved in four different directions to lock the iron cages. Their movements

were all as swift as the eagles!

In an instant, more than twenty of the iron cages were locked and the men was startled and cried out. “What happen?”

Suddenly Feng Mantian laughed, this laugh was getting louder and louder that even the clouds above him was dispersed, the leaves on the ground formed a cloud that flew away from him!

Everyone was stunned, including Nangong Changshu and Du Xiaoyu. Du Xiaoyu who was standing far away, found out that he could not even lift his leg. What about the rest of the people that was in the cage? They had become as white as sheet and even green. All their bodies had become soft and their teeth were clanging in fear now.

From the iron cages, from the chests, sprang out lions, wolves, leopards, and venomous snakes among others. There were different beasts in each cage and when those beasts began to howl, it was indeed very frightening and startling that pierced through the hearts of men. Even the horses that were outside the cage began to foam and collapsed onto the ground!

In that instant, heaven and earth seemed to undergo a change and the malevolent aura overwhelmed the area as the beasts began to kill the men inside. These beasts had been caught by Feng Mantian and trapped in the chests. Now his laughter woke them up and they were now very hungry. It was really a most appalling sight to witness this scene.

At this moment a few people were approaching at a distance. And a beautiful woman could be seen in the midst - Guo Yuxia.

Walking besides her on the left and the right was Ren Fengping and Shi Chen. And the other four men at her back were the four brothers of the Jiangnan Seven Eagles.

Guo Yuxia was startled and said. “Who can this be? How is it possible…”

The man who was nicked Black Eagle trembling replied with his hands on his ears. “I heard that long ago, there was one man by the name of Feng Mantian that burned down the Wanshou Manor. This is his ‘Shattering Shout’, transfigured by his supreme inner strength.”

Guo Yuxia looked around with her beautiful eyes. “Feng Mantian, he is not dead yet?”

Ren Fengping said. “No wonder there is a saying that has been circulating that Feng Mantian Shattering Shout can immobilize a thousand beasts therefore he can totally defeat Wanshou Manor. This shout is even more powerful than the monastic ‘Lion Howl’. But from what I can hear today, it is nothing much.”

Guo Yuxia laughed lovingly. “That is only because we are very far away only.” She gently held Ren Fengping by his wrist and said. “Since that Feng old freak is here, consider it our bad luck that we have made a wasted trip. It wiser for us to go instead.” She pulled Ren Fengping and together they turned in the opposite direction.

Shi Chen was looking at Guo Yuxia’s hands that was pulling Ren Fengping. Was he feeling upset or grief? But finally he bowed his head and followed behind Guo Yuxia as they left in a hurry.

When those seven people had left, naturally Nangong Ping and the rest did not know.

Mistress Nangong had turned her head over, unable watch this appalling scene.

The shout became weaker and weaker like a flute that was weakening. It seemed that this shout of Feng Mantian had the effect of dazzling people.

Nangong Ping could not endure the screams caused by the men inside the cages as the beasts devoured them even though he knew that they were all evil men that deserved to die. In fact, they were even more vicious than those wild beasts.

But he was after all still a human and he felt grief for them. Because his benevolent heart was stirred, the laughter lost its effect on him and he could move. He unlocked all the cages and moved to Feng Mantian shouting. “Stop it, stop it!”

Feng Mantian flashed his eyes, was it a puzzled or a delightful look? He ceased his shouting and began to laugh aloud for some time.

This laugh seemed to have another effect and the power to move the heaven and earth. All the wild beasts and snakes suddenly became powerless and it seemed like they had met their most feared adversary and even ignored the flesh in front of them.

There were still more than twenty men that did not die in the iron cages. When they had heard this laugh, they became somber and tried to crawl out of the cages.

Tie Dagan had his arm bitten off while Zhao Xiongtu was covered with blood. As for Hu Zhenren, he became the meal of a ferocious lion.

In that instant, all those men that could still move had climbed out of the cages. Du Xiaoyu secretly sighed to himself. “Most fortunate.” And he left without a sound.

Feng Mantian stomped with his iron leg and in an instant picked up all the wild beasts and snakes and threw them back to the chests. Soon the malevolent aura that was in the area was gone and it returned to its usual calmness. It seemed

like this tragedy had never even happened before.

Feng Mantian laughed. "Help me to carry all the flesh of the evil men so that it can last me tens of days."

Nangong Ping asked,. "Is this your method of feeding the beasts?"

Feng Mantian laughed. "Using evil heretics to feed the ferocious beasts, is the most righteous thing to do. Although cows, dogs, goats, horses are their feeds but they are much more pitiful than those evil men are. Moreover these evil men choose to come on their own accord."

Nangong Ping was too shocked for words but his eyes were watery.

Lu Yixian sighed, found himself a gourd of wine and gulped it before sighing. "I really never expect that you will put all these things in the chests. I only feel strange why did all these beasts became so tame. If I haven't saw it with my own eyes, I will never believe it."

Feng Mantian laughed and replied. "It is nothing strange. The way I tame these beasts are actually the same as those top expert opponents in the Fraternity who use accupoints to weaken men. Although beasts and men have different accupoints but as long as you can observe their blood flow, calculate the timing and position, once their blood flows through their blood channel, you can hit their accupoints. No matter how fierce those beasts are, they will still be subdue by you."

Nangong Changshu asked. "This method of accupoint is not the same as normal accupoint although it is much alike. Instead this method utilize the know how of when to use accupoint techniques and is the same as the Pai Cult."

Feng Mantian answered. "Indeed, this is the same method used by the Pai Cult. But not many people knows of this method in the Fraternity."

While they were discussing about the most intricate methods of the Fraternity's accupoint techniques, Nangong Ping did not bother to listen. He was thinking how should he bury those people and to clean up the blood.

Mistress Nangong softly said to him from his back. "Let me help you."

Although he had never said anything but Mistress Nangong had already guessed his intention.

Therefore they dug a big trench and placed the bodies inside. The mound was very high too. In the future when words of this incident spread, this mound was named 'Mound of the evil men'.

The second day they had reached 'San Men Wan' and they could see the ocean. At the harbor city, Feng Mantian immediately wrote many couplets for his purchases. Among the couplets were tigers, wolves, snakes etc.

Everyone was wondering why the sacred place of the Fraternity that was called ‘Divine Creator Temple’ for the past hundred or so years, would want these wild beasts, snakes and scorpions for.

Nangong Ping saw one of the couplets wrote ‘Ten evil men’. He was startled and asked. “Is evil man also consider a commodity? What do you want it for? And where are you going to buy it?”

Feng Mantian smiled. “Slowly you will know.” In between his smiles, he looked mysterious, in between his mysterious look, he carried a sorrow heart.

Nangong Ping could not guess the meaning of his words that therefore he did not ask anymore.

Chapter Sixteen
Facing Death Happily

Feng Mantian toasted everyone a cup of wine and said. “Everyone has to part. I, Feng Mantian am glad that in this trip to Jiangnan, I will make friends out of all of you. I am really happy. But time is pressing, after this parting toast, I will have to go.”

Everyone thought that since his goods had not arrived yet and there should still be a few more days before parting, therefore everyone was jolted.

Mistress Nangong said in a trembling voice. “Why leave so hastily? If Hero Feng, you do not find look down on us, please stay for a few more days. I can also prepare a few more dishes and wine…”

Lu Yixian added. “Indeed, indeed. You and I, we do not know when we will meet again. Why not stay a little longer so that we can enjoy more of the Peacock Brew?”

Feng Mantian just smiled but did not reply. He just toasted them. Everyone knew that he had already made up his mind.

Mistress Nangong looked at Nangong Ping intently and muttered. “Hero Feng, you should really wait for a few more days before leaving so that at least tonight I can prepare a few more dishes…” Her head was in whirl and she could not continue!

She rose up and walked over to Nangong Ping. “Ping…er…”

Feng Mantian laughed heartily. “Really, life is like a dream, the cycle of life and death, of gathering and parting. Everyone here is an eminence people. Why not make it straightforward…pui…”

When he said ‘Pui’, everyone collapsed on the ground.

Nangong Ping felt sleepy and his eyes began to close. He could only see his mother’s sorrowful eyes looking at him like the full moon. Slowly, he collapsed into the darkness!

Divine Creator Temple, was it a mysterious place that the smart people had used to trick the stupid?

Or did the Divine Creator Temple never exist in the first place?

Or did the Divine Creator Temple only exist between the boundary of life and death?

Nangong Ping had reached an island; he did not know how he got here in the first place. In this plain land, there were pearls and gold scattered all over much like some one was stepping onto the soil. Even the leaves were like jades.

In the far distant, was imposing palace that was pure white. Its towers were golden and phoenixes flew in the skies above.

Then he spotted his parents among the crowd in the distant and with great delight he ran toward them. But suddenly he found out his legs accupoints had been hit and he could move. In that instant, the entire precious stones and riches had become garbage. And his parents, Mei Yinxue, Ye Manqing, Wang Susu, Long Fei was surrounded by tens of venomous snakes. And the eyes of the venomous snakes looked like Guo Yuxia eyes when she smiled…

He struggled with all his strength and with a great shout, he sprang forward…

He opened his eyes now and in front of him was a lamp and he was on a bed. He had broke into a cold sweat and was relief that all had been just a bad dream.

He felt his chest tore apart by his emotions and his tears began to flow. Did it mean now that his life did not belong to him? Was his life going to end just like that? But he had not repaid his parents yet for their upbringing and there was still so many things waiting for him to do.

After awhile, he swiped away his tears and rose up, muttering. “I need to go back, I need to go back…”

Suddenly there was a laugh outside the door as Feng Mantian entered. “You still want to go back?”

Nangong Ping replied firmly. “Indeed!”

Feng Mantian ceased his laughter and sighed. “Good, good. It is good to have some aspirations!” He appeared to be drunk.

Nangong Ping had many things to ask of him but when he saw his solemn looks, he did not have the will to ask anymore.

Feng Mantian said. “Follow me!”

The two of them went to the cargo hold of the ship. Nangong Ping cast his eyes around and saw that seawater was rushing into the ship. There were many cages in the cargo hold, mainly the wild beasts that Feng Mantian had brought back.

A thin solemn man was at the back of the cargo and a man in greasy clothing was smiling idiocy was standing besides him.

When Nangong Ping saw such a man, he began to loathe him. Although there were many poor fishermen, but at least they had a clean clothing. But this man was wearing greasy clothing, his look was repulsive, rustic and his laugh unbearable to his ears. Therefore he could not resist and asked. “Who is this man?”

Feng Mantian said. “The cook.”

Nangong Ping was stunned. To think that from now on, he had to eat what this man had to cook. He could not help feeling nauseous. He asked looking vexed.

“Why did you find such a person?”

Feng Mantian laughed and said. “It is not easy for me to find these crewmen. Why will want to follow a stranger to the open seas?”

Nangong Ping asked. “Then how did Senior find them?”

Feng Manqing waved his hand and the parrot flew in. He said. “Ask Qi Ge to come in. That parrot began to shriek. “Qi Ge, Qi Ge…” And it flew in a circle around the ship. Soon, a dark man began to descend onto the cargo hold of the ship.

Nangong Ping was startled. This Qi Ge looked funny. He looked like a humpback but was tall and surprising nimbly.

Qi Ge lowered his head and said. “Master what…what orders do you have for me?” He stumbles in his speech and seemed not able to talk well.

Feng Mantian laughed and said. “He and I have changed into this big ship therefore we need a lot of crewmen. Moreover we have so many things to transport.”

Nangong Ping asked. “How many crewmen?”

Feng Mantian said. “Around eleven, twelve. Do you want to have a look at them?”

Nangong Ping said repetitiously. “No need!” After he had seen this Qi Ge that looked more like a beast and that greasy man, he already felt nauseous. He even thought that all these fierce tigers and wolves were more soothing to his eyes.

Nangong Ping wished that he returned to Jiangnan. The crewmen of this ship most of them looked horrible and they would look at him with weird stares like beasts that were hunting for their prey. It was totally different from the normal fishermen that Nangong Ping had known. He was always on guard against them but Feng Mantian did not seem to mind. And was constantly forcing him to drink with him.

Whenever Nangong Ping saw that convulsing man serving him food, he would feel very unbearable and he would drink some strong wines or else he would find himself unable to eat.

That convulsion man was really very convulsing. He did not even wash his face even once. Luckily, water was something very precious aboard the ship and his cooking was indeed very good. Although everyone disdained him but everyone endured him. He would occasionally broke out into an idiocy laugh and did not seem to place anything in his heart. When he saw Nangong Ping, he would laugh and Nangong Ping would try to avert his glance from him.

After many days, there was still no sight of any land. Nangong Ping could not resist asking. “Are we near?”

Feng Mantian coldly replied. “When we reach, you will know!”

The further the ship sailed; Feng Mantian would become more and more solemn. He even started to drink more and more wine.

One day, when Nangong Ping had too much of a drink and when he thought of his family, he felt bored and went to the deck. He looked at the vast expanses of the ocean and could not tell which was the ocean, which was the sky. Suddenly he heard an idiocy laugh approaching.

Since Nangong Ping did not wish to meet this man, he thought of leaving straight away. But when he saw two crewmen holding that convulsing man to the cargo, he could not resist following them as he thought them suspicious.

One of the crewmen was called Jin Song and the other was called Zhao Zhendong. These two men had some authority over the rest of the crewmen therefore Nangong Ping knew them.

Nangong Ping suddenly heard them talking using the speech of the unorthodox pugilists and he became even more suspicious.

They looked around to check if there was anyone. That Jin Song swiftness movement skill looked very good and had years of training. He almost discovered Nangong Ping as he ran past his hiding place when he said. “There is no movement. Only the crewman that is on duty at the front of the ship is active. The rest have slept!”

Zhao Zhendong began to push that convulsing cook down a pile of goods. When he fell, he could no longer laugh or smile.

Zhao Zhendong took out a knife and flashed it in front of the cook and smiled wickedly. “Do you want to live?”

The convulsing cook tried to speak but it was broken. “Naturally…Naturally I want to live!”

Zhao Zhendong said. “If you want to live, you must listen to us. To tell you honestly, we are vicious killers that killed without even bating our eyes. Anyone that rake out a living in the seas, will know that I am Boss Zhao of the Sea Leopard Gang!”

That convulsing cook was startled and carried a bitter face as he said. “Big…Big boss what orders do you…do you have for your servant.” Because he was scared, even his speech became blur.

Zhao Zhendong laughed coldly and said. “I doubt you dare to disobey me!” He took out a paper pouch and added. “Tomorrow make a chicken soup and spill half inside the soup, the half will be inside the rice!”

That convulsing man began to tremble. “Chicken soup do not need to put pepper!”

Zhao Zhendong laughed and scolded him. “Idiot, this is not pepper. Tell you what it is, it is poison. No matter, whoever eats it will surely die. Just remember

not to eat it yourself. When I am rich, I will not forget your share. But if you leak this out, I will cut you to pieces and feed you to the fishes in the ocean, do you understand?"

The convulsing man began to nod many times.

Jin Song softly laughed. "I think that this loot is more than enough for us. That cripple and the freak as well as that young man with the handsome face are not to be trifled with."

Zhao Zhendong coldly hummed and said. "Do you think that Wang Zhi, Sun Chao and that Li Laosao are good people? I think that the three of them had no good intentions for sneaking in the ship. They are most likely to be together. These unorthodox friends…If they are not on our side, we just finish them tomorrow as well."

Suddenly some one flashed by and coldly said. "Boss Zhao, how vicious can you be. You even want to kill us brothers?"

Zhao Zhendong expression changed and he rose up, brandishing his knife. He said in a low voice. "Who is it?"

It was Li Laosao who appeared. He said. "Sneaky dog, hand over the poison."

The convulsing man who had been sandwiched in between them looked more like a sneaky dog.

Li Laosao said. "Don't be too rash to fight first. You must know that I have no ill intention by asking you to hand over the poison. Don't underestimate that cripple. Do you think that with a pack of poison, you can settle him? What if were to he discovered it? You will only be alerting him and disrupt our plans. Throw the poison into the sea, I have a better idea!"

Zhao Zhendong halted his steps but he looked on with hatred in his eyes. "Who you think you are that you want Boss Zhao of the Sea Leopard to listen to you!"

Li Laosao coldly replied. "Do you really don't recognize me? I am…" Suddenly he was besides whispering in Zhao Zhendong ear.

Zhao Zhendong had a big change in his expression, his body was even jolted and he dropped his knife onto the floor. He said in a trembling voice. "Why brings you…you…"

Li Laosao said. "Don't say too much. Go back to the ship deck and have a nice sleep. When the time comes, I will inform you. Since your Sea Leopard Gang have already prepared much effort, I will not forget your share."

Zhao Zhendong replied. "Yes…yes…" And he pulled Jin Song away.

That convulsing man was still at the back when 'Li Laosao' suddenly grabbed his shoulder and said. "What a audacity fellow. Do you think I did not see

through your disguise! Give me your life!"

Nangong Ping was puzzled. "Is that convulsing man someone important too?"

But that convulsing man was looking afraid all the while and when Li Laosao had almost clapped the top of his head, he suddenly halted his attack and just patted the convulsing man. "Don't be afraid. I am just testing you. Go now!"

That convulsing man began to leave but his glances were looking at Nangong Ping's hiding place.

Nangong Ping was startled only to hear a rat running past. He had thought that the convulsing man had discovered his hiding place but it was only a rat that the convulsing man had saw. Nangong Ping felt like laughing.

When there were no one around, he quietly opened the door of the cargo hold and went through it…But his eyes caught the pair of bright eerie eyes looking at him. It was hiding behind the cargo hold door and was waiting for him to enter.

Nangong Ping guarded his body and chest with his hands only to discover that it was the freak Qi Ge.

Qi Ge smiled at him with his white teeth and walked away without a sound.

Nangong Ping was startled and though it was strange. "Did he also heard all the conversations? Then why did he not make a sound!" And he walked to look for Feng Mantian who was still drinking.

He did not turn his head and asked. "You are still awake? Do you want to have some drinks?"

Nangong Ping said solemnly. "I afraid that Senior would be unable to enjoy anymore drinks in the future, even if you wanted to do so!"

Feng Mantian laughed and said. "Is there any wine that I am unable to drink? Come tell me, I want to know!"

Nangong Ping said. "Senior, do you know that all the crewmen in this ship are all pirates?" He proceeded to tell him what he had heard.

But Feng Mantian remained indifferent.

Nangong Ping asked. "Although Senior you look down on them but at least in regards to their ploys, you should have some preparations or reactions…"

Feng Mantian laughed. "Do you think I do not know! Ever since all of them step into this ship, I have already known that none of them are a good man. Only that idiotic man is not with them that therefore I want him to be the cook. But I still have to take some precautions by placing an antidote that can cure a hundred poisons in those jars of wine. That is why I want you to drink some everyday to guard against them. If they really want to fight with me, haha, then it is time for them to die. When you see me drinking everyday, do you really think I am drunk?"

Feng Mantian laughed. "It just that I am old with experience and have seen

much. If you of my age, you will begin to think their tricks and ploys are laudable but…I wonder who that Li Laosao is. He looks like a threat…"

Nangong Ping said. "I am sure he is someone important but in front of Senior, I doubt he can have the chance to exhibit his craftiness!" He was now very impressed with Feng Mantian and was not purposing praising him.

Feng Mantian laughed. "No matter what his background is, he wants that Zhao fellow not to put poison in the wine and food, he is indeed very clever. No matter how intricate they mix the drugs and poison, if I cannot tell, then it a waste of my seventy to eighty years of my life!"

Nangong Ping asked. "Senior, you are not thinking of exposing their ploy?"

Feng Mantian said. "Every day I will shout once, it is to frighten them and put them on their toes. If not, they will have started their ploys much earlier. If I expose the ploys too early, who will do the manual work on this ship?" He laughed. "I afraid when these evil men encounter me, they just have to admit their misfortunes."

Nangong Ping was jolted and he had a thought. So he asked. "Senior, that couplet that you wrote, is it for them?"

Feng Manqing laughed and said. "Indeed. I already know that there be people who will be willing to come to me. Therefore I did not even need to search…" He laughed most heartily.

Nangong sighed and thought that although he deemed this old man with respected but he was also a frightening old man.

Feng Manqing said. "I have only a regret, do you know what it is?"

Nangong Ping shook his head and said. "I do not know."

Feng Mantian sighed heavily and rested his arm loudly on the table. "My only regret is that no matter how much wine I can drink, I will never be drunk and I will remain clear headed. It is really sorrowful."

He continued. "As the saying goes, if a person is drunk, it can cure a thousand sorrows. In this world, nine out of ten people drink to forget their sorrow…For someone like me, who can never be drunk, it is really the most unfortunate of the most unfortunate. This is my regret."

Nangong Ping had never heard of such a theory before therefore he laughed. "Although it may be the case but Old Senior you have been a hero all your life and your fame is known throughout the fraternity. At your old age, you can even residue at the heavenly land of the Divine Creator Temple. It is really a double blessing. Why did you want to drown yourself with wine to forget sorrow?"

Feng Mantian was stunned for awhile and then he muttered. "Divine Creator Temple, Divine Creator Temple…" Suddenly he laughed bitterly and sighed. "I have the wines as my companion. As for you, go and have a sound sleep!"

Before he went to sleep, Nangong Ping was still feeling strange why did Feng Mantian wanted to drown himself silly drunk to forget his sorrow?

The next day, when he went to the bow of the ship, he saw Zhao Zhendong, Jin Song and that Li Laosao doing their usual tasks. Naturally, he pretended to be in the dark about their ploys but he could not help feeling sad about their fates.

Li Laosao was fishing at the side of the ship with a fishing rod.

The sun was about to set when Feng Mantian walked to the deck of the ship and looked at him fishing intently.

Nangong Ping laughed. “Fishing in this vast ocean, is it possible for any fish to get hook?”

Feng Mantian said. “As long as there is a hook in the ocean, sooner or later there be a fish!”

Before he had finished, Li Laosao fishing line was jerking. And he fished out a red colored brass.

Feng Mantian sighed. “This type of fish is the most delicious of all the fishes and is called the ‘Red Fish’. And it is also excellent to eat while drinking too. But a pity we do not have a cook such as your mother here.”

When he unwitting mentioned Mistress Nangong, Nangong Ping looked downcast but immediately he smiled. “My cooking is not bad either.”

Feng Mantian asked in delight. “Really?”

Nangong Ping laughed. “Naturally it is true!” Because he wanted to help the old man to lessen his sorrows, he took the fish down to the kitchen to cook.

Nangong Ping was really highly endowed. Not only did he know the arts, he just needed to pick and learn, and he would become an expert in them. The same went for cooking which required knowledge of fire, ingredients, slicing. If any one of them were offside, then the taste would vary greatly.

Feng Mantian looked on happily when he was preparing the dish. Even the convulsing man was smiling idiocy at the side.

Now the dish was almost ready. The color, fragrant and the aroma were all there.

Feng Mantian could no longer wait and even before the dish of fish could be carried to the dining room, he had finished half of the fish.

Feng Mantian laughed and said. “You should try your cooking too!’

Nangong Ping picked the fish tail and slowly sampled it. When he saw the happy smiles on the old man’s face, he was happy too.

Feng Mantian turned back his head to see that freak Qi Ge looking at the fish too so he said. “You want to eat too? Take the fish head!”

And that Qi Ge really took the fish head and swallowed it whole including the bones. Nangong Ping was shocked for words for he really looked like a beast that was swallowing his food.

Feng Mantian laughed. “Good, good. A wonderful mother will surely have a wonderful son. I didn’t expect that you could really cook so well…” Suddenly his laughter was no more, like a knife that suddenly took away his laughter.

His face was green and he suddenly yelled. “No good!”

And he suddenly plunged at Nangong Ping with his claws extending to him. Nangong Ping was stunned but Feng Mantian snatched away the unfinished fish tail in Nangong Ping’s hands and shouted. “Good grief! I actually fell into their trick! The fish has been poisoned. Hurry and kill all those evil heretics!”

Li Laosao eerily laughed.

Qi Ge howled and then charged fiercely at one of the men from the Sea Leopard Gang. Because that man had already been frightened by his howl, he did not know how to react; therefore Qi Ge crushed him and killed him instantly on the spot.

Qi Ge proceeded to grab another man who was also too frightened to move but suddenly Qi Ge collapsed on the floor with blood foaming from his mouth.

Nangong Ping killed one man with a palm technique on the spot but when he exchanged blows with Jin Song, he felt dizzying spells in his head and he could not focus. He secretly thought. “Forget it!” He did not wish to fall into their hands and therefore he wanted to commit suicide by jumping into the ocean!

But Zhao Zhendong suddenly grabbed his belt and laughed. “You want to die comfortably? Stop dreaming.” He found himself being pulled back and thereafter he lost his consciousness!

Feng Mantian was attacking Li Laosao. Li Laosao after seeing him still so spirited was startled by his martial display therefore he did not dare to exchange blows with him and only evade and taunting him. “Old freak, why don’t you collapse!”

Although he was fast but Feng Mantian was even faster till the point of unbelievable. Feng Mantian caught Li Laosao by his clothing in double quick time and Li Laosao tried to break free by using all his strength. His clothing was tore and he jumped into the ocean as he broke free of Feng Mantian.

Feng Mantian went to the next man and struck him dead. He wanted to kill all the crewmen but this drug was a special drug and the poison inside him was deep and now he started to see shadows flying all over. After a few staggering moves, he knew that he could no longer hold his ground. He was a hero of his times but now he found himself fallen to a few petty men. He unwitting sighed. “I hate myself!” And he finally collapsed.

Everyone was too scared or too shocked to react. They were only too glad that Feng Mantian had finally collapsed.

Even the convulsing man was at the deck to take a look after hearing all those cries.

At this moment of time, Nangong Ping, Feng Mantian, Qi Ge had all fainted on the ground, leaving the parrot hovering around shrieking. “It is a joke…it is a joke…”

Li Laosao had climbed back to the ship. He was wet all over. He looked around and exclaimed. “It is still looking good. Only four had died!” He waved his hands and said. “Throw the dead to the sea and wash the floor. Tomorrow morning I want to sacrifice these three inhumane people.”

He then proceeded to hit the accupoints of Nangong Ping, Feng Mantian and Qi Ge. And as an extra precaution, he tied them tightly with ropes.

Zhao Zhendong and everyone were greatly impressed with Li Laosao.

Li Laosao had secretly poisoned the fishing bait with drugs. When that fish had swallowed the bait, naturally the fish was poisoned as well. Because Feng Mantian had saw with his own eyes that the fish was caught in the open sea, and that it was Nangong Ping that cooked it personally, he became careless. Moreover that Li Laosao was the same person that urged everyone not to use poison. Therefore this hero of the times was now lying on the deck floor.

Once it was dawn, seawater was drowsed on the three of them instantly awakened them.

Nangong Ping thought that the sun was piercing to his eyes and then a piecing laughter was heard in his ears and therefore he was awakened.

It was Li Laosao that was laughing. He coldly laughed. “It just one of my thirty-six ruses, to think that I have just exhibited just one ruse and you have fallen into it. It is really so disappointing.” Although the way he said it, it meant he was disappointed but in fact he was very proud of it.

Nangong Ping cast his eyes around him and saw that Feng Mantian and Qi Ge had been jailed in a cage. Except for their eyes, they were not able to move at all.

Li Laosao had a whip in his hand and he pointed it at Feng Mantian. “Feng Mantian, what do you have to said? I heard that your martial ability has no equal in this world but today you are mine to slaughter.”

Although Feng Manqing had awakened but he did not opened his eyes. He only coldly hummed and slowly said. “I have lived long enough. If you want to slice or cut, it is up to you.”

Li Laosao said. “I have waited for this chance for several tens of years. Finally you have fallen into my hand. If I have let you die so comfortably, it will be so undeserved to you.” Suddenly he became very sharp when he said the last sentence.

Feng Mantian opened his eyes and he turned ashen. “You…you. It is actually you!”

Li Laosao laughed. “Good, good. You have finally discovered it? But what a pity, it is too late!”

And he started to whip Feng Mantian.

Nangong Ping heard a tiger howl behind him and he turned back to take a look – He was caged in with a tiger. That tiger was about to pound on him when it received a lashing from Li Laosao whip and instantly became docile.

From Li Laosao mannerism and his ability to control tiger, Nangong Ping had a sudden jolted in his mind and he suddenly remembered a person. He grasped. “Lady Proudness!”

‘Li Laosao’ laughed. “Good, good. Even you have recognized me.” ‘He’ turned around and when ‘he’ turned back again, the ‘Li Laosao’ was no more and she had now become Lady Proudness!

Nangong Ping sighed and thought to himself. “No wonder her face is always so solemn and even nicked by others as dead face. No wonder she can put poison in the fish bait and she has the ability to tame tiger. She is actually Lady Proudness. Today I have fallen into her hands…alas!” He closed his eyes and was silence for he knew that in front of Lady Proudness, talking was in vain. He only hoped for a quick death.

Lady Proudness walked to Feng Mantian and rubbed his face. She softy laughed. “Old man Feng, I have thought of you for so many years. What do you think that I will plan to do with you? Can you guess?”

She took out a very small silk pouch and added. “Do you know what is inside my silk pouch?”

Feng Mantian closed his eyes and refused to say a word.

Lady Proudness shifted her eyes and giggled. “Inside this pouch is the most powerful aphrodisiac in the world. Just one sniff and you will be immediate on heat. Do you want to take a sniff!”

Feng Mantian turned even more ashen but still refused to open his eyes or talk.

Lady Proudness held the silk pouch and said. “Come, take a sniff to see if it is fragrant. After you have sniffed it but because you still can’t move, that feeling must be so comfortable. I promise you it will be the most comfortable thing that you will feel…” (She talking in reverses)

Nangong Ping felt a chill in his spine. This sort of torture, he had never heard of but it was definitely more unbearable than any other types of torture. He could not resist opening his eyes to take a look.

Lady Proudness had already placed the pouch nearer and nearer to Feng Mantian nose. Although he had his eyes and mouth closed but he was now breaking in cold sweat. This hero of his times, try as he could, he could not even move an inch to turn his nose away.

Suddenly a tiger roar temporary distracted Lady Proudness as she turned to have a look and she spotted some one looking at her with his eyes wide opened. It was the convulsing man and he was stammering. "You…how did you suddenly become a woman!"

Lady Proudness shifted her beautiful eyes and suddenly laughed lovingly. "Do you think I am beautiful?"

The convulsing man nodded and said. "Beaut…Beautiful!"

Lady Proudness laughed. "Since you can appreciate if I am beautiful or not. Good. Hurry and make some delicious dishes and I will let you look at me!"

That convulsing man opened his mouth and idiocy laughed for a few times before he climbed down the ship deck.

Lady Proudness brushed her hair aside and softly laughed. "Old man Feng, you look. Even he knows that I am…"

She shifted her eyes and suddenly noticed that the man besides her was flushed red and looking at her like a beast. She asked. "What do you think you are doing?"

The man began to tremble and his face was all red. He opened his arms and hugged Lady Proudness shouting. "I beg of you, I beg of you. I…I cannot control myself anymore…"

It seemed that just now when Lady Proudness was distracted by the tiger roar, she had accidentally jerked the silk pouch. And this man happened to sniff it. Now the drug had controlled him and his entire body was on the heat.

Lady Proudness did not expect that this man would dare to hug her so in a momentarily distraction, the man had hugged her. She could feel his warm hug and she suddenly felt naughty too. She was typically a wanton woman. Instead of feeling angry, she giggled. And the man had knocked her onto the ground.

Zhao Zhendong flashed a dagger and stabbed the man at the back. "How dare you be so rude to our Lady!"

The man gave a howl and he was dead. Lady Proudness rose up with rosy cheeks and questioned. "Who ask you to kill him?"

Zhao Zhendong was stunned while Lady Proudness softly laughed. "Oh, I know it. You must be jealous!" Suddenly she struck him down with two blows.

Lady Proudness ceased her laughter and looked at everyone on the deck. She said. “As long as all of you listen to me faithfully, I will not make it a loss for all of you. But no one must be allowed to be jealous, understand?” She walked to Zhao Zhendong and extended her hands.

Zhao Zhendong had now turned ashen and did not dare to avoid it.

But she only rubbed his face for a few times and suddenly laughed. “Throw that corpse into the sea and go and steer the wheel, do you understand?”

Zhao Zhendong was instantly on his feet and did what he was told!

Nangong Ping had seen everything. He was sighing deeply in his heart. To fall in the hands of such a woman, was really worse than dead.

The convulsing man was back with six dishes and all of them were fragrant and looked delicious.

Lady Proudness said. “Today meal will be on the deck. I want to eat and at the same time, watch Old man Feng as he performs.”

Everyone started to get some tables and chairs while Lady Proudness toasted a cup of wine in front of Feng Mantian and said. “Is it fragrant?”

The freak Qi Ge flashed its teeth and it seemed from his fiery eyes, he was very angry.

Lady Proudness shook her silk pouch and laughed. “Don’t be afraid. I have now changed my mind. First I want all of you to experience hunger and thirst before I let you feel what it is to be on the heat.”

Other than Lady Proudness, there were seven other men that were left. They spread the tables and began to feast. Although these men were cowed by Lady Proudness but they could not help being captivated by her eyes that looked so wanton.

Lady Proudness was very happy today for she had managed to score a victory against her nemesis. She toasted and laughed at the same time. “Feng Mantian, Feng Mantian, ever since you burnt down Wanshou Manor and caused me to become homeless, you must be feeling very proud. Two months ago at the Nangong Manor, just base on your few words, you almost cause me to lose my life. You must be feeling very baleful. Today where is all your air? It seem like I, Lady Proudness, is more likely to be proud than disappointed!”

That convulsing man was climbing up and down breathlessly constantly fetching jars of wine for everyone. His pair of eyes was constantly staring at Lady Proudness.

Nangong Ping did not know whether to laugh or cry at this situation. Suddenly Lady Proudness had walked toward him and lovingly laughed. “Little brother, how old are you today?”

Nangong Ping clenched his teeth refusing to say anything.

Lady Proudness laughed and said. “What a waste to die so young. If you are willing to listen to big sister, maybe…” Suddenly some of the wines and dishes were overturned and six men fell to the floor in a drunken state.

Lady Proudness shifted her eyes and laughed. “So useless. Just a few cups of wine and was drunk already…”

Before she finished, her expressions changed and she said. “Oh dear!” And she walked over to the convulsing man and grabbed him by his wrists.

The convulsing man asked. “What…what is the matter?”

Lady Proudness sternly exclaimed. “What audacity servant, you dare to poison the wine. Hurry and take the antidote out or else…”

Suddenly the convulsing man laughed. “You have finally discovered it? But what a pity, it is too late!”

That was what Lady Proudness had said earlier. Now she had heard her own words being repeated, she turned even more ashen.

Nangong Ping and Feng Mantian received a jolt to their spirits.

The convulsing man laughed. “It is the same poison that you have given me. Now that I have served you with your poison, it seem the most righteous thing to do!”

In the midst of his laughter, Lady Proudness had collapsed onto the ground.

That convulsing man giggled. “Lady Proudness, your moment of proudness seem a little too short-lived.” And he was back to being his idiotic self.

Nangong secretly sighed and thought to himself. “Looks can really be deceiving just like the ocean can never be measured. Who will expect such a rustic man to have such an intellect? But other than an idiot, who can fool the smart and ever caution Lady Proudness? Why are all the smart people get tricked by fools? If a fool wants to trick someone, why is it always so easy? Maybe it is because when smart people are in the presence of other smart people, they will be extra caution while when people see a fool, they will not guard against him.”

Nangong Ping thought that it was reasonable to assume like this.

The convulsing man began to help Nangong Ping, Feng Mantian and Qi Ge untied their ropes. But their accupoints were not cleared.

Feng Mantian said. “Your benevolent kindness is beyond words. I hope that you can help us with our accupoints too.” He was very respectfully to the convulsing man.

But the convulsing man laughed idiocy. “What accupoints?”

Feng Mantian sighed deeply and said. “If you do not wish to reveal your true martial abilities, I don’t wish to force you!”

Nangong Ping thought. “This man has a righteous heart and accidentally fooled Lady Proudness. He is after all a rustic fellow so why did Feng Mantian

thought that he would be an expert?"

Feng Mantian described the way to clear the accupoint channels in great detail to the convulsing man. But that convulsing man took a great deal of time and he was breathless from trying.

Nangong Ping felt a sour smell coming from the man. It was really so unbearable. Moreover that man's hands were greasy. Although he had not seen many dirty people before but this man could be considered the dirtiest he had ever seen. Once his accupoints were cleared, he found himself pushing the convulsing man away.

The convulsing man fumbled a few steps backward before falling to the deck floor.

Feng Mantian was solemn and said. "Do you find him dirty? If it is not for such a dirty man, us two smart fellows are now the meal of the fishes."

The convulsing man tried to laugh. "Your humble has always been dirty. It is not young master's fault if he look down on me."

Nangong Ping had accidentally pushed with his hands and now he was feeling very ashamed of himself. After he had cleared Feng Mantian accupoints, he went to carry the convulsing man up.

The convulsing man was startled and grasped. "Don't need, don't need. It will only dirty young master's hands."

Nangong Ping felt even more upset and ashamed.

Feng Mantian ignored him and shouted. "I, Feng Mantian has never kneel before anyone in my life before but today…" He suddenly kneel down and bowed at the convulsing man.

That convulsing man was startled and kneels down to bow too.

Feng Mantian said. "I bow not because you had saved my life but because you had saved me from a great humiliation before I could die!"

The convulsion man could find no words to reply.

In Nangong Ping's entire life, he had never felt so ashamed before. Although he had never done anything that was against his own conscious but now he was feeling very painful in his heart.

That convulsion man said. "No need."

The freak Qi Ge had hauled a man by his legs and was moving to the side of the ship.

Nangong Ping asked. "What are you trying to do?"

Qi Ge replied. "Throw him down the seas to feed the fishes."

Nangong Ping said. "Why bother even though they are…"

Feng Mantian coldly said, "You treat your enemies with benevolence but regarding your savior…heng, heng." He coldly hummed twice before he turned to

look in the other direction.

That convulsing man eyed Nangong Ping before stumbling to say. “If we kill them, I find it hard to bear too. Why not put them into a lifeboat and let them drift in the open seas. When they are awakened, whether they can live or die, let luck determine it. It is better than just killing them.”

Feng Mantian sighed. “Since you have such a intention, it is naturally good.” Although he wanted to bring them back to the island but he did not mention it. Therefore the three of them lowered a boat and put them on it – Seven men and a woman.

Feng Mantian did not want the convulsing man to go to the kitchen. Although he grew more and more solemn, his spirit was also more and more downcast but he grew more and more respectfully to the convulsing man.

Nangong Ping had thought it over, and found out that this convulsing man had indeed many suspicious points. So he asked. “I wonder what is your name if it is convenient to ask.”

The convulsing man laughed. “How can my name face anyone. But I have heard of young master’s name before. Because I happen to know one of your friends.”

Nangong Ping was delighted and exclaimed. “Really?”

The convulsing man looked at the open seas and rolled his eyes and slowly said. “Not just a friend, that person is also a very close friend of yours.”

Nangong Ping happily asked. “Do you know my Big Brother Long Fei?”

The convulsing man said. “No!”

Nangong Ping said. “Then surely it has to be Brother Shi Chen!”

The convulsing man answered. “Not him too!”

Nangong Ping asked. “What about Chief Escort Sima? …Third Uncle Lu…” Since Nangong Ping was eager to know his background, so he began to name all his friends and associates.

But the convulsing man shook his head several times. Nangong Ping suddenly had a jolt in his head. “Can it a woman?” So he began to name Guo Yuxia, Wang Susu and even Ye Manqing.

But the convulsing man kept shaking his head and his glances seemed to look afar.

Nangong Ping secretly thought. “My Sister in law is so wanton, good with words and easy to befriend others, Wang Susu is the most gentle and would never make things difficult for others, Ye Manqing although she is haughty but she is exalted and possesses the spirit of a heroine. Although they are all women but none of them look like they will even befriend such a man.”

He sighed and thought again. “Other than these people, only Mei Yinxue is

closest to me. But she is always surrounding herself in her cold demeanor and love cleanliness the most. One has to imagine she had to stuff herself in that coffin for ten years. If it were others, they would look very haggard. But when she appeared from the coffin, her robes and dress were as clean as snow. She is the world's most cleanliness person. Even if this man is an extraordinary person, she will never bother to even talk to him even once. But if this man is just an ordinary person, how can I mention her name in front of him?"

The name of 'Mei Yinxue' was the most precious thing in Nangong Ping's heart but he also buried it in the deepest and most secrecy place in his heart. After thinking for some time, he said. "I couldn't guess it."

The convulsing man was looking idiocy in the distant and was silence for a long while before he said. "Other than all these people, young master you did not have any other friend?"

Nangong Ping sighed and replied. "Don't…have…"

The convulsing man was once again looking idiocy for a long awhile before he suddenly laughed. "I know it. That person is only trying to impersonate as your friend." He rose up with his head lowered and walked to the side to the ship to admire the ocean waves.

Feng Mantian who was standing at the bow turned his head and looked at Nangong Ping, seemingly wishing to say something to him when suddenly the convulsing man grasped in shock. "Oh dear!"

Feng Mantian was surprised. "What is the matter?"

That convulsing man pointed at the bow of the ship and Feng Mantian bend over to look. Instantly his expressions changed. Because the distant of the bow and the seas was only three feet!

Nangong Ping was startled. "Is this ship sinking?"

Feng Mantian did not reply and rushed to the cargo hold on one leg. Lady Proudness had long thrown his iron staff that he had used to support himself into the sea. But his movements were by no means restricted.

There were tiny holes in the bottom of the ship's hold.

Nangong Ping had followed too and was startled to see the seawater as high as his waist!

Feng Mantian shouted. "Retreat!"

The convulsing man asked when he saw them returning. "How is it?"

Feng Mantian said very solemnly. "There are cracks below the deck and the seawater has already crept in. In another one hour or more, this ship will totally sink into the sea."

The convulsing man thought for a while before stomping his leg. "No wonder that Lady Proudness will go down the deck once everyday. She had

already made a hole in the lower deck. Every day she will go down to mend the hole. If her vicious tricks succeed, then she would mend the hole, if not at least she could cause everyone to die with her."

Nangong Ping hatefully said. "What a vicious woman. No wonder she always fond of saying she has thirty-six poison tricks. Do we have any other alternatives now?"

Feng Mantian coldly said. "Except to abandon ship, what other methods do we have?"

The convulsing man sighed. "If I did not suggest that we give the lifeboat to them, haiz…I…I…"

Feng Mantian laughed. "We owed our lives to you. What is there to sigh about? Everyone have to die someday. Death is not something to be feared. Although I don't feel glad that I would have died in Lady Proudness' hands. I really hates to see her proud look even when I am in the underworld."

Nangong turned his body and said. "Let me go check if there is anything…"

Feng Mantian said. "What there to check? All the food and clean water have already been inundated by the seawater. Even if you and me can float on the sea but we will die of hunger and thirst!"

Nangong Ping was stunned and did not move.

The convulsing man suddenly began to sigh softly. "Elder Senior Feng, you really have the heroic to face death."

Feng Mantian laughed hilariously. "I have already lived long ago therefore I can face death heroic. Qi Ge, go down the cargo hold and find some unopened jar of wines. Before I die, I want to have a good drink. At least I will not waste my last moments of life."

That freak Qi Ge did not seem to be too much bothered about life and death. He went down the cargo hold and was back with two jars of wine. He exclaimed. "There is only two jar. The rest has been smashed to bits!"

Feng Mantian opened the jar and invited everyone to drink with him. And he started to drink most happily.

Nangong Ping took a sip from the wine and suddenly sighed.

Feng Mantian asked. "Why did you sigh for? Even if you reach the Divine Creator Temple, you will find it even more unbearable than death. Now you have the opportunity to die, you should feel very glad."

Nangong Ping did not notice the meaning in his speech. He said in a clear voice. "Junior may not be capable but I am definitely not someone who is afraid of death. It just that I suddenly thought of someone therefore I could not help but sigh. If that person was on this ship, maybe Lady Proudness vicious tactics could be averted."

There was a glow in the convulsing man's eyes as he asked. "Who is that person?"

Nangong Ping slowly shook his head and slowly replied. "Mei…"

That convulsing man was jolted and added. "Mei Yinxue."

Nangong Ping expression changed as he asked. "You know her?"

The convulsing man did not reply but asked in a trembling voice. "At this moment of time, why did you suddenly remember her?"

Nangong Ping sighed. "Why did I suddenly remember her? …Alas. When did I ever forget about her." He turned and saw that the convulsing man was now trembling and his eyes were watery.

Nangong Ping was puzzled. "Mister why did…"

The convulsing man said in a trembling voice. "After hearing from you, even if I die, I will…"

Suddenly that Qi Ge breathe deeply and shouted delightfully. "Land, land…"

Feng Mantian asked. "What is the matter?"

Qi Ge said. "There is land ahead!"

The convulsing man asked. "How did you know that there is land in front?"

Feng Mantian sighed. "Although humans are the chief among all the creatures but our smell cannot be compared to that of beasts. Did you notice that those lions and wild beasts had calm down somehow? That is because they have smell the land from the winds."

The convulsing man said. "But he is…"

Feng Mantian smiled. "You want to ask me how did he smell that there is land in the distant? This…not long after you will know." And he closed his eyes and refused to say anything more.

Qi Ge was carrying a pall and emptying the seawater in the cabin to the open sea. One foot more and the deck would totally submerged into the seas.

Although the three of them had discovered a chance to live and should be happy but Nangong Ping, Feng Mantian and the convulsing man did not seem the least happy.

Nangong Ping was still puzzling over what the convulsing man had said before Qi Ge interrupted him. So he asked. "After hearing from me, even if you die, you will what?"

The convulsing man was stunned for awhile before replying. "Even if I die, I will think that you are laudable, pitiful and so wasted."

Nangong Ping grasped and sighed. He was stunned for awhile before he asked. "Why so wasted?"

The convulsing man rose up and walked to the ship bow. "Earlier when I

had heard all the names of your friends, they are all famous people with a good reputation in the Fraternity. Even Ye Manqing, Wang Susu are all beautiful and gentle maidens. But Mei Yinxue…heng, heng. She is heartless, her reputation is so disdainful, and moreover her age is so much older than you are. Now that you are dying, you actually thought of her. Isn't it laudable, pitiful and so wasted?"

Nangong Ping expression changed and he sat on the deck. Without saying anymore words, he began to gulp a few mouthful of wine and suddenly he stood up and walked to the side of the convulsing man. "No matter what you say but I know that she is the world most most affectionate, most most gentleness, most most magnanimous girl. In order to save someone, to protect someone, she rather be humiliated and went through lots of difficulties, although her reputation is not good, although her age is much older than me but as long as she could allow me to kneel under her feet, I will be fully satisfied."

The convulsing man was jolted but did not turn back.

Nangong Ping eyes were now watery and looking at the convulsing man. He slowly said. "She is a person that love cleanliness the most but because of me, she rather dirty herself and to endure it, she is a very haughty person but because of me, she rather be humiliated. Although she have a thousand affections for me, ten thousands way to understand me but when I am alive, she did not even tell me and rather endure all the painstaking difficulties alone. Once when I am dying, she leaked a little of her feeling but it is only because…because…" Before he had finished, his face was covered with tears.

There were tears on the face of the convulsing man as well…

Nangong Ping extended his hands to wipe her tears and cried sorrowfully. "Yinxue, why did you still want to hide from me. Don't you find that your sacrifices for me are not enough…are not enough…"

She cried out, "Ping…" And plunged into Nangong Ping's embrace.

Nangong Ping held her tightly and kissed her face. He no longer found her to be convulsing, no longer smell her grease because he now know that this most convulsing, most dirty, most unbearable man was the most real, most fragrant, most beautiful Mei Yinxue.

Mei Yinxue cuddled into Nangong Ping embrace tightly and cried out. "I will never leave you again. From now on, I will care for nothing in this world. Even if I am old and ugly, even if everyone scold me a wanton, a vicious bitch, I will still want to follow you even if I have to die, even if you dislike me or not."

Nangong Ping was sobbing now. "I dislike you, I dislike you. Why did you not tell me earlier, why did you have to endure all these difficulties?"

Mei Yinxue cried. "Do you know how many times I want to tear away my disgusting mask and to tell you that I have always been by your side, till the ends

of the earth and the edge of the ocean!"

Feng Mantian did not turned his head around but there were now tears flowing from his eyes even though he had tried to close his eyes.

Even though he had a heart that was like steel but he could not help being moved by this love that was deeper than the deepest ocean.

Suddenly there was a stumped and the ship had hit land. Nangong Ping and Mei Yinxue held hands together as they jumped down to the knee deep ocean and walked to the desolate island.

When Feng Mantian looked at this sweet couple, he could not help feeling sweet inside too as well. But he was also very grief and sorrowful. Why did heaven have to let such a heartfelt love experienced trials and tribulations? Why couldn't an ordinary life bring out this extraordinary love as well?

Mei Yinxue removed her medicinal mask and revealed her fragile face. Although fragile but it was a refreshing and wonderful beauty. In this desolate island, it was like a pure white and beautiful orchid that was so heavenly.

Under a tall coconut tree, Nangong Ping and Mei Yinxue was looking tenderly and lovingly at one another.

Under another tall coconut tree, Feng Mantian was drinking some bitter wine.

Mei Yinxue was sitting and mouthing a fruit as she softly laughed. "If we can forever be here, I really do not wish to go back. But a pity, that ship can be repaired. When the ship is repaired, alas…"

Her voice was like a dream, her sound like music…

Nangong Ping sighed. "Who wants to go back…"

Suddenly Mei Yinxue grasped. "Oh dear!" And she sprang towards Feng Mantian.

Nangong Ping was jolted. Two times he heard this 'Oh dear!' it would mean a life-threatening situation and he had narrowly escaped it. Now he had heard it for the third time in two days, naturally he was shocked and he too grasped. "What happens?" And he sprang toward Feng Mantian as well.

Mei Yinxue gripped Qi Ge and asked panicky. "Where did you find these two jar of wines?"

Qi Ge was too stunned to reply and only looked at her.

Feng Mantian said, "You can answer Maiden Mei as if it is from me."

Qi Ge said. "All the other jars of wine had been smashed by the seawater. Only these two jars of wine were on the other cupboard and placed high up." He took a lot of effort to finish talking.

Mei Yinxue was stunned. She hatefully exclaimed. “Lady Proudness is indeed very vicious!”

Feng Mantian was solemn and he slowly said. “I already knew that after a sniff. But I wish that the two of you will share your last moments in bliss, therefore I did not say anything.”

Nangong Ping asked. “What is the matter? Does that mean that the two jar of wine have been spiked with poison?”

Mei Yinxue nodded and said. “Indeed. Lady Proudness had already calculated when the ship is sinking, Old Senior Feng will surely look for some wines. She was afraid that the seas could not drown us therefore she added poison into the two jars of wine. Alas…How did I become so muddle headed and did not think that her vicious ruses would come in a continuous setup.”

Suddenly she asked aloud. “Old Senior Feng, although Lady Proudness’ sleeping drugs cannot be cured but poisons and drugs are two different things!”

Nangong Ping was surprised and asked. “What so different about it?”

Mei Yinxue explained. “Sleeping drugs are used to knock out a person’s senses and the drugs move in the direction of the brain channels. It is fast reacting and even if you have the most extraordinary internal strength, it is useless. But poison is different. Although it is ten times deadly than external injuries but a person with Old Senior Feng internal strength, nine out of ten, he could force out any poisons from his body. But Old Senior Feng, why did you not force it out?”

Feng Mantian closed his eyes and said. “What is the point of living alone on this island? It is better that I accompany all of you to die. At least we have some company in the underworld.”

Mei Yinxue was stunned but she soon smiled.

Nangong Ping laughed. “Actually I have almost lost my life a few times already. I am lucky to be given a chance each time. Heaven has let me live a little longer so that I can finally see you again (referring to Mei Yinxue) and even let me enjoy a few hours of bliss. How can I be any happier?” He laughed and added. “Moreover, I have lived a life without regrets. To die together with a worthy hero such as Old Senior Feng and a wonderful maiden such as you, it is indeed a very lucky thing. What more do I Nangong Ping need to ask for?”

Feng Mantian opened his eyes and for the first time, he had a peaceful look on his look. He began to mutter. “Very good…”

Mei Yinxue closed her eyes and cuddled besides Nangong Ping. Although death was now approaching but they had no fear. In fact they were even smiling and holding hands to hands to face it!

Suddenly Feng Mantian shouted. “What are you two waiting for?”

Mei Yinxue and Nangong Ping were surprised by this sudden shout.

Feng Mantian said. “Since the two of you love one another deeply and is also on the same boat. Why don’t the two of you get marry?”

Nangong Ping said. “But…”

Feng Mantian shouted. “But what! At this moment of time, your parents are not here and I am the matchmaker. I help you to become a married couple before the two of you die.”

Nangong Ping and Mei Yinxue looked at one another. Although Mei Yinxue was looking like she was playing a finger game but nevertheless she lowered her head. Her watery eyes rolled to a side and then with a melancholy look on her face, she bit her teeth and walked away in strides.

Feng Mantian was puzzled. “What is the matter? Don’t tell me you are not willing?”

Mei Yinxue did not turn her head but said. “Indeed, I am not willing.”

Nangong Ping was too startled. “You…you…”

A thought crossed Feng Mantian head and jolted him. He thought. “That it! Mei Yinxue is much older than Nangong Ping is and her reputation in the Fraternity is not good either. Therefore she cannot help but secretly feel inferior inside her. Although her heart is most willing but at the mention of marriage, it touches her innermost worries.”

This wise old man gathered his thoughts and had already analyzed all her contradicting feelings. Therefore he coldly laughed. “Maiden Mei, at first I thought that you are a smart girl but who will have thought that you are really so stupid. At this moment of time, you are still thinking of all that.”

Mei Yinxue halted her steps but did not turn back.

Feng Mantian said. “Do you really want Nangong Ping and you to die in regrets and humiliations?”

Mei Yinxue covered her face with her hands and cried aloud. Suddenly she sprang back to the embrace of Nangong Ping and cried. “I am willing to marry you. As long as you are willing, I am willing to be your wife forever and ever.”

Nangong Ping trembled. “I…I am naturally willing…” Before he could finish, his tears of happiness had flowed.

Feng Mantian laughed. “Two child…” He reached out for Nangong Ping and Mei Yinxue and forced them to kneel. He added. “It is a joyous occasion. Why did you cry? The heaven and the earth be the witness, today I, Feng Mantian will arrange for Nangong Ping and Mei Yinxue to be husband and wife, never to separate forever and ever.”

He rose up, changed into another position and shouted. “The groom and the bride must now bow three times. One to the heaven and earth, two to the deities, three to your parents…” Then he moved to the front of Nangong Ping and Mei

Yinxue and laughed heartily. “The fourth bow will be me as I am the matchmaker.”

Nangong Ping and Mei Yinxue broke out in giggles because Feng Mantian was role-playing so many characters. Their tears had not dried yet therefore when they laughed, it seemed like a mix.

One must know that if the two of them were not trapped in this island and had a matchmaker like the Old Hero Feng Mantian, even though they may be deeply in love but they could not possibly married one another.

Feng Mantian laughed. “Now that all the rites are over, it is time to go to the bed chamber.”

Mei Yinxue was all red and lowered her head.

Feng Mantian laughed heartily. “Is the bride feeling shy?”

Feng Mantian thought for awhile before he grabbed them toward the broken ship. “That will be your bed chamber!”

The freak Qi Ge suddenly laughed. “Wait a while” And he took an axe and hacked the hull, spilling the seawater out. “Let us accompany the newly wed to the ship. It is better that we die on the ship than on this desolate island.”

Feng Mantian laughed. “You certainly become smarter over the years…what are you two waiting for? Hurry and go to the cabin, that will be your bed chamber!”

Nangong Ping and Mei Yinxue held one another’s hands. A feeling of tenderness and sweetness overwhelmed them as well as a melancholy sorrow.

When Feng Mantian looked at this couple, he could not help but sighed deeply. He thought. “The man is talented and the woman is beautiful, they are really a perfect pair. It is really a joyous thing to witness them becoming a pair. Although the time is short…in another ten to twelve hours the poison will act.”

He ushered them inside the cabin. “What a pity, we still short of two nuptial cups of wine but that is not important. Don’t waste this precious moments, hurry and go inside...” He pushed them inside and closed the door.

He muttered. “Farewell, farewell…”

He waved to Qi Ge and said. “You come here…”

Before he had finished, the cabin door opened. Nangong Ping and Mei Yinxue walked out hand in hand, holding the flower guarding bells.

Feng Mantian stared at them with wide-open eyes and shouted. “What are you two newly wed doing here instead of in the bed chamber?”

Mei Yinxue laughed captivatingly and replied. “We are out to accompany you!”

Feng Mantian said. “Who wants you two to accompany me. Hurry and go back…”

But Nangong Ping and Mei Yinxue did not say a word more and slowly sat down by his side.

Chapter Seventeen
Heartbreaking Moments

Nangong Ping and Mei Yinxue cuddled tightly around one around for a long time until Qi Ge slowly rose up and walked to Feng Mantian and to kowtow three times respectfully.

Feng Mantian tried to smile. “It time for you to go?”

Qi Ge exclaimed. “I am going soon!”

Feng Mantian replied. “Good, good, this…”

Among the four of them, Qi Ge martial ability was the weakest therefore his poisoning also acted the fastest. He nodded at Nangong Ping and Mei Yinxue before he jumped into the sea. Before he had jumped, his countenance had already turned black and he was vomiting blood in mid-air.

Nangong Ping and Mei Yinxue held one another’s hands even more tightly for they knew that Qi Ge was unable to endure the pain when the poison reacted therefore he seek an early release.

Nangong Ping knew that the next to follow would be him as his martial foundation was the weakest of the three. He was glad he did not need to watch Mei Yinxue die before him but how could he bear to let Mei Yinxue endure the pain of watching him go?

Suddenly Mei Yinxue softly laughed. “Good, is it my turn to go already?”

Nangong Ping was jolted and turned his glance at her. Her snow-white face was turning ghastly now. But Mei Yinxue forced out a smile and said. “I am only afraid that you will go before I go. That pain, I am unable to endure. But now…I…I…” She bit her teeth and could not say anymore. Her frail body was as weak as the autumn leaf and she was trembling. But her body also seemed hot to touch.

Nangong Ping held Mei Yinxue tightly in his embrace as his tears flowed. Her body was now rigid. “Yinxue, Yinxue…wait for me…”

Feng Mantian extended his hand to hit Mei Yinxue on her ‘Sleep’ accupoint. He wanted to let this affectionate maiden sleep peacefully in the embrace of her most love one before she passed on.

Therefore Mei Yinxue slumbered into unconsciousness but in her face, was a smile even though she was now hovering between death’s door.

Nangong Ping held her even tightly and he lost his voice due to grief. He tried to shout. “Old Senior Feng, I beg of you to let me…”

He turned his glance and saw that Feng Mantian was sitting rigidly and his

face was dark.

Nangong Ping grasped in shock. “Old Senior Feng, what happen to you?”

Feng Mantian opened his eye and said. “I…” It seemed that the poison had already reacted inside him and he was just biting his teeth to endure the pain.

Nangong Ping quickly reached out to hit Feng Mantian on his ‘Sleep’ accupoint.

Feng Mantian muttered. “Thanks…” And he toppled over.

In this vast heaven and earth, only Nangong Ping was left. Nangong Ping began to hallow his sorrows to the heavens. “Heaven alas heaven, why did I not die yet?”

He held Mei Yinxue very tightly and quietly waited for the poison to enact but that did not happen…He began to think that heaven was so unfair. He really could not think of any reason why he had not died yet. Unbeknownst to him, fate had a hand in playing around with him…

The reason he did not die was because in the dark woods of the Nangong Manor, he had accidentally taken a sniff of Lady Proudness deadly poison that was used to kill the Heartless Twin Evil. When the jade box had flown past him, he had accidentally taken a sniff of its fragrant but he did not notice it.

After that sniff of poison entered his body, it did not enact for along time because the type of poison Lady Proudness had used was called the ‘Negative Soul’; it was the world’s most negative poison. But the internal strength that Nangong Ping had practiced was the Pure Positive Vital Energy, and he unwittingly contained that small trace of poison in his heartbeat.

Today the poison that Nangong Ping and the rest had been afflicted was the ‘Positive Soul’ that caused Mei Yinxue’s body to emit heat.

This ‘Negative Soul’ and ‘Positive Soul’ were the two most extreme poisons in the world. If one was poisoned by either of them, there was no antidote that could possible cure it. But these two poisons were able to act as an antibiotic against one another. These two poisons reacted inside Nangong Ping’s body and neutralized one another but Nangong Ping did not know of it.

At the moment, Nangong Ping was feeling worse than death. This sorrow, this grief, this darkness, this chill all the more caused him unable to endure. Nangong Ping stood besides Mei Yinxue, Feng Mantian and muttered. “I am coming too…” And he was about to hit his Tian Ling (Top of the head) when he heard a sharp voice coming from the ocean. “Feng Mantian, is that you who has returned?”

Although this voice was very far away but it was very clear in Nangong Ping’s ears.

He was jolted and thought. “I have reached The Divine Creator Island!” But

he was more fearful that he would be saved and proceeded to hit himself on his head!

Along the sheer cliffs of the seas, built upon its precipice was a cottage but there was not even a window on the four sides its walls.

In the intense cold of the night, there was a ray of light from the cottage. Inside the cottage, there was a big hall, inside the hall, was a couch, lying on the crouch was a peerless beautiful woman. Her face was all white; her eyelids were closed and seemed to be in a state of unconsciousness. She was Mei Yinxue, who had been poisoned and passed away.

Slowly she rose up from the couch. Was this the mortal realm or the spirit realm?

She opened her eyes was startled. She took a glance around her. Was she alive? Or dead? Was mortal? Or Ghost?

She ran to the corner of the hall and rested her hands on the table to support herself. She glanced on the table and saw a spirit tablet ‘Divine Lord of the Marvelous Seven’.

She was stunned because she knew how famous and bright this name had once been in the Fraternity many years ago. Were all these jars on the table, the ashes of those heroes of their times? What was this place and how did she come here? She hurriedly walked another two steps and saw another two jars but it were not placed together. On their spiritual tablets wrote ‘Husband and Wife Liu Heting and Tao Chunchun’.

Those names were also well known to her. She had never expected to see the spiritual tables of these three heroes of their times here. Why and how come their spiritual tablets and ashes would be here? Was it because this place was not a mortal realm? When she thought of it, she could not help shivering a few times.

Slowly she calmed herself down and continued to take a few looks. Another spiritual tablet wrote ‘The Heretic Lord Zhu Wujue of the Malicious Fame’

‘The spiritual tablet of Ximen Bao, Demon with a thousand type of poison’

‘The spiritual tablet of Lonestar Pei Jue’

‘The spiritual tablet of the Sentimental Gentleman Xu Yuanping'

And a long list of other names too. Some she had heard before, some she had not. But she knew that they were the past heroes tens of years ago and even hundreds of years whose fame was very nigh during their heydays. They were all the heroes of their times and had dominated the Fraternity with their deeds. She had already decided that it was not the mortal realm. If it was the mortal realm, how could there be so many spiritual tablets and ashes from so many different

dynasties, so many clans, and so many different people!

Her worries were secretly put to rest. If this were Purgatory then surely Nangong Ping would not be here. If he was not here, then surely he was not dead yet. She did not blamed him for not following her to the death by killing himself for love. That he was still alive caused her to be extremely relieved. She sighed aloud and pray to the heavens to protect Nangong Ping for the rest of his life. Because she had firm confidence in his affections for her, she believed that no matter if he alive or dead, no matter if it was in the Mortal Realm or the Purgatory, he would never forget her forever. And it was exactly the same for her; she would never forget Nangong Ping for eternality.

Therefore she moved her glance at another spiritual tablet and her expressions suddenly changed and she grasped out in fright. She fell to the ground with her tears flowing freely. She was trembling and muttering at the same time. "You have die too? You…but where, where are you…"

For inscribed on the spiritual tablet were the words 'Nangong Ping…" These three words really pierced her heart like three very sharp blades.

In that instant, her entire body had turned cold and then she heard the opening of the bronze door in the hall.

A very thin old man clothed in hemp walked in like a ghost. Although his eyes were bright but it was icy cold. There were not even traces of human emotions in him. Even the look on his face was icy cold and not a tinge of emotion. Even a zombie that had climbed from the grave looked livelier than he did!

He looked at Mei Yinxue coldly. "You have awakened?"

Mei Yinxue said. "I have woke up already…Am I not dead yet?" Suddenly she received a jolt to her spirit and she cried aloud. Since she was awakened, then surely she had not died. Since she had not died, then Nangong Ping would have died!

When the old man in hemp clothing saw her crying, he did not say anything.

Mei Yinxue plunged forward and asked in grief. "Where is his body? I…I want to die together with him!"

Although the old man did not appeared to have moved, but he had already moved three feet away and coldly said. "Have you cried enough?"

Mei Yinxue said. "Nangong Ping, do…you know where is he…"

The old man solemnly said. "If you have not cried enough, you can continue to do so. When you have cried enough, I will take you to a ship. You don't have to ask me about any other things."

Every single word from him was icy cold and he did not seem to care for anything.

Mei Yinxue wiped her tears and stood upright. She said aloud. "If you are

unwilling to reply me, I will search myself. I don't need you to bring me to the ship." A cold demeanor had now replaced her grieving countenance. One must know she was not a weak maiden. Although she was feeling grief but when she saw how emotionless this old man was, she forced herself to suppress her feeling. Everyone in the Fraternity had nicked her 'cold blood' but they had also added a 'concubine' as a mark of respect to her. Who would ignore her like this old man?

When she was about to walk away to the door, the man floated in front of her and coldly said. "You cannot go!"

Mei Yinxue laughed coldly for awhile before she replied. "When I want to go, I will go. Who say I cannot go?"

The old man coldly said. "If you are to walk on this island for even a step, I will break your legs."

Although Mei Yinxue had by now recovered all her vital energies but no matter what swiftness movement skills she had used, the old man was like a rock that was always standing in front of her. Mei Yinxue was secretly afraid now! She began to wonder who was this old man and his background?

One must know that her swiftness skill was already peerless in the Fraternity, then was not this old man's swiftness skills even more unbelievable?

The old man said. "Don't blame me for being rude if you do not board the ship and leave this place."

Mei Yinxue rolled her watery eyes and suddenly smiled most captivating. "Don't you feel ashamed that such a grown up man would want to force a young girl like me?" Her voice and sweetness in that instant was totally different from earlier. It was as though she had become another person.

The old man was stunned and before he could say anything, Mei Yinxue had sprung forth like the wind and through the door that was left ajar. It was dawn now and she saw that she was in a cottage on a steep cliff. She saw many such cottages in the distance as well.

She hurriedly took a glance for she did not dare to stop. When she had sprang down the cliff, there was a cold voice behind her. "What a wild girl…" Then in front of her was the old man that seemingly floated in front of her.

He flinched his robes to send a soft wind against her. "Go back!"

Although the windforce looked gentle and harmless but it was powerful and irresistible. But Mei Yinxue waved her hand and another sharp windforce flew from her fingertips and cut the windforce into two.

This maiden who was so young in age would possesses such unfathomable martial ability startled the old man.

Mei Yinxue said. "Although you look honest and respectable but never to expect that you are such a vile and petty person."

The old man angrily said. “What did you say?”

Mei Yinxue said. “If you are not vile and a petty person, why do you lack a benevolent heart and bully a pitiful widow…” When she said ‘Widow’, her heart felt an intense sorrow and her watery eyes moved, tears began to flow out and carried away by the wind. She really looked very pitiful now.

The old man appeared to be softened for an instant but he soon recovered his icy cold composure and seemed unmoved by her.

Mei Yinxue said. “He has already died, why did you not let me see his corpse? Are you…really…that…heartless…” She cried out her words out and her tears flowed at the same time. Even if a steel-hearted person would to hear it, he would more or less be touched.

But the old man remained expressionless and he clapped his hands. Another big sized man appeared from the side of the cliff. He wore only a leopard-skin short, other than that he wore nothing and his hairs were all golden in color. He did not look human to her. He asked. “Master what orders do you have for me?”

The old man asked. “Have you unload all the goods yet?”

The man that looked like a beast replied respectfully. “Not yet!”

The old man waved his hand and said. “Go now!” Suddenly he hit towards Mei Yinxue ‘Ruan Ma’ accupoint even before his hand gesture had ceased.

Mei Yinxue cried out in a surprise and she crumbled to the ground!

The old man carried her with one arm back to the cottage and put her on the couch. He coldly said. “Once the cargoes have been unloaded, I will carry you to the ship. I have used a divine pill to save your life, it is already not easy. You should be satisfied!”

Why did this old man who was so cold use a rare medicine to save Mei Yinxue’s life? What was this place? Why was it filled with an air of mysterious aura?

Mei Yinxue was pacing with thoughts. Suddenly she leapt from the couch. It seemed that when before the old man had hit her on her accupoints, she had already guarded against it by closing all her accupoint channels. When the old man touched her dress, she simply moved a little, back a little. Her movements were so intricate and marvelous. But still, she was numbed momentarily. She secretly circulated all her vital energies to several channels so that her blood channels could now flow unrestricted. If that old man had used another three folds of vital strength, she would really be unable to move now.

A mysterious and powerful force enabled her to suppress the grief in her heart as she tried to push the door opened. But alas…the door had been locked from the outside and she could not even bulge it a single bit.

All the sides of the walls were made of bronze as she touched the walls.

Other than this door, there was no other opening. In that instant, she found herself back to the coffin. Other than this room was roomier than the coffin; it was really not much of a different from a nailed coffin.

After trying several times, she finally lost all hopes. Although she was typically a strong will person but she was crying now. Once again, she began to look at those spiritual tablets. Suddenly she had a jolt. If the cargo on board the ship had not been unloaded yet, how did his corpse became ashes so quick? Therefore she searched for that spiritual tablet again and found out that written on it was 'The spiritual tablet of Nangong Pingyi'.

With one look, her grieves and heartbreaks flew away.

"He has not died. He has not die yet, this is but someone else's spiritual tablet!"

She was so happy and joyous inside her. Suddenly she heard the bronze door opening and she immediately hid under a table - The tablecloth hid her body from view.

There were a few steps and then the same old man clothed in hemp said. "Where is she? I don't believe that she can fly out of this hall!"

Another man added. "If she has not sprout wings, then does she know invisibility?"

The voice came from the man in front of her table and she recognized his voice as that of Feng Mantian!

The old man coldly said. "On the Divine Creator Island, for hundreds of years, no woman has ever walked on this island. Since this maiden was brought back by you, you need to bring her out of this place." And he started to move out.

Feng Mantian said, "Wait a minute. Now that she has gone, how do I know it isn't you that let her go?"

The old man said, "She is right underneath the table that you are blocking. Heng, heng! Just now when we entered through the door, the table was moving. Do you think that I did not notice? Although you had rushed to block it from my view but it was already too late."

Before he had finished, the tablecloth was flunked aside and Mei Yinxue had crawled out and caught hold of Feng Mantian by his wrist. Her voice was trembling when she asked. "He did not die? Where is he now?"

Feng Mantian was expressionless. He was now holding a wooden crutch and was also wearing clothing made of hemp.

The another old man turned around and said. "That is right. Although he is not dead but you can never see him again forever!"

Mei Yinxue was startled and asked. "Really? Old Senior Feng, what he has said, isn't true?"

Feng Mantian said. “That is right!”

Mei Yinxue tore herself from his hand and said. “He is my husband, why can’t I see him?”

Feng Mantian looked straightly in front of him; he dare not looked into Mei Yinxue’s eyes.

Mei Yinxue laughed coldly for awhile and said in a slow manner. “Old Senior Feng, what I am asking you now, please don’t misunderstand that I am using my status as your savior as a leverage to ask of you. Because the person I want to save is not you. I am only asking you as someone who shared woes and tides aboard the same ship.”

There were flusters on Feng Mantian face.

Mei Yinxue added. “I am just a weak girl and I cannot win both of you in martial. Your words are just like a command, naturally I have powerless to reject it. Although I cannot live to see him but can you please send my corpse to see him.”

The old man asked. “Do you want to die here?”

Mei Yinxue replied. “Although I have no choice in other matters but at least death is something I can decide.”

The old man said matter of fact. “Even when you have died, I will still send your corpse on board the ship. Even if you have died ten times, you still will not be able to see him.”

Mei Yinxue was nicked ‘Cold Blood’ but this old man blood was a hundred times even colder than hers was. Mei Yinxue grief and indignation had reached boiling point but she smiled. “Alas! Old man you are indeed a great hero, great man! …”

And then she suddenly attacked with all her might lifting her leg, hand, and fingers. This one stance three attacking strokes were as swift as the wind when she used on the old man.

Although the old man managed to dodge her attacks but she continued with more moves. Unexpectedly Feng Mantian interrupted her by moving in front of her.

Mei Yinxue exclaimed. “Good, good. The two of you are such great heroes…”

Feng Mantian suddenly yelled. “Come with me!”

Mei Yinxue and the old man grasped. “To where?”

Feng Mantian solemnly said. “I will bring you to see him!”

Mei Yinxue was stunned for awhile before she expressed her delight out. “Real…Really?”

The old man in hemp clothing interrupted. “It is not real!”

Feng Mantian turned his body around and faced the old man. He stared intently at him, his stares were forceful and were like a pair of sharp swords!

The old man slowly rebuked. “Suppress all feeling, suppress all desires, suppress all fame, suppress all self interest! These are the four commandments of the Divine Creator Island for generations. Have you forgotten about it?”

Feng Mantian replied. “I have never once forgotten about it.”

The old man asked. “Why then did you…”

Feng Mantian laughed coldly awhile before he spoke. “Forty years ago, there is already no room for self-interest, desire and fame in my heart. But only this ‘feeling’ is something that I can never forget. Later when I bring her to him, I will take full responsible for it. You don’t have to worry I will drag you into it.”

After staring for a long time, the old man said. “Since you want trouble to be afflicted upon you, I just have to let you…” He shifted his eyes and looked upon Mei Yinxue. “I am afraid that after you have seen him, you will experience even more grief.”

When he finished, he walked out of the door. Mei Yinxue and Feng Mantian walked down the cliff and turned left for thirty feet before he halted.

They were in sight of a cave. Feng Mantian pointed to the cave and said. “We have reached!”

Mei Yinxue cried out in delight as she sprang into the dark cave. In the deepest recess of the cave, there was an iron barrier and Nangong Ping was sitting inside the barrier in hemp clothing. Wrapped around his head was a white cloth but on the top of his head, it was tainted with dry blood.

Mei Yinxue hollowed in sorrow, her heart was painful to see him like that. “You…what wrong did you commit that they want to lock you here?”

There were slight movements on Nangong Ping’s expressions. He appeared to be in pain as well but did not open his eyes.

Feng Mantian said. “No matter who is it, once they reach the island, they must mediate in this cave for a hundred days before they can go out…”

Mei Yinxue gripped the barriers with both of her hands and called out for him. “Why did you…you not open your eyes…is me, I have come…”

Nangong Ping closed both of his eyes tightly and without a word.

Mei Yinxue started to shake the barriers wildly. With tears flowing on her face, she said in a trembling voice. “Why are you…why are you ignoring me…”

The old man said. “Since you have already seen him and he does not wish to talk to you. Now it is the time you should leave.”

Mei Yinxue turned her slim body around and said. “Good, I will leave now but I want to ask you something. You neutralize the poison in me and save my life. Is it because he promises never again to pay attention to me?”

The old man coldly replied. “You are indeed very smart.”

Mei Yinxue forced a smile and looked at Nangong Ping. “Xiaoping, you have made a big mistake. Do you know that I rather want to die together with you, to die in your embrace than let his rough hands save me!”

There were more tweaks on Nangong Ping’s face.

The old man said. “After you have left the island, to live or die is up to you. But for now, you must leave!”

Before he had finished, he had reached his hands to hit Mei Yinxue on her Jian Jing accupoint.

Feng Mantian exclaimed aloud. “Wait a minute!” And the crutch in his hands intercepted the old man’s fingers.

The old man asked. “Brother Feng, are you forgetting about…”

Feng Mantian did not even look at him and coldly said. “What did I forget?”

The old man said. “Have you forgotten about the commandments on the island? With only the two of you, can you fight against the commandments of the Divine Creator Island? It is a dream! If you happen to alarm the elders of the Inner Sanctuary, then even if the two of you were to beg for your life but it will not given to you. When you want to beg for your death, it will be denied too! Not only will you be harming yourself, you will also be harming the others.”

Feng Mantian expression changed and lowered his wooden staff.

Mei Yinxue said. “Xiaoping, aren’t you willing to die with me? Let us die together, it is better than to suffer here. If you are to open your eyes to look at me, even for just awhile, even if I am to die, I will be most willing. You…”

But Nangong Ping did not opened his eyes.

Mei Yinxue said pitifully. “The most convenient in a person’s life is to die. Why did you placed that vow so highly?”

Nangong Ping was like a corpse and did not react.

The old man coldly said. “Even though you want to die with all your heart but others may not seem to be so willing.”

Mei Yinxue was stunned and suddenly she wiped her tears. “Fine! I will leave!”

The old man said. “Follow me then!” And the two of them headed to the beach.

Mei Yinxue was heartbroken. She did not turn her head back and her tears did not flow anymore.

When Nangong Ping had heard her footsteps grew fainter in the distant, he slowly opened his eyes and mouth. He was trembling and he vomited blood. “Yinxue, I…I am so sorry to you…”

Feng Mantian stood on the same spot as though he was dead before he

slowly said. “I hope she will know our difficulties…”

Tears were flowing non-stop on Nangong Ping’s face. “I know that she will surely hate me forever but I will never fault her. But….but how I really wish she would know why I am treating her like this!”

Feng Mantian slowly said. “Forever she will never know…”

Would Mei Yinxue forever really never know? At this moment of time, she was now drifting in the open seas. Whether she would live or die, it was unpredictable to know but one thing for sure, she would carry her broken heart forever till her life had ended!

But Nangong Ping, Feng Mantian all these upright man that feared nothing, why did they want her to be heartbroken? Did they not face death with a laugh before? Did they not face death with a show of their heroic spirit before?

Nangong Ping was still sitting in the cave. He had to endure the bugs and the cold. For the first few days, he was still upset and grieving about the matters of the heart. But awhile, he grew numb. Even his clothing had turned to rags. But he did not care.

Ever since that day had passed, he had not seen Feng Mantian or that other old man. One day while he was mediating to suppress all his hunger, cold and to enter the state of divinity of serenity, another old man in hemp clothing appeared at his cave and said to him, “Congratulations to you, you have officially become a member of the Divine Creator.” Although the old man appeared to congratulate him but he had shown no sign of any emotion.

Nangong Ping rose up and the old man added. “From this day onward, you will have a change of a dwelling place.”

Therefore Nangong Ping followed him into the dense woods and saw a path, which they took. After walking for a time, he saw twenty to thirty wooden cottages. On the entrance of every cottage sat a white hair old man in hemp!

All these old men were different in sized. Only their expressions were uniform – cold, icy and emotionless. Some were looking blankly in the sky, some were quietly reading books. There were even ten old men sitting in a group but none of them moved a glance at Nangong Ping and not even a sound.

The old man brought Nangong Ping to a wooden cottage in the far corner. There were two words on the door ‘Zhi Shui’. (It means as still as water). The old man said. “It shall be your abode.” And then he pointed to the door and added. “And this is your name from now on. When it is time for you to enter the sanctuary, I will bring you inside. But when the time has not come, you must not leave this place even a single step.”

Nangong Ping hummed in response.

The old man asked. “What other things you want to ask of me?”

Nangong Ping coldly said. “Nothing!”

The old man looked at him for awhile before replying. “Good.” And he took his leave.

All the old men here, the hemp on their bodies was golden in color. Only this old man that took Nangong Ping to his new abode was purple. It was because Feng Mantian and he were one of the seven stewards. And each steward had a follower that looked like a freak. Qi Ge was the follower of Feng Mantian. Naturally, all these Nangong Ping would only learnt later and not now.

When he opened the door to the small dwelling, he saw the house was sparse with just a few necessities like a couch, a wooden bowl, hemp cloths, a book etc. Even the bed was not more than five feet and covered with a straw mat.

Nangong Ping looked around and saw that those old hair old men were sitting in a daze and thought. “Is this the ‘Divine Creator Temple’ a legendary martial sacred place that everyone in the Fraternity is talking about? Is this the life style of the people of the Divine Creator Temple? No wonder Feng Mantian heart get heavier and heavier the closer he is to the Divine Creator Island! Because other than himself, there is no trace of any human emotions!”

Luckily for him, he had learnt how to endure the wait during his hundred days of mediation. He took the book that was lying casually around and opened it. He tried to emulate some of the old men by picking a book and reading it at the entrance of the wood hut. When he opened the book, his heart almost jumped out of his heart! Because what written on the book was called ‘The Eighteen Stances of Damo’!

One must know that The Eighteen Stances of Damo was the secret epitome skill of Shaolin. Those who had seen this epitome technique were rarer than rare. Those who knew it were actually nonexistent. If this book were to appear in the Fraternity, it would immediately cause a tidal wave like bloodshed. Countless number of pugilists will lose their lives just to fight over this book. But at this moment of time, this legendary secret manual that everyone in the Fraternity had so desired was tossed carelessly around like it was a waste paper.

Nangong Ping did not want to shift his glance away from the book for even once. He was mind and spirit engrossed in reading and discovering the mysterious epitome of this set of martial skill.

When afternoon came, a golden fur beastman brought two tugs of food, all the old men would take their bowl and had their lunch. They did it so silently and without sound. They did not even exchange any words among themselves.

After three days, just before dawn, the same golden fur beastman changed

the books in every hut. Nangong Ping was devastated and greatly troubled. But who could know it when he opened the new book, it was the 'Shadowless Divine Fist Manual', a long lost martial technique that had disappeared from the Fraternity!

After fifty to sixty days, Nangong Ping had read and studied over twenty secret manuals. All the secret manuals contains the most marvelous and most extraordinary martial skills and techniques. Nangong Ping bit his teeth and had remembered all of them!

One must know that all these old men before they had come to the Divine Creator Temple had their glorious past. Everyone of them was the best martial exponents during their times. After they had come to the Divine Creator Island, no one could leave the island alive. Therefore the priceless secret martial manuals that everyone in the Fraternity wanted so much, would be treated so lightly in this place. Some old men just read it as leisure, some did not even bothered.

He had been here for quite some time but he had never heard anyone talking. He really wondered at times if everyone was simply just a corpse that could walk. One day when it started to rain, these old men did not even seem to take notice and did not even enter the hut to take shelter. Even in late autumn, they were still wearing just a hemp cloth and there were no indications that they were cold.

But Nangong Ping was different; he was shivering from the chill. So he had to secretly circulate his breathing to endure the cold. After three to five days, he actually started to get use to it. Only then did he know that his martial ability had underwent a speedily improvement. All those startling martial secret manuals had been absorbed and incorporated into his body much like those plain food and water on the island.

Therefore he started to sleep lesser, eat even lesser but his mental abilities were even sharper and alert than ever before. Sometimes during the night when the dreams of his past heartbreaking events came to haunt him, he could only clench his teeth hard and silently endured it. It was because he knew that his future was bleak.

One day, during dawn, he suddenly discovered that the old man opposite his hut was gone. No one knew where the old man had gone. No one even bothered to ask. Life and death did not mattered little to these old men. Even if a man would to lose his head in front of them, they would not cast their glance to take notice.

Yet another hundred days went by, the same old man that lead him here in the first place appeared at dawn and said to him. "Follow me!"

Nangong Ping did not even ask what it was all about and he rose up to

follow him.

He suddenly discovered that some of old men had actually lift their heads to look at him. Their eyes betrayed tinge of envy.

Nangong Ping thought to himself in surprise. “I see that all these people do have feeling after all. It just that everyone conceals it very well.” He gathered his thoughts and asked himself. “Why the envy look? Is it because of the place I will be going?”

After several passing through the dense woods, the heaven and earth was starting to be filled with a mysterious malevolent air, Nangong Ping knew that they were now heading to the heart of the island –The Divine Creator Temple. Therefore he unwittingly felt nervous.

When they passed through a huge tree, Nangong saw Feng Mantian hanging upside down on its tree branch! He was hung up by a white string and a golden fur beastman was lashing him with a whip and muttering, “twenty-eight…twenty-nine…” Suddenly the white string broke and Feng Mantian fell to the ground.

Without a word, the golden fur beastman tied another white string. hung him up again and started whipping once more. “One…two…”

That piece of white string was so soft and thin and the whip was so big and rough. Even if Feng Mantian had supreme internal power, the fact that he could remain hanging was already not easy. Moreover he had to endure the lashing.

Nangong Ping was shocked to witness the scene and was stunned. His hands broke into a cold sweat but Feng Mantian remained expressionless and silently endured it.

The whip sound carried on but Nangong Ping could not bear to watch anymore.

The old man coldly said. “Every day he will be whipped thirty-six times for three hundred sixty days. Every time the white string breaks, the whipping will start all over again. Those that break the rules here must first ask themselves, do they have the martial ability and courage to take the whipping.”

Nangong Ping closed his mouth tightly and did not say anything. At the end of the dense woods, a mountain cliff blocked them. There were no houses in sight. Then the old man reached out to a rock along the side of the cliff and patted it gently three times. The amazing thing happened, a door opened up along the cliff and a passage was seen inside.

Nangong Ping walked inside and heard a ‘pong’ sound and the door to this secret passage closed again. He turned around and discovered that the old man was not with him. So he carried on walking down for he spotted a copper door in the distant.

There was a sharp echo around him. “Have you come?”

Even before the voice had ended, the door at the end of the passage swung

opened. As Nangong Ping walked through it without a care and saw two passages. Both of the passages leaded to a big cavern. He could see many caves in the cavern. Some of the caves had people in it, while some were emptied.

The sharp voice said again. “Walk to the front and do not turn your head!”

Nangong Ping did as he was told but sighed secretly in his heart. “Divine Creator Temple! This is the Divine Creator Temple! If others in the Fraternity were to glimpse it, they will be very disappointed…”

Before he could finish thinking, the voice echoed again. “Here it is! Up here!” And the voice seemed to come from above.

Nangong Ping lifted his head up and saw that at the top of this cavern, several feet high above was another cave. He bent his body to jump to the cave. He was really surprised that he could actually jump in a single leap. He was planning to change his circulation of vital energies in mid-air so as to reach the cave in several jumps.

Somehow he knew that he had entered the abode of the mysterious person that control this mysterious island.

The sour stench that was in this cave was stronger than elsewhere. He bowed and said. “I am Nangong Ping…”

An old man with white hair said. “Zhi Shui, your name is Zhu Shui, remember? The minute you enter this island, you have broke away from the material world. From now, you must forget everything that is in your past.” Although he spoke hurriedly and sharp but there was something irresistible in his words.

Nangong Ping nodded and looked at this old man.

The old man suddenly laughed. “You are indeed very fortunate to live in the abode of Zhi Shui. It really such a wonder thing. Do you know that previous owner of Zhi Shui is the Divine Condor Hero?”

Nangong Ping coldly said. “I have long forgot about the fame and glory of the material world.”

The old man laughed merrily. “Good, good.”

It was the first time that Nangong Ping had heard the sound of some one laughing since he first came to the island. So he was puzzled.

The old man added. “Just this word alone, you deserve a toast!” He clapped his hands and said. “Bring me the wine!”

Nangong Ping was even more puzzled to know that this place actually had wine. He was dumbfounded to see the person that had served him wine looked either like a human or monster. He was covered in fur, had only two fingers and looked ebony. He was wrapped around in white cloth.

The old man laughed. “Have you ever seen a human such as him before?”

Nangong Ping replied. “I do not have such misfortunate yet!”

The old man laughed. “That is. Of course you have never seen one before. Do you know that he is not a human and is only a beast…”

Nangong Ping felt a shiver down his spine and said. “Do you mean that, that Qi Ge and all those…”

The old man laughed. “They are all beasts. They are created by my ‘Hua Tou Divine Arts’. It takes me several years of my painstaking effort to successfully made more than ten beasts to be like a human…”

Nangong Ping was startled and asked. “But…”

The old man interrupted. “One hundred and ten years ago, there was a person in the Fraternity who could shift the limbs of a human around. He could shift your hand to your head, your nose to your hand and could even let it grow over there. Therefore he had created quite few freaks. And he himself became a freak in the eyes of everyone.” He smiled proudly for awhile and then added. “But this technique of his when compared to me, is child play. That is because he can only change the skins and limbs around a person. As for me, I can give life to the beasts. I can safety assume that even if Hua Tou was alive today, he will find it hard to match my achievements!”

Nangong Ping was getting chiller every minute he was listening. Finally he knew why Feng Mantian had to send wild beasts to the Divine Creator Island and he finally understood why there was a sour stench.

Suddenly the old man smiles ceased and he became solemn. “The people is so unfortunate because there is too many fake physicians around with dubious knowledge. Eighty years ago, a dubious physician harmed me. Therefore I went through painstaking efforts to search for the Hua Tou Divine Arts. Twenty years ago, finally I could modify a mountain goat to a mule and a mule to a mountain goat. Today I can modify their brains, vocals and let them immerse with human thoughts and sound. In another word, if I want to change a human to a beast, naturally it will be even more easily…”

Nangong Ping felts all his limbs grew weak and cold. Ever since he had entered this island, he had seen many strange things therefore he did not feel strange anymore. But when he had heard this never heard before thing and such a frightening experiment, he was now trembling. He felt like he had just entered hell and wanted to bolt out of this cave immediately.

The old man smiled and said. “All these extraordinary things that I am telling you now, you may not understand it yet but soon you will slowly begin to understand. Although everyone in this island are all the famous heroes of the Fraternity but not many people can actually step into this cave. For tens of years, the Nangong Aristocracy Family funds all the island’s expenses. Therefore I am

treating you a little special."

Nangong Ping said. "Ever since I come here, I have no other wishes. But there is one thing that I am constantly unable to put it down. That is to see my Grand Uncle!"

Although he looked calm when he said that but inside him, he was affected by a burning emotion. One must know that the reason why he did not open his eyes to look at Mei Yinxue was because of the safety of his Grand Uncle.

That day, when he was holding Mei Yinxue's lifeless body, he felt so grieved that he really no more desires to live. Therefore he raised his hand to hit himself on his head. Maybe it was because he was too distracted, he had merely fainted from the concussion. When he had awakened, there was another old man clothed in hemp aboard the ship and that old man was saving Feng Mantian with a divine pill.

Therefore he was so delightful that he jumped out and said. "Old Senior, do you have one more extra divine pill that can neutralize poison?"

That old man said. "You are not poisoned, why did you want a divine pill that can neutralize poison for?"

Nangong Ping pointed at Mei Yinxue and said. "But…"

Before he could speak, the old man had coldly added. "This maiden has nothing to do with the Divine Creator Island. Why should I want to save her?"

Nangong Ping begged and pleaded for quite some time but the old man only pretended not to hear or see. In his anxiety, Nangong Ping tried to snatch the divine pills from him but he was no match for him. Therefore he carried Mei Yinxue and intended to jump into the sea so as to die together with her.

Only then did the old man's expressions begun to change and said. "You have the courage to die with her but your courage cannot save her. Therefore are you trying to sacrifice your courage?"

Naturally Nangong Ping replied. "Yes!"

The old man asked. "If you promise to swear allegiance to the Divine Creator Island forever and not to pay her any attention. Only then will I save her life."

To save Mei Yinxue's life, naturally Nangong Ping agreed.

But the old man added. "Since you have agreed but once you heard her voice, I am afraid that you will forget all that you have promised me. Because all you want now is to save her life but when the moment comes when you have to part with her, I am afraid you will choose to die with her instead.

Although this old man was icy cold but he seemed to know very well the

relationship between a young man and a young maiden. Nangong Ping was startled and thought for a while. He really did not know how to reply him.

The old man added. “But if you swear a sacred oath, I will not be afraid that you will break your promise. Because anyone that breaks their oath in the Divine Creator Island, they will implicate all their relatives as well. Do you know who is your kin on the island?”

Nangong Ping said. “When did I have a kin on the island…” Suddenly he remembered his Grand Uncle who had went to the Divine Creator Temple a generation ago. He was his kin! He said. “I know now.”

The old man said. “It is good that you know.”

Therefore Nangong made the vow and when the ship arrived at the Divine Creator Island, the old man bandaged his head for him and gave him fresh clothing. He was next brought to a cave and was told to mediate inside for a hundred days.

When Mei Yinxue arrived, he wanted to open his eyes so much. Thousands of times he wanted to do so and tell her he was willing to die together with her. But how could he because of his own personal feeling, caused the death of his Grand Uncle? Although he did not placed his own life above self but the lives of others were extremely precious to him.

He had many things to say but it had to wait until he had the chance to meet his Grand Uncle.

But now, this white hair old man who controlled the lives of everyone in the Divine Creator Island asked. “Do you really want to see your kin?”

Nangong Ping said. “Definitely!”

The old man laughed coldly. “Since you have forgot your past, why must you bother to see your kin in the material world?”

Nangong Ping was startled.

The old man said gravely. “You must know that I require everyone on the Divine Creator Island to forget about feeling, interest, fame and desire. Everyone that I have invited to the island, is the best of the best in the Fraternity. That is the reason why I have these four rules.”

Nangong Ping coldly said. “I really don’t see why there are causes for this reason. And I also cannot see how Senior, you are going to explain the logic to these rules!”

The old man said. “It is because I want to build many unprecedented achievements on this Divine Creator Island. I require everyone to give their very

best and don't to be distracted by world interference. If this foundation of mine succeed, then all the achievements of past emperors and generals cannot be compared to mine. I only find it laudable the people of Fraternity thought of the Divine Creator Temple as a place of refuge and solitaire."

Nangong Ping could not resist asking. "What foundation?"

Light shone in the old man's eyes as he explained. "When everyone is but a little child, they will have many fantastic dreams. When they grown up, this fantasy will be even grander and beautiful. When you are a child, did you ever fantasizing about turning iron to gold or even turn invisibility? And all the most ridiculous things that you can think of?"

Nangong Ping could not help giving a smile as he thought of the times when he was a child but he said. "So what?"

The white hair old man said. "Turning iron to gold and becoming invisible are the two most commonest fantasy of mankind. No matter who it is, in his entire lifetime, in his deepest recess of his heart, he is sure to have this kind of fantasy. Some fantasies are not that crude compared to these two examples. When I thought of it, I will feel very delightful. Some people hope that that without reading a book, just by burning it to ashes, mixed it with water and drink it, they can absorb all the knowledge. Some others hope that without using candles and oil, they can cause the surrounding to have light. Some others hope that horse carriage can fly and they can then roam the world freely. Some others hope that just by eating a pill, they will become very smart and or they do not need to eat anymore food."

He paused for awhile before continuing. "Long ago there is a funny joke. Surely you have heard of it before. Someone say if your eyebrow can grow on your fingers, then you can use it to brush your teeth. If the nose is upside down, then your nasal mucus will not leak. If your eyes can grow in front of you and also at the back, then you don't have to turn your head anymore. This funny joke is my fantasy but this fantasy has now become a reality. If you want your eyebrows to be on your fingers, your nose to be upside down, I will help you to do that. If you do not believe, you are free to try it."

And his shoulders began to stretch as though he wanted to rise.

Nangong Ping immediately said. "I think it is better if my nasal mucus can flow and it not bothersome for me to turn my head too."

The old man laughed. "Not only is my fantasy a reality now but the fantasy of others are also soon to be a reality."

Nangong Ping was startled and he asked in fright. "Really?"

The old man said. "After I have removed their world desires, I take them here to research…"

He pointed to the stone caverns on both sides and added. "All these caves

are where they are working on their research. Why don't you close your eyes for awhile and think what happens when their fantasy become a reality? Surely it will be known to all throughout the ages."

Nangong Ping was stunned. He did not know if this old man was a superhuman or a madman.

Suddenly the old man became solemn and lifted his hand. "Today I have talked too much and my work has been delayed. After you entered this place, your movements and speech will not be restricted and every year you are allowed to go out only once. For now, why don't you go around and take a look. You can also stay in any of one of the caves until I summon for you tomorrow."

Nangong Ping was still recovering from shock. He looked around his surroundings. Although he was curious about what they were doing but he dared not face them. It was because he dare not imagine what they were doing. If all these fantasies were to become realities, then what would become to the world?

He thought. "No wonder Feng Mantian wanted to buy all those weird things. No wonder the Devil Flock Island wanted to stop all those chests from reaching here. I think that is because they had some news of what is going on here and are afraid that once they can turn fantasies into realities, then the people on the Devil Flock Island will become the slaves of the Divine Creator Temple."

He unwitting walked into a cave while he was thinking. He saw that this cave was quite big and airy. Two old men sat inside with books and papers. When they saw Nangong Ping, they did not seemed to be startled. Nangong Ping did not dare to ask them for their names and only asked them what were they researching.

One of them old men began to patiently explain to him that they were researching a new way to build a house. It started from the roof instead and then slowly constructed to the base. He explained that this building method was the same as what was used by the bees and spiders, two of the world's most brilliant insects.

Nangong Ping thanks them and went to another cave. Another two old men told him that they were researching a type of medicine water that could replace hunger and thirst for ten days. They had some problems with the medicine water because the mixture did not seem right but the day when they would succeed was forthcoming.

He went to another cave and saw an old man who had been researching invisibility for the past sixty years. And the old man began to explain the principles of invisibility to him. Although he looked like he was listening but in fact he was too distracted to listen – He was confused and did not know whether to laugh or cry. He really did not know if they were all superhuman or madman.

There were all kinds of research going on, all kinds of ideas, some he had

not even heard of it before. He wondered if some of the ideas might or might not come to reality in the future.

But there were some traces of curiosity left in his heart, therefore he unwittingly walked into another dark cave. Just when he was about to turn his body to walk away, he heard a low but solemn voice asking. “Who?”

Nangong Ping focused his eyes and saw that there was someone in the corner. So he thought to himself. “I wonder what this madman is researching.” Therefore he asked what he was doing.

Then the old man started to mutter. “I am researching how to change air to food. Air…do you know what is air! Air is something that exist between the heaven and the earth…” Suddenly he stopped and slowly rose up. He asked in a trembling voice. “Pinger, is…that…you…”

Nangong Ping was jolted and move back three steps. “You…” Suddenly he fell down from the cave. He mustered all his vital energies and somersaulted in mid-air. And then jumped up to the cave again. He saw the white hair old man in the cave looking at him most intensely.

The eyes were so familiar, so deeply engraved into his heart. Nangong Ping looked for awhile before his whole body started to tremble and he sprang forward. “You…you…Mentor Master!”

He kneel down on the ground, at this white hair old man – he was actually Nangong Ping’s benevolence teacher, the number one warrior of the entire Pugilist, the Immortal Divine Dragon Long Bushi!

It was so unbelievable that the two of them would meet under such circumstances. Both of them were so shocked, so happy and so curious and it seemed a dream. It was more wondrous than a dream yet so real.

Nangong Ping asked. “Mentor Master, how did you come to this place?”

Long Bushi said. “Pinger, how did you come here?” He was even more curious to know about Nangong Ping. Never in his wildest dreams, did he expect a young man like Nangong Ping to be on the Divine Creator Island that was peopled by reclusive old men.

After Nangong Ping had calmed down, he began to relate all his happenstance from tail to head. He added. “Your disciple has one more thing to report to you. Your disciple have already married.”

Long Bushi was surprised and happy. “Who is that girl?”

Nangong Ping replied. “Mei Yinxue!”

Long Bushi was even more surprised. Only when Nangong Ping had related everything to him did he sighed deeply. “People say that a beauty is borne under a unlucky sign. This girl is really the unlucky of the unluckiest. I only hope that she will have a tranquil happiness that will compensate her for her entire life of

misfortunes and wrongs. But…" He sighed and did not continue.

Nangong Ping was grieved to his innermost. Master and disciple began to sit in silence to reflect upon their sorrows and grief. That was because the two of them shared the same sorrows and grief regarding their loves.

Nangong Ping tried to move the topic to other things. "When your disciple saw the message 'Guest of the Heavenly Emperor', I thought that Mentor Master has gone to a faraway place. I wonder what happen on that day on the Huashan Peak? How did Mentor Master get here?"

Long Bushi closed his eyes and lowered his head. He muttered. "Huashan Peak, Huashan Peak…" He covered his eyes with his hand and did not say anything.

Nangong Ping knew from his expression that it had to do with his grief and sorrows therefore he did not ask anymore. He had wanted to ask what happened to Danfeng Ye Qiubai.

After a long silence, Long Bushi sighed again and said. "Forty years ago, when I first heard of the name of Divine Creator Temple, I was filled with fantasies and hopes. But now when I am here, I am really disappointed but…alas! It is now too late."

Nangong Ping tried to lighten the mood by saying. "Mentor Master, air is an invisible thing between the heaven and the sky. What method did you use to convert air to food? Then there will not be hungry people in the world anymore!"

Long Bushi finally laughed. "Pinger, do you know that most of the people on this island are madmen? Even if they are not madmen but after that one hundred days of imprisonment and brainwash, they are as good as walking corpse…"

When Nangong Ping thought of those white hair old men sitting outside the wooden huts, he began to sigh deeply for it was such an unbearable loneliness.

Long Bushi said. "The craziest among all these madmen is the Lord of this island. Under his jurisdiction, anyone who has a clear mind will be deemed a madman. When I reached here and saw all these, I really cannot bear to go back to face all those walking corpses out there, therefore after thinking for a long time, I propose a ridiculous theory to him!"

Nangong Ping laughed. "What kind of theory?"

Long Bushi said. "I told him that the reason why flowers and trees can thrive so well is because they can absorb the nutrients in the air. If humans can be like the plants and convert the air to food, then it will really save a lot of manpower and resources since the air is limitless. And it can be used to save the lives of hungry people as well."

He laughed. "When the Lord of the island heard my theories, he was really very happy and heap praises onto the project. He thought that it was the most

magnificent project ever. He promises to give me anything that I need. Therefore I have many delicious wines over here." Although he was laughing but he could not hide his loneliness. This number one warrior in the Martial Fraternity had actually tried to drown his sorrows with wines.

Although Nangong Ping would like to laugh with him but he really could not laugh.

The people of the Divine Creator Island, were they all geniuses or madmen, were they the superior one, or the weaker one, Nangong Ping really could not tell anymore.

When Long Bushi noticed that he was sighing, he ceased his laugh and said gravely. "Pinger, although I drown my sorrows with wine but never once did I lost any hope. I am always waiting for a chance. When that Lord of this island summon you into his audience again, ask him for permission to be sent here to research the 'mysterious food'. We will have a chance in another few months time. When that time comes, with the two of us, our chances of succeeding will be much higher."

It was because every year there was a day that was called the Wild Day. On that day, everyone could freely move around.

The next day the Lord of the Island summoned Nangong Ping to his presence. He had wanted to give a special function to him because he was a member of the Nangong Aristocracy Family but hearing from him that he wanted to partake in that 'Grand Project', he immediately agreed.

Time passed, although the days seemed unbearable long but Nangong Ping had learnt to endure. From time to time, that Lord of the Island would summon him into his presence but only just to look at him for awhile and just said a few words. He had noticed that the mysterious Lord's eyes showed signs of confusion and anxiety. And every time he was summoned, this type of confusion and anxiety in his eyes would increase. He thought. "Did the Lord of the Island discovered the dangers that were lurking on the island?"

During those days of waiting, Long Bushi did not say many things. He told Nangong Ping to adapt to changes for the walls had ears.

Therefore during those days of waiting, Nangong Ping began to refresh all the instructions of the secret manuals that he had completely memorized into his heart. He found out that his eyesight had become sharper and his body gradually become lighter. He did not know how much his martial abilities had improved. Sometimes he would sigh when he thought of those that were his kin and friends

that were thousands of miles away.

One day while he was mediating, he suddenly heard a loud sound of applause. And a great deal of old men began to spring past him muttering. “The day has arrived!”

Nangong Ping asked. “What day has arrived?”

An old man stopped to reply him coldly. “What you want to do, you can do. The day has arrived.” And he was gone in an instant.

Nangong Ping was startled and muttered. “How much does he actually know? …” (Referring to the Lord of the Island)

Long Bushi coldly hummed behind him. “No matter how much he knows, after today, he will not know anything.”

Nangong Ping asked. “By removing him?”

Long Bushi said. “That is right!” He gently tapped his shoulders and said. “Wait for a chance and adapt yourself to changes. If you cannot see any ship or raft, even if we have to swim, we have to get out of this place!”

When Nangong Ping heard his Mentor Master’s firm conviction, he began to believe that nothing was impossible. They sprang out of this cavern in an instant. Along the way, they spotted many old men that were walking quietly. Except for their eyes, they were really like a walking corpse.

After exiting from the secret door, Nangong Ping was glad to breathe in the fresh air and embraced in the wind. It was like his life was being energized. He looked around him and secretly swore that in order to exchange for this life and freedom, he would be willing to sacrifice anything.

Long Bushi had since sprang in front of him and had already disappeared from view. Nangong Ping scouted the other areas for possible areas for escape. Finally he was back to that wooden hut but for now the area was totally changed. The old men were feasting and drinking, their eyes looked delight although they still did not say anything. At this moment of time, fine wine and delicious food were many times more valuable than precious stones. Although precious stones were definitely very precious in the material world but it were worthless here.

Nangong Ping saw their eyes darting around and thought. “Are they trying to run away too because they too find the life here too unbearable?”

Therefore he instantly discovered that among the feasting, there was indeed a kind of malevolent air hidden within it. His heart jumped and he looked around for his Mentor Master but he was nowhere to be seen.

Suddenly he heard laughter coming from behind the trees. Suddenly his mind jolted and he turned around and saw Feng Mantian sitting under a giant tree. He looked very haggard and fragile and had undergone countless days of torture.

He had suddenly discovered that tried as he could, he could not numb his

feelings. He bowed respectfully to him and said. “Senior, because of me, it has been very hard on you.”

Feng Mantian smiled. “Hard on me? …” Suddenly his laughter became very sharp and he said. “It good that it have been hard on me. The pains have caused all my feelings that are numbed to revive once more. All these pains have jolted me and given me the courage to resist!”

He caught hold of Nangong Ping’s shoulders and asked excitedly. “Child, take a look over there. Did you see anything strange about those old men over there?”

Nangong Ping had noticed the excitement in his voice and he recalled the mysterious looks of those old men. In that instant, he almost jumped up. “Are all of you…”

Feng Mantian nodded. “That is right! I have secretly fanned their rage and ambitions. Today, yes today, there will be a grand show on this island between those old men from inside the mountains and us. Either we are going to send them to hell or we will die! Even if we are to die, we don’t wish to live a life like this anymore, am I right?”

Nangong Ping nodded his head and suddenly he remembered something. “Where is the ship? Is there a ship around here…”

Feng Mantian asked. “Ship! What do we want a ship for?”

Nangong Ping was startled. “If there is no ship, how are we going to go back? Do we have to sprout wings and fly across the ocean?”

Feng Mantian laughed awhile and then coldly said. “Go back? Who say anything about going back?”

Nangong Ping was startled again.

Feng Mantian sighed deeply and explained. “Have you ever thought of this before. If you let all these eccentric old men go back to the Central Plains, won’t the entire Fraternity be plunged into a turmoil?”

Nangong Ping lowered his head. He really did not even dare to think about it!

Feng Mantian laughed. “Go have some wines first and then quietly wait for a nice show.”

Nangong Ping said. “Senior…”

Feng Mantian said. “I know what is in your heart. But a pity without a boat or a ship, you are unable to go back.” He extended his wooden staff and sprang away.

Nangong Ping leaned against the tree, looking downcast and absorbed in his thoughts. After awhile he heard the sound of drums and saw five elderly men with golden headdress appearing followed by five golden fur beastmen at the back.

They were carrying a stone bed. On top of the stone bed sat the Lord of the Divine Creator Island.

Although it was noon, but his complexion was very pale, almost transparent. He seemed to be afraid of the sun and ordered the beastmen and the elderly men to take him to the shade. Suddenly there was a hilarious laughter among the crowd.

On the Divine Creator Island, laughter was almost a non-existent thing and yet this hilarious laughter was so audacious.

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island immediately swept his glance around and he soon pinpointed the source of the laughter. He questioned gravely. “Shou Yuan, why are you laughing?”

Feng Mantian stomped the ground with his wooden staff that he had been using as a crutch. He walked out of the crowd and said aloud. “Feng is the surname of my ancestor. Mantian is the name given to me by my parents. A real man will never change his name, much less his surname! I am Feng Mantian, who is Shou Yuan?”

Although everyone looked emotionless but because it had been so many years since they had last heard such straightforward and frank words that burning fire once again incited their dead eyes!

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island said gravely, displaying no traces of any emotions. “Good! Feng Mantian, why are you laughing?”

Feng Mantian laughed hilariously once more. “It is so laudable alas, it is so laudable. All the people on this island used to be such great heroes in the past. But now they have all become a walking corpse and even have to listen to a half-insane, half-idiot and he is a half-cripple freak as well. If I were to tell it to the outside people, surely no one will even believe me. Don’t you find it laudable too!”

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island was now staring at Feng Mantian with his piercing eyes but he did not say anything yet.

Feng Mantian straightened his body and his laughter suddenly ceased. “The reason why I come here is because I am weary of the material world and come here for solitaire. I didn’t come here to be under your tyrannical rule and to be live like a prisoner. Let me ask you this, what virtue and capability do you have to lord over these best of the best heroes of the Fraternity?”

Although all the old men did not say anything but their spirits received a jolt. Nangong Ping was even more so and almost clapped his hands in thunderous applause!

Without lifting his eyes off him, the Lord of the Divine Creator Island slowly said. “Marvelous, since you dare to laugh like this, surely you must have some confidence. So…” He suddenly swept his eyes around. “If anyone else share

his opinion, please step forward!"

Nangong Ping was standing behind some trees, therefore he could not see his eyes but noticed that his voice seemed to have some mysterious ability to dazzle people. He looked around and saw that all those old men that were standing in front had become emotionless again. They did not even have the intentions to step forward and instead took a few steps back.

The Lord of Divine Creator coldly said. "So it is only you?"

Feng Mantian expressions changed and he turned around to shout. "What are you all afraid of? What happen to our plans that we have discussed for many a days? Have you all forgotten about it?"

No one said a word…

Feng Mantian was as white as sheet and clutched his wooden staff tightly.

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island coldly said. "So it seems that you have the intention to usurp the position of the Lord of the Lords for yourself. That is only too easy…"

Suddenly he laughed eerily and the five elderly men with golden headdress had instantly surrounded Feng Mantian from all sides.

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island said. "If I simply order them to capture you, surely even if you were to die, you would not rest in peace. All these years, as one of the Seven Stewards, surely your martial techniques may not be inferior to me. Therefore as long as you can defeat me, from now on, all matters pertaining to the island will be decided by you!"

Feng Mantian clenched his fists tighter and tighter and his fingers looked even whiter and whiter. He slowly lifted his hands but he was trembling. He lifted his staff that looked like a hook and pointed at the Lord of the Lords.

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island looked at him like a hunter looking at a prey. Both of them did not move an inch yet but Feng Mantian looked more and more grave.

Everyone was looking more and more nervous as well…

One must know that they were using supreme martial techniques in a life and death fight! Although Feng Mantian staff appeared to be shaking slightly but each slight movement had the potential to unleash a mighty stroke. As long as the Lord of the Divine Creator Island would show even a slight opening or weakness, victory was his! Indeed as the saying goes, when top exponents of the Fraternity were to duel, it all lies with a single stroke at that instant of time!

Both of them were intently searching for any signs of weakness and opening. Both of them were trying to use their physiological aura to weaken the mental strength of one another. This duel not only concerns their life and death but it also involved all the fates of all the best top exponents in the Fraternity who had long

retired.

Feng Mantian breathing slowly became steady. Although many times he wanted to use all his might to exhibit a stance but this Lord of the Divine Creator Island had no weakness and opening to explore. How could he dare to simply use his stance? The one dead would surely be him if he would to recklessly attack.

Nangong Ping was constantly looking afar. He kept repeating his Mentor Master last order into his heart. “Adapt yourself to changes!” Now that his Mentor Master was not around, how could he recklessly act?

The Nangong Ping of the present was now different from his past. His brain had absorbed the knowledge of a hundred different martial schools. He had long noticed that the trembling staff of Feng Mantian, each slight tremble hid a marvelous wondrous stroke! But he did not attack because he had placed his senses above strokes, to use sense before stance.

Although he was very happy that he could actually senses Feng Mantian martial techniques now but he was also very worried. Because every stroke that was unleashed would surely be earth shaking. But Feng Mantian did not dare to attack recklessly, then would it not mean that the Lord of the Divine Creator Island who was sitting down there without moving, his martial skills would reached the point of acme, into the point of unfathomable?

Feng Mantian secretly sighed in his heart. “I give up!” And he lifted his staff to begin the life and death struggle.

Suddenly there was a great shout from the back. “Wait a minute!” It was Nangong Ping who had sprang out. It was because he had remembered all the good things and care that Feng Mantian had given him. How could he stand behind and watch him die?

Everyone was slightly startled.

Nangong Ping said in a clear voice. “Nangong Ping will stand alongside with Senior Feng on the same side!” And he stood in front of Feng Mantian.

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island coldly said with his eyes wide opened. “You have come to take this position of the Lord of the Lords as well?”

Nangong Ping said matter of fact. “Wrong! I support Old Senior Feng in his deeds and words. If because of fear, I did not dare to say it loud, it would be really unbearable much like pain sticking in my back and my throat would feel like it has been straggled by a whip!”

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island laughed coldly. “What a good examples. Do you know that what place is this? Look around you, all these top martial experts that are around you, which of them isn’t a hero of their times? Is there a room for you to talk?!”

Nangong Ping said aloud. “If Old Senior Feng is wrong, even if all the

people here are the weak and the elderly, I will still do the same. But if Old Senior is right, even though all the people here are the top exponents of the Fraternity, I will still stand up and support! I only ask what is right and wrong, not to advance my own interest. Although my martial ability is not high but at least my conscious is better than all these earth shaking top martial exponents!"

Some of the old men began to feel ashamed.

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island gravely said. "You are so young, do you not know how to treasure your own life?"

Nangong Ping laughed aloud. "Rather than suffer humiliations and indignation, it is better to die now!"

Feng Mantian shouted. "That is the way of a true man!"

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island said coldly. "Don't you regret what you have done!"

Nangong Ping said. "I have already placed my life and death far aside. Would I still regret it?"

"That is the way of a true man!" This shout came from afar.

A man sprang towards them much like an eagle and was instantly by Nangong Ping. It was the number one warrior of the Pugilist realm, the Immortal Divine Dragon Long Bushi!

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island said coldly. "So you have come too!"

Long Bushi thundered. "That is right, I too have come. Pinger, Brother Feng, move aside so that I can know how fathomable is his martial techniques!" He was not willing to say a word more and snatched away Feng Mantian staff and bowed with his hands. "After you!"

The Lord of Lords was startled for awhile because he had never saw such a person as him before. "You want to fight with me?"

Long Bushi thundered. "That is right!" Before he had finished, he had attacked with a stroke using the staff!

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island had not expected him to dare to fight with him much less attack him without any hesitation or care. He simply swung his robes and he had moved away three feet from Long Bushi attacks.

Long Bushi wielded his staff much like a sharp sword and there were very strong windforce all around his staff. In that instant he had made seven attacking strokes, windforce from his staff grew even more furious but the leaves on top of the tree did not even move. It was because all of Long Bushi vital strength was upon the Lord of the Divine Creator Island. Not even one inch of his vital force was leaked or wasted!

His stances and strokes were filled with changes and flexibility. It was unparalleled throughout the Fraternity but when he attacked, it was without

hesitation and doubt. He did not pay much attention for his own safety as compared to the styles of other top exponent experts.

Feng Mantian sighed and said. “No wonder the pugilists in the Fraternity give your teacher the title of the number one warrior in the Pugilist realm. Now that I have seen it today, he indeed lived up to his name!”

Nangong Ping smiled while Feng Mantian added. “As the saying goes, the strong will defeat the weak, courage will defeat the timid. Although that Lord of the Lords martial techniques are mysterious and extraordinary but I am afraid he will not be able to block this earth shaking courage that comes from your Mentor Teacher!”

In between his talks, Long Bushi had already attack with more than ten strokes. He was focusing on attacking his opponent and placed defense as secondary. He did not seem to care for his own personal safety as well. Under his torrential fierce attacks however, he could barely saw the Lord of the Divine Creator figure.

The Lord of Lords asked. “You really do not want your life anymore?”

Long Bushi attacked with another three strokes and shouted. “That is right!”

The Lord of Lords said. “If you died, then what will happen to your project?”

Long Bushi laughed. “What project? It is just a trick to fool small children!”

The Lord of the Divine Creator with an angry shout plunged forward with his right hand, broke the head of the staff and his left hand on Long Bushi’s chest.

Suddenly both of them hit one another on each other’s chest and they flew several yards away from one another. Everyone was startled and did not know what had happened.

Nangong Ping called out in shock. “Mentor Master, you…”

Long Bushi rose up and thundered. “Move aside!” And he sprang to the side of the stone bed to attack the Lord of the Lords on his chest, head and seven other major accupoints!

When the Lord of the Divine Creator saw this type of reckless attack, his expressions changed and extended his hands to parry his moves. “Go back!”

Long Bushi did not slow down at all and use attack to counter attack, he returned three strokes and shouted. “Bullshit!”

But when he opened his mouth, blood flew out. It was because he had already suffered internal injuries when the Lord of the Divine Creator had hit him on the chest just moments ago.

Nangong Ping was greatly alarmed and saw that his Mentor Master continued on his relentless attacks.

The fight aroused the fire in some of the old men in the crowd. Only those

old men that resided in the mountains remained as emotionless as ever.

Feng Mantian said to Nangong Ping gravely. “If the old men in the front rows will to fight the Lord of the Divine Creator, then he will be in a grave situation. Except for a few old men who are stewards who may still fight for him, the other old men at the back would not even care.”

Nangong Ping was getting very worried for his Mentor Master’s safety. He solemnly said. “Until now, this Lord of the Lords has yet to stand up. If he is to stand up, then I afraid that benevolent teacher will…”

Feng Mantian laughed coldly. “He has already been afflicted by deviation phenomenon and both his legs are crippled. I afraid he can never stand ever again.”

Suddenly there was a two cranking sound. Long Bushi had moved back and fallen to the ground. The Lord of the Divine Creator moved back in staggered steps. It seemed that the two of them had each taken one blow. One must know that when the Lord of Divine Creator had attacked him, Long Bushi did not try to dodge it but instead he took the opportunity to attack, therefore the Lord of the Divine Creator had been hit too. If he did not sacrifice himself, how would he going to hit him at all?

Nangong Ping ran to the side of Long Bushi in great shock. “Mentor Master, how are you feeling?”

Long Bushi forced out a smile and said. “Go and take a look at him first!”

Nangong Ping turned his head around and saw that those old men had revived their fighting spirit and every one of them had surrounded the Lord of the Divine Creator but none of them were close, as the beastmen and the Stewards were near.

The Lord of the Divine Creator was sitting with his eyes closed and he was very pale. After awhile, suddenly he vomited out blood.

Feng Mantian with his eyes widened, shouted. “He has been heavily injured too!”

Chapter Eighteen
The Lord of the Divine Creator Island

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island slowly opened his eyes and looked at all the old men. Although he did not say anything, although he had not moved but his eyes betrayed his rage. But the rage of his eyes could not compared to the old men that looking at him now – They had concealed their emotions for years and now even their looks could give some one an heart attack!

Feng Mantian thundered. “You are a crippled man and now you are seriously injured. What do you have to say now?”

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island slowly said. “That is right. I am now seriously injured and I have nothing to say now. I will give up my position.” He laughed for awhile and then added. “Not only will I give up my position but I will also give up my life. But you have to let me go and arrange for my own funeral.”

Feng Mantian looked around him for a response but all the old men did not say anything. Long Bushi thundered. “Let him go!”

Naturally Feng Mantian would have to comply.

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island looked at his five stewards with the golden headdress and asked. “What about the lot of you?” (He is asking them if they will be willing to die along with him)

The stewards looked at one another and without a word, walked far away.

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island forced out a smile and said. “Very good, even you lot decide to abandon me…”

Suddenly there were a howl and five golden fur beastmen charged towards the elder old men that was looking. One of the old men was careless and he was instantly tore apart by the beastmen!

The other old men were startled but they soon retaliated. Every blow that they had used had windforce that were earth shattering! In an instant, two of the beastmen had flown up in mid-air with their skulls broken and their bones scattered!

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island thundered. “Hold it!” His voice still commanded a mysterious authority over everyone.

Everyone hesitated for awhile and immediately they stopped in their tracks. He signaled with his hand with a gesture and immediately the remaining beastmen kneel before him. “For me, you are fighting with your lives is it because you still want to follow me?”

All the beastmen nodded.

The Lord of the Divine Creator smiled and then sighed deeply. “I didn’t expect that the lot of you although may not be fully human yet but you have a human heart. You actually know what is called loyalty and righteous.”

The five stewards that were now looking from the side lowered their heads.

The Lord of the Divine Creator said in a clear voice. “Good! Carry me back!”

The three golden fur beastmen lifted the stone bed and walked towards the mountain. “I will give my reply before sunset!”

Feng Mantian coldly said. “I am afraid that you will not made it back to reply!”

The Lord of the Divine Creator laughed coldly for awhile and turned to look at Nangong Ping, as if he wanted to say something. But finally he left without a word.

Long Bushi looked terrible now and even his breathing started to be very weak.

Nangong Ping upon seeing his Mentor Master’s injuries, he felt a heart wrenching pain in his heart. So he rose up and said aloud. “In the past, all of you are heroes. Why did you all become cowards today? If all of you have decided to fight earlier, benevolent teacher will not be in this condition. Because he wants to injure the Lord of Lords, he is even willing to first let himself be hit first! Now that you have seen that, how do you all feel?”

Everyone stood on the same spot and their eyes became dim.

Nangong Ping was grieved. “Mentor Master, alas Mentor Master! It is all right if you cannot win with all your skills but why did you uses your body as bait…”

Long Bushi slowly opened his eyes and forced himself to smile. “Pinger, sit down first and listen to a story!”

Although no one spoke but they were all had been very impressed with the Immortal Divine Dragon’s courage. So they were all paying attention to this story that he was about to tell.

Long Bushi said. “In an ancient forest, where there is no human, a hundred different types of beasts co-exist with one another. There are no wars and no fights. It is really a very peaceful place…” His face glowed, it seemed that he too had hoped for such a peaceful day. “But the peaceful days did not last for long, one day an evil beast come to the forest and it begin to eat one beast a day. Therefore the hundred beasts are very frightened but they did not know how to fight back. Therefore they have to allow that evil beast to slaughter them. One day they can no longer endure it anymore, they gathered together to discuss of a plan to dispose of the evil beast. But still, they cannot think of a way to kill the evil beast. Only a

rabbit says that it has a way to kill the evil beast."

"The hundred beasts did not know whether to believe it or not and the rabbit did not say anything much but return to its home. Once it reaches its home, it cloaked itself with a very strong poison and run to the evil beast. It uses itself as a sacrifice and indeed, after the evil beast has eaten the rabbit, the poison reacts and it is dead. Once again, the forest is peaceful again. But everyone is feeling sorry for the rabbit. Do you think that the sacrifice of the rabbit is worth it?"

Nangong Ping lowered his head to hide his tears.

The Immortal Divine Dragon Long Bushi smiled. "Just now when I was scouting the island, I already knew that it is near impossible to escape from this island. So I decide to be this rabbit and to sacrifice myself so that everyone can gain their happiness."

He paused a while before continuing. "Just now that Lord of the Divine Creator Island had used a feint called the 'Capturing the Dragon with the Bare Hands'. He had calculated that I would surely be able to avoid it. But I did not avoid it and instead I seize this rare opportunity to inflict a blow upon him. Pinger, although I am seriously injured but do you think that this injury is worth it?"

Nangong Ping was wiping his tears.

Feng Mantian said. "Hero Long, I…I…" His voice was shaky and he could not continue anymore. Instead he bent over to inspect his injuries.

Several old men stepped forward to give him healing pills. Naturally Long Bushi knew that his injuries were hard to recover but he just smiled as a gesture of thanks.

Although everyone had obtained a victory but this victory was bittersweet. Everyone's hearts were heavy. Even if there were fine wines and delicious food around now, no one had the mood to enjoy it.

Towards sunset, a golden fur beastman appeared with a scroll and Feng Mantian took it over to read it aloud. "I have decided to give up my position. Those who want to be the next Lord of Lords, you can follow the envoy to elect the new Lord of the Divine Creator."

Long Bushi was now lying on a bed of flowers with Nangong Ping besides him. After Feng Mantian had finished reading it, he felt nothing but grief. He only hoped that Long Bushi would recover. And he did not care for the position of the Lord of the Divine Creator.

After waiting for awhile, a few old men stepped forward. The five stewards glance at one another before they too stepped from the woods.

Feng Mantian shouted aloud. "No matter who is the new Lord of the Divine

Creator Island, do not forget about the sacrifices that Hero Long has made today. Or else I, Feng Mantian will want to fight with him!"

Long Bushi said. "You should have go…"

Feng Mantian said, "After this episode, the position of the Lord of the Divine Creator Island is but a fleeing glory. So long as next time, everything will be handled fairly and not to let Hero Long down!"

Long Bushi smiled and saw that a group of elderly old men were now following the Envoy. Some of these people in the group had wanted to be the next Lord of Lords, some others simply want to see what happens next while the last group were those near insane old men that could not put down their research.

Time passed and it was now dark. Suddenly there was a thunderous sound coming from the mountains.

And when Feng Mantian and some of the old men heard this sound, their expressions started to change tremendous. Feng Mantian grasped. "Oh dear…!" And he sprang up.

Nangong Ping was startled. "What is happening?"

Feng Mantian and some of the old men began to spring in the direction of the mountain.

Long Bushi said. "Pinger, go and see what has happen over there."

Nangong Ping nodded and sprang like he was flying. His movement swiftness skills had tremendous improved by several notches when compared to the past. In an instant he was at the cliff. He saw Feng Mantian and the rest of the old men crowded around the secret door of the mountain in shock.

Nangong Ping asked. "What has happened?"

Feng Mantian held his new staff tightly and said hatefully. "Curse it, curse it. I actually forget about this thing. I didn't expect that he would be so ruthless…"

Feng Mantian sighed deeply. "This mountain cavern used to be a place that was used by its previous occupants to avert themselves from the turmoil of an chaotic age. Therefore it is like a tomb and there is a 'Dragon Calamity Boulder' to seal off the entrance. In case their enemies followed them into the cavern, they will release the 'Dragon Calamity Boulder' to trap everyone inside. I have already deducted that after he had lost his position, as Lord of Lords, he would rather die but I did not expect him to be so insane and ruthless as to want so many people to be buried with him!"

Nangong Ping sighed when he thought of those people in the cavern who were feeling hopelessness inside. He lowered his head and asked. "I wonder if there is any other way to save them?"

Feng Mantian said. “After the ‘Dragon Calamity Boulder’ had been released, even a deity would not be able to save them. Not only we cannot save them but our situation…alas!”

Nangong Ping was startled and he asked. “What?”

Feng Mantian replied. “All the daily necessities of life like food are all inside the caverns. Although the island do have birds and beasts but the numbers are small. Or else I why do I need to go to the Central Plains to bring so many back. From now on…” He bitterly smiled. “We only have tree barks and roots to eat!”

Everyone mood was solemn and they slowly started to walk back.

Nangong Ping had a jolt in his head, and he asked. “Since we can no longer stay on this island, why don’t everyone leave this island?”

Feng Mantian said. “Ten thousands miles of ocean, even if we forcefully make a raft, we can never survive the waves.”

Nangong Ping said. “Senior, last time when you go to the Central Plains, why can’t you…”

Feng Mantian sighed deeply. “There is ten fast arks that are made from iron wood that are ten thousands old. Not only the waves can’t destroy it; and with our martial abilities, we can even speed through the ocean but…alas! Only three such fast arks are left and they are all in the mountain caverns!”

The taste of victory had not been sampled yet and everyone’s hearts became heavy.

Luckily, the island still had a source of stream water that was enough for everyone to use.

After another three to five days, Long Bushi injuries looked better now but he was still in a dire situation. Everyone tried their best to help him, even expended their vital energies to aid him in recovery. But that Lord of the Divine Creator Island, his palm strength was too frightening. If not for the fact that Long Bushi had trained a very strong mental willpower from his numerous life and death situations, because of his ribs and nerves were broken, he would have died instantly!

Whenever Long Bushi had slept, Nangong Ping would ask those old men for pointers about the various martial techniques. He had remembered all the countless marvelous secret martial skills and now with the advice and pointers of all those experienced top exponents, his martial ability had now improved by leaps and bounds!

But sometimes when he remembered that he had to die in a faraway land, he

lamented what was the point if he would master all the most marvelous martial arts in the world? Therefore he could not help but sigh.

After a few more days, when the weather got warmer, Nangong Ping was fanning Long Bushi with a fan.

Long Bushi grasped. “Pinger, it has been hard on you.”

Nangong Ping forced a smile. “The one that has been hard is you, Mentor Master. I really did not expect to see you here after the Huashan Summit meet.”

Long Bushi sighed. “It is a long story. That day, when I went to the Huashan Summit and saw that Ye Qiubai actually did not die. I don’t know if I feel startled or delight. Along the way, she played so many tricks on me, I should be feeling very upset. But after seeing her, after seeing how fragile she looked, all the vexations of my heart flew away.”

Nangong Ping secretly sigh and thought. “Although Mentor Master is a hero of his times, but he is so affectionate. But the way I treating Mei Yinxue…alas!”

Long Bushi said. “At that moment of time, I just stood idiocy in front of her and did not know what to say. But who will expect…”

Suddenly there were cries of surprise and panic outside.

Long Bushi expression changed and he asked. “What has happened?”

Nangong Ping said. “Disciple will take a look outside.” He sprang out of that small wooden hut and saw many people moving hurriedly in the woods.

Next he heard Feng Mantian saying. “Search around the area, I will guard the position here!”

Nangong Ping hurried to Feng Mantian and was startled to see four corpses. “How did they died? Is it…”

Feng Mantian said solemnly. “Take a closer look.”

Nangong Ping saw that their countenances were twisted. “Is it because the water is poisoned!”

Another old man had sprung here and took out a silver bowl. He filled it with the water from the stream and immediately the silver bowl turned black!”

Nangong Ping was startled. “There is indeed poison in the water!”

Feng Mantian looked extremely grave. The only source of water on this island had been poisoned. The consequences were indeed not a small matter!

The three of them looked at the flowing stream idiocy.

Suddenly Nangong Ping shouted. “It alright! This stream comes from a living source of water! Although the water have been poisoned but the poison will subside sooner or later. As long as we guarded the source of the flowing water, we will not die of thirst!”

Feng Mantian received a jolt and he immediately said aloud. “Go now!”

It so happened that quite a few old men had returned by now and immediately two old men rushed to the source of the water.

Feng Mantian sighed. “It a lucky thing that this stream is a live water! It is really a most fortunate thing. But the matter is not over yet. If we do not find out who is the one that put the poison, then we will never have a peaceful day!”

Suddenly they saw a smoke in the distant and soon the entire forest was on fire. And the fire was spreading faster and faster urged on by the wind.

Feng Mantian was shocked and shouted. “The fruit trees are on fire!”

Everyone tried to help to put out the fire but it was a futile effort. For the forest had now became a sea of fire spread by strong winds! Soon, everything became charcoal black…

Feng Mantian was too shocked and lamented. “Oh heavens! Heavens…”

The two other old men who were besides Feng Mantian suddenly laughed. “What terrifying fire, what beautiful fire…” They collapsed onto the ground in tears but they were laughing hilariously. It seemed that the two old men upon witnessing the sudden change to their daily necessities became mad all of a sudden!

Feng Mantian clenched his teeth and hit their accupoints to knock them unconscious.

Suddenly there were a couple of screams and a few old men had burst into their views enveloped by flames. They were burned so badly; alive only because they possessed powerful internal force but it only made prolong their sufferings before they died.

Feng Mantian was looking more and more gravely. He stomped his leg and muttered. “Who? Who is doing all this?” Suddenly he turned around and looked at Nangong Ping. “Would it be her?”

Nangong Ping was surprised. “Who?”

Feng Mantian exclaimed. “Mei Yinxue! Not only does she hate everyone on this island but also her hatred runs very deep. Especially toward you, she hates you all the more. A person like her who is so haughty and carry herself with pride, who loves you so deeply, add to the fact that with her intellect and martial abilities, the one that…” Suddenly he stopped and sighed. “But I hope that I am incorrect.”

Nangong Ping stood on the same spot rigidly. Feng Mantian was afraid that he might be upset so he did not continue. But now that he had thought of it, it was a huge possibility…

Feng Mantian sighed deeply and then his expressions changed. “Let us go back fast. And don’t let the enemy destroy our dwelling places!”

Feng Mantian, Nangong Ping and all the surviving old men immediately

sprang to the directions of their dwelling places. Along the way, Nangong Ping began to feel his heart beating very hard as though he had sensed an ominous omen. Therefore he grew even more anxious.

When they reached their dwelling places, Nangong Ping was glad that nothing had happened. He hurried to his Master. “Mentor Master…Mentor Master…” But he was stunned to see the Immortal Divine Dragon Long Bushi missing!

Feng Mantian was stunned as well.

Feng Mantian shouted. “Hero Long is now missing. Hurry and search for him. Half will follow me to search while the other half stay behind to as sentries…”

But one old man coldly added. “Who are you to order us!” And five old men stepped forward in front of Feng Mantian. The one taking the lead added. “This used to be a peaceful island. Everyone is living peacefully. But ever since you have returned, you have caused everything to turn upside down. You should have committed suicide long ago as a sin offering to all of us. What right do you have to order us?!”

Feng Mantian expressions changed and asked. “Are you all willing to live like a walking corpse and let that demon lord control you?”

The old man coldly replied. “Even though that is the case but it is better than dying from hunger and thirst.” And he started to walk towards Feng Mantian.

Feng Mantian thundered. “What do you want to do?”

The old man said. “I want to kill you!” And he attacked Feng Mantian!

Feng Mantian said. “You don’t know what is good for you and willing to be a slave. If I know you are such a person, why should I be bother about you.”

In between his words, he had attacked with seven strokes. Although the old man techniques were extraordinary and cunning but his internal power was not strong. In just seven strokes, Feng Mantian forced him to back off.

This old man was a researcher in the cavern for the pill of longevity. The pill that he had created had destroyed his internal power when he swallowed it instead of helping him achieved immortality.

The other four old men began to join in the fray. Although Feng Mantian martial abilities were very high but he could not fight them all at the same time and he even came close to losing his life!

Another old man joined in the fray shouting. “I rather die in freedom than to live as a slave. Brother Feng, let me help you!”

Another old man coldly said. “I have not lived enough yet! It better for me

to live under slavery than being dead."

All the best of the best top exponents in the Fraternity started to join in the fray to fight each other. Only the shadows of their hands could be seen as they attacked as swift as lightning in this mass confusion.

Suddenly there was a great shout. "Stop it!" Followed by another two shouts. "Stop it! Stop it!" Three old men had appeared with three corpses from the outside and they sprang to everyone.

The one taking the lead shouted aloud. "Just now three of our friends were ambushed by a sneak attack from the wild grasses and their bodies swelled before they died. Now we are facing a crisis. If we were to fight among ourselves first, then we will surely die!"

Everyone started to halt their fights but they were staring at one another in hatred.

Nangong Ping said in a clear voice. "If there is a will, there is a way. With our combine abilities, will we still die of hunger here?"

Feng Mantian said. "Indeed. After we find out who is the one that set the fire and poison, with our united front, we can still turn this wasteland into a paradise."

This few words were golden indeed and everyone was moved. Who would protest against such sound advice? Everyone followed the lead of Feng Mantian. Half stay behind to guard the dwelling places, the another half began to search for the culprit and the missing Long Bushi.

Nangong Ping was feeling terribly grieved as well as anxious. Although he was worry about his Mentor Master's life and death but he was afraid that the enemy would be Mei Yinxue.

If it were Mei Yinxue who did all these, then would a man like Nangong Ping who divided right and wrong clearly would do? Although Mei Yinxue had loved him with all her heart but under these circumstances, he could never forgive Mei Yinxue!

Nangong Ping had walked to the cliffs near the sea. He saw that many black cottages housed the spiritual tablets and ashes of all the heroes of the Martial Fraternity. When he saw their names, he was filled with a warm stirring in his blood!

He stressed his eyes to view the open seas. There was not a single sight of any ship. If there was no ship on the open seas, then where did Mei Yinxue come from? Was it because it was not her that did such a thing? Then who was the enemy in the dark?

Suddenly he noticed a shoe made from grass mat. The head of the shoe was pointing east while the heel was pointing south and it had some traces of blood on it. Nangong Ping had a jolted in his head. "Can it be that this shoe is left behind by

my Mentor Master!" Without any hesitation, he began to follow in a southeast direction indicated by the shoe!

After a while, he found another shoe and it was pointing to the west, he began to follow it until he reached a black cliff. He began to search carefully along the cliff but still he could not find any passages.

When the setting sun was setting in the west and shone upon the cliff, he began to sit down on the side of the cliff in hopelessness. Suddenly he heard a low voice coming from the cliff below. It was actually the voice of the Lord of the Divine Creator. "Long Bushi has a pair of grass mat shoes but now he is bare booted. It is indeed very strange!"

The instant he heard the voice, he had already sprung to take a look, hiding behind some rocks. He saw that below the side of the jagged cliff was the messy white hair of the Lord of the Divine Creator!

Nangong Ping saw that he was being carried by a golden fur beastman who seemed to fly from the jagged cliff upward into a hidden passage on the cliff.

Without any hesitation, he immediately took a peek where they had disappeared. But just when he was about to jump down, (He was confidence with his present swiftness movement skill, he could jump down safety down the cliff), he saw that the cliff was as steep as sheet and there was no hiding place!

He began to hesitate and to look at the cliff carefully. Suddenly he noticed that when the wind had started to blow, the vines would start to move and there was a tiny opening in the vines. Surely that must be the mysterious entrance.

So he imbued his hands with vital energies and jumped down. Slowly he separated the vines and indeed, there was a passage! Like a snake, he began to slip in.

After walking for more than thirty feet, he discovered that it was a dead end. Nangong Ping was startled. "How come Mentor Master is not here?" After searching for a while, he found a wooden wall. He deducted that there must be another passage. Therefore, he started to punch it but withdrawn in pain. This wooden wall was as hard as iron! And he could not move it at all. (It was made of iron wood).

He took a deep breath to circulate a mouthful of vital energy and was preparing to smash this wall with all his might when suddenly, the wooden wall began to descend and two golden fur beastmen appeared!

With a great shout and shifting his leg movement techniques, he charged into the passage. As his hands were already imbued with all his vital strength, the beastman on the right side was instantly killed.

The beastman on the left immediately reacted with howling and mysterious techniques. The beastman was very strong and could attack with both his left and right hands. After three strokes, Nangong Ping was taken aback as the beastman was too fierce and did not even care of his life and death. But suddenly the beastman halted his attacks with a howl and plunged forward again!

Nangong Ping saw that the beastman had opened its arm into a bear hug and exposed an opening. It did not seem like the mysterious techniques that he had used earlier. But Nangong Ping was afraid that the beastman was hiding a secret technique if he would take advantage of the opening so he decided to use a feint by pushing out his left and right hand instead.

But how would he expect that the beastman to take a direct hit, it did not even try to evade his feint at all. Nangong Ping was jolted and thought. "Does it mean that this beastman only knows three strokes?"

The beastman shook violently after Nangong Ping hit him but he still persisted in advancing towards Nangong Ping.

Nangong Ping was startled to see this beastman still advancing like a demon upon him. He took the opportunity to hit the beastman while it was shaking, finally it flew backward and collapsed.

He did not know earlier, he had already damaged the beastman in his heart. The beastman persisted only because his mind and body was focusing on Nangong Ping. So when Nangong Ping attacked again, he could not defend himself and was hit again.

Nangong Ping breathed in a sigh of relief and calmed himself down. He noticed that this wood that was blocking the passage was like a ship. He suddenly remembered that this wood that was as hard as iron, was it iron wood ship that Feng Mantian had mentioned? He was very delightful and entered the passage. In the corner of the passage was a stone bed and on it lay a person, it was the Immortal Divine Dragon Long Bushi!

Nangong Ping cried out in joy. "Mentor Master…"

Before he could finish, someone laughed coldly for awhile behind him. "You have come too! Marvelous, marvelous!"

Nangong Ping was startled and immediately turned his body to see the Lord of the Divine Creator Island clutching on two wooden staff to be used as his legs. He was sitting on the head of a golden fur beastman and Nangong Ping did not even noticed when they had appeared.

Under the dim light of this passage, this old man's eyes were very bright and were like an insane wild beast. He did not look like the emotionless Lord of the Divine Creator that he had known!

Nangong Ping knew that this Lord of the Divine Creator had been crazy long

ago. The shock of losing his power caused his madness to totally emerge, therefore he would do all those crazy things like burying all the others in the mountain. In that instant, Nangong Ping was feeling startled and angry at the same time. He shouted angrily. “The one that set the fire, poisoned the water and commits all the murders, are they done by you?”

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island laughed. “Other than me, who else can it be? Those who follow me shall live. Those who go against me shall die. Since all these people have betrayed me, it only deserving that I send them to their maker!”

Nangong Ping was jolted and he slowly moved back to the side of Long Bushi.

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island said. “So you dare to fight with me?”

Nangong Ping said aloud. “Not only will I fight with you but I also want to remove you!” And Nangong Ping sprang forth to engage him.

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island laughed aloud. “Good!”

Nangong Ping focused all his spirit with all his heart and soul to execute all his stances. Using the Divine Dragon Palm Skill as his primary attack, he mixed all the secondary stances with the various marvelous techniques of all the clans and sects, the changes of his blows were really like illusionary attacks, dazzling and marvelous!

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island laughed. “The men of the Nangong family are indeed all very smart. I give out all those dead books but I didn’t expect that you can really make them into a living stance.” With a shook of his staff, he broke seven strokes of Nangong Ping in a row!

The beastman that the Lord of the Divine Creator was sitting on was large. After another ten attacking strokes, Nangong Ping decided not to attack the Lord of Lords anymore and instead he aimed at the beastman. Because the beastman was carrying the Lord of Lords with both his hands on his back, he could not retaliate against Nangong Ping’s attacks. In three attack strokes, Nangong Ping had forced the beastman to back off to the side.

Feeling encouraged, he used a powerful stance name ‘Rainbow in the Day’ as a finishing move. This stroke was original a palm technique from Emei Sect and was highly marvelous. But after he exhibited the stance, even before he could finish all the strokes from the stance, he was blocked by the image of the Lord of Lords’ staff.

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island said. “You have made a total of fifteen attacking strokes, it is now my time to attack.” And he swung both his staffs to form a powerful windforce that hit him like a heavy gravity.

He had now changed his defensive stances into offensive stances. Suddenly,

Nangong Ping was felt a tap on his shoulder. Jolted, he hurriedly moved back seven steps and now his back was facing the wall. In another instant, the staffs were on his face. In shock, Nangong Ping picked a corpse of a beastman to block the attack and in an instant, the dead beastman was sliced into two halves!

Suddenly the beastman that was carrying the Lord of the Divine Creator Island paused in his tracks to mouth the flesh of the beastman that was sliced.

The Lord of the Divine Creator ordered. “Put it down, put it down…” But the beastman refused to listen and he had to hit its accupoint and instantly the beastman collapsed. He did not use any force, merely tapped with his staff. He was heard muttering. “A beast is after all still a beast.”

Nangong Ping seized this minute opportunity to attack but he missed while the Lord of the Divine Creator Island flew to the stone bed and he gripped Long Bushi by his throat. “Do you still want your Mentor Master to live?”

Nangong Ping was stunned and did not dare to move a single step!

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island slowly said. “I have already immobilized him by hitting him on his sleep accupoint. At any point of time, I can effortlessly kill him, unless…”

Nangong Ping said aloud. “Unless what?”

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island said. “Unless you listen to me obediently.”

Nangong Ping angrily shouted. “I didn’t expect that given your status, you will do such despicable things!”

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island laughed. “I am too old and too experienced to fall for your taunting tactics. If you don’t listen to me, it is up to you. But your Mentor Master’s life will end because of you!”

Nangong Ping was stunned for awhile before he sighed in length. “What do you want me to do?”

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island was solemn when he said. “All of my attendants have been killed by you. Naturally you must do their work. I will give you two hours to shift this big ship to the entrance of another cave and you must also shift all the things in the cave to the ship. If you were late for even a minute, or if you tried to inform the others, heng…heng. You should know the consequences. I don’t need to say, you should know.”

Nangong Ping was startled. “You want to leave this place?”

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island said. “That is right. This island has become a wasteland. Do I really need to live like a beast here? It is a pity that my grand plans have not been fully accomplished yet but…” He suddenly laughed heartily. “Although these people have not die yet but living is actually a suffering for them!”

Nangong Ping was angry and feeling shocked at the same time.

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island said. “But you can rest assured. Not only will I take you and your Mentor Master away, I will even pass you the medicinal knowledge that I have painstakingly researched over the years. Why don’t you close your eyes for awhile and think. If you control the life of some one else and even can shift his organs freely, just imagine the wondrous feeling that you will feel!”

Nangong Ping angrily said. “Who want your…”

The Lord of the Divine Creator Island stomped his staff and thundered. “Hurry and get to work!”

Nangong Ping secretly sighed. He would rather suffer humiliations than see harm befell his benevolent teacher.

Not only was this wooden ship large but it was also very heavy. After Nangong Ping had mustered all his strength did he finally managed to shift the ship and all the things to the entrance. He was surprised to know that there was another passage that leaded from this cave directly to the ocean below.

When he was done, he had expended all his strength and was sweating profusely.

The Lord of the Divine Creator laughed. “Very well done! Now you will stay at the entrance of the cave but do not make any false move!”

Nangong Ping had no choice but to comply. After a while he saw him carrying his Mentor Master on his back.

“Push the ship into the sea and after that move back three steps!” That was all he said.

After using all his strength, he finally pushed the ship into the sea. The Lord of the Divine Creator boarded the ship and then shouted to him. “Come and board the ship too!”

After Nangong Ping boarded the ship, he simply stirred the waters with his staff a few times and the ship speeded away. The Lord of the Divine Creator suddenly became very tranquil and solemnly said. “Pick the paddle and use your strength to row the ship. I will be here to steer the ship for you!”

Nangong Ping was naturally puzzled so he asked. “Actually I don’t wish to stay on the island but what about you? You have spent years of your painstaking efforts on the island. Can’t you bear to let it go?”

The Lord of the Divine Creator coldly said. “I can’t bear to!”

Nangong Ping was delighted in his head and he added. “Since you can’t bear to, let us go back!”

The Lord of the Divine Creator said. “Although I can’t bear to but I have to go.”

Nangong Ping would like to leave the Divine Creator Island but he just could not bear to leave his friends that were on the island behind. He could only sigh. Finally the Divine Creator Island became only a small dot on the horizon.

Time passed…

Although the Lord of the Divine Creator still had his grip on Long Bushi’s throat but he was now asleep.

Nangong Ping thought it was a good opportunity and slowly put down the paddle down. Then he sprang to the Lord of the Divine Creator who suddenly woke up even before he could even move his hands.

Nangong Ping angrily said. “What do you actually want to do with both of us?”

The Lord of the Divine Creator coldly said, “I want you to learn all my medicinal arts within a year. Then you will help me do a ‘Transfiguration Art’ and help me cure my cripple legs!”

Nangong Ping replied angrily. “Who want to learn your crazy medicinal arts!”

He laughed. “Even if you don’t wish to learn, you must learn. You must know that it is not a request but an order. If you do not learn, heng…heng! Then your Mentor Master’s legs will have to be exactly the same as mine!”

Nangong Ping was startled. “What! Did you…”

He replied. “That is right. I have already used a heavy accupoint method to cripple his legs. If you want to cure him then you must first learn my medicinal arts and cure my legs first.”

Nangong Ping shouted. “I will fight you now!” And he rose up but the Lord of the Divine Creator coldly said. “Do you dare to make one false move?”

Nangong Ping sighed deeply and lowered his head. He sat down and said. “You…why must you do such a thing! …”

He said. “It is because although I have the ability to do the Transfiguration Art on others but I cannot do it on myself.”

Nangong Ping sighed. “There are hundreds of people on the island, why did you choose me?”

He smiled. “Of course there is a reason but I cannot tell you now!”

Nangong Ping noticed that he was laughing and smiling in an odd manner. It seemed that he was hiding some secrets. Not knowing what to do, he started to row the ship with all his might!

Time passed…

Suddenly there was a wild gust of wind and a dark cloud could be seen above the starlight.

Suddenly the Lord of the Divine Creator said. “Oh dear!”

Nangong Ping asked. “What is happening!” He really did not like to hear this ‘Oh dear’

He solemnly said. “There will be a thunderstorm very soon!” As he spoke, that small dark cloud had become hundreds of times bigger now!

Now there was drizzle and the ship was now rocking madly.

The Lord of the Divine Creator seemed to think over something before he patted Long Bushi on several of his accupoints before helping him to sit up.

Long Bushi breath in deeply.

Nangong Ping greeted his Master aloud. “Mentor Master, are you alright…”

Long Bushi looked around him and was surprised. He thundered. “How did I get here?”

The Lord of the Divine Creator solemnly said. “Now is not the time to talk. Although this ship is not made from ordinary wood but still it cannot withstand such a big storm. From the speed of the wind, it looked like a hurricane. If you and me will to use ‘The Thousand Weigh Fall’, we can stabilize this ship! …”

The Thousand Fall Skill is a powerful internal power skill that creates a gravity pull or increase a person weight by many folds so that they could not be moved by others.

Before he could finish speaking, the hurricane had become more and more furious.

All of them including Nangong Ping shouted aloud and worked their internal strength to stabilize the ship. After awhile, the deck was flooded with water and Nangong Ping took a pail to empty the water into the seas.

But it was such a titanic struggle because the hurricane was getting bigger and bigger. Although this ship was most extraordinary and the three of them had superb martial abilities but from the looks of it, they were unlikely to escape from this calamity.

The howling winds were even louder than the sound of a thousand cavalries on the battlefield. Moreover the thunderstorm was so heavy…

The Lord of the Divine Creator forced himself to open his eyes under this circumstance. He shouted loudly. “Long Bushi, Nangong Ping. I take the two of you to the open seas, do you blame me in your hearts?”

Long Bushi and Nangong Ping were very solemn and did not reply.

He sighed deeply. “It very hard for mere human strength to fight against the might of Nature. I have wanted to keep this secret forever but now we are in a life and death situation and the ship will be destroyed anytime. Therefore I can’t wait now!”

Long Bushi and Nangong Ping was startled and they asked at the same time. “What secret?”

He shouted. “Do you know who I am?”

Nangong Ping was stunned. There was a momentarily loss of vital energies and a sea wave drenched the deck.

Long Bushi thundered. “Who exactly are you?”

He sighed. “Nangong Ping, I am your Uncle! Long Bushi, I am the one that destroy all your happiness in your entire life!”

Nangong Ping was jolted. A lot of things that he was not able to understand, he finally understood now! No wonder he treated me so differently. No wonder he wanted me to learn his medicinal arts! When he left home, killed his wife and child, he must be feeling very grieved and heart wrenching. Tens of years of loneliness and sorrows caused him to become mad. Therefore he could do all those insane and cruel things! But what had he done with Long Bushi’s happiness?

In that single instant, many emotions went through his head! Sorrow, anger, sympathy, shocked!

Long Bushi was trembling and his expressions had changed. “You! You are Nangong Yongle! You…you…you are the one that caused Ye Qiubai to hate me forever. You are that green robe masked man!”

Nangong Yongle exclaimed. “That is right. Nangong Yongle is that green robe masked man. Forty years ago when I first met Ye Qiubai, I have already fallen deeply in love with her. I even forget that I already have a wife. I even forget that I am soon about to leave the mortal realm and to endure a life of loneliness.”

“At that time Ye Qiubai and you were known to be a couple. Therefore I was so jealous and I hated you. Therefore I try my best to separate the both of you. Naturally the people in Pugilist would never have guessed that I did it. It is because no one knows that the eldest son of the Nangong Aristocracy Family would have such startling martial abilities. The day you become enemy with Ye Qiubai was also the day I had to leave home for the seas. I was so grieved at that time. With no way to vex my frustrations, I decided to leave the mortal realm totally and killed my wife and child.”

Nangong Ping felt a chill down his spine.

Long Bushi hatefully said. “Although you had left the mortal realm but you have made me suffer a lot!” And he was about to hit him.

Nangong Yongle shouted. “What a minute. If you want to fight with me,

wait for me to finish first!"

Nangong Yongle added. "But when I reached the Divine Creator Island, I found out that I still cannot forget about the mortal realm and all the more I could not forget about the two of you. As the days go by, the past kept surfacing to me. And Ye Qiubai is always appearing in my mind and cause me unable to forget about her forever."

Long Bushi sighed.

Nangong Yongle continued. "But luckily, the people from the Nangong Aristocracy Family, every generation without fail, they are the Lords of the Divine Creator Island…"

Nangong Ping received a jolt to his head. "What did you…say?"

Nangong Yongle said. "This Divine Creator Island, was created by the Nangong Aristocracy Family. Every generation, we will send the eldest son of the Nangong Aristocracy Family to the island just to take over the position of the Lord of Lords. This is the greatest secret in the entire Martial Fraternity, therefore even you do not know. Do you remember that I told you I have a secret mission for you, that mission is to take over my position when I have retired. Now you understand?"

This shock was too great for Nangong Ping to handle. He had become numb, he could see nothing in front of him now. All these revelations hit Nangong Ping one wave after another wave.

Long Bushi laughed hilariously. "After you took over the position of the Lord of Lords, you still would not spare us. You ordered your men to come to the Central Plains and to find out our whereabouts. Finally on the Huashan Summit, while I was in a daze, you attacked me and sent me to the Divine Creator Temple to torture me…"

Nangong Yongle interrupted. "When did I ever torture you? You told me such a big lie about making food from the air therefore I just pretended to believe you. I want you to come because…because…alas! It just that I don't want you to meet Ye Qiubai at all in the Central Plains while I have to endure this loneliness on a little island and can't even see her shadow!"

Long Bushi thundered. "Let me ask you, where did you hide Ye Qiubai!"

Nangong Yongle was stunned for awhile before he said. "Ye Qiubai…she…she had fallen down the cliff from the Huashan Summit. Even her body cannot be found. After I suffered that shock, I began to act out of the norm…"

Long Bushi shouted. "What did you say?"

Nangong Yongle shouted back. "I say she is dead now!"

Long Bushi was jolted and he muttered. "Dead…she is really dead? …"

With a shout, he charged at Nangong Yongle.

Nangong Yongle parried his blow and laughed hilariously. “Good, good. The feuds that had existed for tens of years between us, we shall settle it today!” And the two of them exchanged another seven blows.

The ship was now losing its balance.

Nangong Ping who had been trying to balance the ship shouted. “Mentor Master! …Uncle! Stop fighting…Stop fighting…”

But the two of them did not heed him and their blows became harsher!

Nangong Ping was totally wrenched and his heart was tearing apart. He could not help his Mentor Master to kill his Uncle and he could not help his Uncle to kill his Mentor Master. He kept shouting but was in futile.

Suddenly he heard Long Bushi, Nangong Yongle shouted aloud and a huge sea wave was seen smashing down the ship!

Before Nangong Ping could cry out, he had already been swept into the sea!

Several more waves smashed against him until he could no longer struggle. He cried out in sorrow in his heart. “Farewell!” It was to all his friends and kin as he sunk into the sea. He was half unconsciousness. He was holding something on his hands but what was it? He did not know and only follow his sense to hold onto it and never to let go!

He opened his eyes slowly and the burning ray of the sun dazzled him. He tried to use his hands to cover his eyes only to find out that he was holding onto a wooden chest.

He, Nangong Ping, had once again escaped from death but he was now totally exhausted and his heart was heavy. Could he have survived on this desolate island?

Slowly, he got on his feet up and did his very best not to think about the past. He really did not dare to think if his Mentor Master and Uncle were to survive this ordeal. He did not even dare to think about what would happen from now on. Because it seemed like Fate had already predetermined for him to stay in this desolate island forever as a lonely wild man until he had grown old and die. His future looked very bleak indeed.

He started to walk into the woods that he saw further inland. He could not stand the burning gaze of the sun. Suddenly he saw a three feet footprint in the woods!

In this desolate island, how could there be such a footprint? Curious, he began to take a closer look. But before he stood still, the ground gave way and he began to fall. It was a trap! He immediately leapt from the ground, mustering all

his strength. But no would expect the instantly he had escaped from this trap, he would leap into another trap in the forest?

He had leapt from the hole to a safe ground when several logs started to spring from different directions toward him! So he leapt again and just when he had landed, he saw a wood arrow flying towards him. Nangong Ping was stunned, he had no time to rest for even one second! Now he found himself losing strength very fast. He barely dodged the arrow by leaping again. Just when he thought it was safe, the ground gave way again.

Even before he could say a word of 'Oh dear', he had fallen into a pit filled with seven feet of seawater. Even if it were a very good swiftness skill expert, if he were to fall into such a trap, he would be helpless and unable to escape.

The arrow that he had evaded triggered other traps as well as Nangong Ping saw logs and arrows flying around him while he was in the pit.

Nangong Ping was totally drenched by the seawater. He forcefully stood on the tips of his toes before his head could appear from the seawater. He was startled. "I didn't expect that there will be humans on this island and even construct such intricate traps. It obvious it was not for snaring wild beasts but to capture an exponent with a very high swiftness skill level! Not only did he construct all these traps flawlessly but he had also calculated the position that an exponent will land with great precision. Is this trap set for me? But who will know that I will be here on this desolate island? If it isn't for me, how can this trap be so precise?"

One must know that if his swiftness skill were stronger by a few notches, he would never have fallen into this trap. If his swiftness skill were weaker by several notches, he would have fallen into an earlier trap and not be trapped here too.

He really could not figure who would set such a trap here just for him. If it were not meant for him, then who would it be? A mysterious enemy was always much more frightening than a powerful enemy was.

Suddenly he heard a sharp laughter. It was a proud laughter but was filled with resentment as well!

A person appeared with messy hair. It was actually a she. Her entire body was covered with blisters and her fingers were like a claw.

She laughed hilariously and was immensely proud of herself. She giggled. "Today, you finally have a taste of my methods. What do you think of my methods, huh? You should have listened to me long ago. Maybe then I might have considered sparing your life. But now I will wait for you to be drained of your strength and eat you piece by piece!"

When Nangong Ping heard this hilarious laughter and that it was in such vicious tones as, he felt a chill down his spine. He said aloud. "Who is the person above me? Why did you want to ambush me?"

Suddenly the strange ugly woman ceased her laughs and she looked down the pit. “You are not…you are not. Who are you?” The ‘proudness’ that was exuded from her earlier was gone replaced by anger, hatred and resentment!

Nangong Ping relaxed because he knew he was not her target. But when he heard her voice, he could not help feeling a chill in his head.

Suddenly she scolded him most in a most vicious manner.

The world most vicious ways to scold people had been muttered by her in an instant. Nangong Ping naturally was angry. “You and I, we do not know one another…”

But the ugly woman did not seem to hear and continued to scold him. “Do you know how much time, how much efforts that I have expended to calculate that witch’s swiftness movement skills so as to build all these traps. But today, you have destroyed all my traps! I am going to slice your skin, eat your meat…” She kept scolding him and then laughed most crazed.

Nangong Ping was startled and angry.

Suddenly she ceased her laughter and pointed at him. “I recognize you now, I recognize you now…since this trap has captured you, it is not a waste of my efforts after all.”

Nangong Ping was startled because someone that he did not know had actually recognized him.

The ugly woman asked. “Nangong Ping, do you recognize me?”

Nangong Ping looked carefully at her, into her eyes and suddenly his heart almost jumped and he asked in great fright. “You…you are not dead yet? You…you are Lady Proudness?”

The ugly woman laughed hilariously. “That is right! I am not dead. I am Lady Proudness! Although I was abandoned by all of you on the open seas but I did not die of thirst and hunger!”

When Nangong Ping saw her looks, he was totally stunned and was speechless!

So it seemed that Lady Proudness had been left drifting on the open seas for a long time. In the day, the burning sun scorned her. At night, she suffered the torment of the icy wind. Therefore she had lost all resemblance of a human being. Those men who were with her were weaker in martial abilities as compared to her. Their cunnings were not as vicious either therefore they were all killed and eaten by her!

Making use the blood of all these people, she struggled for tens of days before she finally drifted to this island. She managed to salvage her life. Life on this island was harsh especially during winter when she had to endure the cold and constant hunger. Now she totally lost her original looks and even her voice had

changed. Only her eyes were still a resemblance of her past.

If it were not for her eyes, Nangong Ping would not have recognized her! It belonged to the charming Lady Proudness that he had known! She was an enchantress in her lifetime and now…

Nangong Ping could only sigh heavily.

Lady Proudness giggled. “Why are you not saying anything now?”

Nangong Ping was resigned to his fate. “Since I have fallen into your hands, just do whatever you want!”

Lady Proudness asked. “Do you want me to kill you?”

Nangong Ping said. “The faster the better!”

Lady Proudness laughed. “If you want me to kill you, but how will I bear to?” She could not stop laughing. “Do you know that you have become my living treasure, how will I want to kill you? After you have lost all your strength, only then will I invite you graciously above!”

Nangong Ping was shocked and angry at the same time. He thought. “This woman is an absolute whore and is extremely vicious. Now I have already lost all my strength and extremely tired. Later if I am to be handed over into her hands to be humiliated, I might as well die now!”

Therefore without hesitation, he raised his hand to hit his Tian Ling death accupoint! (Top of his head)

Lady Proudness laughed. “Are you thinking of committing suicide?”

Nangong Ping hesitated for awhile.

Lady Proudness added. “Do you know that besides me, who is the other person on this island?”

Nangong Ping asked. “Who?”

Lady Proudness laughed aloud. “You will never have thought of it. Mei Yinxue is also here!”

Nangong Ping was startled and he lowered his hands. He shouted loudly. “How would she possibly be here?”

Lady Proudness said. “She was aboard a broken ship and her ship drifted here. The ship is now over the other side but it was broken and she can’t leave now.”

“At that time I did not know she was the one that had landed me to this state. And she did not recognize me too! But…”

That day when she had first left the Divine Creator Island, she immediately lifted the sails. Although she was knowledgeable in navigation but how could she steer such a big ship alone?

In this boundless ocean, she sailed aimlessly for a long time. The water and food that the people on the Divine Creator Island had prepared for her was almost finished. It was all right for her to go without food but thirst was something very hard to endure. She would lose her sanity if there were no water!

She had lost consciousness at that time when her ship had knocked against a rock and she felt a small tremor. Luckily, the ocean rocks held her ship tightly and it did not sink.

Lady Proudness had been on this desolate island when she saw a ship approaching, naturally she was very happy. On close look, she found out that it was the same ship that Feng Mantian and Nangong Ping had taken! But there was only a lonely maiden on board the ship now. She was startled and bewildered.

Maybe it was because the island caused her to feel so lonely therefore she started to wake Mei Yinxue up by giving her water.

Mei Yinxue was in a daze when she regained conscious. As Lady Proudness looked totally different now so she did not suspect that she was Lady Proudness.

But Lady Proudness had already determined that she must have something to do with Feng Mantian and Nangong Ping. Therefore she asked. “Who is Nangong Ping to you?”

Mei Yinxue was startled and asked. “You…how did you know I am acquaintance to him?”

Lady Proudness smiled and said. “When you were unconscious, you kept calling for his name.”

Mei Yinxue coquettish laughed. “He is my husband!”

Lady Proudness was greatly puzzled but she did not show any traces of emotions and asked. “Where is he now? Why did he let you drift on the seas all by yourself?”

Although Mei Yinxue thought that this woman was ugly but she had saved her so she was grateful to her. Therefore she did not suspect anything or guarded against her. She had wanted to say it in a simple manner but when she related her happenings, her tears began to flow.

Lady Proudness asked. “How did a maiden like you get aboard that ship that was full of men?”

Mei Yinxue smiled. “Because I want to secretly protect him therefore I disguised myself…”

Lady Proudness coldly added. “Disguised yourself as an ugly and convulsing man, am I right?”

Mei Yinxue was startled and said, “You! …How did you know?”

Lady Proudness laughed aloud. “Naturally I will know!”

Mei Yinxue asked in fright. “Are you…are you that Lady Proudness? …”

Before she could finish, Lady Proudness had hit her on her accupoints and then laughed in a cocky manner. “Heaven send you here to let me avenge upon you. But don’t you worry, I will not kill you instantly. I want to you to accompany me, to experience all the tortures that I have been through. I want to torture you day in and night out. I want to let you have a taste of what is called begging to live and die!”

When Nangong Ping heard it, he was now covered with cold sweat and he asked trembling. “Where is she now? What have you done to her!”

Lady Proudness laughed coldly and added. “What has she become huh? After you have seen her, you will know. I hate her so much till how I wish I could slice her into a million pieces and let her suffer a living hell but…”

That day, Lady Proudness had brought her back to the island and hung her on a tree. She had hit Mei Yinxue on all her various accupoints so that she could not even muster a single bit of vital energy! What she could experience, was sheer sensational pain!

She tried all methods to torture Mei Yinxue yet did not allow her to die.

She hung her under the burning sun and put a pail of water in front of her. Then she would hide and watch how Mei Yinxue would try to mouth the water yet she could not reach it. She wanted to watch how hopelessness Mei Yinxue would feel.

But how could Mei Yinxue not notice that Lady Proudness was secretly watching? So she pretended to lose her senses and shouted aloud in a daze. “No! No! No matter how you going to torture me, I will never tell you and let you be cocky…” Then she would mutter something in a daze.

Lady Proudness was curious and immediately let her have some clear water. She asked aloud. “What have you been hiding in your heart that you did not want to tell me?”

Mei Yinxue pretended to be coy and said. “Really, nothing!”

Lady Proudness laughed aloud. “Heng, heng! Do you think you can hide it from me? When you are in a daze, you have already told me everything.”

Mei Yinxue turned ashen in fright. “You! …You! …I will never tell you.”

Lady Proudness thundered. “If you still don’t say it out, I will increase your torture by ten folds!”

Mei Yinxue said. “The minute I have fallen into your hands, I already did not want to live. What does it matter if I were to suffer lesser or more torture? It is

all the same to me!"

Lady Proudness was startled and said aloud. "Fine, even if you were to say it, I will not listen anymore!"

And she really started to torture Mei Yinxue in a most cruel manner. But Mei Yinxue simply bit her teeth and refused to say anything.

When he had heard up to this point, Nangong Ping was feeling heart wrenching for Mei Yinxue. His heart was now burning as though a thousand nails had pierced him! He asked in a low voice. "Did she say it? What did you do with her later?"

Lady Proudness coldly hummed but did not say anything!

Nangong Ping asked in fright. "You have killed her?"

Lady Proudness coldly replied. "No!"

Nangong Ping shouted. "Take me to her, take me to her…"

Lady Proudness said. "Why should I!"

Nangong Ping pleaded. "As long as you take me to her, no matter what you ask me to do, I will be willing."

Lady Proudness shifted her eyes. "Really?"

Nangong Ping said. "If you do not believe me, I can make a vow!"

Lady Proudness dropped a piece of vine and coldly said. "First tie the rope around your waist!"

Nangong Ping immediately did what he was asked to do. After Lady Proudness lifted him up, she immediately hit his accupoints and took him inside the woods. "Your martial abilities seemed to improve by leaps and bounds. Surely you must have learnt some awesome martial techniques on that Divine Creator Island…"

Without waiting for her to finish, Nangong Ping interrupted. "I will tell you!" And he immediately recited a Southern Sea Sword Formula from head to tail. Lady Proudness was indeed an extraordinary person. After listening for a few times, she remembered all and she could even understand it.

She exclaimed happily. "I really didn't expect that the Southern Sea Sword Clan will have such unfathomable and marvelous sword techniques and formulas!"

Nangong Ping said. "I have already told you what I know. Can you bring me to see her now!"

Lady Proudness laughed. "Bring you to see her? That is right, I suppose to bring you to see her but…"

That day, Lady Proudness paced around in vexations. Finally she could not endure it anymore and walked to Mei Yinxue and said in a low voice. “Although I am unkind to you but I am after all your Savior, am I right? If you have anything to say to me, you can tell me. After that I will treat you much better.”

Mei Yinxue was secretly delightful in her heart but she coldly said. “It is not hard for me to say it out but after I have said it, you must release me!”

Lady Proudness was secretly delightful and thought. “Once you have told me, how will I not torture you worse than before!” But she said in a friendly manner. “In this desolate island, it always good to have two people rather than one. If you will to say it out, I will release you!”

Mei Yinxue pretended to sigh deeply. “Although you have said it in such a nice manner but how am I going to believe you? Unless…!” She secretly thought. “She is going to be snared soon!”

Lady Proudness asked hurriedly. “Unless what?” She thought. “If she wants me to release her first, then it is obvious that there aren’t any secrets. Then it will only be a ruse to bait me. Heng…heng! I have tens of years being a wily person, will I still fall for your ruse?”

But Mei Yinxue only said. “Unless you can make a terrible vow, only then can I believe you!”

Lady Proudness was even more delightfully as she thought. “What an inexperience little girl. The number of vows that I have made is akin to eating bowls of rice. Why should I be afraid!”

Therefore she pretended to hesitate for awhile before she sighed deeply. “I have never go back on anything that I have ever said in my entire life. And I have never made a blood vow before but…alas! This time, I will do as you wish!”

Mei Yinxue was secretly scolding her. “Bullshit, if you have never made any vows before, then the sun will really come out from the west!” She acted like she believed in her though.

Lady Proudness began to kneel down and to swear. “If I will to break my oath, then may…then may the tree branches crush me to the death and the ants eat my corpse.”

Both of them had a thousand tricks in their sleeves and their cunning was always well planned. Although both of them appeared to be serious but they had plenty of ghosts in their stomach – You wanted to trick me, I wanted to trick you, no one knew who could finally manage to trick the other.

The two of them looked at one another before Mei Yinxue finally sighed. “Since you have already made the oath, I just will have to tell you. Although this island is desolate but there will be ships passing through this area. You will surely have the chance to go back to the Central Plains and would not die on this

island…"

Lady Proudness angrily said. "What? This is the thing you want to tell me?"

Mei Yinxue smiled. "But now you have become like this, when you have returned to the Central Plains, will the pugilists in the Fraternity still call you as Lady Proudness? More likely they will call you Lady Hag!"

Lady Proudness scolded aloud. "One more word, I will tear your face!"

Mei Yinxue pretended to sigh deeply. "You don't want me to say anymore? Alas…what a pity…then I will not say anymore!"

Lady Proudness was startled and forced herself to smile. "Good sister, hurry and tell me. I don't even dare to touch your beautiful face much less tear your beautiful face!"

Mei Yinxue secretly scolded her but she smiled. "Good sister, I am thirsty. I need to drink water."

Lady Proudness secretly scolded her even more viciously but her face was smiling. "Good sister, let your sister take the water for you!"

The two of them were getting more and more intimate. With sister this and sister that but secretly, they had even scolded one another's ancestors.

After Mei Yinxue had her fill of water, she said. "Good sister, can you guess how old I am?"

Lady Proudness said, "You're…sixteen, seventeen right?" Since she wanted to make Mei Yinxue happy, she purposely said a few years younger.

Mei Yinxue laughed. "You probably did not know it yet that I am Mei Yinxue."

Lady Proudness grasped. "Oh you are the Peacock Concubine!" But she secretly scolded. "No wonder this little vixen is so cunning, because she is Mei Yinxue!"

One must know that Mei Yinxue had long established her fame therefore naturally Lady Proudness knew of her name.

Mei Yinxue said. "Ever since I first started to establish a hold in the Fraternity, twenty years have now passed. If I were to calculate it, I should be a forty plus woman now." Because she was planning something, she purposely added a few more years to her age.

Lady Proudness was stunned and looked carefully for awhile. "I really cannot tell…I really cannot tell…" Suddenly she received a jolt in her head and asked aloud. "Did you learn an inner aspect martial skill that helps you to preserve your youth?"

Mei Yinxue laughed. "If I did not know such an inner aspect martial skill, will I look like what I am looking now?"

Lady Proudness was very happy and immediately asked. "Good sister, hurry

and teach me. I have dreamed of it for many years!"

One must know that Lady Proudness did not look as old as she looked too. It was because she exercised great care in her daily diet and washed her face everyday. Even her tea was mixed with pearls to keep her younger. But she did not know the most mysterious of all the inner martial skills, the one that could retain youth. Moreover she was a woman and all women loved to be beautiful. What was more, she had now become in this state.

Mei Yinxue continued. "With a natural endowment such as sister and your strong martial foundation, within one or two years, not only will you regain your original beauty, you can even reverse your age and attain youthfulness!"

Lady Proudness was totally moved and she repeated many times. "Good sister, hurry and tell me, hurry and tell me..."

Mei Yinxue said. "After I have said it, you must release me."

Lady Proudness thought. "My unique accupoint skills, no one will even know how to counter it. Moreover there is no other persons on this island. Even if I will to untie her, she would not have any strength left. She would not even have the strength to carry a chicken so what tricks can she plays? If I do not act generous, how will I convince her to tell me this secret formula with all her heart?"

She did not know that Mei Yinxue had all her martial skills destroyed by this type of accupoint technique before. And she could even recover from it! Moreover Lady Proudness had only seal off all her blood channels in her body.

Lady Proudness smiled. "Good sister, if you don't believe me. Your sister will untie you first. So that you will be more comfortable."

Mei Yinxue laughed. "Sister, you are so nice."

Lady Proudness secretly scolded her. "Little vixen, later you are going to scold me." She covered her face with smiles and untied the vines that were wrapping around her, leaving only her legs tied.

Mei Yinxue laughed and thanked her at the same time. "Sister, listen most carefully." And she really told her the inner martial skill formulas to attain youth. Not even a single word was false for she knew that her opponent was not a mere goon. Even if it were false, it would not fool her at all.

Lady Proudness gave in all her attention and heart to remember and follow the formulas. She thought. "Indeed it is not fake!"

But some of the intricate parts of the formulas were too unfathomable for her to understand. After thinking for a long time, she sighed. "Good sister, some of the formulas are too unfathomable. I cannot understand it in short notice. Why don't you do good all the way by telling me the method to train?"

Mei Yinxue smiled. "This formula I have already known in my early years but it was only many years later when I am forced by someone to be locked inside

a coffin, that with nothing to do, after researching for half a year painstakingly, I finally understand all the intricate. Once you understand it, it is very easy. For example, 'Halo of the Three Flowers' and 'Five Vital Energy Channels', all these formed the intricate formulas on inner strength. Naturally you will understand it."

Lady Proudness was getting impatient and she began to mediate. "And then?"

Mei Yinxue said. "Circulate your entire vital energy once and then concentrate on your diaphragm…"

Lady Proudness did as she was instructed.

Mei Yinxue said. "There are five ways to train inner strength and it is based on the five elements. If you want to train it to the surface of your face, you must…"

She pointed out a lot of methods to train. Not even one word was fake and it was even some of the most secret methods to train inner strength.

Because Lady Proudness was afraid that Mei Yinxue might secretly trapped her, so she secretly researched for some time. Finding no flaws, she did as she was instructed.

After awhile, Mei Yinxue asked. "Now do you feel there is a energy that is slowly surfacing on your face?"

Lady Proudness nodded her head.

Mei Yinxue said. "Then you should transfer your vital energies into your Yin and Yang channels…Then you can completely verify what I will tell you is all the truth. Then you should release me."

Lady Proudness was secretly scolding her. "I will release you and kill you."

Because she was focusing on circulating the vital energies, she could not talk and could only nodded her head.

Mei Yinxue looked at her for a long time until Lady Proudness broke into beads of perspiration on her face.

Lady Proudness suddenly found herself trembling non-stop. "You…what have you done!"

It was because after she circulated her vital energies around, she suddenly discovered that her legs had grown numbed and became like wood and stone.

Mei Yinxue laughed aloud and immediately removed the vines on her legs and moved back three feet. She laughed happily. "Do you feel very comfortable now?"

Lady Proudness scolded her angrily. "You…you dare to trick me!"

Mei Yinxue laughed. "Other than you, who can I trick? Tell you honestly, I was tricked by this training method too and I suffered for one year because of it. Or else how can I fool you too?"

Lady Proudness clenched her fists in hatred. Her lower body was now numbed but she still had strength in her upper body including her hands. She began to sigh. “Since I have already been tricked by you, I have only myself to blame. I will definitely not blame you. So long as you do not kill me, I will not ask you even for the method to regain my limbs. Come over here, let me help you to release you from your accupoints.”

Mei Yinxue smiled. “Thank you so much.” And she took a step to the front.

Lady Proudness was secretly delighted.

Suddenly Mei Yinxue stopped in her tracks and shook her head. “That will not do. That will not do. Now that I do not have any strength in my body, if I walk too near, you may even kill me with a blow.”

Lady Proudness said gently. “Now that it has reached such a point, why will I still want to harm you. Sister, you can relax.”

Mei Yinxue laughed merrily. “Good sister, I am still not assured so what should I do? I guess I have to wait for myself to clear all my blood channels. If by then if you have not starved to death, I will definitely come and take care of you. I will treat you ten folds as nice as you have treated me.”

The gentle smiles on Lady Proudness instantly ceased as she scolded loudly. “What an ungrateful little witch. I have saved your life, have you forgotten?”

Mei Yinxue said, “I have not forgot. Therefore I will not kill you too.” And she started to leave.

Lady Proudness began to scold her with all the most vicious words but Mei Yinxue simply treated her as a crazed dog – She did not seem to hear or take notice at all.

But after Mei Yinxue walked into the woods, her expressions became very tense. Because she knew that the numbness that was afflicted upon Lady Proudness, in another three to five days she would recover. She knew from her own personal experience. As for when her blood channels would clear, she really had no confidence at all.

After reaching the woods on the other side, she observed the terrain around her and set many traps all around. Next she paddled through the seawater to the broken ship and took some tools. Next she chopped several wooden clogs and scattered them amongst the tall wild grasses.

For three days, she did not even dare to rest and worked herself to the point of exhaustion. But her three days of efforts had not been in vain…

Chapter Nineteen
Goddess in the Wilderness

After Lady Proudness saw Mei Yinxue disappeared from view, she was so angry and cursed her nonstop. She used her hands as legs and moved inch by inch to move herself into the woods. During those few days, she would scold and scold aloud, sometimes she would cry and plead but no matter how venomous her curses were, no matter how honey sweet her words were, there was no response from Mei Yinxue.

She did not expect that on the fifth day at dawn, her channels suddenly were cleared on it own accord. In utter joy, she began to rejuvenate her strength and then searched around for Mei Yinxue. She swore once she had found Mei Yinxue, she would spill all her vexations on her.

At sunset, she finally found the woods where Mei Yinxue had been hiding. Suddenly she stepped on something among the tall grasses and tens of tree leaves began to flutter all around and then, slings of stones began to fly toward her. The windforce caused by the stones were sharp and powerful!

Startled, Lady Proudness started to evade with her body. But before she could take even take a breather, tens of stones shot from the ground! She gave a cry before she retreated out of the woods but the stones had already hit her shoulders and she was now feeling sore and painful. She cursed her aloud. “Witch by the surname of Mei, do you dare to come out?”

As her spirit had not been calmed yet from the fright she got earlier, therefore she started to scold her from the outside of the woods for quit a while. But she still dare not enter the woods.

There was a chilling cold laugh coming from within the woods and Mei Yinxue began to walk in a slow dance among the tall grasses. Her dress fluttered in the air as she danced on the tall grasses very much like a fairy that could tread lightly.

‘Flying on the grass’ was an epitome of a person’s swiftness movement skill level but it was only because they had first took in a breath of vital energy to energize themselves as they ran in terrifying speed on the grass. But this type of swiftness movement skill that could allow Mei Yinxue to move in a slow dance on the grass, Lady Proudness had never seen of it, much less even heard of it!

In that very instant, her rage and hatred was changed to fright and shock. She trembled. “You…you…who has helps you to clear your accupoints?”

Mei Yinxue softly laughed. “Do you know that all my skills have been

destroyed by Long Bushi before? Yet I can still recover from it, moreover my channels have only been blocked by you."

Not only could she take a slow stroll on the grasses, she could even talk while holding her vital breath! Lady Proudness was even more startled now. What she did not know was, hidden among the tall grasses were rows of wooden clogs! Someone with very powerful inner force could cause heavy gravity pull in the form of a 'Thousand Weigh Pull' or even circulated their vital energies to lift themselves up to leap, jump, sprang lighter and faster than anyone else. She was totally in awe with Mei Yinxue's swiftness movement skill level.

Mei Yinxue smiled before she continued. "I have prepared a comfortable dwelling inside these woods. Since you have come, why not take a rest inside?"

When Lady Proudness had witnessed her marvelous swiftness movement skill that had reached such an unbelievable level in expertise, how could she dare to go in? But she was still very doubtful. Since her internal power had recovered, why was her speech so dispirited?

Mei Yinxue rolled her watery eyes and she looked even more dispirited. She laughed gently. "My internal power has not fully recovered yet. That is why when I talk, there is no strength and I sound so dispirited. If you want to chat with me, please come in and have a seat. There are no terrible traps in the woods therefore rest assured, you cannot be harmed."

Lady Proudness was stunned for awhile. The more Mei Yinxue wished to invite her in, the more she dared not. She thought. "I see now that she is only pretending to be dispirited so as to trick me in."

Mei Yinxue smiled. "Welcome, welcome…"

Lady Proudness suddenly laughed. "You can fool the others with your words but you definitely can't fool me at all!" After laughing several times more, she turned around and sprang away!

After Mei Yinxue saw her figure disappeared. She wiped the beads of cold sweat from her forehead and secretly thought. "Lucky!" She had used a stratagem by the famous strategist Zhuge Kongming, the 'Empty City Ruse' to fool Lady Proudness away.

Naturally all these happenings were not as detailed when related by Lady Proudness.

Lady Proudness said. "That day after I got back, as I was afraid that that witch would secretly come and did a sneak attack on me, therefore I started to set numerous traps and snares around the wooden hut. Heng…heng! Although she is as cunning as a fox but am I not as cunning too? I dare not go into her woods but

she did not dare to come here as well."

When Nangong Ping had heard that Mei Yinxue was safe, he felt relieved as he relaxed his breathing. He thought. "So all these traps are meant for Mei Yinxue. Therefore, it seems like my swiftness skill is now on the same par as Mei Yinxue now. That is why I am caught in the trap."

He did not know that his present swiftness skill had now surpassed Mei Yinxue by several notches. It was because Lady Proudness had overestimated Mei Yinxue's swiftness skill level and Nangong Ping was not in the best of his fitness yet.

Lady Proudness hatefully said. "What is most hateful about that witch is that she is always disturbing me with the repairs of her ship and the fact that the ship is with her. I am always afraid that she may finally repair the ship and can leave this place. Then I will have to die of old age on this desolate island. But…now that you are here, I am not afraid that she will leave…" She patted Nangong Ping on his shoulder and laughed hilariously.

Nangong Ping was startled. "What you mean by this?"

Lady Proudness said. "She is a maiden with lots of affections. Since she has already married you so how would she leave behind such a handsome young man on this island with me?"

Nangong Ping shouted angrily. "Are you going to use me as a leverage to threaten her?"

Lady Proudness laughed. "You are indeed smart." She started to carry Nangong Ping to the woods.

After awhile, Nangong Ping saw a black cliff and besides it was a forest area. He knew that in the woods was Mei Yinxue, who he had been thinking day and night. When he thought that he was going to see Mei Yinxue again, his heart started to beat very fast!

When he was about to cry out for Mei Yinxue, Lady Proudness hit him on his channels leading to his speech and said. "Be quiet!"

Next she proceeded to hide Nangong Ping behind some rocks and walked to the black cliff that was besides the woods. "Mei Yinxue…Maiden Mei, show yourself fast!" Her voice was sharp and frightened several flocks of birds that flew into the air from the woods.

There was a laugh that came from the woods and Mei Yinxue appeared carrying a tree branch. She walked slowly and she was dressed in a long robe made from the sails of the ship. Although it was a simple robe but it was very clean, just like a goddess in the wilderness. She was carrying a faint smile. "You have come again? Welcome, welcome!"

Lady Proudness giggled. "Good sister, long time no seen. You have become

even more beautiful."

Mei Yinxue laughed. "I have caught some wild rabbits yesterday. The taste is excellent. Do you want to come over my place to have a taste?"

The two of them were very intimate, filled with smiles and gentleness. But in fact, they wished to swallow one another into their stomach immediately.

When Nangong Ping heard had Mei Yinxue's voice, he was filled with happiness but was saddened as well. He hated himself for not able to move, not able to talk. In an instant, his heart was almost torn apart as he struggled furiously.

Mei Yinxue moved her watery eyes and laughed. "You seem very happy today. May I know what is the happy occasion?"

Lady Proudness said, "That is right. When I heard that your ship has almost finished repairing, I am really very happy in my heart."

Mei Yinxue giggled. "Alas, You are really nice. But a pity if I board the ship and leave, you will be very lonely. Moreover…when you have died, no one will prepare for your funeral. Maybe the ants will really eat you, alas! When I thought of that, my heart grieves for you."

Lady Proudness cursed her inside. "Hope you die, witch!" But her mouth was smiling. "Alas, sister, you are really so concern about me. But your sister will surely have someone to collect my corpse for me."

Mei Yinxue laughed delightfully. "Actually I want to stay behind to help you to collect your corpse but what if you grow to an old ripe age and not die? Therefore I can't wait anymore and have to leave…"

Lady Proudness said, "Good sister, I know you are joking. You will not leave because you want to give your ship to me and let your sister board the ship alone. Am I right?"

Mei Yinxue laughed and laughed. "Indeed, indeed. But how can you think of it?" She really thought it was a very funny thing and her eyes were even more watery.

Lady Proudness laughed aloud. "Is this a marvelous idea? Good sister, let me tell you something. This idea did not come from me but from a guest that arrived today."

Mei Yinxue laughed. "Oh? Really? That guest of yours must be truly very brilliant. Who is he huh?"

Lady Proudness coldly said. "Nangong Ping!"

Mei Yinxue received a jolt in her body and her laughs ceased in an instant. She grasped. "Nangong Ping? He has come?"

Lady Proudness said unhurried. "That is right. He has come. Do you want to see him? He has been thinking about you with all his heart and soul. Heh!"

Although Mei Yinxue was filled with the excitement of a hundred emotions

in her but she shown no sign of it on her face.

Lady Proudness was stunned and shouted. “What! Don’t you wish to see him?”

Mei Yinxue recovered from her thoughts and slowly said. “Why should I wish to see him?”

Lady Proudness giggled. “That is it. I have already knew that you will surely want to see him.”

But Mei Yinxue slowly added. “Why should I not wish to see him, he is long dead in my heart. This type of heartless man, it doesn’t matter if I am to see him or not!”

Lady Proudness received a jolt this time and her laughs ceased. She turned ashen and said. “Did you forget the vows of your love? Did you forget that you are husband and wife? You once told me that you are deeply in love with him, is that all a pack of lies?”

Mei Yinxue coldly said. “That is right. I was once deeply in love with him but now I have hated him with all my heart. On that Divine Creator Island, I begged him to open his eyes to take a look at me but he refused me! So now why should I want to see him? Tell me, why should I want to see him!” Her voice was getting more and more high pitch.

Lady Proudness expressions changed and she asked in fright. “At that time, he must surely have a lot of difficulties, that is why he refused to see you. But he is really a gentle and affectionate man. What is more, he loves you with all his heart therefore you must not let him down!”

She had thought that she could use Nangong Ping to threaten Mei Yinxue. She came with high hopes and cockiness but never expected that Mei Yinxue had long forgotten about Nangong Ping!

When her hopes became hopelessness, that why her voice trembled in fright and now she was trying to defend Nangong Ping.

Mei Yinxue coldly laughed awhile. “Since you think that he is such a gentle and affectionate man, you can ask him to accompany you. Heng…heng! With such a gentle and affectionate man on the island with you, I can put aside my worries for you and set sail.” When she had finished, she turned her body.

Lady Proudness was even more frightened now and shouted. “Wait a minute!”

Mei Yinxue did not even turn her head and she coldly said. “I have already given my husband to you, what more do you want? What more do you want to say?”

Lady Proudness was filled with anxiety and all her cockiness was gone. “I am old and ugly, how could I be a match for him? But the two of you are really the

perfect match, the guy is talented and the girl beautiful…"

Mei Yinxue coldly said. "Is that all what you want to say?" She started to walk away.

Lady Proudness shouted. "Wait a minute. He has found you with much difficulty. At the very least you should see him once."

Mei Yinxue halted her legs and said. "It doesn't matter if I were to see him but what does one more time matter."

Lady Proudness said. "Please wait a while. I will bring him now immediately." She sprang away.

She had wanted to wait until Mei Yinxue had pleaded with her for a long time before she would bring Nangong Ping to her. But now, she had to plead with Mei Yinxue to bring Nangong Ping to her. It was indeed pitiful and laudable!

When Nangong Ping had heard their conversations, he had a mix of disappointment and sadness.

He thought to himself. "Even a woman like Lady Proudness can understand my difficulties but why did Mei Yinxue not understand me at all?" He was angry with Mei Yinxue all of a sudden then he had a jolt. "Could she have saw through Lady Proudness' tricks and pretended otherwise…"

He kept guessing in his heart until Lady Proudness pulled him up, arrange his clothing and sternly said to him. "Remember to beg her and plead most sincerely. Surely you can move her heart and she will forgive you. Do you understand or else…heng, heng! You should know in your heart that I am capable of doing anything!"

Nangong Ping bit his teeth and did not say a word. Lady Proudness carried him to stand on the edge of the woods. In that instant when he saw Mei Yinxue's back, his heart was like being weighed by a giant rock. "Yinxue, I…"

Mei Yinxue trembled slightly but she did not turn her head over!

Lady Proudness forced herself to smile. "Good sister, look! Your sister has brought him here now. Look how fragile he is now because he is always thinking about you. Even I feel sad for him when I look at his state."

After a long while, Mei Yinxue slowly turned her back around and her face was a cold demeanor.

Lady Proudness said. "After so many events, finally the two of you have the chance to meet again, alas! It is really such a joyous thing. I am really happy, really happy." Although she said she was happy but her face was sorrowful and her eyes were malicious.

When Nangong Ping saw that Mei Yinxue was looking at him with such a cold demeanor, all the millions of words that he wanted to say stumbled in his throat.

Lady Proudness looked at him and tugged his sleeve. “Hey, say something to her! Now that you have seen her, aren’t you supposed to be happy? If there is anything you want to say to her, just say it! Do you need to feel shy?”

Mei Yinxue expressions changed and she sternly said. “What has he have to say? It is good that I have not seen him. After seeing him, I am filled with hatred for him. Hurry and bring him away!” She was really afraid that Nangong Ping would really say something and she could not control her feelings.

Lady Proudness said aloud. “Do you really want to severe all ties with him?”

Mei Yinxue stated matter of fact. “Indeed you are so right.”

Suddenly Lady Proudness coldly laughed. “Since that is the case, I will use the ‘Five Negative Finger Skill’ to cripple his eight meridian channels and to let him suffer unspeakable pain and torture, then he will vomit black blood and die. I really want to see if your heart will hurts or not.” She lifted her hands to cripple Nangong Ping while the corner of her eyes peeked at Mei Yinxue to see if she would save him or not.

Mei Yinxue coldly laughed. “You are welcome but I hope that you can do it on the spot so that I can witness his torture as well. At the same time, you can also know if I will feel heartache for him.”

Lady Proudness was startled and scolded aloud. “What a heartless, unrighteous witch! You actually have the heart to even murder your own husband, no wonder everyone in the Pugilist nicked you as cold blood. Your heart is indeed more venomous than a venomous snake!”

Mei Yinxue looked up the sky and laughed heartily. “Thank you, thank you for your praises. If I were not cold blood, I would have died so many times already…”

Suddenly her laughs ceased and she took a pair of golden bells from her clothing and threw it in front of Nangong Ping.

Nangong Ping was jolted. And he heard her said. “This is the token of love that you have given to me on our wedding day. Now, I have returned it to you. From now on, we are not related by any means and I hope you will not come to pester me!”

Nangong Ping was too stunned and it was like a sharp weapon that had suddenly ran through his body.

Lady Proudness fumed. “What a shameless witch! You actually divorce your husband! For thousands of years to the ancient times, although there are a lot of vicious and shameless women but no one can be compared to you!”

Mei Yinxue coldly smirked. “Is it true? Oh I actually thought that the most vicious and most shameless woman is you. Heh!”

Lady Proudness almost exploded in anger now. “Nangong Ping, what

happen to you! Why are you like a tortoise that refused to say anything? You…you…" She started to kick the sand and stones around her feet in rage.

Nangong Ping was too heart wrenched to feel anything now. "Yinxue, I am so sorry to you. I don't blame you for the way you are treating me. You are still young and there are many destinies waiting for you. I only hope that you will find an honest man in the future to lead an honest life and not…"

Mei Yinxue interrupted. "There is no need for you to be worry for me, there are countless number of men in the world…" Suddenly she turned around and laughed. "My ship has already finished repairing. I am going to sail now!"

She started to sprang back to the woods, all the while laughing.

Back in the woods, her laughs turned to sobs. Her slim body trembled a few times before she cried in a low voice. "Xiaoping, please forgive me. If I don't do such a thing, I will not escape from Lady Proudness' vicious ploys…" Before she could finish, she coughed out a mouthful of blood!

She struggled to walk a few steps before she could find a place to hide and slowly sit down. She knew very much how vicious and cruel Lady Proudness was, therefore she pretended to severe all ties with Nangong Ping so as to make her disappointed.

But this pretense of hers, she had paid a high price for it. She caused Nangong Ping to be heartbroken, so heart wrenching and painful. The last words of Nangong Ping caused her heart to break and when the pain of her heart could not be endured anymore, she coughed out blood!

She gently wiped away her blood traces and her lips floated a smile; her pretense had been successful. Although Lady Proudness was very cunning but she had fooled her after all.

She started to mutter in a low voice. "Lady Proudness, it time for you to come after me. I have set many ambushes in the woods waiting for you! Since you have thought that I am about to go, will you not come?"

And in front of eyes was a vision…

Lady Proudness had been tied upside a tree and before she had died, she had screamed. After that, she would be back to the embrace of Nangong Ping. At that time, Nangong Ping would know she had been a through a painstaking ordeal. And they were to have tears of reunion and happiness. After that, they would set sail away from this island. And after that, they would have lived a life of bliss and happiness, happily ever after, after that…Her eyes were now closed and she fainted in her blissful and beautiful dream…

It was because her mental strength had been weakened considerable by her emotions. And she had even throw up blood earlier. Now she was weakened

considerably, that was why she had fainted.

After Nangong Ping had saw Mei Yinxue vanished in the distance. He felt a sudden sensational pain and he threw up a mouthful of blood…

Lady Proudness could not control her rage. “Useless man, why don’t you go after her and tied that shameless woman up the tree and then lashed her viciously with a whip…” And she started cleared his accupoints as she spoke.

But Nangong Ping remained sitting on the ground, refusing to bulge. He kept muttering. “Let her go…let her go…”

Lady Proudness fumed. “Let her go? Heh! You call yourself a real man? While you are suffering on this island, she has gone to the company of other men to seek pleasures. How would the others know that she is once Nangong Ping’s wife? Not only will you not be able to see anyone with such shame, even if you were to die, you will be too shameful to face a ghost too. What about your fellow protégés and your Mentor Master? Your ancestors? You have utterly thrown your ancestor’s face away so how are you going to face them?”

Nangong Ping clenched his fists tightly and bit his teeth. Then he slowly rose up.

Lady Proudness was delighted. “Go, hurry and go now!” She had wanted Nangong Ping to take the blunt of all the traps that were in the woods. And then she just had to follow…

But Nangong Ping was stunned for awhile before he crushed to the ground again.

Lady Proudness was disappointed and then she moved around the woods for several times before she hit Nangong Ping on his accupoints. “Go over that time. Hurry!”

Nangong Ping seemed to be totally numbed. He did not even try to avoid her hits.

She deducted that the woods would surely have a lot of ambushes but she was determined to capture Mei Yinxue. After awhile, she came back from the black cliffs with two black flints.

Nangong Ping was startled. “You want to set a fire?”

Lady Proudness coldly exclaimed. “That is right. I want to burn down this entire forest. Then I would want to see if there are still any traps!”

One must know that she had hesitated to set a fire because Mei Yinxue could do the same to her too. When that time comes, the two of them would be left with a total wasteland and would have died together.

And she really gathered a lot of figs and dry grasses on the top of the cliff.

Now she set them on fire and rolled them down the cliff into the woods! And the fire was spreading faster now, urged on by the strong winds.

Lady Proudness laughed. “I want to see what other ideas do you have, unless…”

Nangong Ping coldly interrupted. “She may be thinking of staying for half a day more. Now you set the woods on fire, she will sail off immediately. When the fire has smoothed, by the time you go in the wood, it is already too late.”

Lady Proudness was jolted and was stunned. Suddenly she laughed hilariously. “Fine, fine then. Let us all die together…” And she pushed Nangong Ping down the cliff in a crazed laughter. “Charge! Charge inside! …”

While Nangong Ping was pushed down and when he saw that he was about to roll down the burning fire below, he caught hold of the side of the cliff with his hands. He tried to flick his legs backward but who would have expected that he would accidentally entangled Lady Proudness legs.

Upon losing balance, Lady Proudness started to roll down the cliff while she was still laughing nonstop. But after rolling down for more than thirty feet, she caught hold of the vines on the cliff, in an instant, suddenly more than ten arrows pierced through her body when she gave the vine a tug…

Nangong Ping was stunned and secretly sighed with a relief. He sprang up the cliff and yelled aloud. “Yinxue, Mei Yinxue. Your traps have already done her! Did you see it?”

How he wished that that Mei Yinxue was using a diversionary tactic earlier. Now that when she had heard his voice, she would immediately sprang to his embrace. But there was not a sound coming from the forest. Naturally, he would never expect that Mei Yinxue was unconsciousness now.

Therefore he kept shouting nonstop. He was greatly disappointed and upset that Mei Yinxue did not reply him. In a daze, he charged into the woods, forgetting that there were traps all over. Before he had even charge one yard into the woods, he triggered a trap and a large rock hit him from his back. Once again he threw out a mouthful of blood and was knocked unconsciousness on the spot.

Time passed, this island had become a burning sea of fire and it started to burn everything down. Nangong Ping, Lady Proudness, Mei Yinxue was all knocked unconscious. Very soon, the gratuitous, the hatred, the love that had existed between the three of them would soon ended with their lives and their bodies. It would be forever be buried in this burning sea of fire…

In the distant horizon, a ship appeared. Its sails were most beautiful and consisted of many colors. Even an experienced sailor that had been on the seas

would never seen such a majesty sails.

Except for a young man in fine clothing on the ship, all the other crews on board that ship were all women!

"Land ahead!" A woman shouted.

"Really is a land ahead?"

"Turn the sails and full speed ahead!"

Two beautiful young maidens with a bright countenance walked to the front of the ship. One of the maidens was dressed in a seven-color dress while the another was dressed in an emerald dress and garment.

While the maiden in a multi color dress was looking like she was a bride, full of smiles and joy. The another maiden in emerald dress was looking fragile and in her eyes, was boundless melancholy.

The young man in fine clothes turned his head and laughed merrily. "That is right. There is land in front!"

The young married woman in beautiful dress gently sighed. "Hopefully, that is the legendary Divine Creator Island. Then my sister over here will not be worrying day in and out. She is getting thinner and thinner now."

The young man said. "She is not the only one that is worrying, I…" Suddenly the young man grasped in shock. "The island is on fire!"

Beautiful dressed young married woman said. "Since the island is on fire, surely there must be some traces of inhabitant. Maybe that island is the so call Divine Creator Island!"

The young maiden in emerald dress, who was looking on with a cold demeanor, blushed.

The young man hurried shouted. "Hurry, hurry to the island. The fire is spreading very fast. We must get it before the fire had spread or else…or else…" He had a bad feeling on this but after taking a look at the maiden in emerald dress, he could not find the heart to say it.

Therefore even before the ship had anchored near the cliff to the island, the three of them had sprang to the island in great haste, their movements were as swift as the wind.

The maiden in emerald dress was the most anxious, she had sprang past the cliff and into the burning woods. The young man and the woman in beautiful dress shouted aloud, "Is there any one on this island?" But there was no reply whatever so.

The maiden in beautiful dress thoughtfully said. "If there is people on this island, there should be a reply by now. So it seems…"

Before she could finish, the young man shouted. "Look over there! You saw?" He pointed to a black figure in the middle of the cliff and below was the

raging fire. He took off his garments and began to wrap himself with it on his head.

She said with great concern, her expressions had changed. “Danger, you…”

The young man laughed and smiled. “In my entire life, when did I ever been cowed by dangers? Is there dangers in this world that can possible harm me?!” He was filled with a self-confidence and a heroism.

She softly sighed. “Go then but be very careful…”

The young man displayed a soft silvery spear and with a shake he jumped down the black cliff and into the burning woods below.

The girl looked on with great concern and anxiety. She was relieved when he was finally back with the dark figure. “Did you get burn?”

The young man laughed merrily. “Just this little fire, how can it burn me?”

The beautiful young maiden began to laugh too. “Look at you! Why are you always so fearless? Sometimes I wonder if it is time for you to take some bittersweet beatings!” She was filled with loveliness and tenderness when she said that. She moved her eyes and asked. “Who is this woman? She looked ugly!”

The young man said. “No matter who she is but there should be others on this island too. Unless she is the one that hang herself on those vines.”

The beautiful dressed maiden wondered. “It good if you can ask her but I wonder if she is dead?”

The young man looked at her. “Although not yet but more or less…”

Before he could finish, the emerald dress maiden cried out from afar. “He is here! Nangong Ping, he…he is really here!”

Instantly the two of them were jolted and immediately sprang over to the other side. The beautiful dressed maiden exclaimed in joy. “She has finally found him!”

And they saw the emerald dress maiden carrying a person in her embrace. She looked really very happy but she was also crying. She grasped. “Come over here, he is injured!”

They were startled and asked together. “Is he seriously injured?”

The emerald dressed maiden replied, “It quite serious but luckily it is mostly external injuries. I have given him some healing pills…”

The young man said. “Let me treat his injuries!” And he put down the ugly stranger – Lady Proudness. And he began to infuse vital energies into Nangong Ping to clear all his blood channels and to let the medicine spread throughout his body.

The beautiful dressed maiden took a hanky and helped the emerald dressed maiden to wipe away her tears. She sighed. “Silly sister. Why are you crying? You have found the person that you have been looking for!”

The maiden in emerald dress replied. “I…I won’t cry. I am…really too

happy!"
Although she said she would not cry but her tears were still flowing.

After awhile, Nangong Ping began to regain conscious. He looked around and a strong sense of joy overwhelmed him. He wondered if he was dreaming.

The maiden in emerald dress looked with her watery ears to look into Nangong Ping's eyes. She could not help trembling and she lowered her head, slowly she let go of Nangong Ping's hands. Her watery eyes were that of joy and shyness.

Nangong Ping slowly lifted his hand and gripped the young man's hand. "Brother Di! It has been one year since we last meet. Today I can meet you is really the most fortunate thing that can ever happen in my life!"

Di Yang laughed merrily. "In this whole wide world, who has the ability to kill us brothers? When you and I were separated, I have already known we will have the chance to gather once more."

Di Yang laughed even merrily because he really did not want anyone to see the watery tinge in his eyes.

After many changes and disastrous events, even a steel-hearted man would be moved to tears when they were finally reunited again.

In an instant, Nangong Ping did not know what to say although many things crossed his mind!

When the beautifully dressed maiden saw that the maiden in emerald dress looked disappointed and had an air of melancholy around her, she coldly laughed. "Nangong Ping, Maiden Ye has looked all over for you, searching for you with painstaking care in a million places and even save your life. Did you not see her at all?"

Nangong Ping was startled and immediately turned his look around. "Maiden Ye, I…I…"

Nangong Ping was full of gratuitous but he did not know what to say. He could only sighed deeply and said. "Maiden Ye, I really don't know how should I possibly repaid you!"

Di Yang laughed merrily. "With the intimate relationships between the two of you, what is this talk about repayment? Come, come, come Brother Nangong. Let me introduce you to someone."

Nangong Ping looked at the woman in beautiful clothing and said. "This...this…"

Di Yang laughed merrily and heartily. "This bride is your Sister in law, your little brother new bride…"

Nangong Ping was started but exclaimed in delight. "Brother Di, I really never expect you to be married. Congratulations!"

Di Yang laughed merrily. “Although I lose to you in all areas but at least I am faster than you in terms of marriage. If you are not willing to lose to me, you should hurry and get marry too!” And he purposely looked at Ye Manqing. But when he turned his glance at Nangong Ping, he found him to be solemn and sorrowful. “Today is our reunion day, you should be happy, why…”

Nangong Ping forced out a laugh. “From now on, in my entire life, I will never dare to marry again.”

Di Yang was stunned and then he laughed. “A real man that doesn’t fear death will be scared of marriage?”

Nangong Ping sighed. “It is because, your little brother has already…has already been married!”

Ye Manqing received a jolt while Di Yang and the beautiful dressed maiden, Yi Luo looked at one another and turn ashen. After awhile, Di Yang forcefully smiled.

“Heh…Heh…congratulations to you Brother Nangong. Where is my Sister in law now? Where…”

Nangong Ping slowly said. “Where is she…she…” He really could not control his grief that he had to laugh out hilariously. “She has even returned me our token of love. She has hated me with all her heart now. From now on, she will never want to see me again. And I don’t wish to see her too!”

When Mei Yinxue had regained conscious. She felt her surroundings to be very warm. She opened her eyes and saw that the forest was a sea of fire!

She sprang up in fright, bit her teeth and scolded herself. “Mei Yinxue ah Mei Yinxue! How did you have to faint at a time like this? If Nangong Ping is to come to harm, can you still live in this world?

She was anxious for Nangong Ping.

She could sacrifice everything, she could endure everything so long as long she could be together with Nangong Ping forever. Even if she would to cripple both her hands and legs, she would still have a blissful smile on her face.

Feeling worry for the safety of Nangong Ping, she sprang like she was flying out of the burning woods and just when she was about to shout aloud, in that instant, her sharp eyes spot the figures of many people. And that the Nangong Ping that she was so concerned about was now lying in the embrace of another maiden.

She had recognized that girl to be Ye Manqing. In that instant, she felt a heart wrenching pain within her and she began to conceal in the shade.

She had heard the conversations between Di Yang and Nangong Ping. When she had heard of the last two lines. “…She will never want to see me again. And I

don't wish to see her too!" Her head began to shake and her heart was sliced open by a knife. She lamented to the heavens. "Heavens, ah Heavens, what wrong did I commit? Why must I suffer all these retributions, all these sufferings?"

She had heard Nangong Ping laughing hilariously nonstop and then Ye Manqing, Di Yang, Yi Luo were all stunned.

Yi Luo coldly said, "Since that girl is so heartless to you, why must you suffer all these heartbreaks for her?"

Nangong Ping ceased his laughter, lowered his head and said. "I will never think of her again…"

Yi Luo laughed. "If you will not think of her again, you should be more intimate to Maiden Ye. Do you know that because of you, how much sufferings and humiliations did she has to go through?"

Nangong Ping sighed and muttered. "I know…How should I not know…"

Di Yang laughed. "It good that you know. After you go back to the Central Plains, do not forsake her."

Nangong Ping could only nodded and sighed. But he did not say anything.

After Mei Yinxue had overheard up to this point, she was heartbroken. She looked at Nangong Ping and Ye Manqing although they did not exchange a single word, but they really looked like a couple.

She looked very fragile now. All her sufferings were for Nangong Ping but in this world, how many people really know?

Her tears flowed nonstop while she thought. "Since I already have the nick 'Cold Blood'. Whatever things I do, I will never have the understanding and forgiveness of others. Moreover, he…he has already said such a thing out. Ye Manqing is really a perfect match for him. They are both from orthodox clans and should be husband and wife. Everyone in the Fraternity will surely feel very happy and envy for them. As for me…why must I be in their middle and be their hindering stone?"

One must know that she had already love Nangong Ping with all her heart. Everything was now for Nangong Ping, she had forgotten about herself. In her heart, she only knew that she wanted Nangong Ping to have happiness and rather that she suffered a life of loneliness and sorrows alone.

With these thoughts in her mind, she clenched her teeth, turned her slim body and secretly prayed. "Xiaoping, I hope that you…will…always…be…blissful…" With tears, she sprang away.

She sprang to a cave. Inside the cave were many wooden chairs, tables and other things. She had spent countless lonely moons here but she had never forget about Nangong Ping.

In this place, she had shed countless tears because in her heart, there was

always a tiny hope. But now she was totally hopeless.

She began to shift all the necessary things that she would need and carried it into her ship. She remembered she had expended much effort to repair this ship till her beautiful hands were covered with blisters.

Now she opened the sails, pushed the logs away so that the ship would be afloat. She had come in loneliness and now she had to leave in loneliness. When she had come, she brought nothing, when she had to leave, it was with great sorrows, grieves, heartaches and tears…

Nangong slowly rose up helped by Di Yang. He knew now that this lady was Second Mistress Yi Luo, the Glamorous Soul and also sister to Hungry Ghost Yi Feng of the Ghastly Beggars.

That day, Yi Luo had saved Di Yang by bringing him back to the Hells of Hells. Although Di Yang was heavily poisoned but Yi Luo lavished with so much attentions and care that even gold could split. Finally she managed to bring him back to life. Because Di Yang was grateful to her sincerity and affections, he stayed behind at the Hells of Hells and finally married her.

But Di Yang was a man with great heroism so he did not want to stay outside the frontier and he also missed his friends in the Pass. As for Yi Luo, she had long stayed outside the Pass and was eager to see the scenery of Jiangnan.

Therefore the two of them entered the Central Plains and at an Inn near the Taihu Lake chanced upon Maiden Ye Manqing who was looking lonely and filled with an aura of melancholy.

Because Di Yang and Ye Manqing was old friends and because he was usually a warm hearted person, when he saw how sad Ye Manqing was, he wanted to help her to find Nangong Ping. According to the rumors in the Pugilist, Nangong Ping had already set sail for the seas, to the most mysterious legendary place, the Divine Creator Temple!

After several discussions, he decided to buy a ship. Although the Ghastly Beggars had called themselves as beggars but they were in fact exceedingly rich. As Yi Feng doted on his sister dearly, he spared no efforts in their expenditure. Therefore Yi Luo brought the most magnificent ship, refurbished it and even had the most beautiful sails that the world had never seen - the five colors sail.

But after searching on the seas for a year, the three of them were disappointed and anxious. But who would have expect that the smoke in the horizon would allow them to find Nangong Ping?

Because Di Yang did not want to let Nangong Ping remembered his painful past, so he did not ask him what had happened to him. He laughed. “We can’t stay

on this island for long and I am also tired of living on the sea. Let us board the ship and go back to the Central Plains!"

Before he could finish, Yi Luo hummed and laughed. "How can you forget that there is still one more person here! Although all the Ghastly Beggars are poor and ugly but none can be compared to this woman."

One must know that Yi Luo was not being rude by saying old, ugly to anyone. It was because she had thought of taking Lady Proudness back to join the Ghastly Beggars.

Nangong Ping was startled and turned his head. "She…she has not die yet…"

When Di Yang saw that Nangong Ping had turned ashen, he could not help feeling puzzled and asked. "Who is this person? Friend or foe?"

Nangong Ping hatefully said. "She had harmed me three times and save me once. But…but I rather die than allow myself to be saved by her."

Yi Luo asked. "Who is she?"

Nangong Ping exclaimed. "Lady Proudness!"

Di Yang and Ye Manqing was startled! As for Glamorous Soul Yi Luo, because she had been staying for a long time outside the Pass, she had not heard of this name before. Therefore she laughed. "I really don't see why she has anything to be proud of, and she doesn't look like a lady to me. Why then call her Lady Proudness?"

Di Yang did not reply her and sighed. "Luckily she is as good as dead soon. If not…alas. I really do not know should I save her or not."

One must know that standing aside and to leave a person to die was against the righteousness of the Fraternity. But if one was to save an evil person then it was as good as harming the good people. Therefore when he saw that Lady Proudness was dying, he actually felt comfortable.

But before Di Yang could finish talking, Lady Proudness had opened her eyes and said. "Nangong Ping, Mei Yinxue…Mei Yinxue, where is she now?"

Nangong Ping bit his teeth and refused to say anything. Di Yang and Ye Manqing both looked at him and thought. "Mei Yinxue is on this island too!" They started to look around with their eyes to see if there was any sign of her.

When Lady Proudness could not obtain their reply, she sighed. "I have been in a rampage across the entire Martial Fraternity for my entire life. In my lifetime alone, I have fooled countless number of pugilist heroes. I could be said to be a treacherous evil person. But today I am trick by a little girl. Mei Yinxue ah, Mei Yinxue, finally I decide to yield to you!"

She took a lot of efforts just to mouth those words.

Glamorous Soul Yi Luo coldly smirked. "Those who fools others will be

fooled someday. What is so strange about it?

Lady Proudness stared at her angrily. “Who do you think you are that you will try to be so cocky in front of me.”

Yi Luo giggled. “Since you are unable to feel proud, so what if I want to feel proud? I just want to feel proud.”

Lady Proudness angrily said. “Although she has fooled me but when I fell down from the cliff, I have already see through her ruses. She pretends to be cold and heartless towards Nangong Ping just so she can fool me. When I finally fallen into her traps, then she would come out and have a reunion with Nangong Ping!”

Nangong Ping expressions changed greatly. Di Yang added. “I am afraid that you have guessed wrongly!”

Lady Proudness coldly laughed. “How would I be wrong? I even know very clearly how many intestines she has in her stomach…”

She took another breath and added. “It obviously she knows that I will never harm Nangong Ping, therefore she dare to all out with me. With her temperament, if she has really severed all ties with Nangong Ping, when she saw Nangong Ping, she would have immediately walked off and would never say a single word. If she really hates Nangong Ping then, when she saw Nangong Ping, she would have killed him instantly and Nangong Ping would never be alive and well standing here!”

After listening to Lady Proudness, Nangong Ping suddenly remembered Mei Yinxue temperament, his body began to tremble nonstop and he began to cry. “Wrong… wrong…”

Lady Proudness was asking, “Who is wrong? Who say I am wrong? It is only because you do not understand that witch temperament…”

Nangong Ping trembled. “Yinxue…I have wronged you…I have wronged you…I have wronged you…”

Lady Proudness was startled. “You…you…idiot. Don’t you know?”

Nangong Ping was crying and did not appear to notice.

Lady Proudness hatefully said. “Why did I tell you…I should have let you hate her forever…”

Suddenly she laughed hilariously. “Mei Yinxue…my good sister…did you never expect that in this whole wide world, only I am your bosom friend…” In between her laughs, this evil enchantress of her times had finally drawn her last breath.

Although she had died but that cocky last laugh of her was constantly ringing in everyone’s ears…

Everyone was stoned for a long time. No one said anything. Finally Ye Manqing with her head lowered said. “She is right…right…”

Nangong Ping suddenly yelled aloud and broke free of Di Yang's hands. "Surely she must be here still…" And he began to run into the burning woods.

Di Yang was greatly startled and he caught hold of Nangong Ping's shoulders.

Nangong Ping sobbed. "Let me go, I must find her…"

Yi Luo looked around and said. "If she is on the island, why did she not come out to see you?"

Ye Manqing sighed deeply in great melancholy. "She must have met with a sudden happenstance…"

Yi Luo secretly exasperated. "Oh you! I am helping you now yet you helping her! You are really a silly goose." One must know that she and Mei Yinxue was not acquaintances therefore she wanted to help Ye Manqing and Nangong Ping to become a couple. Moreover she had personally witnessed Ye Manqing's heartbreaks.

Nangong Ping trembled. "Sudden happenstance…sudden happenstance…" Even though the forest was like a burning sea of fire, he still wanted to charge into the woods.

Suddenly a woman in cotton appeared and shouted. "Lady and Master, Maiden. The road is soon blocked. If we do not leave the island now, it may be too late!"

Di Yang was downcast and solemnly said. "Step aside and don't say too many words."

The woman stood aside and muttered. "Others have already sailed away in a ship…"

Di Yang expressions changed and he asked. "Who has sail away? What did you see?"

The woman replied. "When I was at the top of the mast, I saw a big ship over the other side of the island sailing away…"

Di Yang interrupted, "Did you see anyone on that ship?"

The woman said, "Although the ship was very fast but I saw a woman on the ship."

Di Yang, Yi Luo and Ye Manqing looked at one another and thought at the same time. "Mei Yinxue has left!"

They turned and looked at Nangong Ping, who was stoned on the spot. Suddenly he trembled a few times before he coughed out blood and fainted. Di Yang hurriedly caught hold of him and sighed deeply. "Let us go now!"

Ye Manqing looked at the corpse of Lady Proudness and then she actually picked her up.

Yi Luo was surprised. "She has died, why did you carry her for?"

Ye Manqing sighed. “I am going to throw her into the sea so that at least her body will be in one piece!”

No one wanted to stay on this island for an instant therefore they sprang all the way to their ship without looking back.

Ye Manqing lit three joss sticks and wrapped Lady Proudness in a white mat before throwing her into the sea. She sighed and muttered. “Thank you for saving Nangong Ping once so that I can still see him. I hope your soul will always find appeasement under the bottom of the sea.”

Ye Manqing lowered her head and slowly walked back to the ship lower deck.

At the same time, Di Yang and his Lady was attending to Nangong Ping’s injuries. Although Nangong Ping had slowly recovered by now but he was looking at the ocean, hoping to see Mei Yinxue’s ship as well as his Mentor Master Long Bushi and Uncle Nangong Yongle whereabouts. These old men had their vendettas for the longest time but in the end, they had to die together. Heaven really knew how to play a joke on them.

The ship had been in the seas for a month now. Nangong Ping had changed into filial clothing. He did not say anything all day long. What others were saying, he did not seen to hear too!

Di Yang, Yi Luo and Ye Manqing was naturally worried for him but there was really nothing they could do. They could only hope that Nangong Ping would finally calm himself down and forget all about his sorrows and heartbreaks.

As the ship approached the inner seas, many other ships and vassals would pause to take a look at this five color beautiful sails. Everyone thought that this magnificent ship was odd therefore they did not dare to approach it.

Nangong Ping was drinking jars after jars of wine to drown his sorrows. Not a word came from him and he was like an old monk.

Yi Luo could not resist sighing. “Brother Nangong, I am really so impress by you. For thirty days, you can remain so silence. If I were you, I be crazy in three days if I do not talk!”

Nangong Ping did not look in her direction but stared blankly. He had mastered the hardest skill in the world during his stay on the Divine Creator Island – Silence. He tried to suppress all his pains and sufferings into the silence but his sufferings would only increase.

Di Yang laughed merrily. “My lady, I say you should learn from Brother Nangong instead.”

Yi Luo looked coquettish at him and exclaimed. “What? Did I always have

so much to say?"

Di Yang laughed merrily. "Not much, not much…when you are sleeping…when you are sleeping, indeed you don't have much to say. But when you are awake…" He laughed heartily nonstop.

Naturally Yi Luo started to protest lovingly. The two of them started to poke fun at one another. Actually they wanted to cheer Nangong Ping up but he did not even smile at all.

When Ye Manqing saw how loving the two couple was, she remembered how loneliness was her background. She was envy and her sorrows deepened.

When Di Yang saw the expressions on Nangong Ping and Ye Manqing, he really could not laugh anymore. He sighed and took a stroll. He spotted a ship with a white sail approaching them.

Di Yang thought it was strange and he puzzled over it for awhile. "Is this a pirate ship? Or else…"

Yi Luo smiled cheerfully. "I really hope that it is a pirate ship so that it can buzz us awhile. It is really so boring these few days."

There was a man on the other ship carrying a white cloth that was shouting. "Is it Master Di Yang that is on board the ship? I have a matter to inform you. Can you invite me to your ship!"

Di Yang looked perplexed. He thought. "Our ship has not even arrived in the Central Plains, how is it possible that anyone will know I am on board this ship?"

While he was thinking, Yi Luo waved and shouted. "That is right. Who is this friend? What can we do for you?"

The man asked. "Can I board your ship to talk?"

Di Yang nodded and commanded the ship to slow down.

When the man had arrived on their ship, he swept his glances around and took a few glances at Nangong Ping.

Di Yang sternly said. "You and I are not acquaintances. How did you know that I am on board this ship?"

The man smiled and withdrawn his glances from Nangong Ping and said. "While Master Di is still at sea, your multi-color sails have already been forewarned by the people in the Fraternity of your coming from as far as a hundred miles. Therefore when I saw the sails of your ship, naturally I know of your coming."

The eyes of this man were sharp and his manner arrogant. It seemed like 'Fragrance of a Thousand Miles' Ren Fengping had sent him.

Di Yang coldly hummed and said solemnly. "Friend, why did you pay so much attention to me and my lady?"

The man smiled and tens of bamboo carrying baskets of food were carried

over to Di Yang's ship. He said. “My master knows that Master Di have been long in the open seas and therefore you must have shortage of fresh food. So we send some fresh meat and vegetables to you.”

Di Yang solemnly asked. “Who is your Master?”

Yi Luo softly laughed at the side. “He seems so filial to you.”

The man pretended not to hear what Yi Luo had said. “My Master is waiting in the shore for you. Soon you will know who he is when you meet.” He started to move back and sprang back to his ship.

Di Yang said in a clear manner. “If you don’t tell me your Master’s name, I will never accept these gifts.”

The man just smiled and said. “You will know when you meet him. He just wants me to tell you that you are a old friend of his and he is happy that you are returning.”

The crewmen on that ship seemed to be very experienced. In just a few words time, they had steered their ship away.

Di Yang called out. “Follow it!” Then he suddenly sighed and said. “Never mind.”

Yi Luo laughed. “That is right. The stuff that others send to you as a piety offering, you can’t reject it so what the point of chasing after them?”

Yi Luo walked over to the baskets and saw that it was indeed filled with fresh meat and vegetables. She heaved a sigh and said. “What a pity…” Then suddenly she started to throw everything into the sea.

Di Yang suddenly said. “Ah, I thought that you have a urge in your mouth, therefore you can’t bear to throw it away!”

Yi Luo laughed. “Am I really that gluttonous? Well, why don’t you guess who his Master is? Is it a friend or foe?”

Di Yang said. “Maybe it is a enemy, maybe it is a friend. Hard to say…”

Yi Luo interrupted with laughs. “Maybe she is a beautiful vixen who knows a thousand ways to seduce you huh? What you think?”

Di Yang laughed. “Maybe some maidens from so and so clan or gang happen to take a liking to me and specially send me all these stuffs to flatter me.”

Yi Luo stomped her feet and laughed. “Oei, you want to die is it? Maiden Ye, come and help me to tear his this oily mouth!”

This couple was really alike. No matter how serious something was, they would never say it directly with a straight face. Even though they might be carrying a million worries but they would always smile and laugh it off.

Although at this moment of the time, they were still poking fun at one another but they were very frightened and worried. It was because although that man was full of smiles but the vileness and despicable of that man had not escaped

their notices.

Therefore they spent one full night discussing about it. Except to adopt a wait and see tactic, they really would not think of any other plans!

Early next morning, Di Yang and Yi Luo saw another ship approaching. Di Yang solemnly said. “If that man comes aboard again, hehe. This time I make sure he can come but not leave.”

Yi Luo laughed softly. “What a good method!”

So when the another ship was near, without waiting for the another side to say anything, Di Yang said aloud. “Friend, you are so early today. Please come aboard and talk!”

A man asked from the another ship. “Is that the graceful Master Di Yang?”

Di Yang laughed. “Other than my lady and me, in this vast ocean, who else have a ship with such multi color sails?”

The man was seen clearly now, he was big and strong and was not the man that they had seen yesterday.

This man was even more respectfully. And he his gifts were even much grander!

Di Yang was surprised and thought it was all very strange. So he did not say anything now.

Yi Luo asked. “Yesterday you have already send us some gifts and today as well. Just who is your chief? He is a little too generous.”

The man was startled. “We have just received news today that the Heroic Di is coming back to the Central Plains, therefore we rush here.”

Yi Luo asked. “It is not you yesterday?”

The man shook his head.

Yi Luo said. “Just who is your chief? Can you tell us?”

The man simple said. “Your gracious will know once you reach the shore.” He too did not say who his chief was and left.

Di Yang and Yi Luo looked at one another. Yi Luo laughed. “What is this? As the saying goes, a gentleman will not accept gifts of dubious origins. Although we are not gentlemen but all these gifts with dubious origins are not to be eaten.” She proceeded to throw everything overboard.

After thinking for a while, still they had no idea that who was the person that kept sending these gifts to them. Why did he insist on sending these gifts yet did not want to reveal his name?

And it happened again and again. A total of three other different ships appeared with gifts.

Yi Luo was puzzled but she also found it to be laudable. “It seems that we have suddenly become a fragrant treasure that everyone is trying to flatter us now.”

Di Yang said. “We have no dealings with the various clans and sects of the Martial Fraternity. By sending these gifts, surely nothing good will come out of it.”

Yi Luo asked. “Will it be a bad thing?”

Di Yang replied gravely. “I am still wondering.”

Yi Luo said. “It really doesn’t seem normal. Naturally we will wonder about it. I think you have better not think about it, it too draining for your mental strength. Anyway, once we reach the shore, we will know.”

Di Yang sighed. “When we reach the shore, I afraid it will be too late.”

Yi Luo laughed. “If you dare not go to the shore, then we just have to drift forever on the seas and be a heavenly ocean couple.” She turned her head suddenly and smiled at Ye Manqing. “Sister, do you think it is a good idea?”

Ye Manqing reddened and turned her head away. She turned to look at Nangong Ping – He was still sitting on a chair and it seemed that nothing else had caught his attention or even happened.

After a long while, Ye Manqing suddenly said. “There is something that is strange about all these. Did you all not notice?”

Yi Luo laughed. “What so strange about it?”

Ye Manqing explained, “There are a total of five groups of people that have sent the gifts. Every one of them appears to have great fitness but still, they are just stewards. From it, you can deduct that these five Gangs and Clans are not weak. But after thinking about it, I still do not know of any association that they could possibility belong to.”

Di Yang said. “Maybe they are not clans from the Pugilist realm but are from the major orthodox clans in the Martial Fraternity?”

Ye Manqing grew solemn and shook her head. “It is impossible. All the orthodox clans in the Martial Fraternity are like a big family. Identity and status are something they are very fond of, they will not purposely try to conceal their name and to act so mysteriously.”

Di Yang growls. “Maybe there are five powerful clans that established themselves during the past year? It just that we do not know only.”

Ye Manqing questioned. “In one year, how is it possible for five equally strong clans to emerge. Isn’t it even stranger?”

Yi Luo laughed softly. “We are already quite near the shore and you are all still guessing. Soon we know the truth anyway.”

Di Yang and Ye Manqing slowly walked to the side of the deck and cast their eyes. Indeed, the outline of the shore was seen.

Di Yang sighed, turned and looked into the eyes of Yi Luo who had just shed a couple of tears when she saw this ship sailing in the sunset, with such grandeur scenic as they finally reaching the shore. She was so touched by this beautiful and out of the world state of divinity. It seemed very intimating to her.

Yi Luo forced herself to laugh awhile. Her throat stumped. “After we return home, I will never want to come out again.”

Di Yang gently held her smooth hands and slowly breathed out a sigh of blissfulness.

Ye Manqing could sense their blissfulness and she could sense her loneliness. Therefore an uncontrollable sense of sorrow started to linger inside her. And tears appeared from her alluring eyes.

She turned her glance at Nangong Ping who was now standing idiocy at the entrance of the deck looking at the sunset. What was he thinking about? What was he thinking about – Suddenly a crew laughed behind. “Even before we have reached the shore, we have received so many gifts. I wonder what will happen when we got to the shore!” She looked very happy that she could share in the happiness of her Master.

Is Nangong Ping thinking about Mei Yinxue who loves to admire the glows of light because she had been so long in the coffin, in the darkness? Or is he envying Di Yang and Yi Luo? Nobody knows what he is thinking now, only he himself will know.

Di Yang suddenly became even more gravely.

Yi Luo laughed. “Why are you worrying? With so many of us, will we still be eaten by others?”

When it was time for embankment, there were a huge crowd of people that were welcoming them but they were all women. They were all waving and cheering.

Yi Luo growls in puzzlement. “What is going on? The chiefs of those five clans, do they really have sisters that want to marry you?”

Di Yang could not resist laughing for awhile.

But Yi Luo was not smiling at all. She coldly hummed and said. “I didn’t expect that you are such a flirt. It isn’t so long that we have been out to sea and you have so many women here to welcome you.”

Di Yang laughed. “Maybe it is Nangong Ping’s friends?”

Yi Luo exclaimed. “He is not like you…”

Before she could finish, they saw that fishermen from other ships had landed too. And these women were running to embrace them. One must know that the rite that existed between men and women were not as strict as those that were from the

Central Plains and Jiangnan were. These women had no such limitations when it came to hugging their loves one that had been out in the seas for days or even months. Therefore they showed their feelings more freely.

Di Yang began to laugh merrily. “What a jealous lady you are! Did you see that now? They are out to welcome those fishermen that are at sea. They are not here to welcome me!”

Even Ye Manqing who was filled with melancholy giggled unwittingly.

Yi Luo blushed and then slapped Di Yang gently on his hands. “Do you really think I am jealous? I…only want to lighten the mood for Sister Ye and to make her laugh.”

Di Yang laughed. “Although that what you say but I sure your heart is jealous.”

After a while, the bank of the shore was emptied of people and it was soon dark.

Di Yang was surprised. “I thought that the people who send us those gifts will be here to welcome us. So weird.”

Ye Manqing pondered. “There must be some happening going on here. But now, I have not figure out yet too.”

Yi Luo said, “So mysterious but do we need to be bother with it? When we reach the shore, we will know. But first, we must know where exactly is this place.”

Once the four of them reached the shore, they looked around. But in this strange place, this strange Inn, they suddenly found out the Innkeeper and shop assistants were very amicable to them. They even knew Di Yang’s name.

The Innkeeper mysteriously laughed. “We have prepared five courts for you. It have already been tidied and we are just waiting for you.”

Yi Luo asked. “Such a big Inn, don’t you have other businesses? We just want two courts will do.” She really wanted Ye Manqing and Nangong Ping to be together.

The Innkeeper replied. “Although our Inn is not big but for hundreds of miles, there isn’t a second Inn.”

Di Yang asked. “How many rooms are there in a court?”

The Innkeeper said, “Every court has more than ten rooms. Honestly speaking, our Inn is actually as big as the royal palace.”

Yi Luo said, “Such a big court, one is enough. Why should we need five. We are not pirates and are not rich.”

The Innkeeper laughed. “So it seem that you have not known yet. Today five heroes turned up at our Inn and each of them booked one court each for you. They even pay double the price. Therefore I am feeling strange too. There is only Master

Di and your family, why is there a need for five courts?"

Di Yang asked. "Did they leave any message for me?"

The Innkeeper replied. "Not at all. Just the silver and they left."

Di Yang asked again. "Did they leave behind their names?"

Yi Luo interrupted. "Naturally they will not…Boss, I only want to take a look at the silvers that they have left behind."

The Innkeeper was startled. But did not dare to protest.

Di Yang asked. "What so special about the silvers?"

Yi Luo laughed. "This, you do not know. Every silver or banknote, more or less you can tell something about their origins. That is because all the silvers are slightly different. If it is banknote, then all the more easier can we tell where it come from."

Di Yang sighed. "I didn't expect that you know more than me." It wounded his pride to know less than his lady did.

He did not know the Ghastly Ghost Gang were specialist in looting silver and banknote from all over the place. Therefore Yi Luo was naturally more knowledgeable in this field.

The Innkeeper took out a box of silver. There were silvers and bank notes in the chest.

Everyone could see that the silver was rather pure.

Yi Luo slowly examined the silver and the banknote before saying. "These silver come from Ziqing, Cang, Kang places. The weird thing is, there doesn't seem to have any clans that would come here."

She added. "All these banknote seem to from everywhere including Shu, Jiangnan. Why did they come all the way here to this deserted place?" Finally she took out four bank notes with black and red flowers. She thought that the symbols were most unusual.

Di Yang, Ye Manqing was startled at the same time and suddenly Nangong Ping snatched the banknote from her. Yi Luo turned and saw that Nangong Ping was as white as sheet as he looked at the banknote. The symbols are an indication that it had belonged to the Nangong Aristocracy Family.

Di Yang forcefully smiled. "I didn't expect that these people would have the banknote of the Nangong Aristocracy Family!"

Nangong Ping solemnly said. "Who give you these bank notes?"

The Innkeeper was startled to see Nangong Ping in such a grave expression. "It belongs to…"

Nangong Ping interrupted. "Where is the room that he used to stay?"

The Innkeeper trembled. "I will lead you…"

Nangong Ping put back the banknote into the chest before exclaiming

solemnly. “Let go now!”

The Innkeeper took them to another court down the street. This court looks different from the others. He asked. “Do you wish to stay in this court?”

Nangong Ping coldly said. “That's right!” And then he began to walk to the dining hall and sat down. He was back to his blank state again.

When everyone saw his expression, they did not dare to say anything to him. Suddenly there was a loud commotion outside. Curious, Di Yang and Yi Luo went outside to take a look.

They saw a crowd gathered along the shore. Some men even took off their cloths to jump into the sea.

Di Yang said. “Remain where you are. I will go and take a look.”

Yi Luo said. “Why must I remain here!” And she followed him.

When they had reached the shore, they were stunned to see hundreds of thousands of fishes floating on the sea. Because their livelihood were fishing and now without expending any efforts, there were so many fishes, naturally they were very excited!

Di Yang and Yi Luo looked at one another solemnly. That was because they knew where these fishes had come from.

Di Yang tried to smile and gripped Yi Luo on her wrists as they walked out of the crowd. He said in a low voice. “You are guessed correctly. It is a lucky thing that we did not eat those things or else…” He did not say anymore.

When he saw those weird fishes, he instantly knew that those fishes must have eaten those fruits, vegetables and meat that they had thrown into the sea. And now these fishes had been carried by the waves to the shore.

Just a few tens of baskets could actually poison a million fishes. The poison was indeed very powerful. They were now shivering at the thought.

Yi Luo cuddled against Di Yang and said. “What vicious poison. I wonder who is the one that is so vicious that he resorted to such a damnable act?”

Di Yang was silence and muttered. “The truth will be out one day.”

Yi Luo sighed. “Even if we know who send the five men, we will never know who is the one that poisoned the food. Is the poisoning done by all five of them or just one?”

Di Yang said, “Paper cannot be used to wrap fire. There is nothing that can hide from other people in this world. You can be rest assured.”

Yi Luo sighed and then suddenly her expressions changed. “Oh dear!”

Di Yang asked. “What is the matter?”

Yi Luo replied in startle. “Since these fishes have been poisoned, then aren’t they poisonous too? If the common people were to eat all those poisonous fishes, what is going to happen?”

Di Yang turned back and saw those people exclaiming that these fishes were divine fishes sent by the deities.

Yi Luo added. “What shall we do? What shall we do now? There are so many people. Even if we tell them, they will never believe us.”

Suddenly several men in yellow robes appeared and shouted aloud several times. “The Old Immortal has decreed that all these fishes cannot be eaten! Buried all these fishes, it cannot be eaten.”

Someone asked. “Why it cannot be eaten?”

A man in yellow robe said. “The Old Immortal has said that these fishes are poisonous. It is sent by the devils to harm the people. Anyone that eat the fish will die of poisoning in half a day.”

Every one of the fisher folks turned pale. Someone said. “Luckily, the Old Immortal is here or else we are going to lose our lives.”

Yet another added. “The Old Immortal has done untold wondrous deeds. May Heavens protect him and let him live to an old ripe age.”

Di Yang finally breathed in relief. But he was puzzled who was this ‘Old Immortal’ that could cause all the fisher folks to believe in him so easily. So he asked. “May I ask who is this Old Immortal?”

A fisher folk eyed him for awhile before he laughed. “The two of you must be from some where far away. Therefore you did not know who is the Old Immortal. He is someone who knows the astrology and the geology. He is someone who knows everything. You can’t find a second person like him.”

Di Yang thanks him and walked back to his abode while Yi Luo sighed. “This Old Immortal must be a wise man. When I am free, I am going to pay him a visit.”

Di Yang said. “What wise man? He is most probably a trickster.”

Yi Luo said. “If he is a trickster, how does he know that there is poison in the fishes? Although these fisher folks are simple minded but they are not idiots. If not why should they be willing to listen to him?”

Di Yang was not willing to argue with her because every time he would lose.

When they got back to the Inn, Nangong Ping and Ye Manqing were both sitting opposite one another in the dinning hall. They were both very quiet and did not seem to have exchanged a single word.

Di Yang and Yi Luo then related what happened earlier to them and because they did not dare to eat the food here, they went out to the streets and buy a couple of eggs and boiled it in water.

They knew that their situation was becoming more and more dire.

Yi Luo even told her crew not to shop too much in this place lest they would

never be able to come back.

Although Nangong Ping did not say anything but he knew that something was not in order. He went to his room but he was not sleepy. He was still expressionless and was just lost in thoughts. He began to think of his parents, his friends and a lot of other things that he was unwilling to recall. So how could he sleep? Although the candle was now almost burnt out and the night was not early, he did not even close his eyes.

Suddenly he heard someone moving outside the window and there was a 'Zi' 'Zi' sound!

He was jolted and he immediately stood up. When he heard 'Zi' 'Zi' again, his expressions changed tremendous!

For he had remember this sound, he remembered when he first joined the clan as a protégé, in the darkness of the woods, he would play hide and seek with his protégés to train his swiftness skill!

He still remembered at that time they were all still very young, when Long Fei was a teenager, he would take them into the woods to play hide and seek. Sometimes they wondered if they were playing hide and seek or training their swiftness skill. But this piece of fun, was so warm and kind, the intention was so good.

In that instant, his mind suddenly become so clear and he was alive again with all his feelings back.

He was exuded. "Is that my Big Brother Long Fei that is here!?" He immediately dashed through the window and saw a figure in black signaling to him with his hands.

Without hesitation, he sprang towards him and soon he was in the shadows of a giant tree.

In the darkness, he had saw that the outline of the figure was that of his Third Protégé Brother Shi Chen! He was very happy and waved. "Third brother, you…you…"

He was beaming with tears in his eyes and his throat was dry.

He had never expected to see his Third Protégé Brother here. He used to be so handsome and alert but now he had looked haggard and fragile. Even his eyes lost its shimmering brightness. He was like a walking corpse now. It was because he was weighed by his past sins and was simply waiting for death to come.

Nangong Ping was startled, delight to see him but also sorrow to see him in this state.

Shi Chen slowly said. "I have heard that you are here therefore I rushed

here." His voice was now so solemn, so slow and so dead. It was like he had lost all of his past fighting spirit.

Nangong Ping asked. "Since you have come, why don't you come in?"

Shi Chen simply shook his head. His eyes were that of hopelessness. He slowly said. "I cannot go in. I am only here to tell you, do not listen or believe anyone, do not promise to do anything, I…I have only this much to tell you."

Nangong Ping was stunned before he tried to ask. "You…are you doing fine lately? Where have you been lately? Are you together with Sister in law?"

Shi Chen took a long time to reply. "I am a unlucky person. I cannot be forgiven for my sins. You…you…do not have to recognize me as your protégé brother anymore. Just treat me as if I am already dead." His eyes were that of hopelessness and forsaken.

Nangong cried out, his tears flowed as he trembled. "Protégé Brother! No matter what has happened, you are always my protégé brother…"

Shi Chen shook his head and sighed deeply. He took out a hanky and gave to Nangong Ping. "Please take care of yourself. I am going." Before he had finished, he had sprung away and in that instant, his thin body vanished into the darkness.

Chapter Twenty
Dying with a Last Breath

Shi Chen was the most strong willed among the five protégé brothers and sisters. Now he looked so fragile and he lost all his past heroism.

Nangong Ping had not seen him for one and a half-year now. But how did he become like that? Why did he leave in such a hurry? Was he running from something? Nangong Ping was even more saddened and his tears flowed uncontrollably!

The wind was blowing when a slim body quietly walked behind Nangong Ping.

Nangong Ping was startled and he turned around only to see that it was Maiden Ye Manqing, her alluring watery eyes were melancholy and mixed with a complex emotion as she looked at him.

"You crying?" Ye Manqing asked.

"No!"

Nangong Ping lowered his head and tried to force out a smile. But he was unable to hide his face that was covered with his tears!

Ye Manqing softly grasped. "It is very chilling outside. You should return to your room for a good rest!"

Nangong Ping looked at her in appreciation and sighed before he turned back.

Once again, he began to sit down in his room as he stared blankly at the burning candlelight.

He saw the heartbroken Mei Yinxue that was surrounded by hopelessness, and also Ye Manqing who surrounded herself with melancholy!
The cunning Ren Fengping and the wanton Guo Yuxia!
The Long Fei and Gu Yihong that was drugged by the Lady Proudness!
The heroic Feng Mantian who was trapped on the Divine Creator Island!
His Benevolent Master Long Bushi and the Lord of the Divine Creator Nangong Yongle!
Lastly, he thought of his caring parents!

All these thoughts flashed in his mind that darkened and confused his thoughts.

Suddenly he heard Ye Manqing fuming outside. "What a loathsome thief!"

He heard the sound of two figures springing on the rooftop, one in front and one at the back. He immediately sprang out of the window to the roof.

One must know that he had been training in the Divine Creator Island for a year. It did not train just his mental strength and patience but also saw his martial skills improving tremendous. And his swiftness skill was now many times stronger than in the past. Therefore with amazing reflex he was able to react and saw Ye Manqing chasing a man to a tree before she caught up with him!

Her attacks were so graceful yet so vicious, every attack stroke could kill. He wondered what hatred she had against that man. With an attacking stroke 'Chang Er transcending the Moon', she broke through the man's defenses and hit him violently on his shoulders. The man could not defend anymore as his shoulders had cracked at that moment. And Ye Manqing followed up with more attacks.

Nangong Ping shouted. "Maiden Ye, wait a minute!" But he was too slow. The man had already been struck on the chest by her, and had collapsed on the ground!

Nangong Ping sprang like a speeding arrow to examine the man, only to find him breathless and had died on the spot!

Ye Manqing was filled with an aura of melancholy and anger as she coldly laughed awhile. "I didn't expect that you will feel pity for such a lowly despicable thief!"

Nangong Ping replied with a faint smile. "I only want to leave a survivor so that I can question him."

Ye Manqing exasperated, "Why do you want to question such a despicable thief? For him to die in this manner, is actually quite a light punishment."

Nangong Ping was bewildered. "What is going on? Why are you so angry?"

Ye Manqing fumed. "Take a look what is inside his clothing first!"

Nangong Ping lowered his body and took out something from the man's clothing. It was actually a blowpipe and it gave off a faint fragrance scent. Nangong Ping smiled. "He is a flower thief!"

Ye Manqing coldly laughed awhile. "Do you still want to let this despicable thief off?"

Nangong Ping countenance suddenly changed. After thinking for a while, he started to shake his head. "This matter is not that simple. Our whereabouts are already made known and I afraid that this man has something to do with that five clans!" Suddenly he shouted. "Oh no! Let us go back to the Inn immediately!" And he exhibited his swiftness skill in a flying pace.

Ye Manqing began to follow him without a word or a moment of hesitation.

When Nangong Ping returned to the Inn, he began to knock on the doors of

Di Yang and his lady in a hurried pace. He shouted. “Brother Di! Brother Di! …”

After shouting for awhile but there was still no reply therefore he could not wait and barged through the door only to find there was no one inside, even their baggage was not in their room!

Ye Manqing walked in hurriedly as well. She asked, “Where are they?”

Nangong Ping was in thoughts that therefore he did not reply to her question.

Ye Manqing said. “Did you sniff that? It looked like the fragrance scent that belongs to that despicable thief!”

Nangong Ping nodded. “It seem that it is not an easy thing to investigate. Everything has been well planned ahead.”

Ye Manqing asked. “Why don’t we ask the Innkeeper? And ask him if he has seen any suspicious people that are here!”

Nangong Ping sighed. “Since this matter has been under a thorough plan, how would the Innkeeper knows? If that flower thief was still alive, we might have found some leads.”

Ye Manqing blushed as she defensively said. “Why do you not say it earlier, how do I know…”

Nangong Ping interrupted. “If we can find out who are those people that sent the gifts and reserved these courts, we may be able to find some leads!”

Ye Manqing asked. “Then, how are we going to find out who are the ones that sent the gifts?”

Nangong Ping said. “Naturally, it is not going to be a easy thing to find out. But now it is soon going to be the Second Watch. Standing here and pondering isn’t going to help us. Let us go back to our rooms to rest and we discuss it tomorrow!”

The next morning, Nangong Ping went out to look for clues while Ye Manqing stayed behind to observe.

When it was nearly noon, Nangong Ping had returned in a hurry. Ye Manqing hurriedly welcomed him back, and asked with concern. “Did you find any leads?”

Nangong Ping said. “Follow me with your precious sword ‘The Mighty Echo of the Dragon’!”

Maiden Ye Manqing did not quite understand his intentions and asked. “What is going on here!”

Nangong Ping said. “You will know in a while time. Let us hurry now!”

Soon they left the Inn and were outside the city, moving in a westward

direction.

Ye Manqing was filled with uncertainty. So she asked, “Now where are we going?”

Nangong Ping explained while they were still springing. “From what I know, it has something to do with Ren Fengping. For certain, he has a hand in the disappearance of Di Yang and his lady too.”

Ye Manqing pondered before she asked. “Shouldn’t he be in the Northwest? Why did he come to Jiangnan for?”

Nangong Ping said. “Can you be certain that there is no sudden change in one year? Maybe Ren Fengping sphere of influence has even spread throughout the North and the South.”

Ye Manqing looked even more puzzled. “Sudden change? Ren Fengping sphere of influence? What exactly are you saying huh?”

Nangong Ping was startled. Gathering his thoughts, he instantly understood now. It was because Ren Fengping was a very careful and cunning man therefore only Di Yang and Mei Yinxue had known of his plans. Therefore Maiden Ye Manqing was ignorant of it.

He smiled. “It is hard to explain in a short notice but in future, I will explain to you from head to tail. Bur first, we need to hurry to the Southern Mountains!”

Ye Manqing was swept away with sweetness when Nangong Ping said ‘We’. Therefore she did not ask anymore and exhibited her extraordinary unique swiftness movement skills in great haste towards the Southern Mountains.

Nangong Ping stopped in his tracks and turned to Ye Manqing. “This route is the only way to the Southern Mountains. It is narrow and treacherous. Ren Fengping and his men will surely take a breather around here. For now, let us circulate our flow of energy and to recover out internal power. Very possible, we may have a hard fight ahead!”

When he had finished, he walked to a rock and started to close his eyes to circulate the flow of blood in his channels.

Ye Manqing walked besides him and then sat down.

After an hour, there was the sound of carriages and horses. Nangong Ping, Ye Manqing upon hearing these sounds sprang to the back of the huge boulder to hide. .

During his stay in the Divine Creator Island, after one year of nothing but training in martial abilities, he could now even see in the dark as though it was just

like in the broad daylight. Casting his vision, he saw seven men riding horses and a carriage drawn by two horses.

The black curtain of the carriage was fluttering and he saw two people inside the carriage – Di Yang and his lady! Under the moonlight, he could see that Di Yang was bloodied all over, his look was very dispirited and there was not even a trace of his former heroic spirit! As for Yi Luo, her hair was loose and her beautiful dress was shredded badly, she was almost half-naked!

Nangong Ping was sore in heart for his good friend. He was filled with rage and hatred. With a great shout, he sprang through the air with the 'Autumn Fallen Leaf' in his hand, did several somersaults and landed into their midst, with his head down and leg up. This was a stance called the 'The Descending Rain'. He started to slash them with multiple silver light and splitting images of his sword as he hovered in great haste into their midst!

Without hesitation, Ye Manqing drew her sword too and sprang upon those men in black, all her swords display was fast, furious and vicious!

A tall elderly man who appeared to be the leader of the group began to evade Nangong Ping's powerful and vicious sword stances while shouting. "Friend! We have no vendetta whatever so. Why did you attack us without a reason and all your attacks are killer strokes!"

Nangong Ping eyes were burning with rage and he followed by three more killer strokes!

The other men in black began to dodge while shouting. "Even if you want to kill, at least give us a reason first…"

Nangong Ping yelled. "Why so much rubbish! After I killed you I will tell you the reason!" And Nangong Ping immediately displayed a stance from the Southern Sea Swordplay that he had picked from the Divine Creator Island.

The men knew that talking to him was futile and they attacked him with whips and other weapons.

A man was fighting Ye Manqing alone. He was already losing strength fighting with her when Nangong Ping suddenly sprang past him and slashed him twice. More confusion occurred and then another two men in black died.

Suddenly there was a shout. "Hold your hands!"

Nangong Ping saw four men standing at the back. One of them was 'Fragrance of a Thousand Miles' Ren Fengping. The another two were the Manshan Brothers Startled Soul Twin Sword Wind Chaser Swordsman, Chang Sun Kong and Iron Palm Golden Sword Solitary Swordsman, Chang Sun Dan. The one on the right side was an elder man in black robe.

Ren Fengping smiled and said. "Brother Nangong, how are you?"

When Nangong Ping saw Ren Fengping, he recomposed himself and coldly

laughed. “I am lucky not to die therefore I can be considered to have a long life!”

Ren Fengping said. “I heard that those who went to the Divine Creator Temple would never made it back alive. Brother Nangong, you are indeed so lucky!”

Nangong Ping coldly laughed. “If I really die in the Divine Creator Temple, I afraid that Brother Ren will be even happier!”

Ren Fengping said. “I have no such intentions. It is all a misunderstanding. The Fraternity is so chaotic now and I have the intention to asking for your aid to complete our grand plans…”

Nangong Ping interrupted. “I have no worthy deeds to my name and I am too willful. I afraid that you have found the wrong person!”

Ren Fengping laughed. “Brother Nangong you are too humble! Everyone has heard of your heroic deeds. You have fought with the Jaded Hand of the Positive Nirvana at the Eternal Restaurant, barged into the Mulong Manor to retrieve an antidote for Heaven Sword Ding Yang and you can even make it alive from the Divine Creator Island. All these things have already been known throughout the entire Fraternity. With your martial abilities, intellect, guts, you have caused Mister Shuai to admire you greatly. If we can have the aid of Brother Nangong, then I can even wager that within one year, the entire Central Plains Fraternity will be ours!”

Suddenly Ye Manqing grasped. “Where do you think you are going!” She lifted herself and sprang in front.

Nangong Ping turned back and saw that the other two men in black who had been holding Di Yang and his lady hostage were trying to escape. When Ye Manqing was suddenly in front of them, they immediately stood on the same spot and looked at Ren Fengping!

Nangong Ping smiled and asked Ren Fengping. “I wonder if these two men that are holding the Tianshan Divine Sword Di Yang and Yi Luo, are they also your men?” He addressed Di Yang title formally because he wanted to act like a mere acquaintance.

Ren Fengping slowly said. “That is right! They are indeed my men!”

Nangong Ping appeared to be very calm and he sighed. “I didn’t expect that the heroic Tianshan Divine Sword would become so wretched now. On closer inspection, who would believe that he is actually the shining star of the Pugilist that everyone has called the Tianshan Divine sword!”

Even though Ye Manqing was getting impatience but she knew that surely Nangong Ping must have been planning something therefore he was trying to distant himself from Di Yang and his lady. Surely there must be a purpose!

Ren Fengping said. “The Ghastly Beggars have already decided to join

Shuai Tianfan. As long as we can bring back Yi Luo to the Poor Ghost Yi Feng, he will agree to further advance our grand plans."

Nangong Ping cold laughed. "Since Yi Feng has already decided to join the cause of Shuai Tianfan, why then must Brother Ren uses fragrant incense to drug them? It is really hard to comprehend!"

Ren Fengping replied matter of fact. "It is really hard to explain in just a few words. As I am afraid a misunderstanding would occur, therefore I am forced to use this not too brilliant method!"

Nangong Ping coldly hummed and asked. "What has this to do with Di Yang? Why is he being captured?"

Ren Fengping said, "Since they are a husband and wife, naturally they must be together!"

Nangong Ping laughed coldly for awhile. "Did Brother Ren asks Di Yang if he is willing or not?"

Ren Fengping laughed. "Husband and wife should always be together. There is no reason for Di Yang to say no."

Nangong Ping laughed. "Did Brother Ren forget that last year outside the ancient city of Chang An in the Northwest, Di Yang had thrown away your Fragrant of the Wind and Rain Tablet? Di Yang is haughty and proud. So are you nursing a personal grudge against him?"

Nangong Ping laughed again. "It is all thanks to Brother Ren that Di Yang and Yi Luo can become a couple. Although they have been married for a year but they are deeply in love with one another. Because Di Yang refuses to leave Yi Luo alone, how will she leaves him alone as well!"

Ren Fengping laughed heartily. "Brother Nangong, you only know half the story. Last year when Di Yang was poisoned by the morning stars, Yi Luo is his benefactor who saves his life. Since Yi Feng has thrown his lot with Shuai Tianfan, Yi Luo naturally will not refuse. If Yi Luo will not refuse so how will Di Yang refuse?"

Nangong Ping laughed aloud. "The Ghastly Beggars are a righteous group that dedicated themselves to fight the treacherous and greedy people. Yi Feng himself is a haughty and lonely person. It makes no sense for him to join Shuai Tianfan!"

Ye Manqing knew that the more they argued there would soon be a fight. Worrying for Nangong Ping, she began to walk unconsciously to his side.

Ren Fengping shifted his eyes to look at Ye Manqing and asked. "When Brother Nangong went out to the seas, the Cold Blood Concubine had disappeared at the same time. Everyone had thought she had followed you to the Divine Creator Temple. But now you actually returned with Maiden Ye. Is the Cold Blood

Concubine really missing?"

Nangong Ping laughed aloud. "Is Brother Ren very disappointed? Haha! Mei Yinxue is not with me therefore you cannot achieve your aim of netting us together, what a pity!"

Ren Fengping laughed without his expressions changing. "Brother Nangong, you really know how to joke! Even if I have the guts, I will not even dream of that!"

Suddenly Nangong Ping became very solemn and he was enveloped in a malevolent aura. "Ren Fengping! You send five different groups of people with baskets of food that was poisoned to Di Yang! But who knows that Di Yang had already saw through your ruse. Failing once, you try again the second time with a continuous ruse. You even use banknote from different places to reserve the Inn for him but in fact, the entire Inn belongs to you! When Di Yang and his Lady were captured, Maiden Ye and I managed to escape. That is because you did not tell your men about us, that why they did not know about us. Haha! It all because of that useless flower thief that you have sent that all your cunning ruses are exposed by me…"

"Shut up!" Ren Fengping shouted. His expressions had changed now!

But Nangong Ping did not care and stared at him with a malevolent air. "But do you know that Brother Di Yang and I are blood brothers that will even brave life and death together! So why don't you capture me as well?"

Ren Fengping said. "Brother Nangong Ping, you are too serious. Even if I have the guts, I will not dare to do it!"

But those standing besides him looked indignant now. The elderly man that was standing to his right side solemnly said. "Young man, don't you think you are too arrogant and rude? Do you really think no one can capture you?"

Nangong Ping stared at him and laughed. "This man must be Shuai Tianfan right hand man, 'Heavenly Piercing Life Stealing Twin Spears' Ge Zhonghai, Hero Ge?"

Ren Fengping smiled. "That is right. Indeed he is the Old Hero Ge!"

Nangong Ping laughed aloud. "I have long heard of Hero Ge 'Heavenly Piercing Life Stealing Twin Spears' are blah and blah powerful!"

Ge Zhonghai looked at Ren Fengping because before he could act, he must have his approval first! But Ren Fengping remained expressionless!

Nangong Ping laughed. "Why did Brother Ren not nod your head?"

Ge Zhonghai shouted and plunged forward with both his hands.

Nangong Ping was already prepared. He did not move but kick towards his stomach and sent him flying back! His timing was so perfect and his movements so swift!

Ren Fengping was secretly startled. For he had not seen Nangong Ping for one year and his martial abilities had now improved tremendously!

Ge Zhonghai got up without any emotion and deployed a stance 'The Cloud beneath the Waist' that was directed towards Nangong Ping's shoulders Qu Chi accupoints!

Nangong Ping evaded it and counter attack with a stance 'Behold the Crescent' that was aimed at his chest!

In the meantime, Ye Manqing was fighting with both the Manshan Brothers!

Ge Zhonghai was surprised at this stance and with a great shout, he summoned all his internal strength to catch Nangong Ping's technique.

There was a thunderous clapping sound as both hands made contact. Dust and stones flew all around them! Nangong Ping thought that the internal strength of his opponent was coming forth in nonstop and his wrists was hurting a lot. He mustered his strength to free himself from the attraction of the internal force and he was knocked back a yard!

Ge Zhonghai was secretly startled. In this whole wide world, very few people could match him; much less escaped from his internal force once he had used both his hands! Moreover, Nangong Ping looked so weak and young. He could actually headlong with him and not died instantly!

Nangong Ping was very pale now, even green. And he started to vomit blood! It obvious his injuries were not slight. But he bit his teeth and continued on his attacks. Suddenly his stances and strokes changed and he actually used the Eighteen stances of Damo that he learnt at the hut while he was on the Divine Creator Island!

With a stance of 'Chant of the Suffering Pain' Nangong Ping had swiftly hit Ge Zhonghai seven times on his chest!

Ge Zhonghai was startled and immediately moved back five steps.

Luckily for him, although Nangong Ping had remembered the Eighteen stances of Damo by heart, he had not the time to think over its intricate complex changes yet. Therefore he could only use one stance at a time instead of mixing the strokes from its various stances. However this powerful technique of the Martial Fraternity even without playing upon its intricacy flexibility had forced Ge Zhonghai to be on the defensive in just ten strokes! And he had already moved more than one yard to the back!

Ren Fengping was watching and pondering at the same time before he grasped out suddenly. "Damo Eighteen Stances!"

Nangong Ping coldly laughed. "That is right! It is indeed the Eighteen Stances of Damo! If you are scared now, quickly release Di Yang and his lady. It is not too late yet!"

Ge Zhonghai was breaking out in sweat and he was still thinking how to break the Eighteen Stances of Damo!

The Manshan Brothers were laughing and jeering Ye Manqing. It seemed like she could not handle their combined attacks and she was using 'Mighty Echo of the Dragon' to parry while slowly moving back!

Chang Sundan laughed hilariously. "Let me see how many more stances that you still have remaining!"

The Manshan Brothers were attacking her on her front and the back. Now Ye Manqing felt her vital energies were not as smooth as before and her blood was moving in a furious pace. Suddenly, Chang Sundan sent her long sword flying from her wrist!

At the same time, Chang Sunkong plunged forward and hit her on her Da He and Shang Qu accupoints. Because her two major accupoints were hit and her strength was not enough, Ye Manqing collapsed on the ground and did not move again.

Without hesitations, the Manshan Brothers began to join Ge Zhonghai to fight Nangong Ping!

Nangong Ping had picked Ye Manqing's long sword 'Mighty Echo of the Dragon' and now he had 'Fallen Autumn Leaf" as well. He exhibited a stance 'Light that separate the Heaven and Earth' as he formed a wave of trembling sword energies around him.

Ge Zhonghai coldly laughed awhile and he drew his golden twin spears to pierce towards him!

The Manshan Brothers were highly skilled in martial, combined with a top exponent such as Ge Zhonghai, Nangong Ping could only parry and there was no room for him to retaliate! After more than ten furious strokes, he began to falter. He knew that it was not impossible for him to escape today. But he had discovered that Chang Sundan was the weaker one among the Manshan Brothers, therefore he decided to focus on him.

Although his vital energies were erratic now but Nangong Ping was not dazed yet. After evading from Ge Zhonghai spears, he saw an opening and pierced Chang Sundan through his chest with the Fallen Autumn Leaf! At the same time, Ge Zhonghai had pieced through his upper right thigh! And at the same time, Chang Sunkong had stabbed him on his back The wounds were so terrifying that even the white of his bones would be seen! Biting his teeth, he forced Chang Sunkong and Ge Zhonghai to back off five steps with a killer stance.

Ge Zhonghai had no time to pull his spear from Nangong Ping's leg. He was startled and stood on the same spot for quite a while! He had never met someone with such potential!

However Chang Sunkong once again plunged upon Nangong Ping in rage because Nangong Ping had killed his brother!

Nangong Ping shouted aloud even though he was covered with blood now. “The Immortal Divine Dragon, the Immortal Divine Dragon will never die!” And he pulled the spear out without regard to any pain and threw it to towards Chang Sunkong, piercing through his back immediately!

Chang Sunkong enraged over the death of his brother, had thought that Nangong Ping was too weak to retaliate therefore he had made an all out attack and was caught unaware when Nangong Ping threw the spear at him! He really never expected that Nangong Ping would pull the spear from his thigh. Such courage and guts!

Ge Zhonghai shook his head and sighed. “He is indeed the disciple of the Divine Dragon!” And he walked towards Chang Sunkong.

Ren Fengping sighed. “You are indeed the Immortal Divine Dragon the Second. If I can have you to aid me, surely the entire realm will be ours?”

Nangong Ping shouted aloud even though he was bleeding profusely. “You will never dream of that in this life.” But when he had finished, he can cough out blood profusely. And he started to stagger backward and finally collapse onto the ground!

Ren Fengping was now in their midst. He raised his right hand on top of Nangong Ping’s forehead. He was filled with pity that he had to kill some one so talented. But when he was three inches to killing Nangong Ping, some one at the back shouted. “Hold your hand!”

Ren Fengping turned his body around and saw a short man who was in his middle age. His looks were average too.

The man said solemnly. “I must bring this man away!”

Ge Zhonghai had retrieved both his spears and solemnly asked. “Hey you! Who are you?”

The man looked at him for awhile and he simply said. “The Distance Mountains though high!”

Ren Fengping and Ge Zhonghai was startled and immediately replied with. “The Fragrant Wind and Rain!”

The man took a purple tablet and waved it for awhile before adding. “Does the two of you know this tablet?”

Ren Fengping lowered his head and said. “Disciple I recognize it!”

The man said. “Seeing the tablet is the same as seeing the Master! This man I want to bring him away. Do you have any objections?”

Ren Fengping replied. “Disciple I dare not!”

The man coldly hummed and walked to the side of Nangong Ping and lifted

him up with both his hands. Without turning his head, he began to walk astride away.

Only when the man had disappeared into the darkness did Ren Fengping shook his head and sighed. “I wonder when did Mister Shuai recruits such an important man. Why did we not know of him?”

Ge Zhonghai said. “We have already been out for half a year now. This is the new blood recruited by Shuai Tianfan, naturally we do not know!”

The mysterious man sprang like he was flying even though he was carrying Nangong Ping. Soon he came to the edge of a forest.

Under the moonlight, besides a huge tree was two horses that were feasting on the wild grasses on the ground. And besides the horses, stood a most gorgeous maiden whose beauty was out of this world with unrivalled grace. But right now, she was looking most worried and anxious!

Who was she? Mei Yinxue!

When the man was near, Mei Yinxue had sprung to him. Looking at Nangong Ping, she asked. “Is his injuries very heavy?”

The middle age man nodded. “All his vital energies are drained and so is his blood. It a good thing I have arrived in a nick of time or else Ren Fengping would have killed him!”

Nangong Ping was very pale. His eyes were closed tightly. His back and his thigh was very bloodied. Except for his slight breathing, he was almost as good as dead!

Mei Yinxue looked at him with her watery eyes and muttered. “His injuries are so heavy. I wonder if he can live till he gets to see his Mentor Master!”

The man sighed as well. “I don’t think he look like someone who is short lived. I am sure there will be a miracle that will happen to save him!”

Mei Yinxue was silence when she took Nangong Ping from him.

The man said. “Please take care maiden. I am going now. As for that tablet…”

Mei Yinxue said. “You can keep that tablet since I have no use for that tablet!”

The man thanked her and left on one of the horses.

Mei Yinxue took the another horse and carried Nangong Ping in her embrace, as she rode off in great haste.

She took the whole night and just before dawn, Mei Yinxue had reached the Sanmen Wan!

She stopped in front of an Inn, only then did she get off from the horse with

Nangong Ping.

In great haste, she walked to a room with three beds. On the two other beds, lay the Immortal Divine Dragon Long Bushi and the Lord of the Divine Creator Nangong Yongle!

Both of them were awake. They were startled greatly when they saw Mei Yinxue carrying the dying Nangong Ping inside the room!

Long Bushi was the first to ask. “Pinger is injured?”

Mei Yinxue nodded her head, without a word, she placed Nangong Ping on another bed.

Nangong Yongle was the second to ask. “Who is the one that wounded him so badly?”

Both their voices were weak and it seemed like they were afflicted by a sickness.

Mei Yinxue did not reply and closed her phoenix lids and two crystal tears were seen.

Nangong Yongle struggled to climb up from the bed and to inspect Nangong Ping’s wounds. He took a great effort to say. “His injuries are very serious. But as long as I am here, there shouldn’t be any cause for worry. As long as I use the Transfiguration Art on him, self assure that he will be alright in two days time!”

Long Bushi objected loudly. “No! You are not allowed to touch him!”

Nangong Yongle angrily protested. “What has it to do with you if I touch him! What give you the right to make a fuss?”

Long Bushi yell. “He is my disciple! I just don’t want you to touch him!”

Nangong Yongle yelled back. “He is my nephew! So what if I want to touch him!”

Mei Yinxue’s face by now was covered by tears, lamented in sorrow. “He is now a dying man, why did Old Seniors still want to fight over some useless pride. Do you really want to watch him die right before your eyes?”

Long Bushi and Nangong Yongle stared angrily at one another now, silenced by her outbursts.

After a while, Nangong Yongle turned to face the grieving Mei Yinxue who was full of worries. “These tens of days, I have already taught you all my physician skills, including the Transfiguration Art. I see that you are a very brilliant person, why don’t you have a try?”

Mei Yinxue said. “I only know the intricate formulas and not the practical skill, I afraid…”

Nangong Yongle urged her. “With me around, take the courage and try!”

Mei Yinxue was still hesitating therefore she did not reply!

Nangong Yongle said. “He can die any time soon, you cannot hesitate

anymore now."

Mei Yinxue turned to look at Long Bushi but he was quiet! Finally biting her teeth, she cried out. "Fine! Since it has reached such a stage, I just have to take the risk and try!"

Nangong Yongle smiled and said. "Go and buy a bigger needle, a jar of strong wine and strings then we can start!"

Mei Yinxue hurried left for the streets to buy the necessities items that she was instructed to buy. Soon she was back.

Nangong Yongle said, "First put the needle and the thin strings into the jar of wine. Next use the wine to wash his wounds and hit his Feng Wei accupoint on his chest and then his Qi Kan, Ming Men accupoints. Use your vital energies to protect his last breath of life in his heart.

And then wash my thigh with the strong wine and use your sword to slice a piece of fresh. And use the knowledge of the Transfiguration Arts and then stitch it with the strings. Two days later, he will recover."

Mei Yinxue was at work immediately while she was listening at the time. In less than four hours, she had successfully accomplished the operation and indeed all had gone well!

Nangong Yongle, who had been sliced by Mei Yinxue, was in great agony and his strength was exhausted by the ordeal. When he saw that Mei Yinxue had finished the task in such a well manner, he closed in eyes and fell into a deep sleep...

Long Bushi sighed and was moved to say. "Forty years ago, you are indeed as crazed as a madman. But after you have left the Divine Creator Temple, I didn't expect your personality would once again undergo such a dramatic change. Before you have died, you have actually done something humane!"

As Mei Yinxue did not sleep for an entire night, she was feeling fragile and weak now. Only when she had finally finished the operation, did she start to relax herself. All of a sudden, she was overwhelmed by the tiredness and she actually fell asleep soundly besides Nangong Ping's bed!

When Nangong Ping regained consciousness, he gave a weak moaning sound and tried to move his rigid body, Mei Yinxue was suddenly jolted into waking!

When Nangong Ping opened his eyes and saw the Mei Yinxue that was besides him, he was overwhelmed with an unspeakable joy that he grasped. "Yinxue! Is that you…" But before he could finish what he wanted to say, he was dumbfounded by the extreme pain of his wounds.

Mei Yinxue was heartbroken and felt pity for his condition that she hurriedly said. “Your wounds have no totally heal yet. It is not the time for you to talk now. Hurry and close your eyes to rest!”

But when Nangong Ping had saw Mei Yinxue, he was really so joyous and excited. If not for the fact that he was unable to move his limbs, he would really have hugged Mei Yinxue tightly in his embrace. So how would he want to close his eyes to rest now? He grasped. “Yinxue! This is not a dream right?”

Mei Yinxue forced herself to restrain her burning passion and gently said to him. “Don’t say anymore things now, hurry and get a good rest!”

At the same time Nangong Ping had saw Long Bushi on the other bed and he began to grow even more excited. “Mentor Master is here too! Yinxue, hurry and tell me what is going on here?”

Mei Yinxue replied. “It is difficult to explain now but after you are healed, I will tell you slowly. You have better hurry and get a good rest now!” And she hit him on his sleep accupoint.

Nangong Ping collapsed into a sound sleep.

It was then that Long Bushi finally opened his eyes. He sighed deeply at the sleeping Nangong Ping!

Mei Yinxue asked. “Old Senior, you should be glad when you see him. Why did you…”

Long Bushi sighed. “In that torrential thunderstorm, I fought with that Nangong Freak for a thousand blows. I hit him seven times with my fists and he dealt me with six blows. Both of us were drained of all our vital energies and our life force energies were shattered. Never had we expected we could still come across maiden while we were drifting and you took us back to the Central Plains to save us! Alas! I, the Immortal Divine Dragon, in my entire life, I have undergone countless number of times of life and death and did not expect that this time, I would really gonna to die. It not that I am afraid of death but I still have some unfulfilled things to do that is why I am not willing to die just like this!”

Mei Yinxue said, “There are divine pills in the Pugilist realm that are said to be able to revive the dead and to rejuvenate a person. Senior, your internal injuries, as long as you can have the divine pills, it is not a hard thing for you to fully recover from your injuries!”

Long Bushi sighed. “According to my knowledge, the Saint of Physicians, Life Savior Physician have seven such life saving divine pills that can even bring back the dead. But he treasured it more than his life, so how would he have given it to just anyone!”

Suddenly there was a knock and a voice outside said. “Respected guests! It is time for the afternoon meal!”

Mei Yinxue replied, “You can come in!” And a waiter entered with two large dishes enough for three people.

Long Bushi said. “Maiden Mei, you have not slept for the whole of last night and you even have to toil the whole of the morning. Return to your room for a good rest, I will take care of Pinger!”

Mei Yinxue was feeling very tired so she did as what was advised and walked back to her own room.

Just when Long Bushi was about to close his eyes for a rest, a person barged in from the window! He looked up and saw that it was Sima Zhongtian of the Red Flag Escort Agency, a long time friend of his!

He was very happy and shouted. “Brother Sima how are you? How did you know that I am here?”

Sima Zhongtian sighed. “Alas! It is a long story! Ever since you have disappeared from the Huashan meet, there were all sorts of rumors on why you had disappeared in the Pugilist. Some said that you have been defeated by Danfeng, some said you have gone into recluse, some even said you had gone to the Divine Creator island! Anyway, where did you exactly go?”

Long Bushi then explained what happened in the simplest and direct way.

Sima Zhongtian sighed. “If this matter is made known, the entire Martial Fraternity will surely be in an uproar!”

Long Bushi asked. “What brings Brother Sima here?”

Sima Zhongtian sighed. He then proceeded to relate everything on his side as well. Finally he sighed. “The Nangong Aristocracy Family is also finished! Nangong Changshu and his lady are now residing at the Taihu Lake now. Mistress Nangong has asked me here to gather news of Nangong Ping whereabouts. On the way here, Wan Da, a former honorary guest of the Nangong Aristocracy Family told me that Nangong Ping could be here so I come in a hurry!”

Long Bushi sighed as he shook his head. “Who will expect that in two short years, there will be so many changes in the Pugilist realm!”

Sima Zhongtian lowered his voice and said. “When I was here, I saw many pugilists heading here. I think something is going to happen here very soon!”

Suddenly some one laughed outside the window and the two of them turned ashen!

Sima Zhongtian shouted. “Who dare to be so sneaky in front of me, Sima Zhongtian!” And he sprang out of the window.

As Long Bushi could not move, he gave a shout as a pretense!

Suddenly Mei Yinxue entered from the door and hurriedly said. “Old Senior,

we are in a very grave situation now…"

Long Bushi interrupted to ask. "Maiden, what cause you to be in such a state of fright? Something very terrible has happened?"

Mei Yinxue did not have the time to explain when there was a sudden knock on the door. She hurriedly gripped the Fallen Autumn Leaf precious sword that was besides Nangong Ping and walked to the door. "Come in!" She solemnly said.

The door opened and an old elder man in long robe was seen!

Mei Yinxue gravely asked, "Who are you? What is the matter?"

The old man laughed. "Can I ask maiden if the Immortal Divine Dragon and the Lord of the Divine Creator are in this room?"

Mei Yinxue exclaimed, "That is right!"

The old man said, "My Master has an invitation for them!" And he took out a black invitation card.

Mei Yinxue took the card over and coldly said, "I wonder who your Master is. If he is convenient, why don't he come in and have a chat here!"

The old man was startled and laughed. "This…I have to ask my Master first!" And he bowed with his hands and took leave!

Mei Yinxue closed the door and took the invitation to Long Bushi with both hands. Although she was nicked the Cold Blood Concubine but she was very respectfully to Long Bushi!

When Long Bushi opened the invitation, his facial expressions had a change because written on the invitation card was… 'The Divine Creator is now no more and it also time for the Divine Dragon to surrender his life!'

After awhile, there was another knock and once again Mei Yinxue stood besides the door with the Fallen Autumn Leaf.

Long Bushi solemnly shouted. "Come in!"

A handsome middle-aged man who looked like a scholar smiled as he walked into the room as he asked. "May I know if you are the Immortal Divine Dragon, Long Bushi?"

Long Bushi smiled. "I am. Who are you?"

The man laughed. "I am Sun Zhongyu, the son of the Lord of the Devil Flock Island!" Although he was smiling and laughing when he was taking but his attitude was that of person who looked down on everyone!

Sun Zhongyu turned and looked at the Mei Yinxue who was standing at the side of the door. He began to gaze intently at her. Without asking, he to sit on a chair as though he was the owner.

Long Bushi said. "I have nothing to do with the Devil Flock Island. So what is the Young Master of the Devil Flock wants with me?"

Sun Zhongyu laughed aloud. "Nothing really very important. But my father

has asked me to come to the Central Plains to borrow something from the Heroic Master Long!"

Long Bushi was puzzled and shouted. "What you want to borrow? You can tell me in a direct manner!"

Sun Zhongyu laughed. "The head of Heroic Master Long!"

Long Bushi laughed in a clear voice. "I wonder why your father wants my head for?"

Sun Zhongyu was startled for awhile and then added. "I am just following orders. What exactly what my father wants to do with it, I do not know!"

Long Bushi laughed aloud. "Everyone has to die one day, am I right?"

Sun Zhongyu replied. "That is right!"

Then Long Bushi became solemn and thundered. "So since you father wants my head, do you think I will give you with both my hands or do you think I will rather die than give it to you?" His voice was thunderous and piercing.

Long Bushi began to stare at him. The numerous scars that were on Long Bushi coupled with his staring caused Sun Zhongyu to lose all his haughtiness!

Sun Zhongyu sighed. "Hero Long, you are indeed a heroic man. The rumors are indeed true!"

In that instant, many people tried to barge through the door but Mei Yinxue grasped softly and displayed a stunning swordplay with the Fallen Autumn Leaf and stood in front of door. "Hold where you are!" She reproached the men outside.

A short man coldly laughed from among the men. "Do you think that with a sword in your hand, you can cause me, Gu Sa to back off?"

Mei Yinxue looked at him for awhile before she coldly laughed. "If you do not believe, you can have a try!"

Gu Sa laughed hilariously and raised both his hands forward when suddenly Sun Zhongyu shouted. "Stop it! Without my permission, how dare you run amok here!"

Gu Sa respectfully said. "I am only worry about the safety of our Master…"

Sun Zhongyu shouted. "Before I summon the lot of you, I forbid anyone of you to take one step into this room! Go now!"

His men started to back off.

Sun Zhongyu turned to Long Bushi and tried to laugh. "They are the ten stewards of my father. As this is the first time they have followed me into the Central Plains, please forgive them for their rudeness!"

Long Bushi laughed. "I dare not! I dare not!"

Sun Zhongyu could not help but to look at Mei Yinxue again. "This maiden who is so gorgeous looking and your beauty is indeed peerless. I wonder can you tell me your name?"

In the instant, Mei Yinxue's mind paced with many thoughts. The angry look on her face instantly vanished and she broke into a captivating and charming laugh. "Mei Yinxue is my name, everyone calls me the Cold Blood Concubine!"

Sun Zhongyu was startled but he immediately laughed. "I see that maiden is the renowned Cold Blood Concubine, I have long heard of your name!"

Mei Yinxue gently laughed. "Young master, it is the first time you have come to the Central Plains, how would you have long heard of my name?"

Sun Zhongyu said, "The fame of the Cold Blood Concubine is resounding through the Fraternity. When I first come to the Central Plains, I have already heard of the people in the Pugilist talking about you!"

Mei Yinxue was someone that was very wise, very intelligence. When she thought of Shuai Tianfan, Ren Fengping and those others that were trying to dominate the Pugilistic Fraternity, and that all the top exponents of the Martial Fraternity had almost all but vanished. Even Danfeng was dead now and the Divine Dragon was now seriously injured. Those who can fight against their ambitions were extremely few. The young master of the Devil Flock and his ten stewards would surely have startling martial techniques. Therefore if she could pull some strings and make full use of it, won't it be a great help instead? In just a brief second, Mei Yinxue had analyzed all that and secretly committed a great determination to make it happen!

Sun Zhongyu said to Long Bushi. "Father has ordered me to retrieve Hero Long's head. If I am unable to return with it, I am sure to be punished severely. I wonder if Hero Long can help me think of a thorough plan?"

Long Bushi laughed. "I wonder why the Lord of the Devil Flock Island would want my head for. If you can make it very clear to me the reasons to me, after I have weighed the reasons, I am sure to give you a reply. If it even necessary, I would even give you my head!"

Sun Zhongyu coldly laughed. "If it not necessary, father will never order me to come afar to the Central Plains!"

Long Bushi laughed. "I really want to know how you are going to make me give you my head!"

Sun Zhongyu coldly added. "I really feel pity for Hero Long's head…"

Suddenly a voice was heard from the window. "Don't be so arrogant yet. Your head may even fall into my hand!" A person sprang from the window into the room with sound and in stealth. He was Sima Zhongtian!

Sun Zhongyu looked around and decided that it was disadvantage for him to remain here. Therefore he suggested. "Not far away from here, towards the west, is an deserted temple. I will be staying there. I hope that tonight at the Second Watch, I can await for you there!"

After finishing, he stood up and walked to the entrance.

Mei Yinxue was actually smiling when she opened the door for him.

Sun Zhongyu was very delight in his heart and he looked at Mei Yinxue and smiled for awhile before he left.

When Mei Yinxue closed the door, Long Bushi expressions suddenly changed and he vomited out blood!

Sima Zhongtian and Mei Yinxue were very startled and they sprang to his side at the same time.

Long Bushi shook his head. “Just now I have excited myself to say so many words and I have worsen my internal injuries. My internal organs are now seriously damaged. It seems that I am not far from dying!”

Sima Zhongtian tried to comfort him. “Brother Long, as long as you do not try to excite your vital energies anymore. I will send you to Zhijiao Manor and after that even if I have to go to the ends of the earth, I will find that Old Freak Pu to treat you!”

Long Bushi forced himself to smile. “I only have one breath of life left. I am like a dying candle now. It is because I still have an unfulfilled wish that therefore I did not wish to die yet. When Pinger is awakened and I finish my last wish first, then I will die.”

All these words caused a great sense of pity and sorrow for everyone because it was the last words of a great hero!

Suddenly Nangong Ping gave a faint moaning sound!

Mei Yinxue hurried to him and softly grasped. “Xiaoping! Xiaoping!”

Nangong Ping pulled himself from the bed and staggered to Long Bushi as he grasped with emotions! It seemed that he had heard his Mentor Master’s last words. “Mentor Master, how are you?”

Long Bushi took a great deal of effort before he forced out a smile. “Nothing. It is just a slight injury. Pinger, I have something to ask you. You must reply me carefully.”

Nangong Ping nodded his head.

Long Bushi was very solemn now and he gravely said. “If Mentor Master is to leave you forever, what do you want to do?”

Nangong Ping was startled and he grasped. “Mentor Master…”

Long Bushi shook his head and said. “Don’t talk about other things. Think over it carefully and then reply me!”

Nangong Ping was very confused now, even numbed. He gravely said. “First, your disciple will find the one that kill Mentor Master and avenge for you. Then I will observe the piety rites and then re-establish Zhijiao Manor. Together with all my protégés brothers and sisters, we will work together to spread the fame

of our Clan and to uphold righteousness for the entire Martial Fraternity!"

Long Bushi looked proudly at him. "That is right! You have not wasted all my painstaking teachings! But as for that avenge part, you can forgo it!"

Nangong Ping was puzzled. "How do Mentor Master explains this?"

Long Bushi laughed bitterly. "That is because the person that kill me is your uncle!"

Nangong Ping was very startled. And he became even more confused!

Long Bushi added. "Before I die, I still have an unfulfilled wish. At this moment, I have saved my last breath of vital energy. Pinger! I am going to fulfil it upon you!"

Nangong Ping did not understand completely so therefore he did not say anything.

Long Bushi sighed. "In martial techniques, although through how intricate a technique is, you can achieve the objective of killing your foes. But without the presence of a powerful internal strength to complement, it is very hard to attain the objective! Therefore I am going to use my last breath of vital energy to forcefully increase your internal strength by tens of years... by clearing your two meridian channels and to let you break the limitation caused by the Life and Death Channels!"

Nangong Ping was stunned. Unwittingly he had cried. He kept shaking his head and said, "Mentor Master, it is not necessary…"

Long Bushi angrily said. "Even before I have died, you still want to make me angry? Come here!"

Still Nangong Ping did not move. His tears flowed nonstop. "Mentor Master…"

Long Bushi sighed. "There are strong enemies approaching us now. And the people from the Devil Flock Island had come from the west. The Central Plain Fraternity is facing a huge calamity now. Pinger, do you know where your responsibility lies?"

Nangong Ping was startled and looked at the tired and fragile face of his Mentor Master. He really felt so sorrow and grieved.

Long Bushi shouted aloud. "Pinger come over here!"

"Now sit over here!"

Nangong Ping stared at Long Bushi idiocy. He was usually a strong willed person but now, he unwittingly dropped two more tears!

Mei Yinxue and Sima Zhongtian were also greatly moved by Long Bushi as they stood at the side in silence.

Long Bushi laughed hilariously and shouted. "A man should not shed his tears easily! If a real man is to command the Fraternity, then he must not act like a

girl! Pinger! Sit down!"

Nangong Ping bit his teeth and in great hesitation did he sit on the bed!

Long Bushi turned to laugh at Sima Zhongtian and Mei Yinxue. "While I am focusing, can I invite the two of you to be my guardians. After four hours, the task will be accomplished. But I afraid I may not have the strength to pull through, therefore I saying goodbye to you first. I will see you in my next life!"

Although he was trying to laugh it off but his voice was very weak and fragile.

Mei Yinxue and Sima Zhongtian felt like a huge boulder had struck their throats. Therefore they could only gently nodded their head.

Long Bushi did not waste anymore time and immediately pressed Nangong Ping on his head with his left hand and his right hand on his heart. "Pinger, focus all your mental strength together and let everything flow as one!"

They could see that Long Bushi already white face became even paler as he trembled…

Two hours flew past very fast, when Mei Yinxue and Sima Zhongtian saw Ren Fengping coming with a group of men as they barge through the room.

Mei Yinxue drawn the Fallen Autumn Leaf while Sima Zhongtian drawn an iron spear.

Ren Fengping laughed as he fanned himself with a fan. "Maiden Mei how are you?"

Mei Yinxue calmly laughed. "Fine, fine! It all thanks to Hero Ren!"

Ren Fengping tried to look behind them and saw Long Bushi and Nangong Ping. He was startled to see Nangong Ping here. "I saw earlier Nangong Ping earlier at Gangbing Xian and now he is at Sanmen Wang with Hero Long? He is really very fast!"

Mei Yinxue pretended to ponder. "He was seriously injured by others and now Hero Long is using his vital energy to help him to treat his injuries!"

Ren Fengping asked. "According to rumors, the Immortal Divine Dragon is now seriously sick and injured. How…"

Mei Yinxue laughed. "Rumors of the Pugilist, when can you truly believe in it? Hero Long is very healthy and his martial abilities and internal power have even improved tremendously!" She was observant and very intelligence maiden, therefore she knew that time was precious. So she tried to drag it as much as possible. She even told a big lie.

Ren Fengping was now hesitating and in doubts!

Ren Fengping tried to ask about other matters to calm himself down. He

laughed. “Last year outside Chang An, did Maiden Mei considers over what I told you?”

Mei Yinxue lovingly smiled. “A little girl like me is after all from the weaker sex. Shuai Tianfan and Hero Ren are the heroes of your time, moreover your organization is so huge, Mei Yinxue really do not want to be involved in it!”

She was as beautiful as a flower and now when she started to show her charms and to smile, it was really like the blossoming of the lily that could drunk a person’s mind. Even a person such as Ren Fengping could not help but feel dazed by her!

Ren Fengping said. “But Maiden Mei, you have once taken Shuai Tianfan token - Fragrant of the Wind and Rain Tablet!”

Mei Yinxue lovingly protested. “But now the tablet is lost!”

Ge Zhonghai stepped forward and solemnly said. “If the tablet is lost, then you must pay for it with your life!”

Mei Yinxue looked at Ge Zhonghai for awhile before she turned to Ren Fengping with soft laughs. “I didn’t know when Hero Ren has reared one more wild dog?”

Ge Zhonghai was enraged and he sprang forward with both his hands in a fierce display.

Mei Yinxue coldly laughed awhile and then she slashed at He Zhonghai wrists with a stance ‘Feather Fluttering in the Wind’!

Ge Zhonghai shifted his hands to evade Mei Yinxue’s stance and then aimed at her right wrist that was holding the Fallen Autumn Leaf!

But Mei Yinxue did not dodge; instead she raised her sword upward with a stance ‘Wild Fire Everywhere’ and stabbed her sword towards his throat!

Ge Zhonghai was very startled and he dodged with his body. And then he started using all his best martial techniques and had attacked with more than seventeen stances without success!

Mei Yinxue had a long sword in her hand and she could not gain an advantage over the weaponless Ge Zhonghai. Feeling somewhat bashful, she sheathed her sword to engage him in a hand to hand fight!

But when both their hands made contact, Mei Yinxue expressions changed and she became pale immediately! She cough out a deal of blood, obviously her injuries were not light! But her leg movements did not slow down.

Ge Zhonghai seized the opportunity to attack her.

Mei Yinxue secretly circulated her channels and attack once again with her hands!

Ge Zhonghai martial skills were really several notches higher than Mei Yinxue but Mei Yinxue had the will to sacrifice herself, therefore for a time, no

one seemed to gain any advantage.

Ren Fengping looked at the Startling Heaven Seven Eagles and shouted. “Why are you all still standing here for!”

The Seven Eagles had long been drugged and lost their senses. They obeyed Ren Fengping and surrounded Sima Zhongtian in the middle. And they started to attack him most furiously!

Naturally Sima Zhongtian shown no fear and although he could not guard against the green, blue, red, black eagles that had struck him from all sides but nevertheless his lance found the target on the White Eagle. The White Eagle was killed instantly. Sima Zhongtian proceeded with his lance on the Red Eagle!

Ge Zhonghai with a great shout attacked with both his hands six times in a continuous stance!

Mei Yinxue’s vital energies were not in harmony now. When he hit her again with a blow, she immediately coughed out more blood and she staggered back and sat upon the floor!

Ge Zhonghai laughed and he raised his hands again to hit her when there was a great shout from behind. “Hold your hands!”

Ge Zhonghai turned around to see a handsome middle age man that looked like a scholar. He was indeed the young master of the Devil Flock Island Sun Zhongyu!

At the same time, Sima Zhongtian had screamed out in pain as he collapsed on the ground with blood all over him! But not before he had killed the Green and the Purple Eagle too!

Now the remaining four Eagles were moving towards Long Bushi and Nangong Ping!

Mei Yinxue grasped out in a hurry as she forcefully lifted a breath of vital energy to spring up and to block them. Because she was now fighting the four Eagles, once again she coughed out more blood, her breathing was now irregular and she began to stagger for awhile but she did not fall! It seemed that she was very determined to protect Nangong Ping at all costs!

When Sun Zhongyu saw that, he was very pained in his heart. And he immediately sprang forward and forced the four Eagles to move back five steps. Now he was standing side by side with Mei Yinxue!

Mei Yinxue turned to look at him, her lips forcefully smiled with a great deal of effort.

Sun Zhongyu asked in a low voice. “Maiden are you seriously injured?”

Mei Yinxue tries to reply but before she could do so, she had coughed more blood!

Sun Zhongyu was now very anxious and he immediately shouted aloud.

“Where are the Ten Stewards!”

Immediately the ten stewards barged into the room lead by Gu Sa!

Ren Fengping was startled as he tried to gauge his current strength. Three out of seven of the Startling Heaven Seven Eagles had perished now. The remaining four were wounded and exhausted. Although Ge Zhonghai martial ability was high but he could fight so many at the same time!

After gauging he thought that retreating might be after all a good idea. He coldly laughed. “So it seems that you are trying to overwhelm us with numbers? I am disappointed with you. But you and I, we have no vendetta, why should we fight with one another? Not only is it not worth it but it is actually laudable!”

Sun Zhongyu laughed hilariously. “If you are scared, you can choose to scam now!”

Ge Zhonghai turned to look at him hatefully and had drawn out both his twin spears. He had the intention to fight. Suddenly from the outside, there was a chant. “The Distance Mountains though high, the Fragrant Wind and Rain!”

Feng Fengping was startled and suddenly delighted. Now he turned to look at Sun Zhongyu angrily. “This room is too small. If you want to fight, let us go to the courtyard to sort it out who is better.”

Sun Zhongyu laughed hilariously. “There is no difference where we are going to fight! Let us go then!”

And so Ren Fengping, Ge Zhonghai and the remaining Seven Eagles (carrying their dead companions with them) walked to the courtyard. Sun Zhongyu smiled and walked with his ten stewards to the courtyard.

When Mei Yinxue saw them exiting out of the room, she began to heave a sign of relief. The mysterious strength that was supporting her vanished and she began to feel dazed. Her vision was clouded and with a stump sound, she had collapsed onto the floor!

At the courtyard stood a tall and imposing man with dozens of men with morning stars behind. When he saw Ren Fengping, he shouted aloud. “The thirty-six Heaven, Wind, Silvery Rain abide your orders!”

Ren Fengping laughed and then he sighed. “Mister Shuai is ever so wise that he know that I may need help.”

Ren Fengping turned to Sun Zhongyu and said. “We have no vendetta, why should we fight? We don’t know who is the eventually winner or loser! Why don’t we become friends instead and work together. In future, the entire Pugilist Realm will be ours! Why don’t you think thrice about it first!”

Sun Zhongyu was the young master of the Devil Flock Island, therefore he was already used to be egoistic. The reasons he had come to the Central Plains was to execute the orders of the Lord of the Devil Flock Island as well as to make a

name for himself in the Central Plains. The words of Ren Fengping greatly antagonized him. Therefore immediately he laughed loud and hilariously. “Do you think I am the type that will bully the weak and to enter into consort with evil? Do you think that I fear your numbers? You don’t have to say anymore, let fight it out!”

Ren Fengping laughed awhile and then coldly said. “Do you know that you are not long from being dead? Yet you still have the courage to be so arrogant. Don’t blame me for being ruthless!”

He lifted his voice to shout aloud. “Heaven Silvery Rain, conquer the Fraternity!”

His men began to form into groups of three, there were a total of twelve groups in all and they were all moving in a steady step as they surrounded Sun Zhongyu and his followers!

Sun Zhongyu and the ten stewards were startled, as they saw how proficiency were their use of the morning stars and the formation was not easy to break.

Ren Fengping laughed. “If you still want to change your mind, it is not too late now. I am afraid you will all soon die in this Heaven Wind Silvery Rain formation!”

Sun Zhongyu was solemn now, and his arrogant air was no more. He was now in thoughts and searching for a way to break this formation. Therefore he did not even hear what Ren Fengping was saying. His ten stewards were by his left and right and they were all equally solemn! Sun Zhongyu and his ten stewards had all drawn their weapons now!

Ren Fengping laughed aloud and shouted. “Heaven!” It was followed by a clanging sound of the morning stars. “Earth!”, “Wind”…. “Rain”

…A few Stewards had fallen…

Gu Sa was the leader of the Ten Stewards said in a low voice to Sun Zhongyu. “Young master, the present circumstance is not in our favor. We have to find a way to break through the encirclement!”

Sun Zhongyu shoot his head. “Maintain your position and adapt to changes!” It was because he knew that to rush into the morning stars were as good as dead.

Suddenly, two more stewards had died most horribly when he had finished spoke. Another steward was in terrible pain, it seemed like the morning stars were cloaked with poison!

Now only Sun Zhongyu and five other Stewards were left! And they were all looking haggard and tired!

Another two hours had passed!

Nangong Ping opened his eyes and was shocked to see the appalling sight in the room! Nangong Ping immediately sprang to the collapse Mei Yinxue and examined her. She was still breathing and he sighed in relief! Next he sprang to Sima Zhongtian and he saw that his eyes were opened but he had long died!

There was a stump sound and Long Bushi had now collapsed on the bed! Nangong Ping immediately sprang to the bed and grasped. “Mentor Master! Mentor Master…”

Long Bushi struggled to open his eyes and muttered in a very faint voice. “I…I can no longer make it! Ping…er, you must…take…good…care…of…yourself…” Before he could finish, he died!

Nangong Ping was so pained in his heart that he felt like crying aloud. He did not. He tried to suppress it by biting his teeth. He tried to suppress his tears. He was now trying to suppress the outburst of sorrows and grieves in his heart that was bursting forth like a volcano!

Suddenly, Mei Yinxue let go of a slight moan. Although her voice was as soft as a fly but it was enough for Nangong Ping to know of her existence! Nangong Ping immediately sprang to her side and lifted her body and carried her into his embrace! He softly grasped. “Yinxue! Yinxue!”

Mei Yinxue slowly opened her drowsy eyes and finally laughed softly. Although that was only a slight movements on her lips but that represented all her gladness and satisfaction in her innermost heart!

Nangong Ping softly asked. “Yinxue, are your injuries very heavy?”

Mei Yinxue did not say anything, it did not mean anything too and she gently closed her eyes!

Suddenly, there were two horrible screams from the outside! Suddenly Mei Yinxue trembled and Nangong Ping hugged her even more tightly!

Mei Yinxue muttered. “Xiaoping! Let me go. Hurry and go to the courtyard and save those men that are fighting with Ren Fengping!” After saying, she had become very soft that even her breathing had become very weak!

Nangong Ping grasped. “Yinxue! What is the reason?”

Mei Yinxue softly replied. “Don’t ask for the reason now, hurry and go!”

And then there were yet another scream coming from the outside!

Chapter Twenty-One
Strange Encounters

Nangong Ping knew that the situation was urgent so he gently nodded his head. He carried Mei Yinxue to the side of the bed before hitting her on her both her Qimen, Qi Kan and Xuan Ji accupoints to protect her last vital energy so that it would not disperse!

Immediately, he carried Sima Zhongtian to Long Bushi and covered them with a white cloth. With tears flowing, he picked the Fallen Autumn Leaf, bit his teeth and sprang out of the window!

Once he was outside, he was shocked to see Ren Fengping deploying the Heaven Wind Silvery Rain formation. It was even larger now! And the destructiveness of this formation was tens of times more formidable than the last time! It was obvious that they had reformed this formation!

By now, only three men were left standing. They were Sun Zhongyu, Gu San and another elderly old man by the name of Wei An! All three of them were now very haggard and looking pathetic. They were covered in blood, sweating profusely with their hair in a messy state. They had been through a very terrible battle!

Nangong Ping shouted. “Stop it!”

Ren Fengping turned back and saw that it was Nangong Ping. He was startled and he secretly thought. “Oh no!”

Nangong Ping did not pause for even a split second as he swiftly sprang past Ren Fengping without looking at him and into the midst of the fighting!

With a stance ‘The Startling Outer Heaven’, the Fallen Autumn Leaf was filled with a teething sword energy as Nangong Ping pierced through three men that was blocking him, cutting them into pieces.

Although their blood spilled upon Nangong Ping, still he did not hesitate as he sprang towards the middle, sending another three men to their grave!

With the death of six men, suddenly the formation had a momentarily lapse as the three trapped men began to charge out of the encirclements!

Everyone present was shocked to see Nangong Ping broke through the Heaven Rain Silvery Rain formation with two mere stances!

Ge Zhonghai shouted as he raised both his hands to impact upon Nangong Ping. The windforce of his hands were astonishing, it obvious that his hands were filled with powerful internal power!

Nangong Ping just smiled awhile and he blocked with his left hand while he

pointed his sword to Ge Zhonghai throat!

Sun Zhongyu, Gu San and the another elderly man had charged towards Ren Fengping. They had now hated him teething to the bones! Unless Ren Fengping died, they would never stop!

But Ren Fengping could not be belittled! He extended his hands and fan and began to strike at Sun Zhongyu and Gu Sa. In that instant, both Sun Zhongyu and Gu Sa barely managed to fend off Ren Fengping extraordinary martial skills!

Ren Fengping began to shout for the remaining Four Eagles to join in the battle fray!

As Nangong Ping was extremely worried for Mei Yinxue, he decided to end the fight hastily. Therefore all his strokes were fast and vicious types! Now that his two Energy Meridians channels had been cleared by Long Bushi and he had breached the limitations of the Life and Death Channels, his flow of internal strength was like the River Changjiang (One of the two major rivers of China), flowing continuous and nonstop. Because all his techniques and stances were already marvelous in the first place, now that it was imbued with a powerful internal energy, his swordplay was impossible strong and piercing.

Ge Zhonghai was greatly startled. And Ge Zhonghai had now suffered cuts and slashes as Nangong Ping displayed several epitome techniques with the Fallen Autumn Leaf – 'Transition of the Wondrous Seven Stars', 'Flying Stance Startling Sun', 'Storms of Fury'. He could barely fend his attacks with his spears!

Desperate he seized the first opportunity to impact Nangong Ping again with his powerful fists. But who would expect that Nangong Ping would choose take the challenge and impacted his hands with his. There was a thunderous clap as Ge Zhonghai was pushed back several steps and his expressions changed. Nangong Ping's internal force was now like a ocean, without needing to pause to lift his vital energies after the clash of internal power, he dashed past Ge Zhonghai and cut him into two piece! And so end the life of one of the right hand men of Shuai Tianfan.

Without hesitating, Nangong Ping began to spring towards Ren Fengping!

Ren Fengping knew that it was now very unfavorable as he found himself attacked by Sun Zhongyu who hated him for killing his Stewards and Nangong Ping who seemed much stronger than before! While he was thinking, Nangong Ping had pierced his fan and he was forced to discard it.

Suddenly there was a terrifying scream by the Yellow Eagle as Gu Sa killed him.

Suddenly Ren Fengping did an all out attack that startled both Nangong Ping and Sun Zhongyu. This stance of his, disregarded his very own safety and focused on an all out attack! But suddenly, Ren Fengping instead of forward, he began to spring away hastily!

Ren Fengping sprang inside the room, followed by Nangong Ping and Sun Zhongyu in hot pursuit.

But they saw Ren Fengping holding the weak Mei Yinxue and his right hand was on her back, facing her heart. He laughed. “Stop! If you are to move one more step, I will immediately deal her a blow on her heart. You must know that I never kid!”

Nangong Ping was staring in rage. He bit his teeth and did not even move a single step! Sun Zhongyu too did not move or made a single sound.

Mei Yinxue was now breathing very faintly. She looked extremely fragile and weak and her eyes were closed and her soft long hair covered her face.

Nangong Ping was feeling very terrible in his heart and he shouted. “If you do not put her down now, today you can never retreat in safety!”

Ren Fengping coldly added. “If I want to retreat in safety, then all the more I need her to be my hostage till I can leave this place!”

Nangong Ping was furious now as he shouted. “Ren Fengping! If today, Mei Yinxue died in your hands, I, Nangong Ping will swear to tear you into a million pieces or else I am not a human!” Nangong Ping eyes and face was filled with an unforgettable and a piercing malevolent air!

Ren Fengping tried his best to avoid Nangong Ping’s eyes, which was now like swords piercing through his heart!

Nangong Ping did not dare to move recklessly. He could only wait and search for a chance to rescue Mei Yinxue!

Ren Fengping did not dare to be careless too. If something were to happen to Mei Yinxue, he would for certain had to perish here today!

The screaming sound in the courtyard had ceased now, all the remaining Startling Heaven Seven Eagles as well as the tall imposing man that was leading the Heaven Wind Silvery Rain Formation had been killed by Gu San and Wei An!

So when they had appeared, Ren Fengping was even more worried. Death was now approaching Mei Yinxue as he gripped her even more tightly but it was approaching him as well!

But suddenly he saw another group of people coming, he was startled but he was also very delight! Leading the group was Guo Yuxia with three other elderly men!

Guo Yuxia walked to the side of Nangong Ping and said in a lovingly tone. “Have you been doing good, Fifth Brother?”

Nangong Ping was getting impatience but for the sake of Long Fei, he did not wish to be rude to her. So he replied casually. “I am fine!”

Ren Fengping took the opportunity to exit out of the Inn in astride! Nangong Ping was startled and he turned back his head and shouted. “Ren Fengping! If you

dare to move one more step! Don't blame me for being nasty to you!"

Ren Fengping coldly said. "I am afraid it will be not the case now!"

Nangong Ping angrily said. "If you don't believe, you can try it!"

Although the three elderly men that were with Guo Yuxia had no special characteristics but from their expressions in their eyes and their steps, they were definitely top exponents!

Although the situation had now been titled against him but Nangong Ping did not show any fear. He secretly lifted his internal force and prepared himself for an all out attack!

Sun Zhongyu, Gu Sa and Wei An had also sensed the graveness of the situation, therefore they were already on guard!

Guo Yuxia smiled and laughed. "Fifth Brother, there are rumors in the Pugilist that say that you have been to the Divine Creator Island and have mastered several epitome martial techniques, is it really true?"

Nangong Ping by now was already in rage so he shouted. "That is right!"

He kept staring at Ren Fengping, refusing to leave him out of his sight.

Guo Yuxia shifted her eyes and asked. "What happens to both of you? Is there some differences between Hero Ren and you?"

Nangong Ping said. "That is right!"

Guo Yuxia added. "Hero Ren wishes to take the Cold Blood Concubine away but you do not allow him to do so, is that right?"

Nangong Ping coldly shouted. "That is right!"

He had said 'That is right!' three times and every word were filled with his teething rage.

Guo Yuxia raised her eyebrows and said unhappily. "What has it to do with Fifth Brother when Hero Ren wants to take Mei Yinxue away? Why did you want to stop him? Is the rumors that have been circulating in the Pugilist really true?"

Nangong Ping angrily said. "Protégé Sister in Law! Why are you siding with the outsiders?!"

Guo Yuxia angrily replied. "Mei Yinxue has such an infamous fame in the Pugilist, you actually did not know what is shame and even tour hand in hand with her. Do you know that you have disgraced Zhijiao Manor!"

Nangong Ping shouted aloud. "I am just following Mentor Master's orders to protect her. Moreover she is kind at heart and it is in fact the people that are in the Pugilist that have ill intentions towards her!"

Guo Yuxia said. "No matter. Now I am ordering you to leave this place as your protégé sister in law and let Hero Ren to take away Mei Yinxue!"

Nangong Ping laughed aloud. "Do you think that you have the right to order me?"

Guo Yuxia was awash with anger now. “What makes you think I can’t?”

Nangong Ping sternly said, “You have betrayed your Master by going against the righteousness that he had established and cause much wrongdoing in the Martial Fraternity. You alone have destroyed all of Mentor Master’s fame and reputation, you and me have no ties now, what make you think you can order me!”

Guo Yuxia rebuked him. “You are the one that have betrayed your Master and go against the righteous of the Clan! Today on behalf of Mentor Master, I am going to remove you who is a most unrighteous disciple!” When she had finished, she raised her hands to strike him!

Nangong Ping was filled with hatred for her. He was teething with rage that had reached intolerant level now but he was still staring at Ren Fengping when he extended his hand against Guo Yuxia.

Guo Yuxia did not expect that Nangong Ping would really use all his strength against her therefore she was hit by him and had to stagger back seven to eight steps!

Nangong Ping expressions did not change or looked at Guo Yuxia and he continued to stare at Ren Fengping!

Guo Yuxia was angry now. Just when she wanted to attack him again, there was a shout from behind and a shadowy figure of a man sprang into their midst! It was Shi Chen!

Shi Chen shouted. “Fifth Brother don’t panic, your silly protégé brother is here!” And he did not wait to finish and started to exchange blows with Guo Yuxia!

Guo Yuxia was startled. “Shi Chen! Are you crazy?”

Shi Chen shouted aloud. “I am not crazy! All along I was dreaming but now I have woke up from my dreams! You alone have disgraced the Divine Dragon Clan. Since Big Brother (Referring to Long Fei) is not here, therefore I have the most seniority now! (Shi Chen has the Golden Dragon Dagger to punish wrongdoers in the Clan) I will punish you on behalf on Mentor Master!”

And he began to attack like a crazed tiger, using all the most vicious stances and strokes, momentarily Guo Yuxia was pushed back to a wall.

More shouting now, as the three elderly men that Guo Yuxia had brought with her began to join the battle fray! One of them began to join hands with Guo Yuxia against Shi Chen while the other two attacked Nangong Ping!

Nangong Ping knew that it was a hopeless situation as he tried to fend off the two attackers while springing towards Ren Fengping at the same time. But Ren Fengping gripped Mei Yinxue in front of him as his shield and Nangong Ping was forced to withdrawn his stance!

Ren Fengping laughed most despicably. And then he sprang out of the door

while the two elderly men hindered Nangong Ping! Mei Yinxue was gripped violently by Ren Fengping that she moaned aloud and fainted!

Nangong Ping's heart felt like a knife was cutting him, heart wrenching and painful by the way Ren Fengping had handled her! "You dare to leave!" He tried to pursue him but for a time, as he was being attacked from the front and the back at the same time, he could not free himself.

Sun Zhongyu suddenly shouted, "Brother Nangong you do not need to be worried, I swear to bring Maiden Mei back to you!" And he began to give chase after Ren Fengping! Gu San and Wei followed him.

What could Nangong Ping do but hummed coldly as he was now filled with intolerant level of rage and hatred. His stances and strokes were now filled with a malevolent air as he was determined to save Mei Yinxue. With both hands, he began to use 'Chant of the Suffering Pain' as he began his ferocious attacks. One of the elderly men was startled and was fell by Nangong Ping with a blow below his waist vulnerable point! The other man tried to retreat but was hit in his Shi Guan and Zhong Zhu accupoint points by Nangong Ping as he fell unconscious on the ground.

Suddenly there was a scream by Shi Chen and Nangong Ping turned to see that he was now looking very pale and his clothing was shredded! Shi Chen had suffered greatly!

Without hesitating, he began to spring to aid Shi Chen. Nangong Ping was never a petty person who did sneak attacks but these few days he had been through several insufferable terrible ordeals that he was berserk with rage in his heart. Therefore he did not even pause to consider as he sprang and fell the old man who was fighting with Shi Chen!

The golden rays of the setting sun in the west flooded into the Inn but Ren Fengping and Guo Yuxia were nowhere in sight.

Nangong Ping was rigid in his expressions as he took a look at Long Bushi and Sima Zhongtian. Next he walked to Nangong Yongle bed and touched him but the body was icy cold and hard. It was because Nangong Yongle had long passed away!

Although Nangong Ping did not know his uncle very well but blood was thicker than water and he was grieving for his loss! His tears began to flow freely, as he looked idiocy at this old man that had died in loneliness. All his emotions were all numbed now due to over excitement. His Mentor Master was now dead, his uncle was now dead, his father's old friend as well as Long Bushi's, Sima Zhongtian was now dead. In just a single day, three of the old men that were the

closest to him to him were dead. He was not a superhuman and was made of flesh and blood. He could not handle the affliction of such a loss at all and all these sudden events that had happened to Mei Yinxue, Ye Manqing, Di Yang and Yi Luo. If he were not filled with fiery rage and thoughts of vendetta, he would have collapsed now!

He clutched both his hands together in front of his chest and muttered silently. Was he praying for blessing or saying a prayer for the dead? But two tears dripped down from his face! And then he walked out of the room. There was no one in the Inn now, the rest of the guests, Innkeeper, shop assistants had long fled!

Suddenly he had a jolt in his mind. He suddenly remembered that Ren Fengping had kidnapped Di Yang and his Lady together with Ye Manqing on his way to the Southern Mountains. Moreover now Ren Fengping had also captured Mei Yinxue. If he could rush to the Southern Mountains to search, although he was not very confidence but at least he could find something! Gathering his thoughts, he returned to the room again to see Shi Chen had stood up now with tears on his face.

Nangong Ping said. “Third Protégé Brother! I have an urgent matter to do. If by dusk tomorrow, if I did not return, can you please send Mentor Master and the other two bodies back to Zhijiao Manor!

Shi Chen said. “What is the urgent matter? I cannot go with you?”

Nangong Ping said. “It is only a personal matter of mine. Moreover the tasks here are equally important too. I beseech Third Brother and thanks for your hard work!” And he had sprung away hastily out of the window!

Shi Chen sighed and stared at the corpses in the room.

The South Mountains Villa was grand manor surrounded by woods and other wondrous creations of nature. Some of the surroundings were man made and if a person were wise enough, he would know that the surroundings were in fact a formation layout! If one were not careful, they would get lost very easily!

Suddenly, more than ten shadowy figures were springing swiftly on the leaves of the tall trees and the grasses! And every one of them knew the most intricate swiftness movement skills that were in the Martial Fraternity – Flying on leaves and grasses!

In a twinkle of an eye, they had bypassed the forest formation!

Under the moonlight, seventeen of them could be seen! Everyone was dressed as a beggar. The two beggars that were in the lead were wielding two bamboo staff. They were the Hungry Ghost Yi Feng and Malevolent Ghost Song Zhong! Without a doubt, they were the Ghastly Beggars!

Suddenly there were rows of lights being lit up in their directions, as the entire place became ghastly. Their coming did not escape notice.

Malevolent Ghost Song Zhong laughed. “Since we are here, it time we collect some debts. Have the Ghastly Beggars ever been afraid of anything? Brothers, even if it is the palace of the King of Hades, we would still want to rampage it!”

And he started to walk boldly into the villa, accompanied by the Hungry Ghost Yi Feng and the rest of his gang.

Yi Feng looked around and said. “This place is so big, if it is a fighting ground, it will be very convenient!”

In the hall of the villa, a middle age man by the name of Mi Baixiang greeted them. He was pale and eerie looking. “May I know what brought you here?”

His voice was like a girl and gentle. Everyone presented was stunned!

Yi Feng asked. “Are you the owner of this place?”

Mi Baixiang smiled. “I dare not dream of it! I am just the steward of the Southern Mountains Villa Mi Baixiang!”

Yi Feng said rudely. “Ask the owner out to talk!”

Mi Baixiang was not moved by anger and he said plainly. “My Master will not see any guests at the moment. If you have anything to say, you can say to me, it is the same!”

Yi Feng expressions changed and he angrily said. “Hey! We are here for some people!”

Mi Baixiang asked. “What do you mean?”

Song Zhong shouted. “A person shouldn’t do sneaky things! I advise you not to pretend any longer. The Tianshan Divine Sword Di Yang and Brother Yi’s sister, Yi Luo have been captured by you. Tonight, we are here to take them back with us!”

Suddenly there was a laughter as a man with a black veil appeared. “Since we have some honorable guests here, why don’t you invite them with hospitality? What are you waiting for?”

The Ghastly Beggars were startled and Mi Baixiang expressions changed. He bowed with his hands respectfully and said. “My Master invites honorary guests to have a seat!”

Yi Feng angrily shouted. “Since you are the Master of this villa, why don’t you unmask yourself and be a real man!”

The masked man said. “The Ghastly Beggars are renowned in the Martial Fraternity. Why don’t take a seat inside?”

The Ghastly Beggars was startled. They found this voice quite familiar but

they did not know who was it.

The man said. “If we have anything to say, please have a seat first! I feel honor that I have friends coming over from beyond the Pass to my villa!”

Yi Feng coldly said, “Rubbish aside, we are here for someone!”

The masked man laughed aloud. “Brother Yi, you are so impatience. Why don’t have a small banquet first and we can have a nice chat over it to talk over the past!”

The Ghastly Beggars were even more startled. This voice was really familiar and he seemed to know Yi Feng! But still they did not know who was he.

Song Zhong laughed aloud. “Since you are acquaintance to us, why don’t you remove your mask so that we can know who you are!”

The man laughed again. “Taking off my mask is not a difficult thing. But the time has not come yet. So I beg for your forgiveness as I cannot do as you request!”

Yi Feng laughed. “Only those guilty ones in the world dare not show their face. I think you have done too many guilty things therefore you are masked now!”

The masked man said solemnly as he looked at his men. “We have honored guests now, where are the wines and dishes for our guests?”

Yi Feng said. “My brothers and I have come from afar to rescue my sister and Tianshan Divine Sword Di Yang who have been captured by Shuai Tianfan’s men. At this moment of time, I am worry for my sister so how would I have the mood to feast! If you have the mood, why don’t you release my sister and Di Yang first. Then when my worries have dissipated, I can even drink and feast the whole night with you!”

The masked man laughed. “Does Brother Yi wants me to release Maiden Yi so that she could follow you back to beyond the Pass?”

Yi Feng replied. “That is for sure!”

The masked man raised a cup of wine and said. “What if Maiden Yi refuses to go with you?”

Yi Feng cried out. “Laudable! Yi Luo and I are flesh and blood, how will she not go with me!”

The masked man said. “She is living here comfortably. And we are serving her like she is a queen. How will she want to go back to beyond the Pass to endure the chilling snow!”

Yi Feng coldly said. “Don't be too sure!”

Song Zhong laughed. “Although the Ghastly Beggars are famous for begging but outside the Pass, we are like kings and have wealth that can equal a kingdom! Compare to us, this little villa is like a small house facing a big house!”

The masked man laughed aloud. “I am afraid your big house is now burned

to ashes now!"

Song Zhong laughed aloud. "Who you think we Ghastly Beggars are? That we will bow to your threats!"

The masked man said. "I am just stating facts. There is really no need for me to use threats."

Yi Feng shouted. "Rubbish aside! Hand over my sister now and then we can chat! Or else, heng… heng…"

The masked man said. "Why are you so impatience, Brother Yi? We are old friends and you have once saved my life before. I should really toast you gladly with three cups of wine instead. It not too later if we were to discuss this matter!"

He paused awhile adding. "I only know that the Ghastly Beggars are all frank heroes but today I am greatly disappointed!"

Song Zhong asked. "What do you mean by that?"

The masked man said, "I have to prepare a feast for all of you in the middle of the night but instead of thanking me, you are all suspecting whether the wine and dishes have been poisoned! Isn't it too ungracious towards me!"

Song Zhong laughed a few times before he picked the cup in front of him and drink it! "You are too harsh in your comments!"

The masked man laughed. "Brother Song, you are indeed the leader of the Ghastly Beggars, such heroic display!"

Yi Feng interrupted. "Before I can see my sister, I swear I will never touch the wine!"

The masked man laughed. "If you want to see your sister, how difficult can it be!" He clapped his hands and shouted aloud. "Please invite Maiden Yi Luo to see the guests!"

Mi Baixiang bowed respectfully and walked off.

After awhile, there was a 'dinging' sound as Yi Luo made an appearance in beautiful gowns and garments!

She looked serene, tidy and her countenance was bright. There was not even a trace that she had been a prisoner!

Yi Feng shouted. "Sister Luo!"

Yi Luo looked at him with her watery eyes but there was no hint of any siblings' affection. She simply walked behind the masked man and smiled at the man instead.

The entire Ghastly Beggars were stunned. Yi Feng was even more startled as he trembling shouted. "Sister Luo! Don't you recognize your brother anymore?"

Yi Luo smiled serenely. "You are my big brother, how will I not know you!"

Yi Feng was now very worried for her and added. "I am here to save you now!"

Yi Luo simply said. “I am doing very well here. I do not need big brother to save me…”

Yi Feng grasped. “Don’t you wish to go back to the Ghastly Manor?”

Yi Luo laughed. “This place isn’t too bad comparing to the Ghastly Manor!”

Yi Feng grasped aloud. “Sister Luo! Are you crazy!”

Yi Luo said plainly. “Who say I am crazy? Heng! I have other things to do, forgive me for not accompanying you!” And she walked away with Yi Feng still calling out for her name.

Yi Feng was about to spring toward her when Song Zhong pulled him back and solemnly said. “Calm down first, Brother Feng. There are more than meet the eye in this matter!”

Yi Feng turned to face the masked man. “You! You! …What manner of a drug did you administrate to make her lose her senses!”

The masked man laughed clearly. “She is very clear minded. What makes you think she is drugged?”

Song Zhong rose up and solemnly said, “I am really impressed by your ability to divide them. Why don’t you remove your mask so that we can know who you are!”

The masked man said. “If you insist, I will just have to compel with your wishes!” And he took off his black veil that was on his face!

All of the Ghastly Beggars were shocked to see his face!

Song Zhong grasped loudly. “You! You are Di Yang!”

Di Yang faintly smiled and said. “That is right! I am indeed Di Yang!”

Yi Feng shouted angrily as he spat in anger. “You heartless cad! What an ungrateful cad you are! Return my sister to me!’

Di Yang coldly said. “I am already the owner of this villa, how can I allow you to be so bold here!”

Song Zhong interrupted. “Is that why you want to use a black veil to cover your face!?” And he started to plunge forward with his fists up!

Di Yang did not move, instead he pressed his chair with both of his hands as the chair and him sunk into the floor!

Suddenly walls slammed down all over the hall!

Song Zhong shouted angrily. “Now it terrible! We have actually fallen into a trap!”

They started to inspect their surrounding. The walls were all very thick and made of iron. There was only a small hole at the side of the hall.

Yi Feng sighed. “The Ghastly Beggars have always been a merry lot in the Pugilist. Never did I expect that we will be trapped here!”

Song Zhong sighed. “The sides of the walls are several inches thick. Even

with a precious sword, it is hard to slash it! Moreover we have no iron objects upon us! Alas! It seems that if we were to escape from here tonight, it will be as hard as ascending the heavens!"

A figure sprang very fast into the Southern Mountains Villa! In a twinkle of an eye, he had sprung past three houses and was now on the rooftop of the biggest house!

The moonlight shone on his lonely face and his eyes that looked like two twinkle stars! He was indeed Nangong Ping!

Suddenly he was startled by a windforce and he turned his body back and he saw a middle age man in black robe with a pale face standing behind him! He did not know when this man had arrived!

The man smiled and said. "I wonder what brings you here in the middle of the night?"

Nangong Ping coldly said. "I am Nangong Ping and who are you?"

The man replied with both of his hands together in respect. "I am Mi Baixiang. I am the steward here acting under the orders of my Master to await you!"

Nangong Ping asked. "Who is your Master?"

Mi Baixiang said. "You will soon know!"

Nangong Ping had already been prepared to enter the tiger den therefore he said coldly. "Please lead the way then!"

They went into a great hall through a small door and saw a man with a black veil laughed. "Brother Nangong! I have long been waiting for you!"

Nangong Ping had thought this voice to be familiar but he did not know who he was so he asked. "Just who are you?"

Di Yang laughed aloud. "It had been just a few days, doesn't Brother Nangong recognizes me anymore?" And he removed his black veil!

Never did Nangong Ping dream that this man would be Di Yang! Upon seeing his old friend, he was very startled and happy. And he walked in front and gripped both his hands. "Brother Di! It is you!"

Di Yang patted Nangong Ping on his shoulder and laughed. "You have never expected it right!"

Nangong Ping said, "Indeed! Not even in my dreams! But…this isn't possible!"

Di Yang asked. "How come?"

Nangong Ping questioned. "Aren't you and maiden Yi been captured by Ren Fengping? How did you become the owner of Southern Mountains Villa?"

Di Yang just laughed and did not reply.

Nangong Ping asked again. “Then where is Maiden Yi and Maiden Ye now?”

Di Yang laughed. “They are now having a good dream at the moment!”

Nangong Ping shook his head and asked. “Brother Di! What is going on around here?”

Di Yang said, “This Southern Mountains Villa has now belonged to me! Now that you have come, we can now discuss a grand plan!”

Nangong Ping asked. “What grand plan?”

Di Yang said aloud. “This is the grand plan of Mister Shuai – To dominate the Martial Fraternity!”

Nangong Ping was startled. “Brother Di! Are you crazy?”

Di Yang laughed aloud. “My mind is still very clear at the moment! I am not in the least crazy!”

Nangong Ping had a jolt in his head and he regained his composure. He asked. “Brother Di! Did you really join Shuai Tianfan’s organization?”

Di Yang said aloud. “You know that I never lies!”

Nangong Ping coldly said, “Then, what about Maiden Yi and Maiden Ye?”

Di Yang laughed. “Both of them have joined with Mister Shuai as well. You don’t have to worry!”

Nangong Ping angrily resorted. “Rubbish!”

Di Yang said, “I did not lie to you!”

Nangong Ping thought. “A frank and straightforward person like Di Yang will actually join Shuai Tianfan. Then it means that Yi Luo and Ye Manqing who are women and have weaker willpower will surely succumb too. I wonder what magic did that Shuai Tianfan use to control them!”

Before he had finished thinking, there was laughter that came from a man that had just walked into the hall. Nangong Ping lifted his head to saw a short man with a big head.

But when Di Yang and Mi Baixiang saw the man, their expressions changed and they bowed respectfully at him. “Big Brother Tang!”

That Big Brother Tang nodded and he looked extremely haughty as he walked towards Nangong Ping!

Nangong Ping thought. “From his haughty looks, his powerful steps and that Di Yang and Mi Baixiang accorded him with much respect, he must be someone very important!”

Big Brother Tang asked him. It was obvious that he had looked down upon him. “Are you Nangong Ping?”

Nangong Ping replied nonchalantly. “Indeed I am Nangong Ping. And who

may you be!"

'Big Brother Tang' laughed aloud. "You don't even know Tang Huan of the 'Four Swords of the Life Stealing Mystery Wind'?"

Nangong Ping thought. "All the right hand men of Shuai Tianfan like Ren Fengping, Ge Zhonghai and this Tang Huan are all in Jiangnan. I wonder what is going to happen soon!"

Tang Huan replied, "Mister Shuai will like me to invite Nangong Ping to join with us!"

Nangong Ping laughed. "I have no talent to contribute. How will I dare to!"

Tang Huan angrily said. "You don't know what is good for you! Do you think I cannot capture you?"

Nangong Ping laughed coldly. "I afraid just you alone is impossible!"

Tang Huan shouted aloud and then extended his right hand to impact upon Nangong Ping.

Not wishing to display any sign of weakness, Nangong Ping extended a hand too.

There was a thunderous clap, and both of them were forced to move back three steps!

Tang Huan shouted. "Rascal! You indeed have some prowess! Why don't you receive another impact again!" He extended both his hands in front of his chest.

Nangong Ping knew that he must be using all his strength for this blow, therefore he did not dare to be careless and he started to gather all his energy to his diaphragm pressure point and then released all twelve folds of his strength with both his hands!

There was another thunderous clap! Once again, both of them were pushed three steps backward! It was obvious that their internal strength were about the same, it was difficult to know who was better!

Tang Huan expressions changed for he was very startled. He had never expected a junior like Nangong Ping would have such a pure internal strength!

Nangong Ping was as composed as ever and he laughed coldly at Tang Huan. "I didn't expect that the famous Four Swords of the Life Stealing Mystery Wind is only so and so!"

Tang Huan coldly said. "If we cannot determine a winner in internal strength, why don't we fight it out with weapons! Kid, draw your sword!"

Nangong Ping faintly smiled and then drew the Fallen Autumn Leaf!

Tang Huan then drew a bendable long sword from his waist! This long sword of his was very long, thin and its edges were not sharp. The tip of his long sword was black while the rest of the blade was white.

Nangong Ping attacked with a stance the 'Golden Dragon Piercing Armor' but Tang Huan evaded it. As he did not wish to lose his first opportunity of attack, he continued with the Sixteen stances of the Heavenly Dragon! His attacks were all very swift and accurate!

Tang Huan was startled and shifted to pierce Nangong Ping on his Qu Chi! But Nangong Ping evaded it and retaliated with five other attacking strokes and forced him to back off three steps!

Suddenly Tang Huan changed his stance, he began to blend his sword over and flick it! As his sword was longer and this flick caused Nangong Ping to lose his attack advantage!

Suddenly with a shout, Tang Huan and Nangong Ping had both impacted both their swords tip together! As Nangong Ping and his internal strength were the same as Tang Huan, he found himself unable to break off the contact!

Tang Huan smiled cockily. "Throw away your sword!"

Nangong Ping replied with pride. "Not necessary!"

But just when Nangong Ping had mouthed 'Necessary', Tang Huan sword tip broke free of the tip of his sword and was hitting his face! Nangong Ping was very startled and then summoned his strength to move backward hastily and Fallen Autumn Leaf could not withstand the impact of all the internal strength, it started to blend! In split second, he did a double flinch and kick towards Tang Huan who moved back three steps again!

Then Nangong Ping stomped on Fallen Autumn Leaf with his leg and it was straightened again!

After fighting for awhile, Tang Huan on seeing that he could not gain an advantage over Nangong Ping, ordered Di Yang and Mi Baixiang to join in the fray when he was once again pushed back another five steps!

After six strokes, Nangong Ping was already feeling tired and now he was just defending without any opportunity to retaliate against the combined attacks of Tang Huan, Di Yang and Mi Baixiang!

Suddenly, two beautiful voices were heard as Ye Manqing and Yi Luo had suddenly sprang into the hall and without a word, started to attack Nangong Ping fiercely!

Nangong Ping shouted. "Maiden Ye! Maiden Yi! Don't you recognize that I am Nangong Ping anymore?"

Yi Luo grasped. "No matter who you are, as owners of this Southern Mountain villas, we will not allow you to be amok here!"

Nangong Ping grasped. "Why don't all of you hear my explanations?"

Ye Manqing coldly said, "There is nothing to explain! Surrender your life!" When she finished, she exhibited the unique stance of Mistress Shi Zhu, Danfeng's

epitome techniques and started to slash at Nangong Ping repeatedly!

Di Yang shouted too and joined in the fray!

The three of them were attacking like they were crazy, they had no regard on their personal safety – Their attacks were all out with no defense.

How could Nangong Ping bear to use his best stances against three of his very best friends? At the same time, he could not leave too! He had no choice but to use his Mentor Master's techniques, and to focus on defense and not attack!

Although Nangong Ping had extraordinary martial skills but he was unable to use any of it. Fifty strokes later, he was forced back to the middle of the great hall. He had spent the whole night to run here and then after half a night of fighting, although his internal strength was still bursting with strength but his vital strength had already been expended by half! And he was so tired now and sweating profusely.

Now even his parries were slower a lot and he was slowly unable to hold on anymore…

After a great deal of thoughts and trying several methods, the Ghastly Beggars were still unable to find a way to escape from their surrounding. Every one of them was haggard and anxious now!

Suddenly there was a sound from the top as one of iron walls began to move and all the Ghastly Beggars lifted their heads to look. Then some one threw a rope!

Song Zhong was naturally delightful and he hastily said. "Now is the chance for us to escape, let us all hurry!"

Everyone sprang up on the rope dexterously and in a few moment times, they exited out of the hall. And they saw a middle age man with a pale face standing at the secret passage!

Song Zhong did not know who this stranger was but he knew that they were saved by this man! Therefore he placed his hands together to bow and then said. "We are grateful for you to lend us a helping hand, this piece of gratuitous is as heavy as the mountain! Allow me to bow to you!"

At the same, the rest of the Ghastly Beggars had all escaped through the hole and were gathering behind Song Zhong.

Yi Feng walked astride to the front and said. "The Ghastly Beggars have never received any aid from any one, not even half a bit. But tonight…"

Before he could finish, the middle age man coldly interrupted. "I am under the instruction of the Heavenly Crow Priest to save you all from danger. If you want to thank me, you should go and thanks the Heavenly Crow Priest and not me!"

Yi Feng muttered. “Heavenly Crow Priest…Heavenly Crow Priest…we do not know him at all!”

The middle age man said, “But no matter whether if you know him or not, I have a request!”

Song Zhong hurriedly asked. “Please tell us! If it is within our means, even if we were to brave the burning fires, we will do it!”

The middle age man said, “Do you know Nangong Ping?”

Song Zhong shook his head while Yi Feng said, “I have met him once before.”

The middle age man said, “He is now in grave danger! But because he and I have some grudges before, it is really not convenient for me to reveal my identity to save him. Therefore I have to borrow your strength!” And he began to tremble before continuing. “Do you know who I am?”

Song Zhong shook his head and said. “We do not know!”

The man said, “I am the real owner of this South Mountains Villa!”

Everyone was startled and surprised.

Song Zhong said. “This…this…this…” After saying for quite some time, he still could not manage to complete the sentence!

The middle age man became very solemn and said. “I have other matters awaiting me. So it not convenient for me to stay here any longer. But please do not forget my request!”

Yi Feng asked. “Where is Nangong Ping now?”

The man took out a letter and handed it over to Song Zhong and said. “He is now facing a difficult battle at the great hall in front of this building. Please hand this letter over to him and after he has read it, protect him till he can leave this place! Now that I have finished all that I have to say, I have to leave now. I am grateful to everyone of you for rendering assistance to him!” When he had finished, he sprang away!

Who was this strange middle age man? He was seen muttering. “There are some people in the entire life, who in their daily lives and in all matters try to do good, did not dare even to do a single wrong thing. But once they did something wrong once, they immediately become a great sinner. There are some people who are villainous but in a coincidence did a good deed and immediately people forgive all their past doings…”

He was none other than the ‘Gentleman Swordsman’ Ye Liu Ge. Because he was once tempted by lust and tried to rape Mei Yinxue, he lost the chance to be a loving couple with her and even spread all sorts of malicious rumors about her. That was the single greatest mistake of his life!

Song Zhong and Yi Feng looked at one another and shouted aloud. “Let us

go now!”

In the great hall, Nangong Ping was sweating profusely and he could barely hold on any longer. Di Yang, Yi Luo and Ye Manqing were pushing him to a corner!

Suddenly there was a great shout as Yi Feng sprang into the hall and with a stance ‘Clouds of Shackles that Bind the Mountain’ with his bamboo staff, fended off Di Yang from Nangong Ping.

Next, Song Zhong sprang into the hall and attacked Ye Manqing with his bamboo staff!

Nangong Ping was very relieved as the pressure that were piling upon him just moments ago instantly vanished! And so he took a breather.

Even as Song Zhong was fighting Ye Manqing, he had taken the letter to the front of Nangong Ping and said. “Take this letter!”

Nangong Ping was very startled to see this strange request but he took the letter nevertheless and at the same time fended off Yi Luo fierce attacks!

At this moment, the rest of the Ghastly Beggars entered the hall and two of them hit Yi Luo on her ‘Drowse’ and ‘Sleep’ accupoints as well as other parts of her body that could not hurt her!

The cocky Tang Huan and Mi Baixiang upon seeing the Ghastly Beggars charged into the hall were greatly startled and immediately they began to attack the Ghastly Beggars. Joining the fray were the rest of their men in black, wielding sabres or swords. And now the entire hall was in a state of confusion and messy fights!

Song Zhong shouted to Nangong Ping as he held off Di Yang. “Hurry and tear the letter and see what is written on it!”

Although there were fighting all around him, he still managed to tear the letter and read it. On the letter were the words – Your parents are in grave danger now and they would possibly die anytime. Hurry with great haste to Taihu Lake to the Liuyin Manor. If you are late, the worse can happen, so hurry! Wan Da had signed the letter!

After he had finished reading it, he did not believe the letter to be real but he did recognize Wan Da unique style of writing. Would Wan Da try to trick him?

For a moment, he was too engrossed to do anything!

Song Zhong interrupted his thoughts by shouting. “What is written on the letter that caused you to ponder? Hurry and leave this place. What are you waiting for? If you do not leave now, it may be too late later!”

Nangong Ping was jolted and he asked. “Who gives this letter to you?”

Song Zhong had just managed to repulse Ye Manqing beautiful attacking strokes with three stances of continuous staff display. Making use of this breather, he replied. “It is from a middle age man with a stiff expressions!”

Nangong Ping furrowed in thoughts before he asked. “Do you know his name?”

Song Zhong said. “He did not say his name but he said he was sent by a Heavenly Crow Priest!”

When Nangong Ping heard the name of the Heavenly Crow Priest, his expressions changed! That was because the Heavenly Crow Priest was Wan Da!

Now Nangong Ping was even more worried and shouted. “Thanks everyone for rendering aid! This, I, Nangong Ping will never forget! But now I have something very important, please forgive me for leaving first!”

Song Zhong said. “Don’t say so much, hurry and go!”

Without much ado, Nangong Ping sprang towards the entrance of the hall!

But how could Tang Huan allow him to leave just like this? So he sprang in pursue of Nangong Ping but was forced to move back by the Ghastly Beggars who were all top exponents!

Di Yang started to shout. “Don’t let him escape!”

And a group of men in black began to block Nangong Ping! But because Nangong Ping was now full of worries, he did not hesitate anymore and his malevolent air was lifted and those men that had blocked him started to scream as he cut through them with the brilliant light of the Fallen Autumn Leaf!

And so Nangong Ping managed to leave the hall that was still in a state of utter confusion and out of the Southern Mountains Villa!

Chapter Twenty-two
The Evil Leader

In an old tavern Inn, seated a handsome young man who looked fierce and he was drinking with his sword besides him. He looked terribly sorrowful. Behind him stood were two lass about fifteen or sixteen.

Although there were beautiful wines all over the table but he was not in the mood to enjoy it. He kept sighing deeply and sighing faintly all the time as though he was filled with a terrible sorrow and grief!

He was Zhan Donglai, Kunlun disciple! Naturally the two lass that were standing behind him were Baier and Yuer!

Zhan Donglai gulped a jar of wine and he finished it till not a drop was left!

He was always thinking and dreaming of Mei Yinxue who he had fallen in love on first sight! Although she had never shown real affection for him but they had once spent such a long wonderful time together. Although she did not say she had loved him but she had never say she disliked him either.

He had thought of this before. With his outstanding martial skills and looks, if he would spend some more efforts onto it, he would surely gain her affections. And it did not look like it would be such a difficult thing to do!

He had even created for himself a beautiful dream for himself and lost himself in it. Therefore he could only drunk himself silly so that he would always be back in that beautiful dream with Mei Yinxue. But he had failed and even caused him to become even more sorrowful!

Baier and Yuer looked at him with frightened looks.

At this moment of time, a middle age man with white robe walked into the tavern Inn carrying a beautiful elegant young maiden with long flowing hair. Under the broad daylight, a man carrying a young maiden into a tavern would surely invite attentions and gossips.

Zhan Donglai lifted his head to look and rose up as well. He shouted. “Ah! I wonder who it is. You are Brother Ren!”

Ren Fengping turned around; his face was smiling unnaturally and said. “Oh it is Brother Zhan! We have not seen one another for one year ever since we last saw one another at the Mulong Manor!”

Zhan Donglai said. “That is right! Brother Ren you…”

Ren Fengping smiled. “I have a kin that is suddenly sick. Because I am rushing her back, I am forced to ignore the divide between men and women!”

Zhan Donglai was seventy- percent drunk and he looked at the Mei Yinxue

whose face was covered by her long hair. Although he could not see her beautiful face but he could still her captivating outlines of her face and complexion. He said. “Brother Ren, you must really take care of this kin of yours.”

Suddenly Ren Fengping expressions changed as he hurriedly said. “This kin of mine frequent the Pugilist a lot, therefore you may find her familiar.”

Suddenly Mei Yinxue’s slim body trembled as she moaned in her dreams. “Xiaoping...Xiaoping…”

In Zhan Donglai ears, even though her voice was so faint yet it was so familiar and intimating!

Ren Fengping expressions changed as he added hurriedly. “She is seriously injured. I need to settle her down first. Later I will pay Brother Zhan a visit to reminiscent the past!”

Although Zhan Donglai was in doubt and suspicious of Ren Fengping but he did not even suspect that she was the Mei Yinxue that was always in his thoughts! Therefore he simply said, “It alright!”

Ren Fengping heaved a sigh of relief as he hurriedly reserved a room and left.

But Zhan Donglai was left muttering. “What a familiar face ah! What a familiar voice! So familiar…” And he began to look up as though he was trying to remember something!

When Yuer looked at him, she could not resist asking. “Master! Are you still thinking of that Maiden Mei?”

Zhan Donglai was still looking up in idiocy and it seemed like he had not heard Yuer.

Baier who was much cleverer added. “Master! Are you suspecting that the sick young maiden, is Maiden Mei?”

Zhan Donglai was jolted and he immediately gripped Baier on her shoulders and asked hurriedly. “You! What did you say? Say it once more!”

Baier was shocked by his sudden action and was too stunned now. And she was very frightened now. She grasped in fright. “Master! I did not…did not…”

Zhan Donglai loosened his grips and asked again. “Don’t be afraid! It nothing serious, I just want you to repeat to me what you just said!”

Baier was too shocked to say anything intelligent even as Zhan Donglai urged her.

From the expressions of her Master, she had guessed his intentions therefore she helped Baier by repeating the sentence again. “She just said if Master suspects that maiden is Maiden Mei!”

Zhan Donglai expressions changed and shouted. “Ah! That is! You are all so smart!” But then he started to shake his head. “No way! How could it be her!”

After their Master had just praised them, they grew bolder. Yuer said. “Why did Master not go and have a look? What if she is your dream girl?”

Zhan Donglai was filled with delight and he said, “That is right! Why don’t I go and have a look!”

When he thought of that, he immediately rose up and really sprang to the rooms! After asking an inn assistant for the direction to Ren Fengping room, without even hesitating, he began to knock on the door.

When Ren Fengping had opened the door, he was startled to see Zhan Donglai. He forced himself to smile. “Brother Zhan, something up?”

Zhan Donglai said, “I have something to ask of you!”

Ren Fengping smiled weakly and then said, “Please come in!”

The first time that Zhan Donglai stepped into the room was to look at the young maiden that was lying on the bed. She was covered from head to toe with a blanket with only her long hair on the outside.

When Ren Fengping saw the expressions of Zhan Donglai, he immediately knew he had not come with good intentions. So he tried to laugh. “Brother Zhan your fame has been so resounding in the Pugilist for the past one year. It is indeed worthy of congratulations!”

One must know that Zhan Donglai had always behaved out of the norm, so how would he want to talk about other matters? He immediately came to the point. “Brother Ren, your beloved is so sick, why did you not seek a physician?”

Ren Fengping was startled but he immediately replied. “Her old ailment has reacted. I must send her back fast to her father. Only he knows how to cure her!”

Zhan Donglai laughed. “But Brother Ren, did you not say that she have a sickness on the road?”

Ren Fengping expressions changed and he tried to laugh as a smokescreen!

Zhan Donglai asked again. “However I know physician skills, who knows I may even treat her sickness. Won’t it save you a lot of trouble?”

Ren Fengping hurriedly said. “I won’t dare to impose upon Brother Zhan!”

Zhan Donglai laughed. “It doesn’t matter!” And he walked to the bed.

But Ren Fengping quickly stood in front of him and tried to laugh. “She is just a woman. Brother Zhan, you do not need to worry for her!”

Zhan Donglai solemnly said. “Life and death is a very grave matter. All those men and women divide thing are not as important as curing her!”

And he was about to lift the blanket up…when Ren Fengping said aloud, in a high pitch. “Man and woman by right shouldn’t touch one another. How can Brother Zhan be so rude?” And he caught hold of Zhan Donglai right hand with his left hand.

Zhan Donglai laughed. “Isn’t she a pugilist woman? How will she care for

all this scholarly moral thing!"

Ren Fengping said. "But you are making things too ugly for me!"

Zhan Donglai laughed. "I am just trying to be nice to heal her. What is the matter? Are you trying to play punk on me!"

In that instant, the air of amicable vanished and was replaced by hostility.

Ren Fengping exclaimed. "The one that play punk is Brother Zhan, you!"

Zhan Donglai laughed and said. "No matter who is playing punk, this blanket has to be removed!"

Suddenly Mei Yinxue moved with a slight motion as she moaned dreamily. "Xiaoping… Xiaoping…"

Instantly both their expressions changed! And Zhan Donglai shouted. "Who is the Xiaoping that she is crying out now?"

Ren Fengping laughed. "How will you know who is the person that she is calling out for?"

Zhan Donglai was filled with a malevolent air as he thundered. "Is it Nangong Ping?" Before Ren Fengping could say anything, he hurriedly added. "If that is Nangong Ping, then without doubt she must be Mei Yinxue!"

Ren Fengping coldly said. "How could she be Mei Yinxue!"

But Zhan Donglai was determined to know that if she was really Mei Yinxue. But Ren Fengping was determined not to let him know so they started to fight on the spot!

But after exchanging more than twenty blows, Ren Fengping was now sweating profusely! And his breathing was hard now!

Zhan Donglai laughed and laughed coldly and his strokes became even harsher and powerful!

Suddenly Ren Fengping took out a golden fan from beneath his sleeves and to attack Zhan Donglai with it!

Zhan Donglai coldly hummed. "Now you are using weapons, do you think with it you can win me? I want you to throw away your fan under twenty strokes! And before he had finished, he had kicked with both of his legs in fast motion at Ren Fengping Xuan Ji and Qi Men death accupoints!

Another three strokes had passed; Ren Fengping right wrist was now trembling as he used his fan to fend off Zhan Donglai attacks. He tried to counter attack but everything proved to be futile against him!

Not only was Zhan Donglai strokes changing very fast, it was also swift and unbelievably marvelous! It seemed he could attack in a thousand ways and caused Ren Fengping to think that there was no way to dodge it!

Because of a momentarily lapse when he tried to think about Zhan Donglai attacks, Ren Fengping was forced to take one step back!

Zhan Donglai coldly laughed and just he was about to plunge forward at him, someone shouted. “Stop it!” And three men started to walk into the room!

Zhan Donglai and Ren Fengping turned to look at the newcomers. Zhan Donglai expressions did not change and he did not know these three men! But Ren Fengping knew them and his expressions changed!

They were the Young Master of the Devil Flock Island Sun Zhongyu and the remaining two of the Ten Stewards of the Devil Flock, Gu San and Wei An!

Sun Zhongyu coldly laughed and he used the most chilling manner to say to Ren Fengping. “Do you think that you can escape now?”

Because Zhan Donglai was a proud and haughty man, he could not stand this Sun Zhongyu who looked arrogant. He angrily said. “What is the meaning of this? That you even barge into this room and order us to stop fighting?” His mannerism was full of cockiness and pride and he was seemingly lecturing them!

Sun Zhongyu laughed. He too was a proud and haughty man, looking down on most people. “What is the matter? You want to be a busybody and interfere with us?”

Zhan Donglai angrily shouted. “Who is the one that barge into this room and yet have the audacity to be so unreasonable here!”

Suddenly Ren Fengping said aloud. “Let us forgo this senseless talk. Since everyone of us have a share in this matter!”

Zhan Donglai asked. “What do you mean by this?”

Ren Fengping laughed awhile. “You want Mei Yinxue, he wants Mei Yinxue too. And I want Mei Yinxue as well. Doesn’t it mean everyone of us have a share in this matter?”

Zhan Donglai was now very furious and he attacked Ren Fengping!

Sun Zhongyu fended off Zhan Donglai and said. “Wait! He had killed so many of the Ten Stewards that I have brought with me! This blood debt I want to personal settle with him so how will I let him off this easily and let you kill him!”

Zhan Donglai angrily replied. “Who do you think you are that you can order me!”

“Do you think you can escape?” As Wei An intercepted Ren Fengping with a blow!

It seemed that Ren Fengping had wanted to flee in the confusion but he was discovered by Wei An and now he had been forced back!

Sun Zhongyu glanced at the Mei Yinxue who was on the bed. Although she had been covered with a blanket but it was obvious that her breathing was getting weaker and weaker!

Feeling anxious for her, he unwittingly took a step toward the bed but was stopped by Zhan Donglai!

Sun Zhongyu angrily rebuked. “What is the meaning of this?”

Zhan Donglai said. “Since the one on the bed is Mei Yinxue, how then will I let anyone approach her!”

Sun Zhongyu shouted. “Laudable! Who are you to her that you can behave like that to her? Shame on you!”

Zhan Donglai was startled for he could not put words on his relationship with Mei Yinxue.

Sun Zhongyu was now feeling very impatient and shouted. “If you know what is good for you, then move aside!”

Zhan Donglai drew his long sword on his back and placed it in front of him, blocking the bed!

Sun Zhongyu laughed coldly. “So do you want to fight with me then?”

Zhan Donglai remarked. “If you were to take another step in front, don’t blame me for being ruthless with my sword!”

Sun Zhongyu said. “You think you can stop me?”

Zhan Donglai added. “If you don’t believe, you can try me!”

Sun Zhongyu did not want to waste anymore time and he suppressed his anger to say. “Do you know that right now Mei Yinxue is seriously injured and her life is now in grave danger?”

Suddenly Zhan Donglai remembered how Ren Fengping had carried Mei Yinxue into the Tavern Inn and how weak she was!

He had loved Mei Yinxue deeply so when he remembered that Mei Yinxue was now seriously injured; he was startled and began to feel uncomfortable. But he was a young man with a haughty temperament that caused him to hesitate to give way. So he asked. “She is now seriously injured, so what does it have to do with you?”

Sun Zhongyu said. “I have promised Nangong Ping to treat her injuries and then I will personally bring her to Nangong Ping!”

If he did not say it, it would be better for it caused Zhan Donglai to be very angry. “So it is because of Nangong Ping! Heng! Don’t you dare to dream of touching her!”

Sun Zhongyu said, “Her injuries are now very serious. If we don’t save her now, her life will be in grave danger!”

Zhan Dong coldly laughed. “No matter how seriously her injuries are, there is no need for you to worry about her!”

Sun Zhongyu could not tolerate it any longer. One must know he was a haughty person but because of Mei Yinxue, he suppressed all his pride. But now upon seeing Zhan Donglai behaving so unreasonably, he was now moved to anger!

Sun Zhongyu was now filled with a malevolent air and he had drawn his

sword as well!

These two amazing swordsmen were the most marvelous of their generation. After ten strokes of the most vicious, most powerful attacks, they could not find a dent in one another's armor yet! And so for a time, it was really hard to determine who would be the eventually victor!

As Gu San and Wen An were worrying for their master, they unwittingly moved closer to the duel!

Ren Fengping immediately seized the opportunity to escape again. But when he started to sprang, he was discovered by Wei An and he was blocked by him. Angry, he started to attack Wei An.

But Wei An gave a smile. Using a simple move, he neutralized his fierce attacks and hit Ren Fengping!

Ren Fengping took the blows with his hands and there was a thunderous clap and his expressions changed and he became pale and green at the same time and then he was forced to take three steps back! His injuries were not light! As for Wei An, he did not even move an inch!

Ren Fengping sighed. He knew he could not escape and gave up the idea now. And he turned his attention to the duel.

The duel was getting more and more furious as teething sword energy filled the air and what was more, the duelists were themselves were shadowy – it was very hard to differential who was who now!

Suddenly, Sun Zhongyu shouted at the same time with Zhan Donglai! And then they disengaged!

Sun Zhongyu right sleeve had been stabbed with a deep slash. Just a little more, his hand would be slashed!

But Zhan Donglai left shoulder had a red mark; the blood was now expanding and dripping on the floor!

Now it was obvious that Zhan Donglai was a little weaker than Sun Zhongyu!

Sun Zhongyu said. "You have already been defeated by me, what do you have to say?"

Zhan Donglai endured his pain and said haughtily. "Laudable. The winner and loser have not been determined yet, aren't we still alive yet, how can you say that I have lost already!"

Sun Zhongyu slowly said. "If we keep fighting over swordplay, we are just wasting time. Why don't we exchange three blows with one another to determine the winner?"

Zhan Donglai laughed. "I am alright with it!" He had the powerful Outer Heaven Life Force Internal Skill, so he was extremely confident.

Sun Zhongyu shouted. “Take my first blow first!” And he extended out his right hand.

Zhan Donglai knew that such a blow would determine the outcome of the winner as well as life and death so he dared not be careless as he used nine folds of his strength.

There was an impact and Sun Zhongyu expressions changed while Zhan Donglai shook a bit but none of them moved!

Sun Zhongyu lifted his vital energy and shouted aloud. “Second Blow!” Once again, he extended out his right hand!

Zhan Donglai was now furious and he used ten folds of his vital strength!

There was a thunderous impact.

Sun Zhongyu face turned green and he started to stagger!

But Zhan Donglai turned pale and he took a one step back!

Sun Zhongyu shouted again. “Third Blow!” His voice was not as clear as earlier. It was obvious that his injuries were not light! And he used all his strength!

Zhan Donglai bit his teeth and he forcefully mustered all his strength for this blow!

Once again there was another thunderous impact…

Sun Zhongyu face turned even greener, he staggered back three days and fell upon the floor sweating profusely!

Zhan Donglai closed his eyes, he felt dizzy and he fell upon the ground…

Sun Zhongyu smiled upon seeing Zhan Donglai had collapsed. He slowly walked to the bed and carried up Mei Yinxue. He used a great deal of effort to say. “Let us go!”

And he walked to the entrance of the room in astride! But his legs were not steady and he was staggering. Gu San moved to his side to support him but he was rejected by a shout from Sun Zhongyu and then he threw up a great deal of blood! But still he had managed to walk out of the room!

The elderly Wei An laughed coldly at Ren Fengping and said. “Tonight we will spare you but when our young master of our Island has recovered, he will come and settle this personally with you!” After finishing, he walked out!

Ren Fengping was stunned as if he had never heard what Wei An had said. Instead he was left muttering. “The Devil Flock Island…Devil Flock Island, the grand plan to dominate the Martial Fraternity have once again been hindered by another layer of obstacles… another layer…”

Covered by its own sweat, a horse collapsed onto the ground. It tried to move but it was too weak. The rider had rode a thousand miles in a hurry. Without

taking a look at the horse, the rider began to spring like an arrow towards the entrance of the Liuyin Manor…

He was indeed Nangong Ping who had been extremely worried for the safety of his parents and traveled hastily for a thousand miles to reach the Liuyin Manor!

For three days, he had traveled nonstop. Now he was standing at the entrance of the Liuyin Manor and had lifted his right hand but was hesitating to knock. It was because he harbored a hope that the news that he had received was fake or else when the door was opened, his hope would be immediately be shattered in bits!

After hesitating for a while, he took courage, bit his teeth and knocked with his right hand. And then a low voice asked behind the door. “Who is that?”

Although this voice was low, but it was echoed loudly in his ears! For it was the voice of his father that he had not heard for over a year!

So he began to shout loudly. “Father! Father! I am Pinger, Pinger ah!”

No one would expect him to be so excited and when the door was opened, he saw his father and mother looking serenely but their excited eyes were looking at him! It did not seemed like the news that he had received had been that bad!

Nangong Ping began to calm himself down and bowed onto the floor. “Your unfilial son greets Father and Mother!”

Nangong Changshu too calmed his excited expression and then looked at the kneeling Nangong Ping before he slowly questioned. “Pinger, did you come back from the Divine Creator Temple?”

Nangong Ping nodded his head and said. “Child I am indeed back from the Divine Creator Temper but…”

Nangong Changshu interrupted. “Is it the Lord of the Divine Creator Temple that allows you to be back?”

Nangong shook his head and said. “No…”

Before he could finish, Nangong Changshu angrily said. “What a cad that doesn’t keep your word. Have you forgotten our ancestor rules for the Nangong Aristocracy Family?”

Nangong Ping did not know why his father was in such a rage therefore he was startled and hurriedly said with his head lowered. “Our family rules, abide by trust and righteous as foremost, how will child ever forget about it?”

Nangong Changshu angrily said. “Then why did you leave the Divine Creator Temple to return to the Central Plains? And even break our family faithful pact!”

Nangong Ping knew why his father was angry now. But what had happened to him over the past year was too long to explain in just a few words. And so he did not know how to begin…

Nangong Changshu was getting more and more furious. Suddenly Mistress Nangong softly grasped. “Look at you. Why did you frighten your child in this manner? Why don’t you listen to him first before you started to lecture him!”

Nangong Changshu did not look at her and suppressed his rage to ask. “Pinger, what did you have to say?”

Therefore Nangong Ping began to relate all that had happened to him starting from the time Feng Mantian took him to the oceans and then what happened in the Divine Creator Temple and then what had happened till now…

Nangong Changshu was silence for a long time before he sighed. “Child! Father has wronged you! I didn’t expect you have been through so much in one year! Alas, life is really so unpredictable…”

Mistress Nangong smiled. “Pinger, come over here to let Mother look at you!”

Nangong Ping was like a lost sheep that had lost his shepherd and immediately was in the embrace of his Mother. Therefore he was crying now, enjoying this piece of motherly love…

After awhile, Nangong Ping suddenly remembered Wan Da words and he tore himself from his mother’s embrace then looked in concern at his father, said. “Big Brother Wan told me that Father and Mother are in grave danger and would…would…” Nangong Ping was surprised. “But why? …”

Nangong Changshu sighed with his head lowered. “Your Father and Mother will not live past tomorrow!”

When he had said that, Nangong Ping was jolted in his head and he turned pale as he took two steps back. He looked at his parents in daze and then shouted. “No! No! Aren’t you and mother looking fine, how is it possible!”

Nangong Changshu solemnly said to him. “Although you can’t tell from our expressions but in fact we are heavily poisoned. Moreover we have internal injuries too. At the moment, we are depending on our tens of years of cultivation to hold upon our last breath of vital energy so we can take a last look at you. But when tomorrow comes…alas! Once it is dawn, we will…”

Nangong Ping shouted aloud and kneeled in front of them, cried aloud. “What is going on here, what is going on here? No! No! This is not possible…” He immediately sprang up again to shout. “Your child refuses to believe this is real!”

Mistress Nangong sighed. “Silly child! How will your father lies to you!”

Nangong Ping questioned. “Then, please tell your child, who is the one that poisoned you?”

Nangong Changshu solemnly said. “That is the Shuai Tianfan that you have just told us, the one that wants to dominate the entire Martial Fraternity!”

“Shuai Tianfan!’ Nangong Ping took two steps back and shouted. “He again!

He again! What have we done to him that he wanted to be so vicious!"

Nangong Changshu hatefully said. "I did not know how he managed to find out about your father and mother past. He even came personally to invite us to join his organization. Naturally I refused to co-operate with him and we even broke into an argument. But who would expect that evil bandit had secretly poisoned our food earlier. Therefore when your mother and I fought with him, only then did we discover that we had been poisoned, therefore our internal powers were not able to utilize fully and then we are injured by him…"

Nangong Ping almost spat fire when he had heard all that. He clenched his fists with his blood boiling, shouting. "Evil Bandit! Evil Bandit! If I do not tear your corpse into a million pieces, I swear I am not human…"

But before he could finish, there was an eerie laughter that could be heard in the house…

Nangong Ping turned around to see a middle age scholarly man walked into the courtyard.

Nangong Changshu and his lady had been expecting this man to appear and so they were very composed. But Nangong Ping was infuriated and shouted. "Stand where you are!"

The man smiled and stopped in his tracks.

Nangong Ping walked to the entrance of the room and said aloud. "Who are you? Why did you come?"

The man bowed with both his hands and said. "I am Xiao Mengyuan, I am here to send your father and mother to paradise!"

Nangong Ping flew into a rage. "Outrageous! You are a dog of Shuai Tianfan!"

Xiao Mengyuan was jolted. "How is it possible! I am Mister Shuai right hand man!"

Nangong Ping angrily shouted. "You evil bandit, it is good that you have come! First I will slaughter you and then settle the scores with Shuai Tianfan!" And he drawn out both the Mighty Echo of the Dragon and the Fallen Autumn Leaf, pointed at Xiao Mengyuan and said. "Come and meet your maker!"

Xiao Mengyuan laughed awhile. "Are you really confidence of sending me to the maker?"

Nangong Ping resorted. "Rubbish aside, if you do not believe, you can try!"

Xiao Mengyuan hurried added. "First we disregard the fact if you can win me. Even if I am willing to surrender my head to you, why don't you think of your parents first?"

Nangong Ping was startled. "What do you mean?"

Xiao Mengyuan laughed. "It doesn't take me long to explain. Whether your

parents can live till tomorrow, will have to depend on you…"

Nangong Ping coldly hummed and added. "Stop dreaming!"

Xiao Mengyuan coldly said. "It good that you know what is a dream. As the saying goes, a person must place filial piety as primary. If you want to be a unfilial sinner, then I have nothing more to say."

Nangong Ping was jolted and was left speechless.

Xiao Mengyuan laughed cunningly and said. "The Nangong Aristocracy Family used to be so famous in the world but are now forced to take residence along the Lake side. Who is the one that caused all this? If you do not work hard to repay your parents' love for you and instead you are blinded by your personal grudges, then I afraid that your parents' life will be forfeited!"

Nangong Ping broke into a cold sweat upon hearing his words!

Indeed, Xiao Mengyuan was not wrong to say so. The Nangong Aristocracy Family was in such a dissipated state; much of it was owed to the Divine Creator Temple. But now the Divine Creator Temple had been broken down and the Lord of the Divine Creator Temple Nangong Yongle had now passed away. All these vendettas, who should he going to pursue?

Nangong Ping asked himself. Who were his enemies? What about those people from the Devil Flock Island? But the Devil Flock folks have never directly hurt the Nangong Aristocracy Family. Then, is it Shuai Tianfan? That is right. Shuai Tianfan had tried to harm him directly and indirectly and now his vicious hands had harmed even his parents! But, indeed like what Xiao Mengyuan had said, even if he could kill that Shuai Tianfan, could he recover the lost prestige and wealth of the Nangong Aristocracy Family?

Could he bring back his parents from life if he had killed Shuai Tianfan? The answer was a resounding no!

But if he did not go against Shuai Tianfan, what could he do?

Nangong Ping was in his thoughts therefore he stood at the entrance of the door, looking confused and did not know what to do…

Suddenly Nangong Changshu laughed in a clear voice. "What a slippery tongue despicable man! You actually dare to display your sweet talking in front of me!" He shouted sternly to Nangong Ping. "Pinger! Do you know why your parents will rather take residence alongside Taihu Lake, do you know why we give birth to you. It is because we want to keep our word to the Nangong Aristocracy's Pact so that we will never let anyone down. That Shuai Tianfan is like a wolf with an insatiable appetite. He is using evil and despicable ways to dominate the entire Martial Fraternity. Killing him is as good as removing an evil from the world, so why are you hesitating now?"

His words jolted Nangong Ping to his senses and he calmed himself down

and said aloud. “The twisted theories of evil men, your child has now understood now!” He shouted. “Despicable dog, surrender your life now!”

Xiao Mengyuan expressions did not change as he laughed. “As the saying goes, a man will not shed any tears till he has entered the coffin. You are thinking that if I cannot enter the house, then I can’t kill your parents, right?”

At this moment of time, Nangong Ping was now seething with rage and wanted to charge forward to tear him into pieces. But when he thought that it would be a ruse to lure him out of the entrance of the door so that he would send others into the house, he remained at the entrance unmoving! Therefore he shouted. “I don’t believe you have such an ability! It seems like empty words to me!”

Xiao Mengyuan laughed happily as he took a jade bangle out and said eerily. “The lives of your parents lie in this bangle. Why don’t you make a try?”

Nangong Ping calmed himself down and looked carefully. He really could not find anything special about that jade bangle. They were only two yards apart, should he snatch the bangle or destroy it? Now a hundred possibilities began to float into his mind…

When Xiao Mengyuan saw the undecided look on Nangong Ping’s face, he was very proud and smiled. “If you still cannot decide, I am afraid that I do have some matters to do and cannot stay for long.”

Suddenly Nangong Ping had a jolt in his mind, he suddenly remembered that his parents had once given him a pair of flower guarding golden bells. Immediately he swiftly reached into his clothing and took the bells out and placed them into his hands. First he sent one of the bells toward the jade bangle. There was a dinging sound as the bells flew out.

But suddenly, there were terrible cries from within the house and he immediately withdrawn the bells that he had sent flying out and turned his head back!

And he saw both his parents turned ashen and they were biting their teeth in pain as they trembled!

Xiao Mengyuan laughed cockily. “Wonderful! You are indeed a smart aleck. You cause your parents such terrible pain, it is really not my fault.”

Nangong Ping turned his head back and shouted angrily. “Despicable dog! What underhand methods did you use? Hurry up and say it!”

Xiao Mengyuan laughed. “What has it to do with me? It is you who caused it!”

Nangong Ping stared at him angrily. “Utter rubbish, if you say that again, I will tear you to a million pieces!”

Xiao Mengyuan laughed. “The poison in your parents body will be triggered

when this jade bangle is shattered but who will expect that your bells can actually trigger the poison too. Isn't it marvelous?!" He ceased his laughing and said. "If you cannot bear to see your parents suffering in your sight, why don't you surrender to Mister Shuai. This is not to late for you to contribute your strength to him. I hope you will think thrice about it first!"

Nangong Ping was now anxious and angry at the same time. But he was now speechless with rage…

Xiao Mengyuan laughed and took out another two identical jade bangles and said. "By right, by the time I have dropped three bangles, your parents lives will be over. But all thanks to you, now I only need to drop two bangles onto the floor. But since you are doubtful, let me demonstrate to you." And he dropped one bangle onto the ground and there was a shattering sound.

Immediately Nangong Ping heard his parents crying out in terrifying pain… Nangong Ping turned his head back and saw that his father was bleeding from his seven senses on his face! And he was looking very awful! He bit his teeth and shouted. "Despicable dog! I…I…agree…"

But before he could finish, his father shouted in a trembling voice. "Shut up!"

Nangong Ping cried as he turned his body over. "Father! You…"

Nangong Changshu took in a deep breath and said. "Pinger! Have you forgotten our family rules? If you…if you were to go against the principles of our family for the sake of our lives, then you…you…you are the unfilial son of the Nangong Aristocracy Family…as well as the sinner of the entire Martial Fraternity…"

Nangong Ping felt like his heart was being sliced opened. How could he not understand how his father felt but how could he bear to watch his parents die painfully in front of him!

"No! No! I cannot, I don't want to do this…" His heart was heart wrenching as he bit his teeth, turned and about to rush madly towards Xiao Mengyuan…

But the minute his feet moved, Xiao Mengyuan shouted. "Stand where you are!"

And Nangong Ping stood his ground…

Xiao Mengyuan lifted the jade bangle in his hands and laughed. "If you dare to move a single step, I will immediately shatter this bangle into pieces. Whether you want to agree to my condition or not, just tell me on the spot!"

The sounds of Nangong Ping's teeth were heard seething. He clenches his fists and his nails were deeply burrowing into his flesh as he at last sighed deeply and hatefully said. "Alas! I…"

His father grasped aloud. "Pinger!"

He turned and saw his father lifting his right hand onto his mother's chest and he hurriedly shouted. "Father! You…"

Nangong Changshu stared at his son and grasped. "You have decided to submit?"

Nangong Ping laughed terribly. "Father! What can I do other than this!"

Nangong Changshu laughed awhile before he said. "Never mind. As your father, I really cannot bear to look at this unfilial son of mine, therefore I decide to go with your mother first!"

Nangong Ping grasped and cried out as he kneeled down, shouting. "No! No! Father! You cannot do this!"

Nangong Changshu solemnly said. "Then you have to promise your father to kill this Xiao fellow and then summon the entire Martial Fraternity to get rid of that evil doer Shuai Tianfan!"

Nangong Ping shouted. "Fine! Child promises father to avenge for you!" And he turned around with his swords pointing at Xiao Mengyuan, shouting. "Despicable dog, surrender your life!"

When Xiao Mengyuan saw the terrible look on Nangong Ping's face, his expressions changed and he took a few steps backward. With an evil laugh, he threw the second jade bangle in his hands to the ground…

The instant the jade bangle dropped, from the outside, the shadow of a man dashed past like lightning and caught the bangle and at the same time another hand of the stranger pressed onto his waist and Xiao Mengyuan collapsed onto the ground!

Nangong Ping was totally startled and delightfully as he sprang forwards. When he finally caught the look on the stranger face, he was shocked and grasped. "Is you!"

The stranger was indeed the bald old man, who shook the entire Martial Fraternity in the past and was called the 'The Divine Shadow, Shadowless Bronze Fist and Iron Hand' one of the 'Three Swashbucklers' that was so famous for his swiftness skills and accupoint attacks, Lu Yixian!

Lu Yixian said apologetically to Nangong Ping. "Your silly uncle has come late, nephew you have been through a fright!"

Nangong Ping was grieving now as he lowered his head with tears on his cheeks. "My Father and Mother, I am afraid…"

Lu Yixian shook his hand and said. "Nephew, you do not need to panic. Leave this to me…" And another figure sprang towards them.

Nangong Ping saw the newcomer was an old man that was wearing the robe of a physician.

Lu Yixian turned to his old man and asked. "Have you settle everyone?"

(Referring to the men that Xiao Mengyuan had brought with him)

The old man just nodded his head but said nothing!

Lu Yixian turned to Nangong Ping and said. “Nephew, come and bow to this famous ‘Life Stealing Physician', Cui Minggui, Hero Cui!”

Nangong Ping had long heard of the marvelous physician skills of this Life Stealing Physician Cui Minggui. He was delighted and immediately bowed most respectfully and said. “Junior Nangong Ping pays my respect to Old Senior!”

Cui Minggui waved his hand at him to indicate that it was enough but still he did not say anything.

As Nangong Ping knew that normally reclusive people like him was like that, therefore he did not mind at all. He asked Lu Yixian. “How did Uncle come at such a coincidental timing but…”

Lu Yixian said, “This is a long story. Wait until we have seen to your parents then we talk.” And he picked Xiao Mengyuan up as he walked into the house.

At this moment of time, Nangong Changshu was left with only a breath of vital energy. Earlier, he had been excited to motivate Nangong Ping not to let the Nangong Aristocracy Family down, now he was dying.

When Nangong Ping saw it, he was startled and turned pale, his tears once again flowed down his cheeks!

Then Lu Yixian put down Xiao Mengyuan and said solemnly to Cui Minggui. “Brother Cui, it depends on you now to demonstrate your amazing skill!”

First, Cui Minggui examined Nangong Changshu pulses and coldly said. “Nothing to worry about!” And he reached into his handy bag, took out a black gourd and poured two black pills and gave one of each to Nangong Changshu and his lady. “One hour later, the poisons will be neutralized, then I will treat the internal injuries!” When he finished, he sat at the corner and closed his eyes to rejuvenate his mind and spirit.

Nangong Ping was half believing if it was really so miracle but he was too embarrass to open his mouth to ask. Therefore he looked at Lu Yixian to ask…

Lu Yixian interrupted him and said in a low voice. “Nephew you can rest assured. When I have received news from your past honored guest Wan Da that your parents have been harmed, your silly uncle spent a great deal of effort to invite Hero Cui here to aid you. If it weren’t for those henchmen outside, we would have already reached much earlier…” He suddenly stopped and asked. “Didn’t you go to the Divine Creator Temple? How come you are in the Central Plains now?”

Nangong Ping sighed and explained what happened to him for the past one year.

When Lu Yixian had heard it, he nodded his head and sighed. “I didn’t

expect that so many things would happen in one year. After your parents have recovered, let us discuss of a way to…" But before he could finish, both Nangong Changshu and his lady were moaning together and had regained conscious.

Nangong Ping was delighted and went forward shouting. "Father! Mother!…"

When Nangong Changshu opened his eyes and saw Lu Yixian, he gripped Nangong Ping and smiled to Lu Yixian. "Brother! It has been hard on you!"

Lu Yixian laughed. "It is not my credit!" And he pointed to Cui Minggui and said. "It all thanks to Brother Cui that Big Brother and Third Sister can avert this disaster!"

Nangong Changshu immediately placed both his hands together to bow respectfully to Cui Minggui. "My Lady and I have no worthy deeds to involve Hero Cui to assist us…"

Cui Minggui rose up and waved his hand to say. "Now is not the time to thank me yet. I am still not done yet. Let me treat your injuries first then you will help your lady."

Nangong Changshu thanks him many times while Cui Minggui took out a white gourd and took out a white pill and crashed it to powder on his hands. Then he began to rub Nangong Changshu on his 'diaphragm' and 'heart' accupoint point. Then he concentrated and used the Salamander Fire to dissolve all the powder into Nangong Changshu body. After a while, Nangong Changshu berthed out a mouthful of air and he was covered with warm sweating.

Cui Minggui then taught Nangong Changshu how to cultivate his breathing and then poured another pill on his hand to teach him how to treat his lady. Nangong Changshu once again thanks Cui Minggui most profusely.

Without any expressions, Cui Minggui once again retreated to the corner and closed his eyes to rejuvenate his mind and spirit.

Lu Yixian once again greeted Nangong Changshu and Mistress Nangong. He hatefully said. "I didn't expect that Shuai Tianfan would be so malicious. We need to think of a idea to deal with him so as not to disappoint him for his treatment of us!"

Nangong Changshu sighed. "Actually after sending Pinger off, I have already lost my past heroics. Therefore together with third sister, we decide to live a quiet and solitaire here forever. But now it looked like it is impossible for us anymore and I guess we may be forced to come out of retirement!"

He turned towards Lu Yixian and asked. "Since Brother, you have just come from the Pugilist realm, do you know the movements of that Shuai Tianfan?"

Lu Yixian sighed. "I only know that he is only good at using drugs and underhand methods. He even controlled the Seven Orthodox Sects now and

intending to host a grand gathering to appoint a Alliance Leader of the Martial Fraternity. As for when and where he is going to host it, I do not know. Does Big Brother have any idea too?"

Nangong Changshu shook his head and looked at the Xiao Mengyuan, laughed. "This man claims to be the right hand man of that Shuai Tianfan. Why don't we start from him!"

Lu Yixian laughed as well. "What Big Brother has said is also my intention too." He immediately cleared Xiao Mengyuan's channels and laughed. "If you want to live or die, it all depends what you are going to say."

Xiao Mengyuan pushed himself up with his hands. He secretly lifted and circulated his vital energies throughout his body but suddenly, he became like cotton and collapsed onto the ground. He began angry and anxious at the same time because he knew that he might not escape or pull any ruses. But his face maintained a smile and slowly asked. "So what if I want to die? So what if I want to live?"

Lu Yixian laughed. "How you want to die, we put that aside first. If you want to live, you must exchange some words as precondition."

Xiao Mengyuan coldly laughed. "If you want some words from me, first you have to surrender to Mister Shuai."

Lu Yixian coldly said, "Then you don't intend to live anymore but choosing to die may not be comfortable either!"

Xiao Mengyuan smiled. "Since I have fallen into your hands, how will I dare to have any wistful thinking to live!"

Lu Yixian laughed awhile and said. "Very good, then I will have to invite you to have a taste of my 'Chaining of the Hundred Pulses of the Accupoint'!"

Suddenly Xiao Menyuan expressions underwent a tremendous change for he had long heard of this terrible 'Chaining of the Hundred Pulses of the Accupoint' accupoint skill. Just when he was about to say something, Lu Yixian had already hit him on several parts of his body…

Mistress Nangong batted Lu Yixian with an eye and said, "Second Brother, have you forgotten about the vow you have made last time!?"

Lu Yixian expressions were jolted and he said. "Although this man isn't the most terrible of all the despicable men but other than this, I have no other methods. How can Third Sister use the vow of yesteryear to fault me?"

Mistress Nangong 'Hmmm' awhile and then waved Nangong Ping to come to her. "Pinger, let Mother look at you. Don't take a look at the man on the floor."

While she was talking to Nangong Ping, a terrible cry that could chilled everyone could be heard moaning from Xiao Mengyuan as he trembled over all. Every inch of his muscles and flesh were trembling non-stop and black blood

began to bleed from his seven senses on his face. Finally, his eyes that were filled with rage and hatred were now slowly becoming pitiful.

Lu Yixian laughed proudly as he kicked him with both his legs like a maddening wind on Xiao Mengyuan's seventy-two big and small accupoint points. Finally he lifted him up and said. "There is not much time left. Now if you can reply me with just a word, where does Shuai Tianfan intending to host that Grand Martial Fraternity Gathering?"

Xiao Mengyuan coughed out the trapped air in his lungs as he grasped. "Zhijiao…" But when he had said Zhijiao, he gave a terrifying scream as blood poured forth from his mouth and his body became rigid!

Lu Yixian extended his hands to check Xiao Mengyuan for signs of breathing before he sighed. "That Shuai Tianfan method is really vicious!"

So it seemed that Shuai Tianfan had used hypnosis to induce death to all those that had betrayed him.

Nangong Changshu said. "If he is not vicious, how will he have the ambition to try to dominate the Martial Fraternity? Now that our leads are broken, what other ideas do you have, brother?"

Lu Yixian sighed and did not know what to suggest.

Nangong Ping was jolted and he grasped. "Are they thinking of hosting the Grand Martial Fraternity Gathering at Mentor Master's Zhijiao Manor?"

Lu Yixian exclaimed. "That's right! That's right! Although the Immortal Divine Dragon had died but Zhijiao Manor have the authority and prestige to be the place for him to be an Alliance Leader of the Martial Fraternity!"

Nangong Ping was worried for his fellow protégés so he said, "There is no time to waste, shall we set off now?"

But Lu Yixian looked at Nangong Changshu with a tinge in his eyes and then said to Nangong Ping. "If Nephew you want to go, you can go first. But your silly uncle, your father and your mother have something marvelous to settle first therefore we cannot follow you."

Nangong Ping was startled and started to protest but Nangong Changshu laughed. "Pinger, listen to your uncle and go now."

Lu Yixian took out a small bag and handed it over to Nangong Ping. "Inside this bag is the unique divine pills that Hero Cui has made to neutralize the drugs used by Shuai Tianfan. When you go ahead and see all those people that are afflicted by his senseless drugs, you can seize the opportunity to use the vital heat to dissolve the pill to the inside of those affected and then the poison will be neutralized."

Nangong Ping was extremely delighted and carefully kept the bag. And after some reluctant, he bade farewell to his parents and sprang hastily in the direction

of Zhijiao Manor.

The renowned Zhijiao Manor that was known throughout the Pugilistic Fraternity was as tranquil as still water. Three coffins were arranged in the great hall, they belonged to the Immortal Divine Dragon, Red Flag Escort Agency Sima Zhongtian and the Lord of the Divine Creator Temple Nangong Yongle.

Sitting in a circle besides the coffin were Iron Hero Long Fei, Gu Yihong and Shi Chen.

Right now, these three disciples of the Immortal Divine Dragon were now very solemn and looking at one another in silence…

Finally Long Fei sighed deeply and said. "What should we do now?"

Gu Yihong and Shi Chen glanced at one another and they asked one another with their eyes. "What should we do now?"

There was a sense of hopelessness in their faces.

Long Fei looked up and sighed again.

'Pong'! Shi Chen suddenly slammed on the table and bit his teeth. "No matter, we will fight courageous and bravery to the very ends and not let Zhijiao Manor perish without a single sound from the Martial Fraternity!"

Gu Yihong said quietly. "Third protégé brother you are indeed heroic and measure to the standard of the Zhijiao Manor. But with the three of us, I afraid we can't even hope to reach the level of courageous and bravery to perish with the enemies!"

Shi Chen sighed and lowered his head. "If we don't fight, what can we do then! Unless…unless…" His voice became softer and softer until he could no longer be heard.

Long Fei sighed. "If only fifth protégé brother is here…"

At the same time from outside, a clear and loud voice could be heard. "Big Brother, Third Brother, Fourth Sister, I am back!" And a figure sprang into the great hall!

Everyone was startled and jumped out of their seats in joy and delight, shouted together. "Fifth Brother! You are back!"

Yes, indeed he was Nangong Ping. But when he saw the three coffins, his expressions changed and he looked at Long Fei.

Long Fei hurriedly said. "This is the coffins of Mentor Master, Uncle Sima and your uncle, sent back by Three Brother."

Only then did Nangong Ping relaxed and he paid them a respect. He said. "I have heard that Shuai Tianfan is planning to act against Zhijiao Manor, therefore I traveled throughout the night to reach here. I wonder did Big Brother receive any

news of it?"

Long Fei solemnly replied. "How could I not know!"

Nangong Ping suddenly spotted a black invitation card on the long table and he immediately opened it to read. Then he said angrily. "That lowly rat is really so arrogant and intending to bully our Zhijiao Manor!" He paused awhile to ask. "What does Big Brother intending to do now?"

Long Fei shook his head and said. "We are hoping that you be back so we can discuss of a thorough plan."

Nangong Ping said, "According to my analysis, if we fight headlong with Shuai Tianfan, we are definitely not his match. But the reason why Shuai Tianfan can expand his influence so rapidly is because he is making use of drugs to control so many people. If we can save those people that are drugged by him, we can reveal his ambitions and create a situation that is unfavorable to him. And then it will not be too difficult to defeat him!"

Long Fei said in delight. "Therefore you do have some degree of confidence?"

Nangong Ping replied. "Till now, this is the only plan that I have. We still have to adapt to changes. I only hope that we will get the chance to meet the Leaders of the Seven Major Orthodox Sects so that we can explain to them. Big Brother, what about the rest of the protégés of Zhijiao Major? Are they all ready?"

Long Fei said. "It is all arranged according to Big Brother setup and they are all in their positions and formations now."

Suddenly music could be heard in the distant…

Nangong Ping coldly hummed. "That despicable man indeed comes in style and grandeur. Let us not bother with that first and order our protégés to open the gate to let them in first.

Therefore the gate was opened and they saw thirty to forty men in yellow robes, as well as many lads with musical instruments. At the back were tens of men in black.

Nangong Ping had recognized half of them. They were Ren Fengping, Ren Kuangfeng, Qin Luanyu, Tang Huan, Gu Hong, Zhuo Bufan and Peng Lie.

What had startled Nangong Ping was that among these people were also some of the people that were closest to him. He saw Ye Manqing, Di Yang, Yi Luo and Guo Yuxia as well. They had all lost their senses due to the drugs administrated by Shuai Tianfan and were now manipulated by him!

Long Fei coldly said, "Welcome!"

Shuai Tianfan was a middle age man with bright eyes. He made his way to Long Fei and said to him. "I have heard that the spiritual tablet of Hero Long is here. Let me pay my respect to him and then we will discuss some serious matters,

what do you think?"

Everyone was surprised to see that the ambitious Shuai Tianfan would be so young and had the lofty ambitions to take over the Pugilistic Fraternity.

Long Fei solemnly said, "Mentor Master and you do not know one another, we dare not accept your respect for him!"

Shuai Tianfan solemnly said, "The Immortal Divine Dragon is so famous in the Pugilistic Martial Fraternity, who will not know him or respect him?" Then he looked at the two lads that were accompanying him and said sternly. "Hurry and present the rites!"

Therefore the two lads took some ritual candles, items and fruits and walked respectfully to the altar in the great hall…

Long Fei was bursting with anger but Nangong Ping said in a low voice to him. "He is here for the rites. We cough to be generous a bit or else others will think that Zhijiao Manor is petty."

Therefore Shuai Tianfan walked into the great hall and bowed his respect and Long Fei, Nangong Ping, Shi Chen and Gu Yihong had to bow back to him too.

Suddenly Shuai Tianfan waved his hand and sixteen men carried a grand chair into the middle of the great hall for him to sit without even asking for permission. And he began to sit on his magnificent chair looking proudly. It seemed like he had already become the Lord of the Zhijiao Manor.

Next Ren Fengping said in a clear voice. "Invite the honorary guests of the Seven Major Orthodox Sects to come forward and have a seat!"

An old monk, four priests, two elderly men began to seat themselves.

Nangong Ping and the rest of his protégés did not know if they were the Protege Leaders of the Seven Major Orthodox Sects. But their eyes were sharp, their footing steady and they had an air of haughtiness, it was obvious that they were important figures in the Seven Major Orthodox Sects.

Therefore they thought among themselves. "This is not going to be easy to handle!"

Nangong Ping was even more anxious and he thought. "Why did Father and the rest not come yet, did something happen to them? …"

Shuai Tianfan interrupted his thoughts and said. "The Immortal Divine Dragon is already dead and from now on, Zhijiao Manor will lose its prestige in the Martial Fraternity. What does everyone think?"

The seven people from the Seven Major Orthodox Sects began to nod and exclaimed. "Indeed! Indeed!"

Shuai Tianfan laughed very cockily and then asked. "So what does Zhijiao Clan have to say?"

Long Fei was shouting, “Even if our Zhijiao Manor is to disappeared forever, you, Shuai Tianfan is not going to dominate the Martial Fraternity!” And he turned to look at the people from the Seven Major Orthodox Clans and thundered. “Have you all forgotten about the righteousness of the Martial Fraternity?!”

The old monk replied, “You are too serious over a light matter. Zhijiao Manor has long dominated the Martial Fraternity and it is time for an able person to ascend. Under the orders of our Clan Leaders, we are here to dominate Shuai Tianfan as the Alliance Leader of the Martial Fraternity. I hope that you will pause to consider the bigger picture and wake up from your confusion!”

His words angered Long Fei so much that he immediately shouted aloud. “Bullshit! Does the Seven Major Orthodox Sects still have the face to show up in the Martial Fraternity again!” He paused for awhile and thundered. “Protégés of Zhijiao, hurry and show up to kill these despicable men!”

Suddenly from all sides, there were hundreds of bright lights.

Shuai Tianfan laughed coldly and said. “Do you think I did not anticipated that that there will be an ambush? If I waved my hand, all your hundreds of followers will immediately become a wandering ghost!”

Suddenly there were laughter coming from the hundreds of light. Someone laughed coldly. “Marvelous! Marvelous! We have tens of wandering ghosts here at the moment here. I wonder if you able to change us again!”

Nangong Ping recognized the voice to be that of Hungry Ghost Yi Feng, therefore he was delighted!

Shuai Tianfan laughed coldly. “Marvelous! Marvelous! I have already anticipated that you will also come!” And he signaled to the old monk who appeared to be the leader of the group.

The old monk held his hands together to say. “The protégés of the Seven Major Orthodox Sect have already surrounded this Manor and awaits Mister to give orders!”

Nangong Ping was startled and thought. “The protégés of the Seven Major Orthodox Sect, each clan have at least a few hundreds followers. If they are really together, then even with the help of the Ghastly Beggars, it is most difficult to turn the situation around…”

So it seemed that nothing could prevent this bloodshed now. Nangong Ping looked at Long Fei, Shi Chen, Gu Yihong and knew that they had no choice but to fight now.

Shuai Tianfan shouted. “Kill them all!”

And the people from the Seven Major Orthodox Sects started to take out a fire flare and released it into the air…

There were a several thunderous sounds and the night sky was filled with multi layers of colors!

And then Nangong Ping and the rest began to drawn their weapons…

At the same time, Ren Fengping was ashen as he suddenly sprang towards Shuai Tianfan and said in a low voice. “There are Zhuge Multiple Crossbows in this place!”

Shuai Tianfan shook his head and just laughed.

The old monk said. “Rest assured that these puny Zhuge Multiple Crossbows mean nothing to us. In a short while time, this entire Manor will be a Ghost Manor!”

But before he could finish, seven golden lights flew in front of the leaders of the Seven Major Orthodox Sects!

Ren Fengping took a closer look saw that it was a golden dagger with heraldry of a devil head craved on its hilt! And he grasped. “Decree of the Devil!”

All the leaders of the Seven Major Orthodox Clans pulled the dagger out with solemn expressions and then they bowed respectfully at Shuai Tianfan and said. “Something have happened to our clans, please forgive us for not attending this meeting, good bye!”

And before Shuai Tianfan could open his mouth, every one of them had leapt away into the darkness! And their voices could be heard echoing. “Farewell to the Zhijiao Clan, till we meet again!” They were really top expert exponents! For they had vanished in just an instant of time!

Everything happened so fast that Shuai Tianfan did not even have the time to react! So he was extremely startled. Only when the leaders of the Seven Major Orthodox Sect had gone for awhile, only then did he react angrily by humming coldly a few times. And a malevolent air surfaced on his face…

Nangong Ping and the rest of the people did not for what reasons did the Seven Major Orthodox leaders suddenly retreated but how could they waste such an opportunity? Therefore they shouted. “Protégés and Friends, attack!”

Suddenly there was a loud announcement from the outside. “The Three Swashbucklers’ have arrived!”

When Nangong Ping had heard it, he was extremely delighted but a thought struck him. “Since Father and the rest have arrived, why is it announced by Shuai Tianfan’s man? …”

Shuai Tianfan’s malevolent aura had changed to that of a spring breeze and he looked at Ren Fengping to say. “Hurry and welcome them, I am waiting for them for a long time!”

Ren Fengping sprang away and returned with Nangong Changshu, Mistress Nangong and Lu Yixian.

Shuai Tianfan held his hands together to pay a respect. “What takes the three heroics so long to come here. Where is Xiao Mengyuan?”

Nangong Changshu bowed with his hands and laughed. “Because my lady and I wish to wait for my third brother therefore we are late. As for that Hero Xiao, he says he has to wait for Mister in another location therefore he cannot come.”

Shuai Tianfan then invited Nangong Changshu, Mistress Nangong and Lu Yixian to take a seat.

After Nangong Changshu had seated himself, he asked. “How did the gathering today have developed to such a sorry state? I wonder if there is anything that we can help you in?”

Shuai Tianfan said solemnly. “Actually there are no need to bother you but because the people of the Seven Major Orthodox Sects have suddenly retreated and now your son that is under the Zhijiao Clan, is extremely rude. But because for the sake of the three of you, I did not make things too difficult for him but I wonder…” He hummed awhile and did not continue.

Nangong Changshu laughed. “This is only a small matter, my lady and I will be glad to help to repay you kindness.”

Shuai Tianfan replied delightfully. “You are too modest! It is just a misunderstanding in the past. Let me apology to you first.” And he bowed with his hands.

Nangong Changshu returned a bow with his hands and then turned to the Nangong Ping that was looking shocked, shouted. “Pinger, come over here!”

Although Nangong Ping was a million times unwilling to compel but he knew that his father might have some other intentions. After whispering to Long Fei to be on guard, he walked over to his parents and kneels down. “Pinger pays my respect to my parents!”

Nangong Changshu asked him solemnly. “Mister Shuai is going to dominate the Martial Fraternity soon, why then are you so stubborn?”

Nangong Ping lowered his head to say in a low voice. “Child…”

Nangong Changshu shouted. “Don’t say too much and hurry up. Go and pay Mister Shuai a respect. And then talk it over with your friends. I still have something to say to your Senior Protégé Long Fei.”

Nangong Ping had planned to protest but after awhile; he began to have a inking of his father’s plans. Nangong Ping was an intelligence person therefore he began to act accordingly and bowed with his hands at Shuai Tianfan. “Mister Shuai!”

Shuai Tianfan did not expect things would be settled so smoothly that he

nodded many times. “It good that you are so understanding, I will definitely treat you with much honor and respect.”

Nangong Ping gave a thanks to Shuai Tianfan and began to walk into the crowd, towards Ye Manqing, Di Yang, Yi Luo and many others to shake their hands and to greet them…

Only then did Nangong Changshu turned his head towards Long Fei to say to him. “Nephew, do you know that right now Zhijiao Manor is hanging along the line. Just the few of you, do you think you can do anything? Why don’t you listen to Mister Shuai?”

Long Fei raised his voice in a high pitch and said, “Uncle you are a hero but why did you have to say such words. Your nephew has already made up my mind to defend till the very last. Uncle you do not need to say anymore!”

Nangong Changshu solemnly said. “Nephew you have insisted on doing it your way but have you ever thought of the future of Zhijiao Manor?”

Long Fei thundered. “Shuai Tianfan is like a ravenous wolf. Even if nephew decides to submit but it doesn’t mean that in future he will not destroy Zhijiao Manor. Uncle, can you be so sure that in future he will not harm you as well!”

Shuai Tianfan expressions changed when he heard that.

Nangong Changshu slowly turned his head to look at Shuai Tianfan. “If he did not mention it, I almost forget about it. Can I ask Mister, what is the position of my lady, third brother and I after you have dominated the Martial Fraternity?”

Shuai Tianfan was solemn for awhile before he laughed. “When that time comes, I will treat you as honorary guests and help you to re-establish your former glory.”

Nangong Changshu laughed. “But my family used to have exceeding wealth, how could Mister have this power to help me?”

Shuai Tianfan said, “After I have dominate the Martial Fraternity, I will next dominate the Entire Fraternity. At that time, everything will be mine to have and give. Restoring your former prestige then will be as easy as lifting my hand.”

Nangong Changshu sighed and said, “So I see but just now when I saw the pugilists of the Seven Major Orthodox Sects beating a hastily retreat, don’t you think that it is a blow to Mister Shuai plans to dominate the Martial Fraternity? What are your contingency plans now?”

Shuai Tianfan laughed. “Their lives have long been in my hands. This matter is but a ceremony and I can control them anytime.”

Nangong Changshu said. “So their lives are all in your hands because they are poisoned by Mister Shuai?”

Shuai Tianfan said, “Indeed.”

Nangong Changshu became serious and said, “I do not agree with your

methods in this."

Shuai Tianfan coldly said, "Why?"

Nangong Changshu said, "Do Mister know that if one is to dominate the Martial Fraternity or the Entire Fraternity, what preconditions do you need?"

Shuai Tianfan slowly asked. "I hope that you will enlightenment me!"

Nangong Changshu gravely said, "If one is to dominate the Entire Fraternity or the Martial Fraternity, first he has to be a benevolent person, only then can he wins over the hearts of everyone and then he can accomplishes big things according to the wishes of the masses!"

Shuai Tianfan expressions changed and he looked intently at Nangong Changshu and shouted. "What do you mean by all these?"

Nangong Changshu laughed aloud and then shouted back. "I have thought that Mister is a exceptional man when you first came to the Central Plains but how did I know that you are actually a person that administrate drugs to control others. You are just a despicable man that made use of the weakness of others to further your own aims. Isn't that laudable and deserve to be pitied!"

Shuai Tianfan had now turned bronze green and stared at Nangong Changshu. "Are you suggesting that I have to use drugs or else I will not accomplish anything big?"

Nangong Changshu laughed. "Indeed that is the case!"

Shuai Tianfan was heard 'hehe' for a few times and then called aloud. "Ye Manqing, Di Yang, Yi Luo come over here to await your orders!"

Therefore Ye Manqing, Di Yang and Yi Luo walked over and bowed over with their bodies and asked. "What orders do you have Mister?"

Shuai Tianfan looked at them peacefully and said, "Take down the head of this Nangong Changshu without any hesitation!"

Ye Manqing, Di Yang and Yi Luo bowed again with their idiocy expressions and then drawn their swords and shouted together. "Despicable dog, surrender your life!"

Their swords were as swift as lightning and attacked on all sides! But Nangong Changshu was still looking serenely and laughing.

As for Shuai Tianfan, he was grasping with his hands on his chest in shock and pain. And he opened his mouth with his tongue sticking out as though he wanted to say something but no words flowed except for his blood…

Then with a 'Pong' sound, he had collapsed on the ground, unmoving!

This sudden change of event totally stunned Shuai Tianfan that he had collapsed onto the floor like a stupid wooden duck not knowing what to do!

Nangong Ping waved his hands and shouted. “Everyone attack!”

And rows of arrows began to fly and in an instant over twenty to thirty of Shuai Tianfan’s men had perished.

Ren Fengping tried to flee to the great hall but Long Fei, Gu Yihong and Shi Chen tried to block him with their long swords, followed by Nangong Ping, Di Yang, Ye Manqing and Yi Luo.

And then Yi Feng appeared with his group of Ghastly Beggars and this most renowned Zhijiao Manor of the Entire Fraternity had become a battleground for a terrible bloodshed!

Nangong Ping solo the Four Swords of the Life Stealing Mystery Wind, Tang Huan and he displayed several of his earth shattering epitome sword techniques. With a great shout, he cut off the head of Tang Huan with the Fallen Autumn Leaf even as he gave a terrifying scream!

Di Yang and Yi Luo were now fighting Ren Fengping, their swordplay were like slippery dragons that could attack from head to tail. In an instant, Ren Fengping had been hacked three times!

The Wind Rain Double Whips, Gu Hong, ‘Cloud Breaker Hand’ Zhuo Bufan, Peng Lei and as well as the others thought that it was not worth to sacrifice their lives and in unison, they exhibited their most powerful life saving techniques to break out of the mountains of blades!

Nangong Changshu, Mistress Nangong and Lu Yixian had saw them trying to flee but they did not make things difficult for them and allow them to go.

As for the rest of Shuai Tianfan’s followers, Long Fei and the rest slaughtered them. Finally in a twinkle of an eye, everything had quieted down and Zhijiao Manor, Ye Manqing and the others were filled with delight and the joyous mood of victory.

Then Nangong Ping spotted Wan Da and he immediately hurried to thank him. “It all thanks to the timely arrival of Big Brother that we have success in our hands. I wonder how shall we going to thanks you!” Nangong Ping had saw that someone had tried to release poisonous gas but Wan Da had extinguished it.

Wan Da laughed. “What I did is not worth mentioning but I saw Mei Yinxue along the way and she asked me to hand over a letter to you.” When he had finished, he gave the letter to Nangong Ping.

Nangong Ping was jolted and he hurriedly asked. “Where did she go?”

Wan Da sighed deeply. “Alas as for she. She has now left with the young master of the Devil Flock Island!”

Nangong Ping was stunned and his head became a swirl as he stammered. “She…She…Why was the reason?”

Wan Da solemnly said. “She is really an outstanding girl. She did not

hesitate to exchange her lifetime of happiness so that the Seven Major Orthodox Sect would retreat! Pinger, I afraid you will never be able to repay her for this piece of gratuitous in your lifetime!"

Nangong Ping suddenly realized that those people from the Seven Major Orthodox Sects must have retreated under threat from the Devil Flock Island. The only reason why the young master of the Devil Flock would be willing to do that was because he wanted Mei Yinxue as a precondition!

Hastily he tore opened the letter Mei Yinxue had wrote to him and with tears flowing down his cheeks as he read word by word. "…Please take good care of Sister Qing, and don't bother to remember me, I am a ill-fated person, my life is over in this lifetime, I hope that we can have another chance in another lifetime…"

Nangong Ping muttered. "…Another chance in another lifetime…another chance in another life…"

Suddenly he grasped out and cried. "Never! Never! Even if I were to travel to the ends of the earth in this lifetime, I must search for you…"

Suddenly a pair of beautiful white hands gently held him on his shoulders and he could hear an alluring grasping. "Pingge!"

Nangong Ping slowly turned his head around with tears in his eyes. All of a sudden, he chanced into Ye Manqing's alluring apricot eyes that were filled with love and sympathize…

Therefore the two of them looked into one another's eyes for an extremely long time in silence…

Till the darkness had been lifted and dawn was now rapidly enveloping the vast earth…

Epilogue

Sun Zhongyu sighed as he looked at the fragile Mei Yinxue. "I have promised Nangong Ping to bring you back to him!"

Mei Yinxue lowered her head and shook her head weakly. "I am dying now. I don't wish for him to be heartbreak…" Her breathing was faint as she forced herself to speak. "Promise me that you will receive him well if he were to come to the Devil Flock Island!"

Sun Zhongyu sighed. Mei Yinxue had written a letter to Nangong Ping and told a big lie that she was going to the Devil Flock Island with him because she did

not want Nangong Ping to know she was now dying! Did Nangong Ping know that even without Mei Yinxue as a condition, he would also have demanded the Seven Major Orthodox Sects to retreat? That was because he had hated Ren Fengping and that Shuai Tianfan so much for causing the deaths of eight of his Stewards!

Sun Zhongyu asked. “Will he really find his way to the Devil Flock Island?”

Mei Yinxue smiled faintly as she thought of Nangong Ping fondly. “He will… he is always an extremely determined man!” And she started to walk away before turning her face back to smile forcefully. “Farewell…”

Sun Zhongyu was saddened, he had never seen or heard of a woman such as Mei Yinxue. She did not want Nangong Ping to have a grieving heart therefore she had left. How was he going to tell Nangong Ping should he come to the Devil Flock Island?

Suddenly he coughed out blood and he began to lose unconsciousness! His internal injuries were not light! Gu San and Wei An immediately sprang to their young master to carry him.

Wei An sighed. They had wanted to bring Mei Yinxue back to the Devil Flock Island for treatment but she knew that her days were numbered and that to bring her along would only delay them unnecessary and their young master would be in an even more dangerous condition!

Gu San sighed deeply and said. “Let us go now!”

Mei Yinxue was in a daze now and she found herself a cool shade to sit. Then she slowly slipped into unconsciousness…she could hear Nangong Ping calling her. “Yinxue! Yinxue!” She smiled dreamily and muttered. “Xiaoping…Xiaoping…”

Suddenly she felt tears dripping on her face and her shoulders were gripped as the voice got louder. “Yinxue! Yinxue! Wake up, it is me!”

She slowly opened her weak lids and was jolted to see Nangong Ping holding her and besides him, stood Ye Manqing!

She grasped. “It is…really you…Xiaoping!” And her eyes were watery now.

Nangong Ping said anxiously. “Yinxue, don’t talk first.” He handed a white pill over to Ye Manqing and said. “Manqing, it is up to you now!” How could he rubbed Mei Yinxue on her diaphragm and heart? Therefore the task was given to Maiden Ye Manqing.

Ye Manqing had broken into smiles of delight when she saw Nangong Ping had found Mei Yinxue! And there was even tears beaming in her eyes now…

Nangong Ping was with Ye Manqing when he had a sudden jolt. He hurried asked Wan Da where did he last saw Mei Yinxue and immediately bowed down in front of Cui Minggui to ask for the white divine pill to treat internal injuries.

It was not that Cui Minggui did not want to give his pills but when he saw Ye Manqing was holding onto Nangong Ping earlier, he was surprised. So he asked. "You have a wonderful maiden besides you now, why did you want to break her heart and to look for another?"

At this, Ye Manqing too kneel down and pleaded. "I hope that Old Senior will give us the divine pill to save Sister Xue!" As long as Nangong Ping was happy, she would be happy too as well! To the ends of the Heaven, to the Four Corners of the Earth, to the far reaches of the Ocean, she would follow Nangong Ping wherever he goes forever, till time itself ceased.

For the first time, this old man started to smile and he muttered. "*Alas Heavens, what is love that causes everyone to lament over it*…" Then he patted Nangong Ping on his shoulder and handed over the pill to him and said. "Hurry and go! Or else it will be too late! The method…"

Nangong Ping thanks him most profusely and sprang off with Ye Manqing.

One year later, two beautiful women that looked like they were fairies descending on the mortal realm were singing and laughing along Taihu Lake with a handsome young man as they made music with the golden flower guarding bells. Indeed, they were Nangong Ping, Mei Yinxue and Ye Manqing.

Ye Manqing laughed demurely. "When I first know that Qian Chi is actually the uncle of Pingge, I almost faint from shock. To think I even have to bow to him from now on!"

Mei Yinxue laughed merrily and asked. "I wonder where is Di Yang now?"

Nangong Ping replied, "Brother Di Yang is determined to surpass me in fame. Or else he felt he was unworthy to be my brother. So he set off in his multi-colored ship. Alas but surely he should have known that I do not hanker after fame…"

Ye Manqing interrupted with a smile. "He says that it is one thing that he had to surpass you! But I think he just wanted to lead a carefree life!"

Mei Yinxue pondered for a while before she said, "With such an eye-catching ship and a crew that consisted of only women. I'm afraid that in no time at all, he will be extremely renown throughout the Entire Fraternity. Last I heard, people throughout the Fraternity have already nicked him the Purple Marquis for he likes to appear in purple. So whenever they chance upon a ship with a multi-

color sail, everyone would start to exclaim aloud that the heroic Purple Marquis is here!"

Mei Yinxue had said that to provoke laughs.

Nangong Ping and Ye Manqing laughed together.

Mei Yinxue started to sing anew and Ye Manqing joined in the singing as well.

Nangong Ping looked dreamily at their singings in a bliss state of divinity before he said. "Zhijiao Manor has regained its prestige in the Martial Fraternity and the Seven Major Orthodox Sects have even returned the stolen silver back to the Nangong Aristocracy Family. Big Brother Long Fei and Fourth Sister Yihong had managed to convince Gu Hong to put down the vendetta. Now that every thing had been settled, I'm thinking of going to the Divine Creator Island to pay Old Senior Feng Mantian a visit."

Mei Yinxue laughed softly. "No, I want to tour Jiangnan!"

Nangong Ping interrupted. "To the Divine Creator Island!"

Mei Yinxue turned her watery eyes to look at Ye Manqing. "Sister Qing, what do you think?"

Ye Manqing blushed and she smiled coyly. "How about Huashan?" For this was the place where she first fell in love with Nangong Ping.

Mei Yinxue laughed when she saw her looks. "Huashan…Huashan…" Mt. Huashan was the place she had first known Nangong Ping too...

Nangong Ping sighed. "To the Divine Creator Island!"

Mei Yinxue laughed softly and gently said. "Look Sister Qing, he has not even married you for a year and now he is trying to bully you…"

Nangong Ping sighed. "Yinxue…Yinxue…Manqing…Manqing…"

"Xiaoping…Xiaoping…"

"Pingge…Pingge…"

The three golden Flower Guarding Bells were tangible objects to link them together but their love and sacrifices for one another were intangible and invisible.

~ *Fin* ~

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